

JAPAN

Q) Discuss the chief characteristics of Japanese Agriculture.

Ans Introduction → Japan is a 'miracle' of modern times. During the last half a century, it has emerged as an economic superpower & industrial giant. But Japan by no means provides ideal conditions for agriculture.

⇒ Reason for Japan's underdevelopment in Agriculture →

- 1) Steep & densely wooded mountainous terrain.
- 2) Poor quality of soil
- 3) Highly dissected landscapes
- 4) Swift & torrential streams not building any flood plain or delta.

(Due to these reasons, only 14% of the total land remains for cultivation. But in spite of these odds, by most standards its agriculture can be called one of the most efficient in world in terms of the use it makes of its available resources.)

Although due to rapid growth of urban industries after World War II, no. of people engaged in agriculture has declined yet due to government's policy to provide incentives to farmers to grow more variety & quantity of crops, Japan's agriculture has maintained a recognizable position in world.

⇒ Chief characteristics of Japanese agriculture →

A. Physical characteristics →

- 1) Farms are small & dissected.
- 2) winds are cold & dry bringing rain in steel form.
- 3) climate is humid & have marked seasonal changes.

B. Characteristics of the mode of farming →

- 1) Terrace farming → Due to presence of mts, farming is done by making terrace on it.
- 2) Multiple cropping → In this type of farming due to long growing season, one crop after another is grown on the same field leaving no time for the land to remain empty.

eg! - After rice, paddy is grown in spring!

3) **Interculture** → In this type, two or more crops are grown at same time, in same field at adjacent strips of land.
eg:- Alternative row, sweet potato, beans, cabbage, onion, wheat & maize are grown side by side.

4) **Shifting cultivation** → In this mode, after cultivation a land is left empty to let it regain its natural fertility. Mostly done in mountainous or forested regions. Eg:- Kyushu.

5) **Intensive farming** → In Japan, cultivation is done by scientific methodology to increase per hectare production which includes -
1) use of modern techniques
2) use of heavy fertilizers & insecticides etc.

6) **change in size & ownership of cultivated land** →

C. other characteristics → Perhaps more than any other nation, a characteristic feature of Jap. agriculture is an intensive use of organic & inorganic fertilizers - such as bean, oil cake, bone meal, seaweed, & fish cake.

⇒ Japan is mainly divided in 4 agricultural regions →

1) Eastern Hokkaido & North-central Honshu

2) Western Hokkaido

3) West-central Honshu

4) Eastern Honshu, Shikoku, Kyushu

Subregions → a) Kinki lowland b) Nobe & Nagoya plain

1) **Eastern Hokkaido & North-central Honshu** →

a) **phy. characteristics** → Extended valley areas & coniferous forests & receives small amounts of precipitation.

b) **Main occupation** → cattle raising, mixed farming & dairy

c) **Main crops** → Barley & cultivation of mulberry trees

d) **Main industries** → Paper & pulp industry. This area is also famous for inter sports.

2) Western Hokkaido →

- a) Phy. characteristics → Lower hilly area & comparatively large farms extended to 6-8 acres.
- b) Main occupation → Farming
- c) Main crops → Rice, beans, oats, potato & paddy
- d) Main feature → short growing season of 4 months.

3) West-Central Honshu →

- a) Phy. features → (Coastal lowlands filled with alluvial soil.)
Western mt. slopes act as major topographical barrier for cold winter winds.
- b) Main occupation → Farming
- c) Main crops → Rice, barley, beans & fruits, mulberry
- d) " features → i) Agriculturally most imp. zones
ii) Small & scattered farms.
iii) Double cropping of rice is done followed by beans & barley.

