

# **Chapter Eighteen**

## **Introduction To Agriculture**

### **Agriculture:**

- This refers to the growing of crops and the raising of animals for sale or for consumption, i.e. to eat them. -
- The early men who lived many years ago did not practice agriculture. -
- This means that they did not make farms or keep animals. -
- They therefore roamed in the forest looking for food.
- They also killed some of the animals they came across, and ate them as food. --
- On certain days, they had a lot of food, but on other days they had none.
- This made them go hungry and some of them even died. -
- Sometimes they were killed by some of the animals they tried to kill. -
- In order to get food always, the early man started growing some of the food they came across near their homes. - They also
- started keeping some of the animals they caught near their homes. s- This was
- the beginning of agriculture or farming.

### **The importance of agriculture:**

- Agriculture is very important because of the following reasons:
  - (1) It provides work for many people.
  - (2) It brings money to people such as farmers.
  - (3) It provides us with raw materials such as cotton.

### **Selection of land or a site for the making of a farm:**

- (i) The site you choose for the making of your farm must be flat or levelled.
- (ii) The soil at this site must be very rich in plant nutrients.
- (iii) The site must be near or close to the home of the farmer.
- (iv) The site must also be near the market.
- (v) You must also choose a site which is near a water source, such as a river or a lake.

## **Land tenure system:**

- This refers to the conditions or terms, under which a person can acquire or become the owner of a land.

- The types

of land tenure systems we have are:

### **(a) Inheritance:**

- In this type, a person becomes the owner of a land after he has been given the land by one of his ancestors.

- This ancestor may be an uncle, a father or a grandfather.

### **(b) Leasehold:**

- In this type, the owner of a land gives it to a person to use it for a number of years.

- The person then becomes the owner of the land for that number of years.

### **(c) Freehold title:**

- In this type, a person becomes the owner of a land after buying the land.

## **Propagation in plants:**

- Propagation is the same as reproduction, and a plant can be reproduced sexually or asexually.

### **Sexual propagation or reproduction in plants:**

- This is also known as seed propagation.

Many crops are propagated or reproduced by using seeds.

- Examples of such crops are pawpaw, mango and maize.

### **Asexual propagation (reproduction) in plants:**

- This is also referred to as vegetative propagation.

- In asexual propagation, we use certain parts of the plant to reproduce a new plant.

- In this case, we do not use seed.

- Some of the parts of a plant we use for vegetative propagation are stem tubers, suckers and stem cuttings.

### **Stem tubers:**

- Plants such as the yam and the sweet potato are propagated using tubers. - The yam or the sweet potato is cut into pieces and put inside the soil. - If these pieces contain buds or eyes, they will grow into new plants.

### **Suckers:**

- These are smaller plants that grow from the root or the main stem of a plant, such as the plantain or the banana plant. - Plants such as the banana and the plantain are reproduced using suckers.

### **Stem cutting:**

- This is what is used to propagate plants such as cassava and sugar cane.  
- The stem of these plants are cut into pieces. -  
When these pieces called cuttings are planted in the soil, they will grow into new plants.

### **Harvesting of crops:**

- Crops must be harvested when they grow to a certain stage.-  
If harvesting is delayed, then the number of pests and diseases which attack the crops will increase. -

### **Food processing:**

- This refers to the changing of crops or raw animal produce, into tasty, rich and safe food products. - By  
means of food processing, pineapple is changed or processed into pineapple