The land use categories explained

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Introduction

In the following we explain how the category "land use" or "grondgebruik" came about. This is a category that is distinguished in the AgroDataCube database. It's usually abbreviated as "GRG". It indicates the way the agricultural land parcels are used.

Background

The Dutch government department called RVO or "Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland" requires farmers to indicate every year which crops they grow on their land parcels. This has been going on for more than 20 years already. RVO distinguishes different types of land use:

Code	Dutch name	English translation
A	Bouwland	Arable land
F	Braakland	Fallow land
G	Grasland	Grassland
N	Natuurterrein	Area reserved for nature
O	Overige	Miscelllaneous

In principle, there's a one-to-one relationship between the crop and the land use. Grass is expected to only grow on grassland. In practice, this is becoming less realistic. Farmers are required to grow so-called rest crops once in a few years on arable land in order to allow the soil to recover after a demanding crop. Temporary grass is considered as a rest crop, so some farmers do plant grass on arable land. Then the land use automatically changes to "Grassland". In the table category_codes of the AgroDataCube, the codes and Dutch names are reflected as shown above.

No algorithm

There's no actual algorithm that e.g. indicates how much land farmers have of the various categories described above. It's easy to understand though that this could be useful information for some people and it would not be very difficult to e.g. calculate which share of land of a farmer belongs to each of the categories. That's one of the reasons why it was decided to store this information in the AgroDataCube database.