# Agriculture in Rural Spaces

Case study: Tomato & tomato paste

Tomato, processed or not, is used everywhere in the agri-food business. The biggest exporters are Italy, Spain, Portugal, China and US. The biggest buyers are Europe, sub-Saharan Africa and the middle-east . Agriculture has evolved (production spiked) especially in MEDCs (More Economically Developed Countries) to produce as much as possible (machines, GMO, pesticides), these countries don’t rely as much on agriculture as LEDCs (Less Economically Developed Countries) and therefore prevent these LEDCs to flourish and live properly of tomato production

Questions: 1. The phrase “a global, tomato civilization” means that the whole world depends on tomato, that it has taken the biggest place in today’s agricultural and food world. 2. The main geographical origins of tomatoes use in the paste industry are **China, Italy, Portugal, Spain and the USA**. Agriculture represents nearly 30% of some African country’s GDP. These countries who, therefore, strongly rely on this industry but are extremely outdated technologically compared to countries like China or the USA. These African countries also usually serve **subsistence agriculture** which has the purpose to provide food to the local community.Europe is Italy, Spain and Portugal’s biggest importer of tomato paste. China exports most of its tomato past to sub-Saharan African countries. 3. The tomatoes in MEDCs are now GMO to prevent them from splitting when under a pile and are now being collected with trucks and machines instead of being handpicked. This increases productivity but can have negative effects on health and the environment. The paste is also sweetened with GMO maize and made thicker with guar gum. 4. USA has the economic and technological resources to increase their production, their carbon footprint and the wage and GDP gap between MEDCs and LEDCs. Ghana on the other hand is an LEDC and the farmers do not have enough funds to modernize their activity and Ghana isn’t rich enough a country to help them financially. The farmers have to pick the tomatoes by hand and store them in bags instead of having employees use machines and storing them in trucks. 5. The Chinese workers don’t own a fair wage compared to what their labor produces. Even though their wages have slightly increased, most of the money is made by the businessman. Workers in Ghana are losing money and production 6. |Economy |Social |Environment/Rural spaces | |———|———|———| |Local farmers are ruined| increase of global inequalities between MEDCs and LEDCs|Pollution (pesticides GMOs, fertilizers| |Productivist agriculture makes more income for MEDCs |Health problems for field workers exposed to pesticides|Pressure on water resources| |Companies like Monsanto/Bayer make enormous profit|Extreme poverty for local farmers||

### Essay - Why are tomatoes a global product?

Plan:

1. Worldwide production:

1. Exported by many countries [graph p.7 doc 2, [Global exports of tomato paste](http://www.tomatonews.com/maj/phototheque/photos/Images_TN/6600_00.jpg)]

2. Not seen as being a traditional food from 1 place = global food => Larger consumer base

3. Present in junk food & healthy food => Larger consumer base [p.8 doc 4]

2. Worldwide consumption:

1. Imported by many countries [graph p.7 doc 2]

2. Conquering new markets [[China & ketchup](https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-06/15/content_15506137.htm)]

3. Used in many cultures and traditional dishes around the world [p.9 doc 5]

3. Worldwide effects:

1. Socio-economic effects (Ghana & US comparison [p.8 doc 3])

2. Geo-political effects (China case study [p.9 doc 5])

3. Environmental effects (US & GMO [p. 8 doc 4])

The tomato paste industry has experienced phenomenal growth during the last ten years. This growth has caused tomatoes to be a global product. This growth has had many changes in the way tomatoes are produced, consumed and has also had many worldwide effects. Throughout the essay will be discussed the globalized nature of tomatoes as a product. Initially, we will summarize the changes in tomato production that the increased demand has caused. Further, we will demonstrate that tomato consumption and usage have both drastically changed and finally, the effects that these changes have had on the world.

Worldwide tomato exports have more than doubled since the end of the 1990s. To profit as much as possible of this fantastic boom and to keep up with the ever-increasing demand farmers have radically changed the way they produce their tomatoes. In more economically developed countries (MEDCs) this takes the form of automation using robotics and trucks to improve productivity but also the increased pesticide usage and modifying tomatoes using genetic modification technology to make them more resistant to bugs and transportation. The largest tomato exporters are