

L.O.: To explore the agricultural system in South America

Keywords

Agriculture - the science or practice of farming, including cultivation of the soil for the growing of crops and the rearing of animals to provide food, wool, and other products.

For decades, agriculture has been associated with the production of essential food crops. At present, agriculture above and beyond farming includes forestry, dairy, fruit cultivation, poultry, bee keeping, mushroom, arbitrary, etc. Today, processing, marketing, and distribution of crops and livestock products etc. are all acknowledged as part of current agriculture. Thus, agriculture could be referred to as the production, processing, promotion and distribution agricultural products.

Agriculture plays a critical role in the entire life of a given economy. Agriculture is the backbone of the economic system of a given country. In addition to providing food and raw material, agriculture also provides employment opportunities to very large percentage of the population.

South America's temperate climates are home to a number of industrial crops and livestock. Corn is produced throughout the temperate climates, and soybeans have become an increasingly lucrative crop in the Pampas.

The Pampas' vast, high-quality pastures are also the center of South America's huge ranching industry. Brazil is the world's third-largest beef exporter (behind only Australia and the United States). Argentina is also an important beef exporter.

Only about one-eighth of South America's land is suitable for permanent cropping or grazing. It is broadly agreed that agricultural land use throughout the continent is less efficient than it might be. Farm and ranch productivity could be enhanced by measures such as providing adequate agricultural credit, improving marketing, storage, and transportation systems, and expanding the educational system in rural areas. Such changes would benefit the large number of small farmholdings (minifundias)—three-fourths of South America's farmers own less than 25 acres (10 hectares)—making it possible for those farmers to improve their living standards and contribute to national development. The changes also would help to alleviate the widespread under- and unemployment prevalent in some densely populated rural areas. Unemployment is a problem in such areas, even though less than one-third of South America's working population is employed in the agricultural sector, as compared with nearly one-half of the population for the world as a whole.

Corn (maize), a native of tropical America and now a staple in countries around the world, is the most widely cultivated crop throughout the continent. Argentina became a major exporter of corn during the 20th century. Beans, including several species of the genus *Phaseolus*, are widely cultivated by small-scale methods and form an important food item in most countries.

Cassava and sweet potato also are indigenous to the New World and have become the basic foodstuffs of much of tropical Africa and parts of Asia. The potato, which originated in the high Andes, became a dietary staple of many European nations.

Cashews, cultivated in most tropical countries, and Brazil nuts, harvested from trees in the Amazon basin, are widely regarded as delicacies, but both the cashew fruit and the nuts also are local favourites. Cacao, native to the Amazon region and the source of cocoa, was prized by indigenous peoples and is still cultivated in many parts of South America, particularly in the state of Bahia, Brazil. Avocados also originated in the same region. Pineapples, probably indigenous to southern Brazil and the Paraná River basin, were cultivated throughout tropical South America and the West Indies prior to the arrival of Columbus. Papaya and guava are also from tropical America. "South America"

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Task

1. Circle "True or False" for the statements below:
 - a) Brazil is the world's largest beef exporter. True/False
 - b) Filberts and hazelnuts can also be harvested from trees in the Amazon basin. True/False
 - c) Agriculture is limited to simply farming. True/False
 - d) Only about one-eighth of South America's land is suitable for permanent cropping. True/False

2. *The Pampas' vast, high-quality pastures are also the center of South America's huge ranching industry.*
Research and explain how South America has become so successful in the **ranching industry**.

3. *China is the leading worldwide producer of rice, but it's also the leading producer of wheat and the number two producer of corn, as well as the largest producer of many vegetables including onions and cabbage.*
How has China excelled in agriculture in comparison to South America?

4. List four fruits which grown in South America and exported top countries across the globe:
 - a) _____
 - b) _____
 - c) _____
 - d) _____

5. *Three-fourths of South America's farmers own less than 25 acres.*
Explain how the statistic above has effected the agricultural system in South America.