

Agricultural science 1st term

Scheme of work

Agriculture JSS1 First Term

Week 1

Topic: MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURE

A. What is Agriculture?

Agriculture means all the activities involved in rearing of animals and cultivation of crops for man's and the nation's benefits. The word agriculture was derived from two Latin words which are 'agar' and 'culture' meaning 'land' and 'cultivation'.

Agriculture is often defined by many people as the cultivation of land. As a science, it deals with the systematic study of plants and animal lives in their environment and seeks to provide natural conditions for them so as to produce the best quality

which are used directly or indirectly by man

C. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agriculture began when man started to exist on earth. The early men lived by gathering wild fruit and hunting wild animals because they are wanderers. The type and quantity available at that time was irregular and uncertain and was subject to the prevailing weather and luck. They continued with this nomadic life until large population of the families and properties necessitated the building of huts, so they changed from their nomadic way of life to a more settled life.

Agriculture and its practices i.e farming started by accident about 12,000 years ago. When the early men discovered that seed and other propagative parts of remains of their food germinate, grow to maturity and reproduce their kinds, they also discovered that certain animals were friendly, so they began to domesticate them. Moreover, crops and animals from different parts spread to other countries by the early missionaries, explorers and traders.

Agriculture has undergone significant developments since the time of the earliest cultivation. The Fertile Crescent of Western Asia, Egypt and India were sites of the earliest planned sowing and harvesting of plants that had previously been gathered in the wild. Independent development of agriculture occurred in northern and southern China, Africa's Sahel, New Guinea, parts of India and several regions of America. Agricultural techniques such as irrigation, crop rotation, the application of fertilizers were developed soon after the Neolithic Revolution but have made significant strides in the past 200 years.

The Haber-Bosch method for synthesizing ammonium nitrate represented a major breakthrough and allowed crop yields to overcome previous constraints. In the past century, agriculture in the developed nations, and to a lesser extent in the developing world, has been characterized by enhanced productivity, the replacement of human labor by synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, selective breeding, and mechanization. The recent history of agriculture has been closely tied with a range of political issues including water pollution, biofuels, genetically modified organisms, tariffs, and farm subsidies.