Class 10 Geography Chapter 4: Agriculture - Notes, Important Questions and MCQs (2026-27)

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These Agriculture Class 10 notes cover Class 10 Geography Chapter 4 completely as per the 2026-27 NCERT book: types of farming (primitive subsistence, intensive subsistence and commercial), the cropping pattern of rabi, kharif and zaid seasons, major food and non-food crops with their climatic conditions and producing states, technological and institutional reforms, and the Bhoodan-Gramdan movement.

The highlight is a one-page crop table with temperature, rainfall, soil and leading states for every crop, plus a shifting cultivation names table, map-work points, NCERT-style questions with answers, 10 MCQs and a free PDF with no signup.

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Chapter Overview

India is an agriculturally important country: two-thirds of its population is engaged in agricultural activities. Agriculture is a primary activity that produces most of our food, raw materials for industries, and exports such as tea, coffee and spices.

Cultivation methods have changed over time with the physical environment, technology and socio-cultural practices. The chapter explains the farming systems practised in India, the three

Important Topics and Concepts

Primitive subsistence farming

- Practised in a few pockets on small patches of land with primitive tools like hoe, dao and digging sticks, using family or community labour.
- Depends on the monsoon, natural soil fertility and suitable environmental conditions.
- It is ‘slash and burn’ agriculture: farmers clear a patch, grow food crops, and shift to a fresh patch when fertility falls. This lets nature restore fertility, but productivity is low as no fertilisers or modern inputs are used.
- Known as jhumming in Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland; Pamlou in Manipur; Dipa in Bastar (Chhattisgarh) and in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Intensive subsistence farming

- Practised in areas of high population pressure on land.
- Labour-intensive, with high doses of biochemical inputs and irrigation for higher production.
- The right of inheritance has divided land among generations, making holdings uneconomical, yet farmers try to get maximum output from limited land because they lack alternative livelihoods.

Commercial farming and plantations

- Uses higher doses of modern inputs such as HYV seeds, chemical fertilisers, insecticides and pesticides for higher productivity.
- Commercialisation varies by region: rice is a commercial crop in Punjab and Haryana but a subsistence crop in Odisha.
- Plantation is a type of commercial farming in which a single crop is grown on a large area; it is an interface of agriculture and industry.
- Plantations use large tracts of land, capital-intensive inputs and migrant labour; all produce is used as industrial raw material.
- Important plantation crops: tea, coffee, rubber, sugarcane and banana; tea in Assam and North Bengal, coffee in Karnataka.
- A good transport and communication network linking plantations, processing industries and markets is essential.

Cropping pattern: rabi, kharif and zaid

- Rabi: sown in winter (October–December) and harvested in summer (April–June). Crops: wheat, barley, peas, gram and mustard. Important states: Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh. Winter rain from western temperate cyclones and the Green Revolution help these crops.

- Kharif: grown with the onset of monsoon and harvested in September–October. Crops: paddy, maize, jowar, bajra, tur (arhar), moong, urad, cotton, jute, groundnut and soyabean. Rice regions include Assam, West Bengal, coastal Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Maharashtra (Konkan), Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, and recently Punjab and Haryana. Assam, West Bengal and Odisha grow three paddy crops: Aus, Aman and Boro.
- Zaid: a short summer season between rabi and kharif. Crops: watermelon, muskmelon, cucumber, vegetables and fodder crops. Sugarcane takes almost a year to grow.

Rice

- Staple food of most Indians; India is the second largest producer after China.
- Kharif crop needing high temperature (above 25°C), high humidity and annual rainfall above 100 cm; grown with irrigation in drier areas.
- Grown in the northern and north-eastern plains, coastal areas and deltas; canals and tube-wells allow rice in Punjab, Haryana, western UP and parts of Rajasthan.

Wheat

- Second most important cereal; main food crop of north and north-west India.
- Rabi crop needing a cool growing season, bright sunshine at ripening and 50–75 cm of evenly distributed rainfall.
- Two zones: the Ganga-Satluj plains in the north-west and the black soil region of the Deccan.
- Major states: Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan.

Millets: jowar, bajra and ragi

- Called coarse grains but highly nutritious; ragi is rich in iron, calcium, micronutrients and roughage.
- Jowar: third most important food crop by area and production; rain-fed, grown in moist areas; Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh.
- Bajra: grows on sandy and shallow black soils; Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Haryana.
- Ragi: crop of dry regions on red, black, sandy, loamy and shallow black soils; Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, Jharkhand, Arunachal Pradesh.

