

SUBJECT: AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE

TOPIC: MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURE

CLASS: SS 1

TERM: 1ST TERM

WEEK: WEEK TWO (2)

MEANING OF AGRICULTURE

Agriculture can be defined as the science and art of cultivating the soil, production and management of crops and processing of their products and by-products for man's use and other purposes. The major occupation of our forefathers was agriculture. Agricultural practices were adopted by man in search of food, clothing and shelter. Technical skills and materials resources started with the early men as fruit gatherers and hunters moving from one place to another in search of food.

IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURE TO INDIVIDUAL, COMMUNITY, AND THE NATION

Agriculture is very important to individual, the community where they live and the entire nation because of its role in the provision of food, employment, raw materials, income and foreign exchange.

Agriculture is important in the following ways:

1. PROVISION OF FOOD

This is one of the major importance's of agriculture. Agriculture provides the basic food for the population of the world. A nation that depends on another nation in terms of food production is called dependent nation, while an independent nation can provides food for her citizens. Food could be meat, eggs, milk from farm animals and products from different crops such as rice, yam, maize, and cowpea and so on.

2. PROVISION OF RAW MATERIALS

Many local industries depend solely on raw materials from agriculture to produce their finished products. For example, agriculture provides cocoa for the beverage industries, cotton for textiles industries, timber and pulp wood for paper industries, rubbers for tyre and materials should be adequately provided to meet up with the needs of industries and allow for future expansion.

3. PROVISION OF EMPLOYMENT

Agricultural sector provides job opportunities for all categories of workers principally because of its large size compared with other sectors of service and industries in the country. Also agriculture provides employment for those that engage in processing of raw materials into finished products. The agricultural sector absorbed sizeable proportion of the population into farming business ranging from peasant farming agricultural officer, extension officers, researchers and so on.

4. PROVISION OF INCOME TO FARMERS

Agriculture serves as a source of income to farmers through the proceeds from the sales of crop products like yam, rice, plantain, cocoa, pineapple and livestock products like meat, milk, eggs and animal skin. The money derived from these materials is used by farmers to purchase goods which are not produced on the farm e.g radio, cloth, chair and lots more.

5. PROVISION OF SHELTER

Building materials are obtained from agricultural products like timber and leaves for building constructions. Timbers are used in the construction of furniture like tables, chairs and bed, etc. also asbestos are manufactured from fibre.

6. PROVISION OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE

Agricultural products are exported to different countries to earn foreign exchange. This is of vital importance because countries need foreign exchange to produce certain goods and services. Foreign currencies however accrue to nations through exportation of agricultural products.

7. PROVISION OF RECREATION AND SPORT

Some farm animals produce a kind of recreation or a form of amusement while others are used for sporting activities. For example, animals like monkeys provide a lot of amusement while dogs are used in dogs' race and horses are used in polo games sport.

8. DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL AREAS

Agriculture brings about development of villages where farmers live and carry out their farm activities. For example, farmers and their family members are able to have access to good roads, pipe-borne water, electricity and schools because of agriculture.

ASSIGNMENT

1. Define agricultural science
2. Discuss five reasons why agriculture can be regarded as the mainstay of Nigerian