Soil Surveys in Kentucky

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Soil surveys are a scientific inventory of the soil and land resources of an area. They locate the different kinds of soils and provide information as to their physical and chemical properties. The surveys also contain tables and charts showing the use of the soils for agriculture, engineering, community development, recreational areas, woodland, and wildlife.

Today there is some type of soil survey activity in every county. The University has cooperative soil survey arrangements with the USDA Soil Conservation Service and the U.S. Forest Service.

Forty-two Kentucky counties have been surveyed and the results published, using the classification schemes of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. These counties and their survey dates are: Adair (1961), Bath (1959), Caldwell (1962), Calloway (1967), Christian (1912), Clark (1961), Elliott (1961), Fayette (1931 and 1968), Fulton (1961), Garrard (1921), Graves (1941), Harrison (1968), Henderson (1963), Jefferson (1962), Jessamine (1915), Logan (1919), McCracken (1905), Madison (1905), Marshall (1938), Mason (1903), Mercer (1930), Metcalfe (1962), Muhlenberg (1920), Rockcastle (1910), Scott (1903), Shelby (1916), Union (1902), and Warren (1904).

The maps and reports on Adair, Bath, Caldwell, Calloway, Clark, Elliott, Fayette, Fulton, Graves, Harrison, Henderson, Jefferson, Logan, Marshall, Mercer, and Metcalfe counties are still available (January 1969) from the Agronomy Department, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky 40506. The other reports listed above are out of print, but copies may be viewed at the College of Agriculture Library at the University of Kentucky, or at other public libraries. In addition, 14 counties (Bell, Breathitt, Clay, Floyd, Johnson, Harlan, Knott, Lawrence, Leslie, Letcher, Magoffin, Martin, Perry, Pike) in eastern Kentucky were mapped in 1961 (reconnaissance-type survey) as a part of the development program for that area. This report is also available through the Agronomy Department.

The Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station surveyed Webster (1912), Graves (1915), and Franklin (1915) counties using a different system of nomenclature. These reports are now out of print.

Detailed soil surveys of Boone-Campbell-Kenton, Calloway-Marshall, Estill-Lee, Grayson, Pulaski, McCreary-Whitley, Madison, and Nelson counties have been completed and the reports are being prepared. The completed Barren county survey is in the hands of the Government Printing Office and is expected to be released during 1969.
Progressive soil surveys are in progress in 12 other survey areas, namely: Allen-Monroe, Ballard-McCracken, Bourbon-Nicholas, Carroll-Gallatin-Owen, Christian, Daviess-Hancock, Hardin-Larue, Henry-Oldham-Trimble, Hopkins, Laurel-Rockcastle, Logan and Menifee-Rowan counties. Soil surveys of individual farms are also being made in other counties as they are needed for farm planning purposes.