Maize

- Used as food and fodder; kharif crop needing 21°C–27°C and old alluvial soil; also a rabi crop in Bihar.
- HYV seeds, fertilisers and irrigation have increased production.
- Major states: Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

Pulses

- India is the largest producer and consumer of pulses in the world; they are the main protein source in a vegetarian diet.
- Major pulses: tur (arhar), urad, moong, masur, peas and gram.
- They need little moisture and survive dry conditions. Being leguminous, all except arhar fix nitrogen from the air and restore soil fertility, so they are grown in rotation.
- Major states: Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka.

Sugarcane

- Tropical and subtropical crop needing hot, humid climate, 21°C–27°C and 75–100 cm rainfall; irrigation in low-rainfall areas.
- Grows on a variety of soils and needs manual labour from sowing to harvesting.
- India is the second largest producer after Brazil; source of sugar, gur (jaggery), khandsari and molasses.
- Major states: Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Bihar, Punjab and Haryana.

Oilseeds

- In 2020 India was the second largest producer of groundnut after China. Oilseeds cover about 12 per cent of total cropped area.
- Main oilseeds: groundnut, mustard, coconut, sesamum (til), soyabean, castor seeds, cotton seeds, linseed and sunflower; used for cooking and for soap, cosmetics and ointments.
- Groundnut is a kharif crop and about half of major oilseeds produced; Gujarat was the largest producer in 2019–20, followed by Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu.
- Linseed and mustard are rabi crops; sesamum is kharif in the north and rabi in the south; castor is grown in both seasons.

Tea and coffee

- Tea: plantation and beverage crop introduced by the British; now mostly Indian-owned. Needs tropical or subtropical climate, deep fertile well-drained soil rich in humus, warm moist frost-free climate and frequent showers all year. It is labour-intensive and processed within the garden. Major areas: Assam, Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri (West Bengal), Tamil Nadu and Kerala; also Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Meghalaya, Andhra Pradesh and Tripura. In 2020 India was the second largest producer after China.
- Coffee: Indian coffee is known for its quality; the Arabica variety came from Yemen. First grown on the Baba Budan Hills; now confined to the Nilgiris in Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

Horticulture crops

- In 2020, India was the second largest producer of fruits and vegetables after China.
- Mangoes: Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal. Oranges: Nagpur and Cherrapunjee. Bananas: Kerala, Mizoram, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu. Lichi and guava: Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Pineapples: Meghalaya. Grapes: Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra. Apples, pears, apricots and walnuts: Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh.
- India is an important producer of pea, cauliflower, onion, cabbage, tomato, brinjal and potato.

Non-food crops: rubber

- Equatorial crop also grown in tropical and subtropical areas under special conditions; needs moist humid climate, rainfall above 200 cm and temperature above 25°C.
- Important industrial raw material; grown mainly in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and the Garo hills of Meghalaya.

Fibre crops: cotton and jute

- Four major fibre crops: cotton, jute, hemp and natural silk. Silk comes from cocoons of silkworms fed on mulberry leaves; rearing silkworms is called sericulture.
- Cotton: India is believed to be its original home and is the second largest producer after China. Grows in drier parts of the black cotton soil of the Deccan; needs high temperature, light rainfall or irrigation, 210 frost-free days and bright sunshine; kharif crop maturing in 6–8 months. States: Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.
- Jute: the ‘golden fibre’; grows on well-drained fertile floodplain soils renewed every year and needs high temperature. States: West Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Odisha and Meghalaya. Used for gunny bags, mats, ropes, yarn and carpets.

Technological and institutional reforms

- Sustained use of land without matching techno-institutional changes has slowed agricultural growth; many farmers still depend on the monsoon and natural fertility, though agriculture supports more than 60 per cent of the population.
- After Independence, collectivisation, consolidation of holdings, cooperation and abolition of zamindari were given priority. Land reform was the main focus of the First Five Year Plan, but implementation was weak.
- In the 1960s and 1970s, the Green Revolution (package technology) and the White Revolution (Operation Flood) were launched, but development was concentrated in a few areas.
- In the 1980s and 1990s, a comprehensive land development programme included crop insurance against drought, flood, cyclone, fire and disease, and Grameen banks, cooperative societies and banks offering loans at lower interest.
- Other schemes: Kisan Credit Card (KCC), Personal Accident Insurance Scheme (PAIS), weather bulletins and farm programmes on radio and TV, and minimum support price, remunerative and procurement prices to protect farmers from middlemen.

