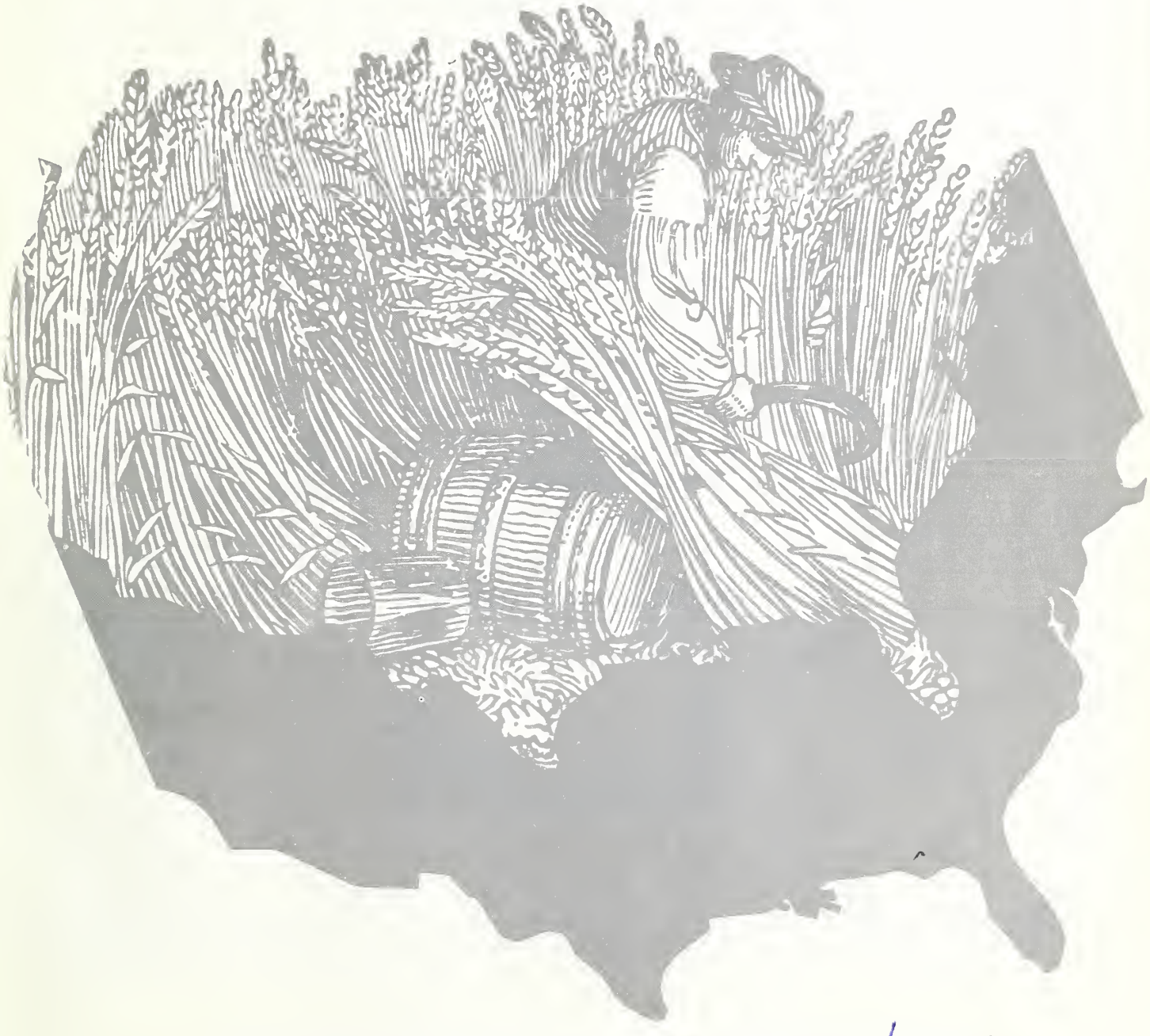
REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

1985 AND BEYOND



U. S. Department of Agriculture • Economic Research Service • ERS 564

The four articles in this reprint summarize ERS projections of principal agricultural commodity production for the U.S. as a whole, the Northeast, the South, the North Central region, and the West.

The projections are "demand" estimates based on expected population, per capita consumption, income, and net export levels. They indicate how much of each commodity will be needed to support expected demand and where these commodities might be produced.

