

Agriculture

- Agriculture is a primary activity which includes growing of crops, fruits, vegetables, flowers etc and rearing of livestock for their products like milk, meat, poultry and other products.
- Almost half of the world's population are engaged in agricultural activity. In India, almost two-third of the population is dependent on agriculture.
- Favourable topography of soil and climate are vital for agricultural activity. The land on which the crops are grown is known as 'arable land.'
- **Specialised forms of agriculture are**
 - (i) **Sericulture** Rearing of silkworms for silk yarn production.
 - (ii) **Pisciculture** Breeding of Fish.
 - (iii) **Viticulture** Cultivation of grapes.
 - (iv) **Horticulture** Growing of vegetables, flowers, decorative plants and fruits for commercial use.

Crop Seasons in India

1. **Kharif** Sown in June/July, harvested in September/October. e.g. rice, jowar, bajra, ragi, maize, cotton and jute.
2. **Rabi** Sown in October/December, harvested in April/May e.g. wheat, barley, peas, rapeseed, mustard, grains.

3. **Zaid** They are raised between April/June e.g. melon, watermelon, cucumber, toris, leafy and other vegetables.

Types of Farming

The two types of farming based on the geographical conditions, demand of produce, labour and level of technology are

1. Subsistence Farming

This is practised to meet the needs of the farmer's family and needs less technology and labour.

- (i) **In intensive subsistence agriculture**, the farmer cultivates a small plot of land using simple tools and more labour. Rice is the main crop. Other crops include wheat, maize, pulses and oil seeds.

This type of cultivation produces little to be left over and fulfils mostly the farmer's family needs. However, it is widely practised in the densely populated regions of the world.

- (ii) **Primitive subsistence agriculture** includes shifting cultivation (also called 'slash and burn' agriculture) and nomadic herding of livestock.

- (a) **In shifting cultivation**, after cultivation, the field is abandoned and the cultivator moves to a new plot. In most parts of India, it has been banned as it led to land degradation.
- (b) **In nomadic herding**, herdsmen move from place to place with their animals for fodder and water along defined routes. Sheep, yak and goats are the herded animals. The shepherds sell their milk, flesh and wool in the market for their livelihood.

2. Commercial Farming

In this, crops are grown and animals are reared for sale of the products in the market. It involves high mechanisation and less labour. Developed nations mostly practise this farming extensively.

- (i) **In commercial grain farming**, crops like wheat and maize are grown for commercial purposes. This farming is practised in temperate grasslands of North America, Europe and Asia.
- (ii) **In mixed farming**, the land is used for growing food and fodder crops as well as for rearing livestock. It protects the farmer against crop loss in a particular season.
- (iii) **Plantations** are a type of commercial farming where a single crop like tea, coffee, sugarcane, cashew, rubber, banana or cotton is grown. These crops are labour intensive and need specific climatic conditions.

- Crops grown in an area also depend on the type of soil a region has, therefore, it is very important to the relation between type of soil and the crops grown on them.

Crop Type	Crop Name
Cereals	Wheat, Rice, Gram, Barley, Bajra
Cash Crops	Sugarcane, Poppy
Oil Seeds	Coconut, Linseed,
	Groundnut, Rapeseed and Mustard, Sesame, Sunflower
Fibre Crops	Cotton, Jute, Silk, Hemp
Plantations	Coffee, Rubber, Tea, Tobacco
Spices	Pepper, Cashewnuts, Ginger, Turmeric

Agricultural Crops	Top Producer
Rice	West Bengal
Wheat	Uttar Pradesh
Maize	Andhra Pradesh
Oilseeds	Gujarat
Rapeseed & Mustard	Rajasthan
Soyabean	Madhya Pradesh
Sugarcane	Uttar Pradesh
Jute	West Bengal
Cashewnut	Maharashtra

Soils

Soil is a dynamic and natural mixture of organic and inorganic substances. It is the topmost layer of the Earth surface. It has the capability to support life and growth of the plants.

