

Unit Four Vocabulary

Agriculture: the deliberate effort to modify a portion of Earth's surface through the cultivation of crops and the raising of livestock for subsistence or economic gain

Monoculture: producing or growing one crop over a wide area

Polyculture: using multiple crops in the same space and avoiding large stands of single crops

Multi-cropping: growing two or more crops in the same space during a single growing season

Double Cropping: a second crop is planted after the first has been harvested

Aquaculture: the cultivation of aquatic organisms especially for food

Agrarian: People or societies that are farmers therefore promote agricultural interest

Hunting and Gathering: Before agriculture, humans gained food by hunting for animals, fishing, or gathering plants. They lived in small groups, travelled frequently following game and seasonal growth of plants.

First Agricultural Revolution

Plant Domestication: deliberate tending of crops to gain certain desired attributes; began around 12,000 years ago along several cultural hearths

Animal Domestication: domestication of animals for selling or using byproducts

Extensive Subsistence Agriculture: characterized by low inputs of labor per unit of land area

Shifting Cultivation (slash and burn): vegetation is cut down and then ignited to make the ground more productive (swidden is the term for this prepared land); each field is used for a couple years then left fallow for a relatively long time

Nomadic Herding/Pastoralism: based on herding domestic animals

Intensive Subsistence Agriculture: a form of subsistence agriculture that involves effective and efficient use of labor on small plots of land to maximize crop yields

Second Agricultural Revolution: precursor to Industrial Revolution that allowed a shift in work force beyond subsistence farming to allow labor to work in factories, especially the Enclosure Act which consolidated land in Great Britain

Crop Rotation: The practice of rotating use of different fields from crop to crop each year to avoid exhausting the soil

Von Thunen Model: When choosing an enterprise, a commercial farmer compares two costs, cost of land versus the cost of transporting production to market. Identifies a crop that can be sold for more than the land cost, distance of land to market is critical because the cost of transporting varies by crop. Von Thunen's Theory disregards site or human factors.

Also found that specific crops were grown in varying rings around city:

1. Market-oriented gardens and milk producers because of expense of transporting and perishability.
2. In the next rings wood lots used for construction and fuel, it is a heavy industry with high transportation costs.
3. Next rings are used for various crops or pastures.
4. The outermost rings devoted to animal grazing.

Commercial Agriculture: characterized by integration of different steps in food-processing industry, usually through ownership by large corporations

Plantation Agriculture: based on large estate owned by an individual, family, or corporation and organized to produce a cash crop

Cultivation Regions

1. Dairy: expensive transportation and storage make it most profitable near large markets
2. Commercial Grains: most profitable in the temperate zone with decent land fertility
3. Rice: a commercial grain that is the staple of many Asian nations
4. Livestock Ranching: commercial grazing of livestock over an extensive area
5. Mediterranean: farming in the land surrounding the Mediterranean Sea growing fruits, vegetables, flowers, and tree crops

Cash Crops: crops grown for money

Luxury Crops: specialized crops typically not essential to human survival

Illegal Drugs: illegal cash crops are typically grown in the periphery and sold to the core

Staple Grains: maize, wheat, and rice are the most produced grains world wide accounting for 87% of all grains and 43% of all food

Market Garden: the small scale production of fruits, vegetables, and flowers as cash crops sold directly to local consumers

Truck Farm: commercial gardening and fruit farming that grow many of the fruits and vegetables that consumers demand in developed societies. Truck farms sell some of their product to fresh markets, but mostly to large processors for canning or freezing

Feed Lot: a plot of land on which livestock are fattened for market

Third Agricultural Revolution: (Green Revolution) rapid diffusion of new agricultural technology, especially new high yield seeds and fertilizer

Biotechnology: using living organisms in a useful way to produce commercial products like pest resistant crops

Agribusiness: general term for businesses that provide goods and services that support agriculture

Commodity Chains: a sequential process used by firms to gather resources, transform them into goods or commodities and finally, distribute them to consumers

Hybridization: the cross breeding of plants of different varieties in order to produce a new plant with desirable traits from both parent varieties

Food Irradiation: began in the early 1900s; provides the same benefits as when food is processed by heat, refrigeration, freezing or treated with chemicals to destroy insects, fungi, bacteria, or viruses that cause food to spoil or cause human disease

Organic Agriculture: approach to farming and ranching that avoids the use of herbicides, pesticides, growth hormones, and other similar synthetic inputs