

Revision Notes
Class-8 Social Science Geography
Chapter 04- Agriculture

Agriculture is that branch of science that deals with the plants and products derived from plants. The products can be used to as food as well as in other forms of valuable resources. Agriculture also has the distinction of an economic activity, in fact in the riverine nations which also includes India, it is the primary occupation of the majority of people. Moreover, the half of the world's population livelihood also depends on the agriculture.

CBSE class 8 Geography Chapter 4 provides an elaborate discussion of the agriculture, main crops, types of farming and the agricultural development that has occurred in the country till now.

Highlights

- Despite the fact that plants grow on every type of land but still agriculture is not a feasible activity on all lands. Agricultural activity requires specific climatic and topological conditions in order to be carried out properly.
- The land suitable for the cultivation of crops is known as arable lands.
- Farm systems are just like the other systems of production which requires some inputs to get the desired outputs.
- The inputs needed are seeds, water, climatic conditions, land, fertilizers etc.
- Ploughing, harvesting, sowing and irrigation etc. are some of the processes that ensures input produces the desired outputs.

Types of Farming

Agriculture is practiced all over the world but still farmers do not adopt the same practices worldwide. Factors play a very significant role in this for ex: Labor, geographical location, demand for production etc. are different for the different farmers. Based on these factors, there are two

significant types of farming: Commercial Farming and Subsistence Farming.

- **Subsistence Farming:** It is practiced where there is limited availability of the labor for the production of crops. It is not aimed to meet the high demands of production and they also use low levels of technology.
- **Types of Subsistence Farming:** They are further classified into intensive subsistence farming or the Primitive Subsistence Farming.
 - **Intensive Subsistence farming:** In this type of farming, a small piece of land is cultivated with the help of small tools. It also requires more labor as compared to other modes of farming. It is practiced in the places which have quiet long summers as compared and have rich fertility of the soil. Rice is the major crop that is grown in this type of farming. Other crops include wheat, oilseeds, maize, pulses. This farming is mostly practiced in the regions of South Asia, East Asia and South-East Asia.
 - **Primitive Subsistence Farming:** As the name only suggests that it is an old type of farming where farmers cultivate different stretches of land at only one time. After production of one crop, farmers then move to the next stretch of land.
 - Two major forms of Primitive Subsistence farming are the **shifting cultivation as well as the nomadic herding.**
 - **Shifting Cultivation:** It is practiced in regions of very high rainfall and dense forestation. For Ex: Southeastern Asia, Northeastern India and the Amazon Basin.

In this type of cultivation, a land is chosen by a farmer and then they cut all trees of that land. The ashes of the trees are then mixed with the soil of the land which increases its fertility. The farmer then grows crops on that cleared land till it does not lose its fertility. After that they move to the next piece of land and repeat the entire process again.
 - **Nomadic Herding:** This type of herding is mostly practiced in the semi -arid regions of the Sahara, parts of Asia and the dry regions of Jammu and Kashmir and Rajasthan.

Due to adverse climatic condition of the region, the farmers select a certain route for themselves so that they can sustain. In the way, they practice the herding on the different areas of the same route.

- **Commercial Farming:**

- It helps in the cultivation of large amounts of crops along with animals with the purpose of selling in the market.
- A large area of land is used for the cultivation of large amount of production with the help of advanced machineries.
- It requires high amount of capital as compared to the subsistence farming.
- **There are varieties of Commercial Farming also:**
 - Commercial Grain Farming
 - Mixed Farming
 - Plantation
- **Commercial Grain Farming:** Crops are produced on the large patch of land for the commercial purposes.
 - Wheat and Maize are grown through this farming.
 - Mostly practiced in the temperate grassland regions of Europe, Asia and Northern America.
 - The area selected for this is usually a field and that too in sparsely populated area.
 - Due to the harsh conditions in winter season, there can be only successful cultivation of only one crop.
- **Mixed farming:** This method is used for the growing of crops alongside the rearing of animals for the purpose of sale in the markets. Argentina, South Africa, New Zealand, Eastern USA, Southeastern Australia etc. are the regions where this farming is practiced.
- **Plantation:** Only one crop is used to grow throughout the year over the large areas.
 - Major Plantation crops are the coffee, tea, rubber and the cashew nuts.
 - The produce can be easily processed in the farms or the nearby factories.

➤ The regions where plantation farming is practiced is Sri Lanka, India, Brazil, Malaysia etc.

- **Major Crops:** A large varieties of crops are grown in different regions of world to meet the requirements of growing population. Some of the important crops are:
- **Rice:** It is a staple food in the tropical and sub-tropical climatic conditions.
 - Climatic Requirements: It requires high rainfall, high humidity and high temperature.
 - For the cultivation of rice, alluvial soils are best as they can easily retain the water.
 - The major rice growing regions are China (Largest producer), India (Second Largest Producer) along with Bangladesh, Japan and Egypt.
- **Wheat:**
 - It is consumed throughout the world to meet the growing demands of the population.
 - Climatic Requirements: It requires bright sunlight during harvesting, moderate temperature as well as rainfall in the growing season.
 - The best soil for the cultivation of wheat is the loamy soil as it is well-drained.
 - Major wheat growing areas are Russia, Canada, Australia, India, Argentina, Ukraine, USA.
- **Maize:**
 - Maize is also known by the name of corn.
 - Climatic Requirements: It requires moderate rainfall and temperature with a lot of sunshine.
 - Well-drained fertile soil is needed for the cultivation of maize.
 - Major maize growing regions are: China, North America, Russia, Canada, Brazil, Mexico and India.
- **Millets: It also includes a number of different crops like Jowar, bajra and Ragi.**
 - They can be very easily grown on the sandy soils or the less fertile soil. They are hard in the structure.