After total commodity requirements were determined, production was estimated by States and regions based on their historical shares of U.S. production, and adjusted for changes in projected cropland availability and productivity. Projected crop yields assume a dampened rate of increase in agricultural research and development and thus a slower rate of technological change and crop yield increases. To measure the capacity of U.S. agriculture to expand production, an alternatively higher set of net farm exports is assumed.

These estimates are currently being updated by the ERS Economic Projections Program. Scenarios are being developed that depict alternative futures with regard to population, exports, and per capita disposable income. A new publication series entitled "Agriculture the Third Century" will report the updated projections. Publication is scheduled for late 1974.

Material for these articles was provided by Virden L. Harrison, Leroy Quance, and Allen Smith, National Economic Analysis Division, and Marlin Hanson, Natural Resource Economics Division.

agriculture's capacity to produce

northeast states

Agriculturally speaking, the Northeast appears to be in good shape to meet its share of the Nation's needs to 1985.

In its major study projecting production, yields, and acreages to 1985, ERS researchers find that demand for U.S. agricultural production could go up for all principal commodities except oats, tobacco, and sheep.

The 11 Northeastern States* are projected to increase their production of half of the 16 commodities included in the study (see table). The Northeast is also shown to exceed the overall U.S. rate of increase for barley, rye, oats, and milk. With U.S. milk production projected to increase only two-tenths of 1 percent over the 1970-72 level by 1985, the Northeast's faster growth rate of 10.6 percent will give it a larger share of the fairly stable national market.

Yields to rise. Yields of the major crops in both the U.S. and the Northeast are projected to increase from 7 to 28 percent by 1985 compared with 1970-72. Northeast yield gains are projected to exceed U.S. crop yield gains for six commodities—wheat, rye, oats, barley, soybeans, and potatoes.

The acreage of cropland used for crops rose slightly during 1972 to 12.9 million acres in the Northeast region. Estimated productive capacity is projected to rise to 13 million acres by 1985.

The researchers note that abandonment of cropland has nearly ceased and the small amount of abandonment plus urbanization will be counterbalanced by reclamation and a return to production of some land in areas where fairly large fields are possible. However, not much expectation is held for return to crop production where uneven terrain, small fields, and small holdings are the rule.

In addition to cropland, there are some 23 million acres in Land Use Capability Classes I-III in other uses, principally forest and pasture. Much of this was formerly cropped, and a little may be returned to cropping, offsetting loss to urban uses and highways and some continuing abandonment.

Peak in last century. In terms of cropland acreage used for crops, the Northeast probably saw its peak in the last century. Land has been going out of crop production in this region at a rapid rate for some years.

The historical high at 25.4 million acres was almost double the 1973 cropland acreage in the Northeast.

Until recent years, abandonment of cropland has been running at a rate of 300,000-500,000 acres a year. Reclamation has been running at about 10,000 acres a year, mainly a result of drainage in the Delmarva Peninsula. Urban expansion and highway building have taken about 150,000 acres of land—possibly 70,000 acres of cropland—annually over the past 20 years.

In its projection, ERS finds that neither the Northeast—nor the U.S. as a whole—would experience any land constraint in producing the major commodities to 1985.

In fact, the Northeast would need about 950,000 fewer harvested acres in 1985 than were used in 1970-72 to produce nine selected crops. Crops for which fewer acres will be required to meet 1985 production projections include wheat, corn, oats, hay, tobacco, and potatoes. More

* Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland.

THE U.S. AND THE NORTHEAST'S AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, 1970-72 AND 1985

