

of Agriculture urges, therefore, that whenever possible the destruction of these pests be a community undertaking. In the past, individual efforts often supplemented by the payment of bounties by State, county or township have been only partially successful in reducing rodent depredations. In many Western counties the amount paid out in a single year for bounties on pocket gophers and ground squirrels, would, if wisely expended in poisoning operations such as have been practiced under Government supervision on public lands, secure the destruction of nearly every such animal in the county and make unnecessary much further outlay for the purpose.

A few of the rodents which inhabit the United States are not classed as injurious as they live in desserts, mountains or swamps and rarely come in contact with cultivated crops. Some are valuable because they feed largely upon insects, some because they produce fur and others because they are useful as human food. Of the injurious species all are native to this country with the exception of four -- the house mouse and three kinds of rats -- but these four cause approximately two-thirds of all the damage. Field mice, kangaroo rats, pocket gophers, ground squirrels, prairie dogs, woodchucks, and rabbits are among the most destructive of the native species.

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