



CHAPTER 3: AGRICULTURE.

Read this e-lesson and the lesson 'Agriculture' from the textbook. Thereafter, follow the instructions and do the given assignment in a notebook with date, index, and topic.

Link for the chapter:- <http://ncert.nic.in/textbook/textbook.htm?jess1=1-7>

INTRODUCTION

'Agriculture' is the science or practice of cultivating soil and rearing animals.

It is an age-old economic activity in our country and is the main stay of our economy. Let us examine some of the features of Indian agriculture, which make India an agrarian country :

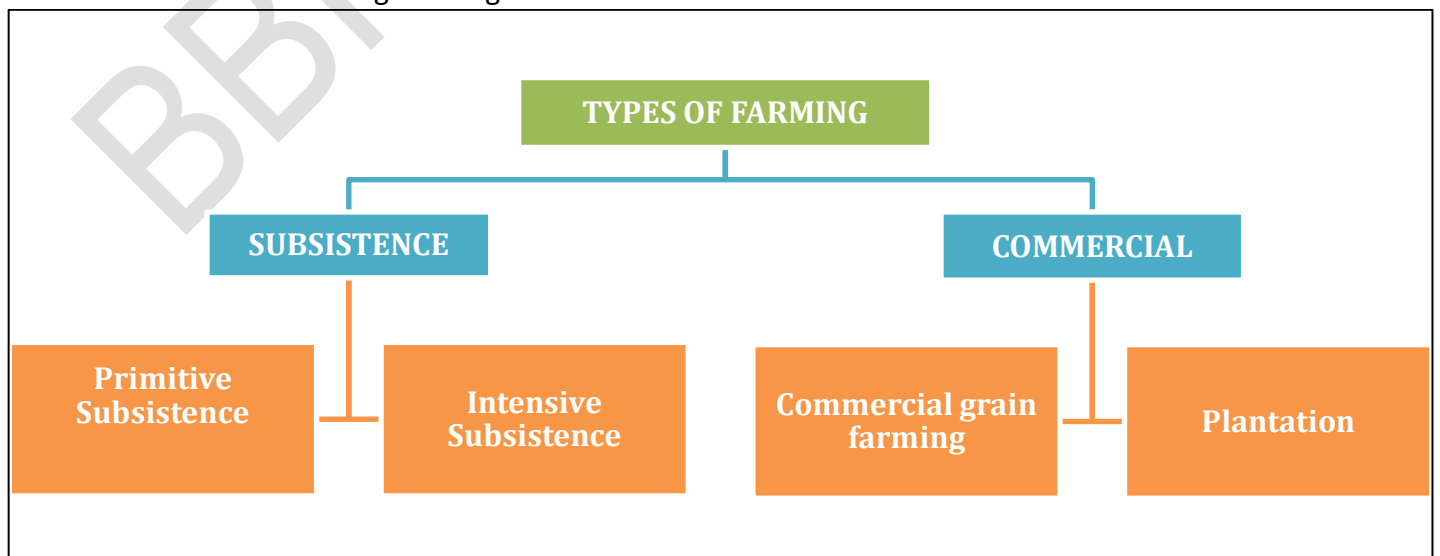
- Two third of its population is engaged in agricultural activities.
- Agriculture provides raw material for various agro based industries.
- It is a primary activity; it produces food grains, which ensures food security.
- Various agricultural products example: Tea, coffee, spices etc. are exported.

TYPES OF FARMING

Over these years, cultivation methods have changed significantly across the globe and so in India . Farming type depends upon the following characteristics:

- Physical environment (Relief feature and associated climate)
- Technological know-how (Level of technology advancement and its accessibility)
- Socio-Cultural practices
- Economic condition

Farming practices thus vary over regions depending on number of factors. However, they can be majorly classified under the following headings:



Let us understand the features of each type of farming:

PRIMITIVE SUBSISTENCE FARMING:

- Primitive subsistence agriculture is practised on small patches of land with the help of primitive tools.
- This type of farming depends upon monsoon and natural fertility of the soil and other environmental condition.
- Family /community labour and land productivity in this type of agriculture is low.
- It is still practised in few pockets of India especially in dense forested area of Madhya Pradesh and north eastern states of India.
- It is referred by different names in different parts of the country. For example :
 - *Jhumming in North eastern states of India*
 - *Dipa in Andaman Nicobar island and districts of Chhattisgarh*
 - *'Bewar' or 'Dahiya' in Madhya Pradesh*
- It is also commonly called “slash and burn” agriculture or “shifting cultivation”.