	1970-72 Average			1985 Projections				
	U.S.	Northeast	Northeast's Share of U.S. Production	U.S.	Northeast	Northeast's Share of U.S. Production	U.S. 1985 As Percent Of U.S. 1970-72	Northeast 1985 As Percent Of Northeast 1970-72
	Millions		Percent	Millions			Percent	
Wheat	1,505 bu.	20.2 bu.	1.3	1,528 bu.	17.6 bu.	1.1	101.5	87.1
Rye	39 bu.	1.5 bu.	3.9	43 bu.	2.8 bu.	6.4	112.2	186.7
Corn	5,089 bu.	156.2 bu.	3.1	6,613 bu.	185.1 bu.	2.8	129.9	118.5
Oats	831 bu.	42.3 bu.	5.1	752 bu.	50.2 bu.	6.7	90.5	118.7
Barley	434 bu.	14.9 bu.	3.4	557 bu.	20.5 bu.	3.7	128.2	137.6
All Hay	128 tons	12.2 tons	9.3	138 tons	11.1 tons	8.1	107.3	91.0
Soybeans	1,193 bu.	12.4 bu.	1.0	1,800 bu.	15.4 bu.	0.8	150.8	124.2
Tobacco	1,788 lbs.	64.7 lbs.	3.6	1,665 lbs.	62.5 lbs.	3.8	93.1	96.6
Irish Potatoes	313 cwt.	59.8 cwt.	19.1	357 cwt.	67.2 cwt.	18.8	113.8	112.4
Cattle and Calves	40,020 lbs.	1,036.0 lbs.	2.6	55,051 lbs.	985.9 lbs.	1.8	137.6	95.2
Hogs	22,174 lbs.	327.7 lbs.	1.5	27,484 lbs.	261.9 lbs.	1.0	123.9	79.9
Sheep and Lamb	1,051 lbs.	15.5 lbs.	1.5	407 lbs.	6.1 lbs.	1.5	38.7	39.4
Chickens[1]	1,173 lbs.	179.1 lbs.	15.3	1,452 lbs.	196.8 lbs.	13.6	123.8	109.9
Turkeys	2,297 lbs.	69.6 lbs.	3.0	3,381 lbs.	62.4 lbs.	1.8	147.2	89.7
Eggs	69,400	10,219	14.7	75,484	10,057	13.3	108.8	98.4
Milk	118,640 lbs.	24,166 lbs.	20.4	118,850 lbs.	26,728 lbs.	22.5	100.2	110.6

[1] Does not include broilers

acres will be required for rye, barley, and soybeans.

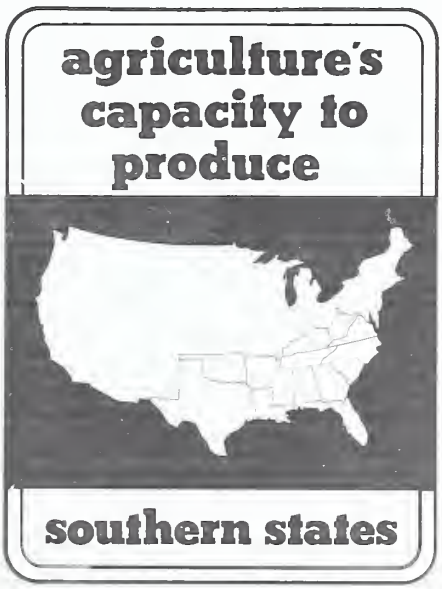
Thus, using conservative crop yield and export demand projections, the researchers find the Northeast will have adequate cropland to produce its projected share of U.S. crop output.

And if demand were higher . . . The study also explored agriculture's capacity under conditions of an optimistically high export demand by 1985. Such a development would require a continued movement toward freer trade and a U.S. comparative advantage in international trade of food and fiber commodities.

Specifically, U.S. feed grain exports under this alternative would reach 56.3 million metric tons by 1985 as opposed to 34.5 million assuming continued barriers to freer trade and a conservative growth in U.S. exports. (The 1969-71 average for U.S. feed grain exports was 20.9 million metric tons.) Soybean exports in 1985 would reach 30.6 million metric tons under the high demand assumption as opposed to 25.8 million in the more conservative projection—up from an average of 11.6 million in 1969-71.

To produce these higher export quantities would require an additional 10.1 million harvested acres for feed grains and 4.5 million acres for soybeans in the U.S. The Northeast's share of this increase would require an additional 320,000 acres for feed grains and another 50,000 acres for soybeans.

This would be well within the productive capacity of the Northeast and the U.S., and would require only a moderate increase in feed grain and soybean prices to provide the incentive for the required production.



The South is not only well fixed for agricultural land now but is projected to need even fewer harvested acres by 1985.

That's the conclusion from a regional study of 14 southern States* based on ERS's recent report on American agriculture's capacity to produce to 1985.

Projected harvested cropland requirements for 16 major crops in these southern States is 66.6 million acres in 1985—about 1 million fewer than these crops averaged in 1970-72.

The South's need for fewer harvested acres in the next 10 years stems from higher yields and regional shifts in commodity production.

Commodities on the move. Regional

* Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas.

