

Food Security

The average destruction of 1,200 square miles of farmland and habitat per year (2002-2017)¹ is unsustainable for a country that desires the continued capability of [food independence](#).²

- According to the latest data, in just 35 years, more than [44 million acres](#) of previously undeveloped land (an area larger than Florida) was paved over to accommodate our growing cities and towns.³ Much of that lost open space was once cropland, pastureland, or rangeland.
- According to the American Farmland Trust, the U.S. is projected to lose [another 18.4 million acres](#) of agricultural land between 2016 and 2040.⁴

Sources of Newly Developed Land

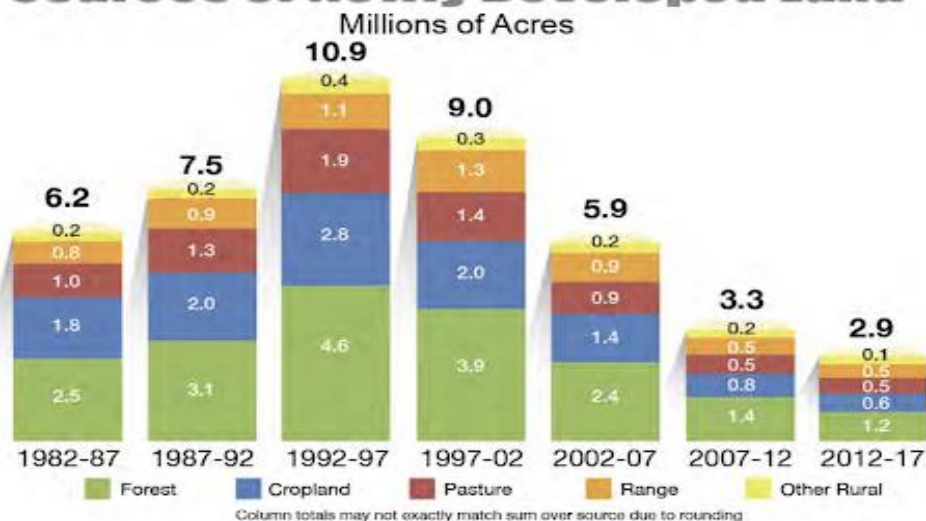


Figure 13. Sources of Newly Developed Land, 1982 to 2017
Source: 2017 National Resources Inventory, Summary Report, p. 2-7.

¹ 2017 National Resources Inventory, Summary Report, p. 2-6.

² Bonnie Erbe, "Food Security," PBS, To The Contrary, Episode #17, July 2, 2015.
<https://www.pbs.org/to-the-contrary/watch/4723/food-security>

³ 2017 National Resources Inventory, Summary Report, p. 2-6.

⁴ Dr. Mitch Hunter, Dr. Ann Sorensen, Dr. Theresa Nogeire-McRae, Dr. Scott Beck, Stacy Shutts, Ryan Murphy. *Farms Under Threat 2040: Choosing an Abundant Future*. American Farmland Trust. 2022.
<https://farmlandinfo.org/publications/farms-under-threat-2040/>

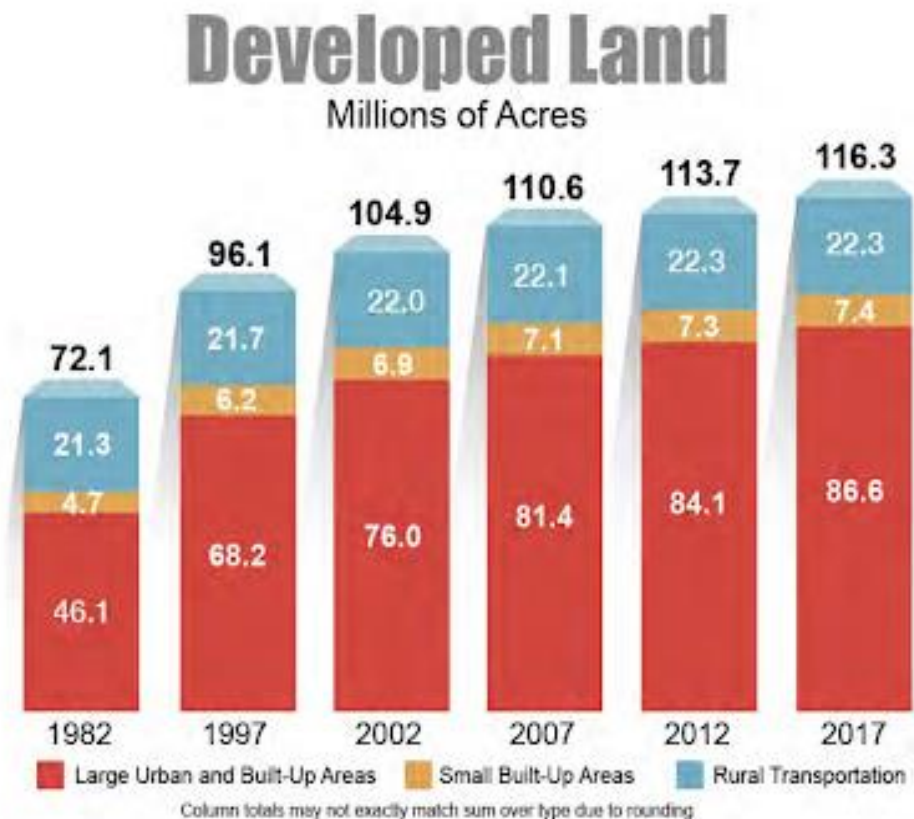
While the rate of loss has slowed, the total losses continue to mount, inevitably, as the population increases.

Sprawling cities and industrial farming are also threatening America’s groundwater supply.⁵

- Roughly 40 percent of wells have hit all-time lows since 2010.⁶

The Census Bureau projects the U.S. population to grow by 81 million people between 2016-2060, with roughly 90 percent of that growth resulting from Congress' [immigration policies](#).⁷

The United States can continue to have a generous immigration policy as we work to ensure food security for future generations, but not at current levels.



⁵ Mira Rojanasakul, Christopher Flavelle, Blacki Migliozi and Eli Murray “America Is Using Up Its Groundwater Like There's No Tomorrow,” *The New York Times*, August 28, 2023. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2023/08/28/climate/groundwater-drying-climate-change.html>

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Sandra Johnson, A Changing Nation: Population Projections Under Alternative Immigration Scenarios, February 2020, U.S. Census. <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2020/demo/p25-1146.pdf>