

## IV Commercial Farming (5 types)

### A. Defining Commercial Farming

1. Commercial farmers produce their crops to sell them in the marketplace
2. Types include mixed crop, livestock, ranching, dairying, large scale grain
3. Plantation Farming is considered commercial farming, but it is practiced mostly in less developed nations.

### B. Mixed Crop and Livestock Farming

1. Mixed farming involves a farm that grows crops and raises animals.
2. Most of the crops grown on mixed farms are used to feed the farms animals.
3. The animals in turn provide fertilizer as well as products (eggs)
4. Most of a mixed farms income comes from the animal products
5. This reduces a mixed crop and livestock farmers complete dependence on seasonal harvests b/c animal crops aren't dependent on seasons.
6. Mixed farming exists widely throughout Europe and eastern N. America.
  - a) Usually near large urban areas with limited land available.
7. Most Mixed farms practice crop rotation in which the field is subdivided into different regions, each region growing a different seed and rotating over time.
  - a) Allows the nutrients of the soils to replenish, as each seed leeches different nutrients

### C. Ranching

1. Ranching is commercial grazing, or the raising of animals on a plot of land on which they graze.



2. Usually extensive, requiring large amounts of land.

3. Meat and wool are in high demand, so cattle & sheep are the most common animals.

4. Practiced in Areas where climate is too dry to support crops.

a) W. US, Argentina, S. Brazil, Uruguay (Rare in Europe)

b) Most US Ranches are being converted into fattening farms.

c) Also in tropical areas of W. Latin America, and Northern Mexico.

5. Decline in Ranching is partially caused by low grain prices and meat quality standards.

a) US favors fat meat to lean meat.

## D. Dairying

1. The growth of milk based products for the market place.

2. Dairy farms closest to the market place usually produce the most perishable, fluid-milk products, while those farther away produce milk cheese & butter.

3. It is the most economically productive type of commercial agriculture practiced near cities in NE. US, SE Canada, and NW Europe.

4. Farms are usually very small and capital intensive.

a) Use a lot of machines in the farming process,

b) labor intensive farms use more human labor.

5. The milkshed is the zone around a cities center in which milk can be made and shipped w/o spoiling.

6. The growth in transportation tech has allowed dairy farmers to locate farther from the cities center, thus increasing the area of the milkshed.

a) Also tech has increased the amount of milk per cow.



## E. Large Scale Grain Production

1. Wheat is the dominant grain on large scale grain production
  - a) Grains we often grow to be exported to other places to be consumed.
2. Most common in: US, Canada, Argentina, Australia, France, England, and Ukraine
  - a) US is the largest grain producer (large scale)
3. Wheat is the largest export led by US + Canada (grow 1/3 of world's wheat)
  - a) Many grain farms produce grain to be consumed by the world's farms plan to sell or eat later.
  - b) Much of western Europe's grain farms are just for animal feed
4. Large scale grain farms grew from the industrial revolution
  - a) City sized populations needed food.
5. Large Scale Grain farms are capital intensive.
6. Use several technological innovations
  - a) 1830's McCormick Reaper
  - b) The Combine Machine

## F. Plantation Farming

1. Involves large scale farming operations known as plantations or agricultural estates, that specialize in the farming of one or two high demand crops for export.
  - a) Usually to more developed regions
2. Introduced in Tropical and Subtropical zones by European colonizers.
  - a) Europe wanted: coffee, tea, pineapples, palms, coconuts, rubber, tobacco, sugar cane, cotton
  - b) Think US South + cotton.
3. Today plantation agriculture is still largely reflective of global power structures
  - a) Owned by more developed nations, take advantage of local people/land



4. Most exist in a location that has easy coastal access for exporting their crops.

5. Plantations: labor intensive

a) US + migrant workers

b) Hawaii (but has a growers union)