THE U.S. AND THE SOUTH'S AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, 1970-72 AND 1985

	1970-72 Average			1985 Projections				
	U.S.	South	South's Share of U.S. Production	U.S.	South	South's Share of U.S. Production	U.S. 1985 As Percent Of U.S. 1970-72	South 1985 As Percent Of South 1970-72
	Millions		*Percent*	*Millions*		*Percent*		
Wheat	1,505 bu.	188.4 bu.	12.5	1,528 bu.	264.9 bu.	17.3	101.5	140.6
Rye	39 bu.	4.7 bu.	12.2	43 bu.	6.9 bu.	15.9	112.2	146.8
Rice	8,491 lbs.	6,647 lbs.	78.3	10,487 lbs.	7,992 lbs.	76.2	123.5	120.2
Corn	5,089 bu.	420.8 bu.	8.3	6,613 bu.	393.5 bu.	6.0	129.9	93.5
Grain sorghum	795 bu.	373.0 bu.	46.9	1,148 bu.	570.4 bu.	49.7	144.3	152.9
Oats	831 bu.	49.7 bu.	6.0	752 bu.	43.9 bu.	5.8	90.5	88.3
Barley	434 bu.	33.0 bu.	7.6	557 bu.	50.6 bu.	9.1	128.2	153.3
Hay	128 tons	20.6 tons	16.1	138 tons	20.8 tons	15.1	107.3	101.0
Soybeans	1,193 bu.	326.8 bu.	27.4	1,800 bu.	541.4 bu.	30.1	150.9	165.6
Peanuts	3,091 lbs.	3,073 lbs.	99.4	4,408 lbs.	4,369 lbs.	99.1	142.6	142.2
Cotton	5,478 lbs.	4,300 lbs.	78.5	5,702 lbs.	4,232 lbs.	74.2	104.1	98.4
Sugarcane	26 tons	14.3 tons	55.2	29 tons	17.1 tons	59.0	112.0	119.6
Tobacco	1,788 lbs.	1,662 lbs.	93.0	1,665 lbs.	1,558 lbs.	93.6	93.1	93.7
Irish potatoes	313 cwt.	18.5 cwt.	5.9	357 cwt.	21.2 cwt.	5.9	113.8	114.6
Sweet potatoes	13 cwt.	11.4 cwt.	91.2	9 cwt.	8.0 cwt.	87.5	72.8	70.2
Cattle, calves	40,020 lbs.	12,305 lbs.	30.7	55,051 lbs.	17,129 lbs.	31.1	137.6	139.2
Hogs	22,174 lbs.	3,826 lbs.	17.3	27,484 lbs.	3,815 lbs.	13.9	123.9	99.7
Sheep, lambs	1,051 lbs.	311 lbs.	29.6	407 lbs.	73 lbs.	17.9	38.7	23.5
Chickens, except broilers	1,173 lbs.	553 lbs.	47.1	1,452 lbs.	806 lbs.	55.5	123.8	145.8
Turkeys	2,297 lbs.	738 lbs.	32.1	3,381 lbs.	1,027 lbs.	30.4	147.2	139.2
Eggs	69,400	28,533	41.1	75,484	35,074	46.5	108.8	122.9
Milk	118,640 lbs.	20,020 lbs.	16.9	118,850 lbs.	17,536 lbs.	14.8	100.2	87.6

shifts away from the South, for instance, are projected to result in the South producing a smaller portion of the Nation's cotton, hogs, sheep, milk, corn, and hay by 1985.

On a national level, of 22 commodities studied, only oats, sheep, tobacco, and sweet potatoes are projected to decline in production by 1985. The South produces more than 90 percent of both our tobacco and sweet potatoes.

However, the South's share of national production is expected to shoot up for a number of important commodities, including soybeans, wheat, grain sorghum, barley, sugarcane, and chickens.

Looking at the big ones. Of 16 major crops, the South is projected to require less acreage for 9 of them in meeting its share of production by 1985: cotton, tobacco, rice, corn, silage, oats, hay, Irish potatoes, and sweet potatoes. More acreage will be required for the other 7 crops: wheat, rye, grain sorghum, barley, soybeans, peanuts, and sugarcane.

The South varied from the U.S. trend for these crops in only three instances. Total U.S. acreage for wheat and sugarcane is projected to go down, while the South's acreage is expected to go up. U.S. acreage for corn is projected to expand, whereas the South's is projected to go down.

While the South is projected to need fewer acres of cropland by 1985 to meet its share of demand, it will have more cropland readily available.

ERS projects some 87½ million acres will be potentially available for crops in the South in 1985—about 10 percent more than were used in 1973. This potential cropland includes cropland not under cultivation but which could be readily converted, such as pasture.