- Climatic Requirements: High to moderate temperature as well as low rainfall.
- Millets are grown in China, India and Nigeria.
- **Cotton:**
 - Climatic Requirements: It requires bright sunshine, 210 frost-free days with light rainfall and high temperature. Black and alluvial soils are best for the cultivation of cotton.
 - It is mainly grown in the regions of India, Pakistan, Brazil, USA and China.
- **Jute: It is also known as the golden fiber.**
 - Climatic Requirements: It requires very high rainfall, humidity as well as temperature.
 - Alluvial Soil is the best soil for the production of Jute.
 - India and Bangladesh are the largest producers of jute.
- **Coffee: It's a beverage which is most common and consumed worldwide.**
 - Climatic Requirements: It requires adequate rainfall with high temperature.
 - It requires hill slopes along with the well-drained loamy soil.
 - The leading producers of the coffee are the India, Columbia and Brazil.
- **Tea:**
 - Climatic Requirements: it needs cool climate with proportionate distribution of rainfall all throughout the year.
 - Like coffee, it also needs hill slopes and well-drained loamy soils.
 - There is a lot of labor requirement in the harvesting of tea.
 - The largest producers of tea are the India, China and Kenya.
- **Agricultural Development:**
 - It is the development in the field of agricultural production in order to meet the current increasing demand. The logic is to increase the food security. For the development, it

includes, HYV seeds, fertilizers as well as improvement in the irrigation facilities.

- In developing nations like India, the farmers still use primitive methods like tube wells, tractors, bullock ploughing etc.
- Whereas on the other hand, developed countries like USA differs a lot from the developing nations. For ex: they conduct soil testing and then sent samples in the laboratory. The use of chemical fertilizers is based on the Scientific Fertilizer Programs that were undertaken.

Important Questions and Answers:

1. State the differences between Commercial and Subsistence Farming.

Commercial Farming	Subsistence Farming
1. Crops are grown for trading purpose	1. Crops are grown for the personal consumption.
2. It is capital-intensive.	2.It is labor intensive.
3. It requires large area	3.Small area is needed
4. It uses high doses of modern inputs.	4.It uses manure.
5. Cash crops and cereals are grown in this type of farming.	5.Vegetables and fruits are grown here.
6. It does not depend on monsoon.	6.It depends on monsoon.

2. Write a short note on Primitive Farming.

Ans: It is practiced in the small areas using primitive tools like digging sticks, bow, hoe etc. It depends on the rainfall and family members cultivates the field and do other associated work in the Primitive Subsistence Farming. This type of agriculture faces very low land productivity giving rise to quiet meagre yields. It is done solely for the consumption purpose as nothing left

to be sold in the market. The size of farms is very small and in this type of farming only selected crops are grown.

3. What are the requirements of growing different main crops?

Crop	Climatic requirement s	Soil required	Regions of cultivation
Rice	High temperature, high rainfall, high humidity.	Alluvial soil	China, India, Egypt, Japan and Bangladesh.
Wheat	Moderate temperature, bright sunlight (during harvesting) and rainfall (in the growing season)	Loamy soil	USA, Ukraine, Russia, Canada, Argentina, Australia and India.
Maize	Moderate temperature, rainfall and a lot of sunshine	Loamy soil	China, North America, Russia, Canada, Brazil, Mexico and India.
Millets	Low rainfall, high to moderate temperature	Sandy soil	China, USA, Brazil, India and Pakistan
Coffee	High temperature and adequate rainfall.	Loamy soil	Brazil, Columbia and India.
Tea	A cool climate and well distributed high rainfall all through the year.	Loamy soil	Kenya, India, China
Cotton	High	Black and	USA, India and

	temperature light rainfall 210 Frost-free days and bright sunlight for growth.	alluvial soil	Pakistan.
Jute	High temperature, high rainfall and high humidity.	Alluvial soil	India, Bangladesh.

4. Discuss the disadvantages of shifting cultivation.

Ans: The disadvantages of shifting cultivation are:

1. It leads to deforestation as once the fertility of land drops, farmers shift to the other patch of land which have high fertility.
2. Because of this, soil erosion takes place and the chances of desertification increases. It leads to the damage to the natural environment as well as the biodiversity.
3. It destroys watersheds which is very uneconomical in the nature.
4. It restricts the intensity of land-use and leads to water pollution.

5. Discuss the importance of agriculture.

Ans: Agriculture contributes to the national income of a developing country however, for developed nations it contributes very less. It is important for the food and fodder demand of the population as well as animals. Agriculture contributes in the marketable surplus. With the development of a country more people get engaged to the non-agricultural sectors like the mining, manufacturing etc. As agriculture expands, it leads to the expansion of a marketable surplus which the nation can also export to the different countries.