4) Eastern Honshu, Shikoku & Kyushu → Agriculture is dominated by 3 lowland plains which are -

- a) Kinki lowland
- b) Nobi & Nagoya plain
- c) Kanto plain

- a) Kinki lowland → Main features :- i) long coastal strip extending to 3 hundred miles in length.
ii) Abundant rain & generally mild climate helps the farmers to raise 2-3 crops annually.
Small farms near main industrialised centres like Kyoto, Osaka & Kobe.
Main crops :- Paddy, wheat, barley, tea, wet rice & oranges are summer crops while wheat & barley winter crops.

b) **Nobi / Nagoya plain** → main features: i) Very dense, having area - 3000 sq. miles & population - more than 7 million.
 ii) Lowland regions have alluvial soil.
 Main crops: → Paddy, wheat, barley, beans, oranges, tea, sweet potatoes & mulberry trees.

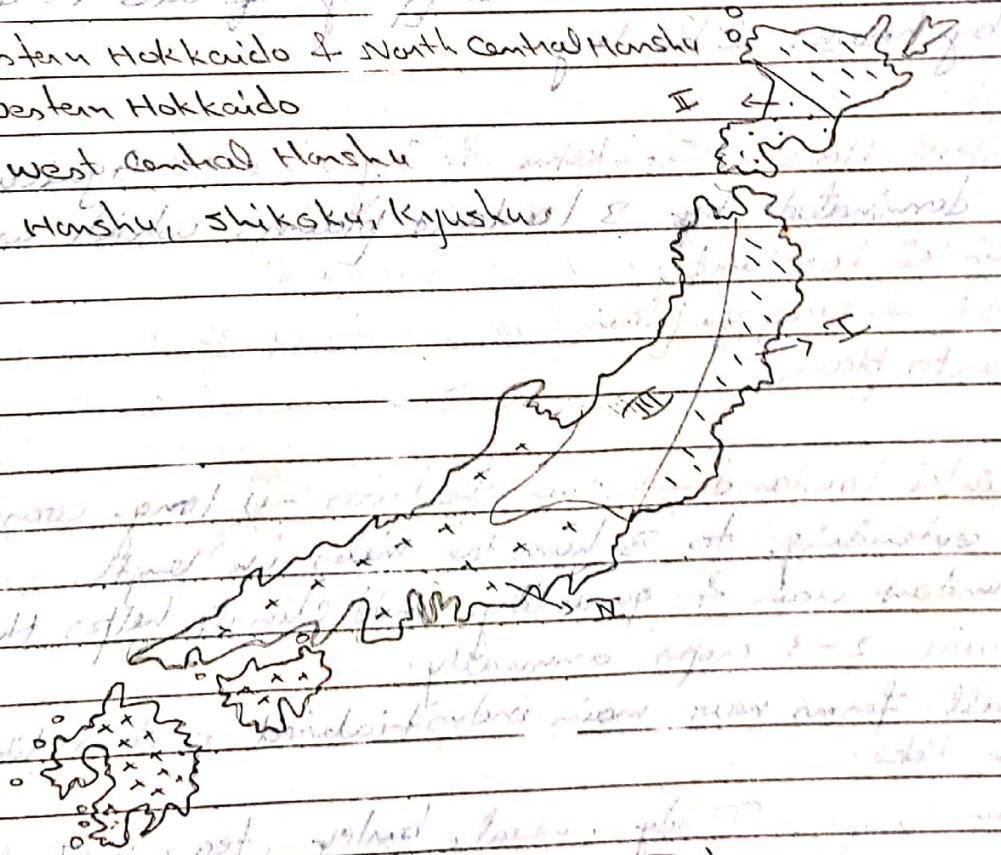
c) **Kanto plain** → Main features: i) Most imp. in economic terms.
 ii) Highly dense as 22 million people reside in an area of 500 sq. miles.
 iii) Two levels of plain caused by upliftment & depression.
 iv) Upper level - alluvial soil & lower level - volcanic soil.
 v) Monsoon comes in winter season mainly.
 Main Crops: → Summer crops - Millet, soyabean, green vegetables, sweet potatoes. Mulberry crops are grown on upland terraces.
 Main industry: → Silk industry - 1/4th of total Japan's silk is produced here.

I → Eastern Hokkaido & North Central Honshu

II → Western Hokkaido

III → West Central Honshu

IV → Honshu, Shikoku, Kyushu



Agricultural Region of Japan