In projecting 87½ million acres, ERS assumed that urbanization and abandonment will be counterbalanced by reclamation and a return to production of enough land to add about 700,000 acres a year to the cropland base.

Thus, the land potential is available for more production in the South then is projected. But the economic potential will be limited unless favorable prices, costs, and increasing yields continue.

Over the past 25 years, about 1.8 million acres in the South have been taken out of crop production each year. On the average, 200,000 acres each year have gone irreversibly to urbanization and highways. The rest —1.6 million—has gone to forest, permanent pasture, or rangeland—land that can be converted back to cropland if need be. There are about 120 million acres that are more marginal—rolling lands, for instance, or land that needs clearing. These acres are suitable to crops but are not now under cultivation according to the latest USDA Conservation Needs Inventory.

A second projection. Because the study used conservative figures for export demand in 1985, ERS economists also worked out an alternative projection based on higher demand for feed grains and soybeans.

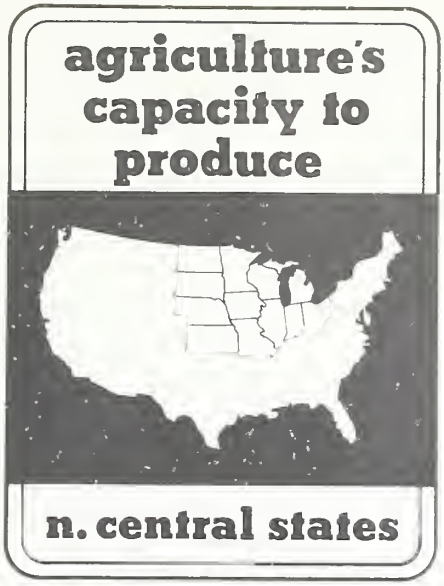
This alternative level of exports assumes high export demand through continued movement toward freer trade and a U.S. comparative advantage in international trade of food and fiber commodities.

Specifically, the alternative projection puts U.S. feed grain exports at 56.3 million metric tons in 1985 (as opposed to 34.5 million in the more conservative estimate) and soybeans at 30.6 million metric tons (as opposed to 25.8 million in the more conservative projection).

Still within capacity. To produce enough to meet this extra demand would require 10 million more harvested acres for feed grains and 4½ million more acres for soybeans.

The South, to share in this increase, would have to farm 3 million more acres—half of it for feed grains and half for soybeans.

This additional acreage is well within the productive capacity of the South and the U.S. and would require only a moderate increase in feed grain and soybean prices above historical levels to provide the incentive for the required production.



In no region in the U.S. is there more likely to be a tight supply of cropland in the next 10 years or so than in the Corn Belt.

Judging from projected demand for food and fiber till 1985 and a high export assumption, the Corn Belt may well need more cropland than it has readily available, particularly for corn and soybeans. This could force a shift in production among crops there . . . and possibly among other regions of the country.

This comes out of ERS's latest regional study on agriculture's capacity to meet demand to the year 1985.

For the U.S. as a whole, however, projected cropland either "in hand" in 1985 or readily available—needing to be plowed or cleared—will exceed projected demand by some 3 to 18 million acres over the 1973 level, depending on the export assumption.

Twelve States. This latest study covers 12 North Central States and includes the Corn Belt—Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri; the Lake States—Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota; and the Northern Plains—North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas.

Altogether, these North Central regions planted more than 206 million acres in 1973 in crops and harvested 187 million acres. For 1985, they are projected to have readily available 221 million acres that could be planted if demand was high and commodity prices favorable, and these would yield about 207 million harvested acres. This amounts to a

THE U.S. AND THE NORTH CENTRAL STATES' AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, 1970-72 AND 1985

