

5 Agriculture and von Thünen – Part 1

— Answers

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Work through these after you have tried the questions yourself.

5.1 Benefit: much higher yields, which reduced famine in parts of Asia. Cost: dependence on fertiliser, pesticide and irrigation, which depleted water and disadvantaged farmers who could not afford the inputs.

5.2 Intensive agriculture applies a large amount of labour or capital to a small area; extensive agriculture applies little to a large area.

5.3 Its produce is highly perishable and costly to transport, so it must reach the market quickly; because it also yields a high value per unit area it can afford the high land rent nearest the market.

5.4 It assumes a single market on a flat, uniform plain with one transport mode — modern refrigerated transport and multiple competing markets weaken all of these.

5.5 A single variety grown over a large area shares the same vulnerability, so one disease or pest can destroy the whole crop; it also depletes the same soil nutrients each season.