**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.)
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