

AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPES

A) TRADITIONAL AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPES

Traditional agriculture is a type of **subsistence agriculture**. They use primitive technology and it involves a great deal of labour. The production is low and it is used for self-consumption.

✓ Itinerant, slash and burn agriculture or shifting cultivation

This type of agriculture is typical in the equatorial and tropical climates of Africa, Central and South America. The agricultural landscape is composed of irregular fields cleared in the forest. Trees are cut down and burnt along with the weeds. Mixed farming is practiced, with cereals and other products (sorghum, millet, maize, cassava, yam, sweet potato), for self-consumption. The soil is cultivated continuously, so it becomes exhausted after two or three years. Then, the farmer moves to another place and repeats the process.



✓ Dry sedentary agriculture



This type of agriculture is found in the tropical savannah areas of Africa and in certain regions of South America and Asia. The agricultural landscape is composed of vegetable plots and small fields, near the houses, which are fertilized with waste and animal manure. This permits the continuous cultivation of vegetables, beans or maize. The land around the village is divided into three areas where a main crop (millet or maize) is rotated with another complementary one (peanut or tubers) and fallow land (where cattle feed and fertilize it with their dung). With this system, the soil is not exhausted, which allows the permanent settlement of the population.

✓ Monsoon irrigated agriculture

This type of agriculture is found in the monsoon tropical climate zone of south and south-east Asia, in countries such as China, Vietnam, Cambodia or the Philippines. The typical agricultural landscape is rice paddies, on the alluvial plains and the river deltas. The main activity is the cultivation of rice in small, floodable paddies, separated by dykes.

The cultivation technique consists of firstly planting rice in a nursery treated with manure. While it grows, the paddies are ploughed, fertilized and flooded. When the plants have grown a little, they are transplanted into the paddy and they begin to mature. Later the water is drained off and the rice is harvested, threshed and collected. This system permits continuous production, with two or three harvests a year.

B) DEVELOPED AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPES

Developed agricultural landscapes are those where farmers practice **market agriculture**, use advanced technology and require less intensive labour than traditional agricultural systems. Production is abundant and farmers specialize in the products best adapted to the physical environment or those which are most profitable. These landscapes are found in certain areas of new-world countries, some coastal areas of the tropics and Europe.

✓ The agriculture of new-world countries

New-world countries are those which were colonised by Europeans between the 16th and 19th centuries in North and South America (USA, Canada, Argentina) and Australia.

The agricultural landscape is characterized by large, regular fields, with the use of the most advanced technology and very little labour. The land normally belongs to highly-trained farmers or large companies which also control the processing, distribution and sale of the products.

Production is massive and specialised, and it is intended for sale on the international market. In wetter areas crop agriculture predominates. In the United States, for example, agricultural land forms belts specialised in the production of one crop (wheat, maize, tobacco, cotton, etc). In drier areas, extensive livestock farming is common (cattle or sheep), for the production of meat, wool and leather.

✓ Plantation agriculture



This type of agriculture is found in some coastal areas with humid tropical climates in Central and South America, south-east Asia and the Gulf of Guinea in Africa. The agricultural landscape is composed of large fields, or plantations. High levels of investment and the use of technology are needed. However, it also requires a great deal of labour as some of the tasks cannot

be mechanised. The plantations normally belong to large multinational companies whose aim is to obtain products at low prices and sell them on the international market. Both food crops (bananas, pineapples, coffee, cocoa, sugar cane) and industrial crops (rubber, cotton, palm oil) are in great demand in developed countries.



ACTIVITIES

1) Fill in the gaps with terms from the text:

- ✓ _____ are examples of modern agriculture because their produce is aimed at the market but they are usually located in underdeveloped countries
- ✓ _____ cultivation is also known as slash-and-burn agriculture
- ✓ _____ irrigated agriculture is found in south and south-east Asia
- ✓ In the United States, agricultural land for _____ specialized in the production of one single crop
- ✓ The land that is left uncultivated is called _____ land

2) Label the following pictures with the agricultural landscape you think they are depicting. Then try to describe what you see focusing on the type of tools/machinery farmers use, the types of crops that could be grown, its possible location... Use sentences like the ones provided in the example.



It might be (type of agricultural landscape) because I can see... I think it might be located in (region/continent) because ...





3) Compare traditional agriculture and developed agriculture by completing the table. Then write comparative sentences writing sentences like in the examples provided below.

- ✓ Traditional agriculture uses.... while developed agriculture tend to use...
- ✓ The productivity of traditional agriculture is ... whereas in developed agriculture is ...
- ✓ Traditional agriculture involves ... On the contrary, developed agriculture...

	Traditional	Developed
Technology used		
Labour		
Productivity		
Destination of the produce		

4) Draw and complete tables like the one below. You must draw and complete one for each type of agricultural landscape

	Name of the landscape
Location	
Climate	
Types of crops grown	
Basic procedure	