

LESSON NOTE FOR WEEK THREE (FAMVAR INTERNATIONAL SEC. SCHOOL)

SUBJECT: AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE

CLASS: JSS1

TOPIC: EVOLUTION OF AGRICULTURE(HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE)

HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE

From the earliest of times, one of man's most basic and important concerns has been how to secure food. To meet this need, he has engaged in agriculture and over the years, has developed new ways of satisfying this.

The development of agriculture can easily be divided into three main periods or eras. these periods are: paleolithic or old stone age era, mesolithic era or middle stone age era and neolithic or new stone age era.

A. Paleolithic or old stone age: This period is characterized by the development of the most primitive stone tools. During this period, the early men (who were cave dwellers) survived by gathering wild fruit and hunting wild animals as they moved from one place to another.

B. Mesolithic era or medieval age: During this period, the early man began to hunt and fish. He also employed the assistance of dogs to hunt wild animals for food.

C. Neolithic or new stone age: This was the period when human population began to grow and the early man changed from his nomadic ways to a settled lifestyle. Agriculture started by accident about 15,000 years ago when the early man observed that the fruits and seeds he threw away near his hut germinated and developed to produce kind of fruits and seeds.

In the same way, he noticed that male and female animals mate to produce young ones. From these observations, he learnt how to bring plants and animals under his control, a process known as **domestication**.

DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE IN NIGERIA

The development of agriculture in Nigeria passed through three main phases, namely:

A. The precolonial period: This refers to the period before the coming of the Europeans(colonial masters). Subsistence farming was mostly practised and simple farm tools such as hoes and cutlasses were used.

B. The colonial period: this was the period when Nigeria was under British colonial rule. During this time permanent farming systems such as crop rotation, mono cropping, mixed cropping etc. were introduced. The peasant farmers were forced to produce cash crops such as cocoa, oil palm, cotton and rubber, which were needed by the colonial masters at home.

C. Post independence period: This is the period after the colonial period which is characterized by agricultural reforms, establishment of farm settlement schemes and introduction of agricultural services , use of improved implements etc.

The Role of Agriculture in the National Economy

The roles of agriculture in the national economy are as follows:

1. Agriculture provides employment of many people in the country
2. It serves as a source of revenue for the government which is derived from taxes payed by the farmers and agricultural industries as well as export duties.
3. It is a source of foreign exchange for the government.

HOMEWORK

1. List out the three main periods in the development of agriculture.
2. Identify the three phases of agricultural development in Nigeria.
3. State two roles of agriculture in the national economy.