Types of Soil	States where Found (Occurrence)	Composition	Crops Grow
Alluvial	Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Jharkhand	Rich in potash and lime but deficient in nitrogen and phosphorus	Large variety to rabi and kharif crops such as wheat, rice, sugarcane, cotton and jute etc.
Black Soil (Regur Soil)	Deccan Plateau, Valleys of Krishna and Godavari, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.	Rich in iron, lime aluminium, magnesium, calcium, but lacks in nitrogen, phosphorus and humus	Cotton, sugarcane, jowar, tobacco, wheat and rice
Red	Eastern Parts of Deccan Plateau, Tamil Nadu, Goa, Odisha and Meghalaya	Rich in iron and potash, but deficient in lime, nitrogen, phosphorus and humus	Wheat, rice, cotton sugarcane and pulses
Laterite	Summits of Eastern and Western Ghats, Asom hills, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka West Bengal and Odisha.	Rich in iron but poor in silica, lime, phosphorus, potash and humus	Tea, coffee, rubber, cashew and millets
Desert	West and North-West India, Rajasthan, North Gujarat and Southern Punjab.	Rich in soluble salts, but deficient in organic matter.	Generally unsuitable for cultivation, but with irrigation useful for cultivation of drought-resistant lime, millets, barley, cotton, maize and pulses
Mountain	Hills of Jammu and Kashmir, Uttarakhand and Asom hills	Rich in iron and humus, but deficient in lime.	With fertilisers, tea, fruits and medicinal plants can be grown
Saline (Reh, Kallar, Usar, Thur, Rukar) and Alkaline	Drier parts of Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan and Maharashtra.	Many salts such as sodium, magnesium and calcium	Unfit for agriculture
Peaty and Marshy	Kerala, Coastal regions of Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Sunderbans of West Bengal	Contain large amount of soluble salts and organic matter, but lack in potash and phosphates	Useful for rice and jute cultivation



Practice Exercise

1. Which amongst the following is a primary economic activity?
(a) Information processing
(b) Teaching
(c) Film making
(d) Agriculture
2. How much population is engaged in agriculture in India?
(a) Almost two-third
(b) One third
(c) Half
(d) Can't say
3. Sericulture is associated with which of the following activity?
(a) Agriculture
(b) Silk production
(c) Bee keeping
(d) Milk production
4. Which amongst the following is not correctly matched?
(a) Pisciculture Breeding of fish
(b) Viticulture Cultivation of grapes
(c) Horticulture Silk production
(d) None of the above
5. Which amongst the following, agricultural activities are associated with farming?
(a) Cultivation of crops
(b) Rearing of livestock
(c) Both (a) and (b)
(d) None of these
6. How many crop seasons are there in India?
(a) One (b) Two (c) Three (d) Four
7. Which amongst the following is a Rabi crop?
(a) Rice (b) Jowar (c) Cotton (d) Wheat
8. Kharif crop is sown in which of the following months?
(a) June/July (b) July/August
(c) September/October (d) October/December
9. Vegetables, cucumber and watermelon are grown in which crop season?
(a) Kharif (b) Zaid
(c) Rabi (d) None of these
10. The farming which is practiced to meet the needs of the farmer's family is called
(a) Subsistence farming
(b) Nomadic herding
(c) Commercial farming
(d) Mixed farming
11. By which name, Shifting Cultivation is known in Assam?
(a) Ponam (b) Jhum
(c) Podu (d) Beera
12. Nomadic herding is related with
(a) Rearing of animals
(b) Growing of vegetables
(c) Hunting
(d) Breeding of fish
13. Which farming system is mostly practiced in Developed Nations?
(a) Subsistence farming
(b) Commercial farming
(c) Shifting cultivation
(d) Mixed farming
14. In which farming, the land is used for growing food and fodder crops as well as for rearing livestock?
(a) Commercial farming
(b) Nomadic herding
(c) Mixed farming
(d) Plantation
15. Most suitable soil for agriculture in India is
(a) Alluvial Soil (b) Regur Soil
(c) Laterite Soil (d) Desert Soil

Answers

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