GEography
Agriculture

There are three different kinds of activities:

**Primary Activities:** All those activities in which natural resources are extracted from the Earth. Examples: Farming, fishing, mining

**Secondary Activities:** It involves all processes in processing and manufacturing of primary goods. Examples: Weaving of cloth, manufacturing of steel

**Tertiary Activities:** Tertiary activities provide services to support the primary and secondary activities. Examples: Transport, banking, advertising

### Types of Farming

Farming depends on various conditions such as geography of land, availability of labour, kinds of tools used and the level of technology. Based on these factors, there are two main kinds of farming—subsistence farming and commercial farming.

### Subsistence Farming

In this kind of farming, cultivation is practised by farmers to fulfil the needs of their own families. Mostly family members cultivate on a small piece of land. Subsistence farming can be further classified into intensive subsistence farming and primitive subsistence farming.

#### Intensive Subsistence Farming

- In this kind of farming, cultivation is carried out on a small patch of land with simple tools and extensive labour.
- More than one crop can be grown on the land because of the availability of sunlight and fertile soil.
- Besides rice, which is the main crop, wheat, maize, oilseeds and pulses are also grown.

#### Primitive Subsistence Farming

Primitive subsistence farming can be further classified into shifting cultivation and nomadic herding.

### Shifting Cultivation (Slash and Burn Agriculture)

- In this kind of cultivation, a patch of forested land is cleared by felling and burning trees. The ashes of trees are mixed in the soil.
- After two to three years, when the soil loses its fertility, the land is left fallow and a new patch of land is cleared for cultivation.
- Maize, potato, yam and cassava are mainly grown in shifting cultivation. It is practised in the forested regions of the Amazon basin, tropical Africa, some parts of Southeast Asia and northeast India.

### Nomadic Herding

- Nomadic herdsmen move from place to place with their animals in search of fodder and water.
• Herdsmen travel on defined and familiar routes. They travel to different places in search of favourable climatic conditions in order to feed and rear their cattle.
• Sheep, camels, yaks and goats are mostly reared as they provide meat, wool, hides and other products to herders.

Commercial Farming
Contrary to subsistence farming, crops are grown on large estates in commercial farming. Because the land is large and availability of labour is limited, most work is done with the help of machines. Commercial farming can be further classified into commercial grain farming, mixed farming and plantation agriculture.

Commercial Grain Farming
• In this kind of farming, crops are grown for commercial purposes, i.e. for selling in the local and international markets.
• Wheat and maize are the main crops which are grown in commercial grain farming.
• It is practised largely in North America, Europe and Asia.
• Because of severe winters, mostly one crop is grown in fields.

Mixed Farming
• In mixed farming, apart from growing crops and fodder crops, animals are also reared.
• This type of cultivation is mainly carried out in Europe, eastern USA, Argentina, New Zealand, South Africa and southeast Australia.

Plantations
• In plantation farming, single crops of tea, sugarcane, coffee, rubber, cotton and bananas are grown on large fields.
• Large labour force and capital are required in plantations.
• Developed transport is required to transport these crops to factories for processing.

Major Crops

Wheat, rice, jute, coffee, cotton and maize are some important crops which are grown all over the world.

Rice
• It is a major food crop and forms the staple diet of the people living in tropical and sub-tropical countries.
• Rice grows well in clayey soil as it can retain moisture and requires high temperature, high level of humidity and abundant rainfall.
• China is the leading producer of rice in the world. India, Japan, Sri Lanka and Egypt are other major producers of this crop.

Wheat
• Wheat requires rainfall during the growing season and sunshine at the time of harvests.
It requires moderate temperature. It is grown mainly in USA, Canada, Argentina, Russia, Ukraine, Australia and India.

**Millet**
- Millets are grown on less fertile and sandy soils. They require moderate temperature and abundant rainfall.
- These are coarse crops such as bajra, ragi and jowar.
- These crops are grown in China, India, Nigeria and Niger.

**Maize**
- Maize is a major fodder crop which requires moderate temperature, rainfall and abundant sunshine.
- It grows in well-drained fertile soils.
- It is mainly grown in Brazil, North America, China, Russia, India and Mexico.

**Cotton**
- It requires light rainfall, high temperature, 210 frost-free days and bright sunlight.
- It grows well on alluvial and black soil.
- Major producers of cotton are China, USA, India, Pakistan, Brazil and Egypt.

**Jute**
- It is also known as the ‘Golden Fibre’. It requires high temperature and heavy rainfall with moderate climate. Thus, this crop grows well in tropical regions.
- Alluvial is best suited to the growth of jute.
- India and Bangladesh are the leading producers of jute in the world.

**Coffee**
- Coffee grows best in well-drained loamy soil and wet climate. Thus, hillslopes are considered most suitable for the growth of coffee.
- Brazil is the leading producer of coffee in the world. India and Columbia rank second and third respectively in coffee production.

**Tea**
- Tea requires cool climatic conditions and evenly distributed rainfall all over the year for the growth of its tender leaves.
- It grows well on drained loamy soil and on gentle slopes. It is a labour intensive industry as it requires human power at the time of the picking of leaves.

**Agricultural Development**
With the increase in population, the demand for food is steadily
Agricultural development refers to efforts made to increase farm production keeping in pace with the growing population. A country’s aim of increased food production is to ensure food security for its people.

### Comparison between Farms in India and USA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>An Indian Farm</th>
<th>A US Farm</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>An average Indian farmer has a small farm.</strong></td>
<td>The average size of a US farm is much larger than that of an Indian farm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Many small farmers in India have a farm size ranging from 1.5 hectares to 5 hectares.</td>
<td>The size of a farm in USA is usually about 250 hectares.</td>
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<td>Indian farmers reside in villages near their farms.</td>
<td>A farmer resides in a house which is located on the farm.</td>
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<td>Farmers in India take advice from village elders, friends and government agricultural officers regarding various farming practices.</td>
<td>A farmer in USA takes adequate scientific measures to improve productivity.</td>
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<td>An Indian farmer uses bullocks and tractors for ploughing land.</td>
<td>He uses modern machinery such as tractors, seed drills, combined harvesters and threshers to perform various agricultural operations.</td>
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<td>He depends on information of monsoons in order to understand cultivating practices.</td>
<td>A farmer may use a satellite which is linked to his computer to give him a good picture of his field.</td>
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<td>He is a peasant, with his family also perhaps engaging in farming during the harvest period.</td>
<td>A US farmer acts like a businessman.</td>
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