Bhoodan-Gramdan movement

- Vinoba Bhave, whom Gandhiji declared his spiritual heir, undertook a padyatra across India after Gandhiji’s death to spread the idea of gram swarajya.
- At Pochampally in Telangana, landless villagers asked for land. Shri Ram Chandra Reddy offered 80 acres to be distributed among 80 landless villagers. This was Bhoodan.
- Some zamindars gave whole villages to the landless; this was Gramdan.
- Some landowners donated land fearing the land ceiling act. The movement is also called the Bloodless Revolution.

Shifting Cultivation: Names in India and the World

A favourite MCQ and matching topic.

Region	Local name
North-eastern states	Jhumming
Manipur	Pamlou
Bastar (Chhattisgarh), Andaman and Nicobar	Dipa

Region	Local name
Madhya Pradesh	Bewar or Dahiya
Andhra Pradesh	Podu or Penda
Odisha	Pama Dabi, Koman or Bringa
Western Ghats	Kumari
South-eastern Rajasthan	Valre or Waltre
Himalayan belt	Khil
Jharkhand	Kuruwa
Mexico and Central America	Milpa
Venezuela	Conuco
Brazil	Roca
Central Africa	Masole
Indonesia	Ladang
Vietnam	Ray

Cropping Seasons at a Glance

Quick revision of the three seasons.

Season	Sowing	Harvesting	Main crops
Rabi	October–December	April–June	Wheat, barley, peas, gram, mustard
Kharif	Onset of monsoon (June–July)	September–October	Paddy, maize, jowar, bajra, tur, moong, urad, cotton, jute, groundnut, soyabean
Zaid	Summer, between rabi and kharif	Summer	Watermelon, muskmelon, cucumber, vegetables, fodder

Map Work: Crop Areas

Practise identifying these on an outline map of India.

- Major areas of rice and wheat
- Largest/major producer states of sugarcane, tea, coffee, rubber, cotton and jute

Major Crops of India: Conditions and Leading States

Crop	Season / type	Temperature	Rainfall	Soil	Major states
Rice	Kharif	Above 25°C, high humidity	Above 100 cm	Alluvial, deltas	WB, UP, Punjab, Assam, Odisha, AP, Telangana, TN
Wheat	Rabi	Cool season, sunshine at ripening	50–75 cm	Ganga-Satluj plains, Deccan black soil	Punjab, Haryana, UP, MP, Bihar, Rajasthan
Jowar	Kharif, rain-fed	—	Moist areas	—	Maharashtra, Karnataka, AP, MP

Crop	Season / type	Temperature	Rainfall	Soil	Major states
Bajra	Kharif	—	—	Sandy and shallow black soil	Rajasthan, UP, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Haryana
Ragi	Dry regions	—	—	Red, black, sandy, loamy	Karnataka, TN, HP, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, Jharkhand, Arunachal
Maize	Kharif (rabi in Bihar)	21°C–27°C	—	Old alluvial	Karnataka, MP, UP, Bihar, AP, Telangana
Pulses	Kharif and rabi	—	Low moisture	—	MP, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, UP, Karnataka
Sugarcane	About a year	21°C–27°C	75–100 cm	Variety of soils	UP, Maharashtra, Karnataka, TN, AP, Telangana, Bihar, Punjab, Haryana
Groundnut	Kharif	—	—	—	Gujarat, Rajasthan, TN
Tea	Plantation	Warm, moist, frost-free	Frequent showers	Deep, fertile, humus-rich	Assam, WB (Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri), TN, Kerala
Coffee	Plantation	—	—	—	Karnataka, Kerala, TN (Nilgiris)
Rubber	Plantation	Above 25°C	Above 200 cm	—	Kerala, TN, Karnataka, A&N, Garo hills
Cotton	Kharif, 6–8 months	High, 210 frost-free days	Light rainfall or irrigation	Black cotton soil	Maharashtra, Gujarat, MP, Karnataka, AP, Telangana, TN, Punjab, Haryana, UP
Jute	Kharif	High	—	Fertile floodplain soils	WB, Bihar, Assam, Odisha, Meghalaya

Important Definitions and Terms

Term	Meaning
Primitive subsistence farming	Slash and burn farming on small patches with simple tools and family labour
Intensive subsistence farming	Labour-intensive farming with high inputs on small holdings in densely populated areas
Commercial farming	Farming with modern inputs to produce crops for sale
Plantation agriculture	Commercial farming of a single crop on a large area
Rabi crops	Crops sown in winter and harvested in summer
Kharif crops	Crops sown with the monsoon and harvested in September–October
Zaid	Short summer cropping season between rabi and kharif
Leguminous crops	Crops like pulses that fix nitrogen from the air
Sericulture	Rearing of silkworms for silk
Golden fibre	Jute
Green Revolution	Use of HYV seeds, fertilisers and irrigation to raise food production
White Revolution	Operation Flood to increase milk production
Minimum support price	Price announced by the government to protect farmers
Bhoodan	Voluntary donation of land to the landless, started by Vinoba Bhave

Term	Meaning
Gramdan	Donation of whole villages to the landless

Short Answer Questions

Q1. Name one important beverage crop and the geographical conditions required for its growth.

