
 1935-1938
 APRIL 1, 1955

The "Dust Bowl" is bigger than in the thirties. But added to that are emergency areas spotted along the southern half of the U. S. from coast to coast

Already more extensive drought may become the most damaging

Drought May Be Worst

Both crops and animals are victims. Overgrazed range in drought areas is a poor place to boost farm income curves



Drought damage in the U. S. today is more widespread than even in the mid-thirties. The USDA's Soil Conservation Service says the current drought is fully as severe as that of twenty years ago. Last year the acreage damaged was greater than in any single year of the previous drought. Although land area affected is greater, damage per acre is less to date. Dust storms have been as frequent but less severe.

The mid-thirties drought lasted seven years (1931-38). If the current troubles continue two more years, there is a strong likelihood that total damages will exceed previous records.

Recurring droughts have been a feature of the southern great plains since they were settled. The last drought period 1931-38 brought on such widespread damage that it was termed a major disaster. During the period 1941 to 1950 the region had an abnormally heavy rainfall, land was again plowed up for wheat, and the stage set for another dust bowl disaster. The present drought began about 1950; about 7.5 million acres of cropland and about 3 million acres of rangeland in the region has been damaged by wind erosion this year. As of April 1, in addition to the 10 million acres that had been damaged by wind erosion, another 20 million acres were in condition to blow.