

TYPES OF FARMING

The basis for the classification of different types of agriculture in India are rainfall, irrigational facilities, purpose of production, ownership and size of holding and technology used. On the basis of these factors a number of farming can be identified. The main types of farming in India are:

A. Dry Farming This type of farming is practiced in the areas where the amount of annual rainfall is generally less than 80 cms. In such regions, the farmers are generally dependent upon rainfall. Here, moisture content in the soil is less. Hence, only one crop can be grown in a year. Millets like jawar, bajra, ragi, pulsees etc. are important crops grown under this type of farming. Rajasthan, Maharashtra, parts of Madhya Pradesh, Southern Haryana, part of Gujarat and Karnataka fall under this category of farming. In such areas, farmers adopt subsidiary activities such as dairy, cattle farming to supplement their meagre farm incomes.

B. Wet Farming This type of farming is practised in the areas of alluvial soils where annual average rainfall is more than 200cm. Here, more than one crops are grown in a year because enough amount of moisture in the soil is available. Rice and jute are the main crops of this types of farming. West Bengal, Assam, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Tripura, Manipur, Mizoram and Malabar coast fall under this category of farming.

C. Irrigated Farming This type of farming is practiced in the areas where average rainfall is between 80 to 200 cms which is insufficient for certain crops,. This system of farming can be practised only in those areas where availability of water from underground or surface water bodies like rivers, tanks, and lakes is sufficient throughout the year. The other condition for this farming is the availability of levelled agricultural land. The main areas where much farming is practised are in Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, north western Tamil Nadu and the deltas of peninsular rivers. The other important pockets of irrigated farming are found in the Deccan Plateau region particularly in Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. Wheat, Rice and Sugarcane are important crops of this farming.

D. Subsistence Farming This types of farming is practised primarily to fulfill self requirements of the people of the area. The main objective of this farming is to provide subsistence to the largest number of people of a given area. Size of holdings is small, use of manual labour and simple farm implements are common features of this type of farming. Subsistence agriculture is practised in parts of Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand and the hilly areas of the country.

E. Shifting Cultivation In this type of cultivation, land is cleared by cutting and burning of forests for raising crops. The crops are grown for a few years (2-3 years). As fertility of land declines, farmers move to new areas, clear the forests and grow crops there for next few years. This farming is practised in some pockets of the hilly areas of Northeast and in some tribal belts of Orissa, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh. In northeast, such type of cultivation is known as “Jhuming”.

F. Terrace Cultivation It is practised in hilly areas. The farmers in these regions carve out terraces on the hill slopes, conserve soil and water to raise crops. In India, this type of cultivation is practised on the slopes of the Himalayas and the hills of the peninsular region. Due to pressure of population, terrace cultivation is being adopted in the North-Eastern states of India where shifting agriculture was practiced earlier.

G. Plantation Agriculture Well organized and managed cultivation of crops particularly a single one on a large scale is called plantation agriculture. It requires large investment on the latest technology and proper management. Tea, coffee and rubber are examples of plantation agriculture. This agriculture is practiced in Assam, West Bengal and the slopes of Nilgiri hills.

H. Commercial Farming Under this farming, the farmers raise crops mainly for the market. Under this system, generally those crops are grown which are used as raw materials for industries. Cultivation of sugarcane in Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra; cotton in Gujarat, Maharashtra and Punjab; and Jute in West Bengal are some of the examples of this farming.

I. Contract Farming It is viewed as an important tool to increase private corporate involvement in agro-processing. In this system, companies engaged in processing/ marketing of agriculture products enter into contract with the farmers. They provide the farmers necessary facilities and buy back the products with a rate specified in advance. The Field Fresh Company, a multi national has 1000 acres land under horticulture in Punjab. Pepsi and McDonalds have started contact cultivation of citrus fruits and lettuce respectively. Ballapur and ITC provide farmers with fast growing cloned varieties of tree that mature in just four years and buy the out-put. Such type of farming is said to be getting popular among farmers especially in Punjab. How-ever, some scholars fear that shift of lands from food crops under this contract farming on a scale is likely to result in food insecurity, especially for lower income groups.

J. Eco-Farming or Organic Farming This farming avoids the use of synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, growth regulator and livestock feed additives. This types of farming rely on crop rotation, crop residues, animal manure, off-farm organic wastes and biological pest control to maintain soil productivity. A few farmers from Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Pondichery and Punjab are adopting this types of agriculture.

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