	1970-72 Average			1985 Projections				
	U.S.	N. Central States	N. Central States' Share of U.S. Production	U.S.	N. Central States	N. Central States' Share of U.S. Production	U.S. 1985 As Percent Of U.S. 1970-72	N. Central States 1985 As Percent of N. Central States 1970-72
	Millions		*Percent*	*Millions*		*Percent*		
Wheat	1,105 bu.	897.3 bu.	59.6	1,528 bu.	879 bu.	57.5	138.3	97.9
Rye	38.6 bu.	29.3 bu.	75.9	43.3 bu.	28.2 bu.	65.1	112.2	96.2
Corn	5,089 bu.	4,354 bu.	85.6	6,613 bu.	5,938 bu.	89.8	129.9	136.4
Grain sorghum	795.3 bu.	361.7 bu.	45.5	1,148 bu.	478 bu.	41.6	144.3	132.1
Oats	831.1 bu.	697.1 bu.	83.9	752.3 bu.	625 bu.	83.1	90.5	89.7
Barley	434.4 bu.	153.0 bu.	35.2	556.9 bu.	175.6 bu.	31.5	128.2	114.8
Hay	128.2 tons	65.4 tons	51.0	137.6 tons	71.7 tons	52.1	107.3	109.6
Soybeans	1,193 bu.	853.8 bu.	71.6	1,800 bu.	1,244 bu.	69.1	150.9	145.7
Irish potatoes	313.2 cwt.	63.0 cwt.	20.1	356.5 cwt.	69.7 cwt.	19.6	113.8	110.6
Dry beans	1,711 lbs.	900.0 lbs.	52.6	1,451 lbs.	821 lbs.	56.6	84.8	91.2
Cattle, calves	40,020 lbs.	17,983 lbs.	44.9	55,051 lbs.	25,139 lbs.	45.7	137.6	139.8
Hogs	22,174 lbs.	17,554 lbs.	79.2	27,484 lbs.	23,033 lbs.	83.8	123.9	131.2
Sheep, lambs	1,051 lbs.	325 lbs.	30.9	407 lbs.	140 lbs.	34.4	38.7	43.1
Chickens, except broilers	1,173 lbs.	291 lbs.	24.8	1,452 lbs.	235 lbs.	16.2	123.8	80.6
Turkeys	2,297 lbs.	970 lbs.	42.2	3,381 lbs.	1,592 lbs.	47.1	147.2	164.1
Eggs	69,400	18,643	26.9	75,484	15,909	21.1	108.8	85.3
Milk	118,640 lbs.	56,505 lbs.	47.6	118,850 lbs.	56,560 lbs.	47.6	100.2	100.1

7-percent rise in planted acreage from 1973 to 1985.

Close to past peaks. These three North Central regions are somewhat unique in that they are closer to using their peak crop acreages than other areas of the country. Taking the Corn Belt's peak in World War I, the Northern Plains' peak in 1954, and the Lake States' in 1935, the top acreage these States have used for crops is 220 million acres. They used 94 percent of this last year while the rest of the continental U.S. averaged 72 percent of its historical high.

Taking into consideration projected demand for agriculture and its capacity to produce to 1985 and distributing this by region according to historical trends and comparative advantages, the study found—

—The North Central States are projected to produce a larger portion of the Nation's corn, turkeys, and hogs by 1985.

—Out of 17 selected commodities, the North Central States are projected to reduce their production of 7 of them by 1985: wheat, rye, oats, dry beans, sheep, chickens, and eggs. In the U.S. as a whole, production is projected to go down for only 3 commodities: oats, dry edible beans, and sheep.

—Out of 10 selected crops, the North Central States are projected to harvest more acres in 1985 for corn and soybeans than they did for 1970-72 but harvest fewer acres for the other 8 crops: wheat, rye, grain sorghum, oats, barley, hay, potatoes, and dry beans. This differs from the projection for the U.S. as a whole in that harvested acreages for corn, soybeans, rye, grain sorghum, and barley are projected to go up.

—The greatest reservoir of land that could be converted rapidly to crop production in the U.S. is probably in the Northern Plains. USDA's Conservation Needs Inventory of 1967 shows the Plains has 28 million acres suitable for cropland but not in crops, with about 22 million acres of this in pasture or rangeland.

—Altogether, the three North Central regions have a reservoir of some 81 million acres not now in crops that could potentially be converted to cropland, according to the inventory. This includes 25 million acres in the Corn Belt and 28 million acres in the Lake States. However, much of the 81 million acres is in small sections, in forest, or in pasture supporting the beef industry. Thus, the economics of it suggest that only a part will be brought into production in any given year, and only with substantial investment and with prices high enough to get farmers to convert it to cropland. Projecting to 1985, ERS sees about 15 million of these acres being converted to crop production in the North Central States, with about 10 million of this needed for crops under the "low" export assumption.

Cropland changes. Over the past 25 years, land taken out of crop production in the three North Central regions has averaged 500,000 acres annually, offset in recent years by an annual average of 540,000 acres of newly developed cropland, such as from clearing brush and plowing pastures.

