**Farming as a System**

Just like industry, farming can also be looked at as a system with inputs, processes and outputs. In farming, physical (natural) and human impacts are normally separated.

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| **Human Inputs:** Things that are built or made by humans and added to a farm. | **Physical Inputs:** Natural things that are either found on a farm or are added to a farm. | **Processes:** The events that take place on a farm to turn inputs into outputs. | **Outputs:** Things that are produced on a farm and are often sold. |
| * Labour (workers) * Machinery (tractors, combine harvesters, etc.) * Buildings (barns, silos) * Seed to grow crops * Animal feed * Fertlisers and pesticides * Calves, Chicks, piglets, etc. (small animals bought to rear and later sell) | * **Soil:** If soil is fertile then arable farming is likely to take place, if it is less fertile and can only support grass then pastoral farming is likely to take place. * **Precipitation:** Water that helps water the crops. * **Sun:** Energy to help plants and animals to grow. * **Alluvium:** This is mineral and nutrient rich sediment (load) that is transported by rivers and deposited on floodplains in times of flood. * **Flood water:** Floods not only bring alluvium but also water to keep the ground moist. * **Relief:** If land is flat then it is easier for arable farming to take place. If land is hilly then pastoral farming is more likely to take place. * **Drainage:** It is important that fields are well drained so they are not permanently flooded. Apart from rice most crops and animals can't survive being permanently submerged. | * **Rearing:** This is the caring for and support of animals to maturity. * **Shearing:** The removing of wool from animals, normally sheep. * **Ploughing:** Turning over the land and preparing it for planting seeds. * **Fertilising:** Adding chemicals to the soil to try and make it more fertile. * **Weeding:** Removing alien plants (plants other than the crops your are growing) from crop fields. * **Irrigating:** Watering the land. * **Cultivating:** To care for and grow crops. * **Harvesting:** The collection of crops at the end of the growing season. * **Slaughtering:** The killing of animals once they have reached maturity and are ready to sell. * **Planting:** Putting seeds into the ground. | * Profits * Meat products (lamb, beef, chicken, pork) * Wool (normally from sheep) * Milk (normally from cows) * Waste e.g. animal excrement * Methane (mainly from cows) * Crops (corn, wheat, carrots, potatoes, etc.) |