Tea. It needs a tropical or subtropical climate, deep fertile well-drained soil rich in humus and organic matter, a warm moist frost-free climate all year and frequent showers evenly distributed over the year.

Q2. Name one staple crop of India and the regions where it is produced.

Rice is the staple crop of most Indians. It is grown in the northern and north-eastern plains, coastal areas and deltas, such as West Bengal, Assam, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Kerala, and with irrigation in Punjab and Haryana.

Q3. What is primitive subsistence farming?

It is slash and burn agriculture practised on small patches with primitive tools like hoe, dao and digging sticks using family labour. Farmers grow food crops for their families and shift to new land when fertility falls; productivity is low.

Q4. Distinguish between intensive subsistence and commercial farming.

Intensive subsistence farming is labour-intensive farming on small holdings in densely populated areas, mainly to feed the family. Commercial farming uses high doses of modern inputs like HYV seeds and fertilisers to produce crops for sale.

Q5. Why are pulses grown in rotation with other crops?

Pulses (except arhar) are leguminous crops that fix nitrogen from the air and restore soil fertility. They also need less moisture. So growing them in rotation keeps the soil fertile.

Q6. What are the geographical conditions for cotton?

Cotton grows in the drier parts of the black cotton soil of the Deccan. It needs high temperature, light rainfall or irrigation, 210 frost-free days and bright sunshine, and takes 6 to 8 months to mature.

Q7. What is plantation agriculture? Give two features.

It is commercial farming in which a single crop is grown on a large area. It uses capital-intensive inputs and migrant labour, and its produce is used as raw material in industries, so it links agriculture and industry.

Q8. What was the Bhoodan-Gramdan movement?

Started by Vinoba Bhave, it encouraged landowners to donate land to the landless. At Pochampally, Ram Chandra Reddy gave 80 acres to 80 landless villagers (Bhoodan); some zamindars gave whole villages (Gramdan). It is called the Bloodless Revolution.

Long Answer Questions

Q1. Suggest the initiatives taken by the government to ensure increase in agricultural

Institutional reforms after Independence: consolidation of holdings, cooperation and abolition of zamindari; land reform was the focus of the First Five Year Plan.

The Green Revolution (HYV seeds, fertilisers, irrigation) and the White Revolution (Operation Flood) in the 1960s and 1970s.

A comprehensive land development programme in the 1980s and 1990s with crop insurance against drought, flood, cyclone, fire and disease.

Grameen banks, cooperative societies and banks giving loans at lower interest; Kisan Credit Card and Personal Accident Insurance Scheme.

Weather bulletins and agricultural programmes on radio and television.

Minimum support price, remunerative and procurement prices to protect farmers from middlemen.

Q2. Describe the three cropping seasons of India with examples.

Rabi crops are sown in winter (October–December) and harvested in summer (April–June); examples are wheat, barley, peas, gram and mustard, grown mainly in Punjab, Haryana, HP, J&K, Uttarakhand and UP. Western cyclones and the Green Revolution help them.

Kharif crops are grown with the onset of monsoon and harvested in September–October; examples are paddy, maize, jowar, bajra, tur, moong, urad, cotton, jute, groundnut and soyabean.

Assam, West Bengal and Odisha grow three crops of paddy: Aus, Aman and Boro.

Zaid is a short summer season between rabi and kharif; crops include watermelon, muskmelon, cucumber, vegetables and fodder.

Sugarcane takes almost a year to grow.

Q3. Compare the geographical conditions required for rice and wheat.

Rice is a kharif crop; wheat is a rabi crop.

Rice needs high temperature above 25°C and high humidity; wheat needs a cool growing season and bright sunshine at ripening.

Rice needs annual rainfall above 100 cm; wheat needs 50–75 cm evenly distributed.

Rice grows in alluvial plains, coastal areas and deltas; wheat grows in the Ganga-Satluj plains and the black soil region of the Deccan.

Rice states include West Bengal, UP, Punjab and Assam; wheat states include Punjab, Haryana, UP, MP, Bihar and Rajasthan.