In projecting the 15 million-acre addition to the cropland base by 1985, ERS assumed that the rate of cropland lost to urbanization or diverted to forest, pasture, and rangeland will slow down and that there will be enough of an increase in cropland being reclaimed or developed to add about 1.2 million acres a year to the cropland base. This assumes that farm prices will be such as to encourage farmers to convert more acreage to cropland.

In addition to these projections, which use admittedly conservative agricultural export estimates, ERS looked at agriculture's capacity to produce under much heavier export demand . . . and found the North Central States would fall short of enough cropland to maintain its share of production.

Feed grains and soybeans. The North Central States are heavy producers of the feed grains and soybeans that make up the bulk of U.S. farm exports, and in projecting heavier export demand, the study focused on these two commodities. For feed grains, the U.S. export level was set at 56.3 million metric tons by 1985 as opposed to 34.5 under the more conservative assumptions and 30.6 million metric tons of soybeans compared with 25.8 million.

The "optimistic" export conditions include (1) continued movement toward freer trade and (2) a comparative advantage for the U.S. in international trade of food and fiber commodities.

To meet the greater demand projection would require nearly 15 million more harvested acres in the U.S., about two-thirds in feed grains.

North Central's share. For the North Central States to produce the same share of U.S. production in 1985 as it would under the more conservative assumptions, they would need about 8 million more harvested acres for feed grains and 3 million more harvested acres for soybeans. And this exceeds their estimated productive capacity for 1985 by about 5 million acres.

The U.S. as a whole can meet the higher export demand levels. This would, however, probably require some shifting among regions as to the commodities they produce, and it would require favorable prices for feed grains and soybeans to provide the incentive for the increased production.

agriculture's capacity to produce

western states

By the turn of this century, the West is expected to be playing a larger role in agricultural production in the U.S. . . . a fact attributable primarily to a projected increase in irrigated cropland.

In particular, the 17 Western States* are projected to produce a substantially larger share of the Nation's rye, peanuts, Irish potatoes, cotton, and eggs by the year 2000.

They're projected to produce a substantially smaller share of only three major commodities—barley, dry beans and peas, and turkeys.

Of all major commodities, barley is the one projected to show the most change in the West. Nearly 85 percent of the Nation's barley was produced there in 1970-72 but only about 63 percent is projected for the West by 2000.

Of the 20 major commodities in the ERS projection, the West is shown to step up production of 14 commodities by the year 2000. Peanut production is projected to double, grain sorghum is projected to go up by two-thirds, and production of cattle and calves, chickens, and eggs, by half.

The only major commodities for which production in the West is expected to decrease in the next 25 years are oats, barley, rye, sweet potatoes, sheep and lambs, and milk.

Use fewer acres. To meet production demands, the 17 Western States are projected to use fewer acres than they did in 1969, due principally to increases in crop yields and irrigated crop acreage.

In a second projection—to the year 2020—ERS shows both the U.S. and the Western States experiencing significant crop yield increases relative to 1970-72.

For the U.S. as a whole, the smallest yield increase is for sugarbeets—16 percent over the 20 tons per acre of 1970-72. The largest increase would be for rice—72 percent over the 4,679 pounds per acre of 1970-72.

The West is projected to experience even further increases than the U.S., except for sugarbeets, due to higher irrigated yields and further increases in irrigated crops in the West.

The smallest yield increase projected for the West in 2020 is in sugarbeets—9 percent more than 1970-72's yield of 22 tons per acre. The largest gain is an 88-percent rise in oat yields from the 1970-72 average of 47 bushels per acre.

While these Western States had 127 million acres of harvested crop-

*Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, Washington, Oregon, California, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas.

THE UNITED STATES' AND 17 WESTERN STATES' AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, 1970-72 AND 2000

