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World Geography

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Chapter 3 Response

The impact of climate on agriculture cannot be understated. Having dramatic effects on the types of crops that can be grown, the availability of water to grow them, and the reliability of the weather in the area. This disparity can still be seen in our modern world by the relative population, and to a certain degree wealth, of nations across the world.

This can be seen in microcosm in Europe, where the northern countries of Norway, Sweden, and Finland have significantly lower populations due to the inferior carrying capacity of their lands due to the colder climate. This is in contrast to the moderate, regular climates of central and western Europe, which have the twin benefits of wider spaces for agriculture and a more reliable climate. This can swing the other way as you get to Southern Europe and North Africa, where the Mediterranean climate can support a wide variety of crops, and a comfortable standard of living, but due to the geography of the area some nations might lack physical space for agriculture.

While the United States is a single entity, the disparity between regions is just as comparable as countries are in Europe. The Midwest is understandably the breadbasket of the country, with fertile soil, regular rainfall, and massive amounts of space. This is contrast to somewhere like Maine, which has the dual disadvantages of a colder climate and a largely forested landscape. This is not to say that Maine is a bad place to live, but it is not as well suited to agriculture as the Midwest is. This disparity in America can also be seen historically in the industrial focus of the Northeast, and the slave-based economy of the South prior to the Civil War.

In conclusion, the climate of an area has a massive impact on the agriculture of the area, which in turn has a massive impact on the population and wealth of the area. In the historical ages of subsistence agriculture, the climate of an area was *the* determining factor in the population density of a region. This can be seen in the disparity between the countries of Europe, and the regions of the United States, and across the entire world.