Let us understand the reasons behind this name “slash and burn”:

- ❖ The farmers generally slash down all the trees and burn the grass to clear the land for agriculture.
- ❖ They practice agriculture with the help of basic tools and family labour.
- ❖ The output is very low in this type of agriculture and the farmer is just able to sustain his family.
- ❖ When the soil fertility decreases, the farmers moves to a new patch of land, leaving previous land to regain its fertility naturally.

Slash and burn agriculture comes with its own set of advantages and disadvantages:

Advantages	Disadvantages
Allows nature to replenish the fertility of soil naturally.	Deforestation
This agriculture type uses only natural inputs and no chemical fertilizers are used.	Contributes to the increase in CO ₂ level by burning the vegetation to clear the land.

INTENSIVE SUBSISTENCE FARMING:

- Practised in areas of high population density, like India and other South East Asian countries.
- It is labour intensive and excessive inputs like chemical fertilizers are used to get maximum output from land.
- Farmer uses other sources of irrigation like tanks, tube wells to obtain higher production.
- The size of land holding is small due to “Right to Inheritance.”
- The output is limited but it is traded at the local level market.

COMMERCIAL FARMING :

- The land is cultivated for trading the crops at national and international market.
- Capital intensive and is practised on a significant large area of land
- Advanced inputs like high yielding variety of seeds (HYV), chemical fertilizers, insecticides, pesticides etc. are used to obtain higher crop production.
- Depends on various sources of irrigation like tanks, tube wells, etc.
- The degree of commercialization and the type of crop grown in this farming practice varies from region to region.

PLANTATION FARMING :

- Plantation is a type of commercial farming. In this type of farming, a single crop is grown on a large area.
- Plantation farming covers large tracts of land, using capital-intensive inputs, with the help of migrant labourers.
- The plantation has an interface of agriculture and industry, all the produce is used as raw material in respective industries.
- Since production is mainly for markets, a well developed network of transport and communication connecting the plantation areas, processing industries and markets, plays an important role in the development of plantations.
- In India tea, coffee, rubber, sugarcane and banana etc. are important plantation crops.

Let us summarize the above information by differentiating between subsistence and commercial farming :

	SUBSISTENCE FARMING	COMMERCIAL FARMING
Size of Land	Practised on a small area of land	Practised on a large sized land holding
Tools and Technology	Primitive tools like hoe, dao, and digging sticks etc. are used	Modern advanced technology and machines like tractor, thresher, irrigation pumps etc. are used
Inputs	Basic, low output traditional seeds and fertilizers are used	Modern inputs like HYV seeds, chemical fertilizers , insecticides etc. to obtain higher productivity are used
Irrigation Method	Depends on monsoon for irrigation	Facilitated with other sources of irrigation like tube wells and canal irrigation
Labour	Family labour	Use excessive machines and if required hire labour at large-scale.
Output	Productivity very low	Land productivity is high
Purpose	Farmer and his family produce crops for themselves and for the local market	Crop is traded at national and international market

ASSIGNMENT:

- Q1) Analyse the importance of agriculture for Indian economy. (5 points)
- Q2) Identify any three reasons why subsistence agriculture is still practised in certain parts of the country.
- Q3) Explain the concept of Right to Inheritance. State its one limitation in the context of Indian agriculture.
- Q4) Mention any three points of difference between primitive subsistence and intensive subsistence farming.
- Q5) Explain with the help of an example why rice is cultivated as a commercial crop in one region and as a subsistence crop in another region.

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