	1970-72 Average			2000 Projections				
	U.S.	Western States	West's Share of U.S. Production	U.S.	Western States	West's Share of U.S. Production	U.S. 2000 As Percent Of U.S. 1970-72	West 2000 As Percent Of West 1970-72
	Millions		*Percent*	*Millions*			*Percent*	
Corn	5,122 bu.	815.8 bu.	15.9	6,761 bu.	909.9 bu.	13.5	132.0	111.5
Oats	830.1 bu.	317.8 bu.	38.3	750.7 bu.	292.9 bu.	39.0	90.4	92.2
Barley	434.4 bu.	367.8 bu.	84.7	551.3 bu.	345.3 bu.	62.6	126.9	93.9
Sorghum	789.5 bu.	718.6 bu.	91.0	1,296 bu.	1,203 bu.	92.8	164.2	167.4
Wheat	1,505 bu.	1,209 bu.	80.3	1,671 bu.	1,336 bu.	80.0	111.0	110.5
Rye	38.4 bu.	26.9 bu.	70.0	28.0 bu.	21.0 bu.	75.0	72.9	78.1
Rice	85.0 cwt.	40.7 cwt.	47.9	108.7 cwt.	50.3 cwt.	46.3	127.9	123.6
Peanuts	3,086 lbs.	622.0 lbs.	20.2	4,691 lbs.	1,220 lbs.	26.0	152.0	196.1
Sugarbeets	27.3 tons	23.1 tons	84.6	28.7 tons	23.2 tons	80.8	105.1	100.4
Dry beans and peas	20.3 cwt.	13.0 cwt.	64.0	28.7 cwt.	16.4 cwt.	57.1	141.4	126.2
Irish potatoes	313.7 lbs.	191.0 lbs.	60.9	372.6 lbs.	248.1 lbs.	66.6	118.8	129.9
Sweet potatoes	12.5 lbs.	1.6 lbs.	12.8	11.8 lbs.	1.4 lbs.	11.9	94.4	87.5
Cotton	11.5 bales	5.7 bales	49.6	11.7 bales	6.5 bales	55.6	101.7	114.0
Cattle, calves	40,020 lbs.	22,785 lbs.	56.9	57,701 lbs.	33,561 lbs.	58.2	144.2	147.3
Hogs	22,173 lbs.	4,118 lbs.	18.6	28,495 lbs.	4,760 lbs.	16.7	128.5	115.6
Sheep, lambs	1,052 lbs.	812.9 lbs.	77.3	952.6 lbs.	741.9 lbs.	77.9	90.6	91.3
Chickens	12,211 lbs.	1,433 lbs.	11.7	19,236 lbs.	2,157 lbs.	11.2	157.5	150.6
Turkeys	2,297 lbs.	782.5 lbs.	34.1	3,826 lbs.	1,081 lbs.	28.3	166.6	138.2
Eggs	69,389	15,219	21.9	83,778	22,638	27.0	120.7	148.7
Milk	118,591 lbs.	28,200 lbs.	23.8	118,800 lbs.	26,269 lbs.	22.1	100.2	93.2

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land in 1969, they are projected to harvest 125 million in the year 2000.

Overall, the Western States supplied slightly less than half of the 459 million acres comprising the Nation's total cropland in 1969—a proportion that's not likely to change much by 2000.

Tops in irrigation. However, the West supplied nearly 90 percent of the Nation's 37 million acres of irrigated cropland.

By 2000, total irrigated cropland is projected to increase by 4 million acres, with three-quarters in the West.

For irrigated harvested cropland only, total acreage is projected to go from 33 million to 37 million acres, of which 33 million—and most of the increase—would be in the West.

About 1 million acres of this additional irrigated land in the West is expected to come from public development. Private irrigation development is projected at only 2½ million acres—a result of a likely decrease of 1½ million acres in Texas caused by depleted ground water supplies.

The 17 Western States are estimated to have a 5-million acre decrease in nonirrigated harvested cropland between 1969 and 2000.

Water in the West. In projecting how much more water the West will be using for irrigation by the turn of the century, ERS puts the figure at 10 percent. This is water consumed—meaning it does not return to surface or ground water—and would thus total 63,580,000 acre-feet (volume of water that would cover 1 acre to a depth of 1 foot).

By regions in the West, however, this estimate varies considerably. In the Southern Plains—Oklahoma and Texas—water consumed is projected to go down by about 1.7 million acre-feet. While water consumed is expected to go up in the other regions, the Pacific States of Washington, Oregon, and California would see the greatest increase—nearly 3 million acre-feet.

Water consumed in the Mountain States—Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, Arizona, and New Mexico—is projected to go up by about 2.7 million acre-feet, and in the Northern Plains, by 1.9 million acre-feet.

ERS also made a set of projections based on a much higher export demand by the year 2000. Such demand would require a continued movement toward freer trade and a comparative advantage for the U.S. in agricultural trade.

Under these projections, another 1.5 million acres of irrigated cropland would be added, along with 47 million acres of nonirrigated cropland, of which 14 million would be in the West.

The reason the high export level does not affect the West more is that a movement toward freer world trade is projected to involve mainly feed grains and soybeans—which are predominantly Corn Belt crops.

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