



PHOTO COURTESY OF CECILIA BERGMAN

# What Is the Prairie?

## Infographic

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**WHAT IS THE PRAIRIE?**

The prairie region encompasses the vast North American grassland that once overspread the central part of the continent from the Rocky Mountains to Illinois and from Mexico to Canada.

*Rootstalk* is published in Iowa, which lies within the easternmost portion known as the tallgrass prairie.

Since 1850, 99.9% of the tallgrass prairie in Iowa has been destroyed, arguably the fastest and most complete destruction of an ecosystem in human history.

The major cause of the destruction of the tallgrass prairie has been its conversion into farmland.

Many groups of people have found a home in the prairie region, including indigenous peoples – who were here first – then beginning around 1850 Euro-American and African-American settlers, and most recently people from Mexico and Central America, Laos, Bosnia, and Somalia.

The prairie region has been a wellspring for the arts, including art, architecture, music, and literature.

**99.9%**  
completely destroyed