MCQs with Answers

1. Which describes a system where a single crop is grown on a large area?(a) Shifting agriculture (b) Plantation agriculture (c) Horticulture (d) Intensive agricultureAnswer: (b) Plantation agriculture

2. Which one of the following is a rabi crop?(a) Rice (b) Gram (c) Millets (d) CottonAnswer: (b) Gram

4. Slash and burn agriculture is called ‘Kumari’ in(a) Western Ghats (b) Jharkhand (c) Odisha (d) ManipurAnswer: (a) Western Ghats

5. Aus, Aman and Boro are three crops of(a) Wheat (b) Paddy (c) Jute (d) TeaAnswer: (b) Paddy

6. India is the second largest producer of sugarcane after(a) China (b) USA (c) Brazil (d) CubaAnswer: (c) Brazil

7. Which crop requires 210 frost-free days?(a) Jute (b) Tea (c) Cotton (d) RubberAnswer: (c) Cotton

8. Rubber requires annual rainfall of more than(a) 75 cm (b) 100 cm (c) 150 cm (d) 200 cmAnswer: (d) 200 cm

9. The Arabica variety of coffee was initially brought from(a) Brazil (b) Yemen (c) Ethiopia (d) KenyaAnswer: (b) Yemen

10. The Bhoodan movement was initiated by(a) Mahatma Gandhi (b) Vinoba Bhave (c) Jawaharlal Nehru (d) Ram Chandra ReddyAnswer: (b) Vinoba Bhave

Quick Revision Points

- Two-thirds of India’s population is engaged in agriculture.
- Farming types: primitive subsistence (slash and burn), intensive subsistence, commercial (plantation).
- Shifting cultivation names: jhumming (North-east), Pamlou (Manipur), Dipa (Bastar), Kumari (Western Ghats), Podu (AP).
- Rabi: Oct–Dec to Apr–Jun; kharif: monsoon to Sep–Oct; zaid: summer.
- Rice: >25°C, >100 cm; India second after China.
- Wheat: cool, 50–75 cm; Ganga-Satluj plains and Deccan.
- Jowar third most important food crop; ragi rich in iron and calcium.
- Maize: 21–27°C, old alluvium.
- Pulses: India largest producer and consumer; nitrogen fixing.
- Sugarcane: 21–27°C, 75–100 cm; second after Brazil.
- Groundnut: Gujarat top (2019–20); oilseeds 12% of cropped area.
- Tea: Assam, Darjeeling; second after China. Coffee: Arabica from Yemen; Baba Budan Hills.
- Rubber: >200 cm, >25°C, Kerala.
- Cotton: black soil, 210 frost-free days; jute: golden fibre, West Bengal.
- Reforms: land reform, Green and White Revolutions, crop insurance, KCC, PAIS, MSP.
- Bhoodan-Gramdan: Vinoba Bhave, Pochampally, 80 acres.

Chapter Summary

Agriculture is the backbone of India’s economy. Farming ranges from primitive subsistence slash and burn cultivation, known by different local names, to intensive subsistence farming in crowded areas and commercial and plantation farming using modern inputs. India has three cropping seasons: rabi, kharif and zaid.

Major crops include rice, wheat, millets, maize, pulses, sugarcane, oilseeds, tea, coffee,

Exam Tips and PYQ Pattern

- The crop table is the most scoring part: learn temperature, rainfall, soil and states for each crop.
- NCERT MCQs: plantation agriculture, gram as a rabi crop, pulses as leguminous crops.
- Short questions often ask conditions for tea, rice, wheat, cotton, rubber and sugarcane.
- Map work: identify major rice, wheat, sugarcane, tea, coffee, rubber, cotton and jute areas.
- For the reforms question, list at least five government initiatives.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are rabi and kharif crops?

Rabi crops are sown in winter and harvested in summer, like wheat and gram. Kharif crops are sown with the monsoon and harvested in September–October, like rice, cotton and jute.

What is plantation agriculture?

Commercial farming in which a single crop such as tea, coffee or rubber is grown on a large area using capital-intensive inputs.

Which crop is called the golden fibre?

Jute.

Is Agriculture in the 2026-27 syllabus?

Yes, it is Chapter 4 of the Class 10 Geography book for 2026-27, including map work on crops.

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Conclusion

Agriculture explains how India grows its food and raw materials and how farmers can be supported through reforms. Master the crop table, the cropping seasons and the reforms list, and practise the crop map work to score well in this chapter.

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Author Bio: Written and reviewed by the Nextoper Editorial Team, a group of CBSE social science educators who build chapter notes directly from the NCERT textbook and past board paper patterns.

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