The Geology

This area, which is critical to the nation’s food security, was formed by prehistoric glacial Lake Wisconsin which covered all or parts of 7 present day counties in central Wisconsin from 15,000 to 10,000 years ago. A sudden bursting of an ice dam at the southern extent of the lake quickly drained approximately 1400 square miles of lake bed exposing the sandy deposits laid down by the lake. By the mid-1800s 70% of the area was well drained and supported a mixture of pine and oak barrens and prairie with the remainder being wetlands and the region remained relatively undeveloped for the next century.

In the mid-1950s, the introduction of irrigation systems in combination with advances in farming technology and the advent of synthetic fertilizers, quickly transformed the regional economic landscape into a thriving specialty crop production area.