



ANSWER KEY

Exercise: 1

Instructions: We depend heavily on agriculture for our food and for many other resources. Agriculture in the Western states depends heavily on the availability of water. The soil, weather and other characteristics of an area are very important when deciding what type of farming should be done. Use the information you have obtained in class and from the Digital Atlas to answer the following questions to the best of your ability. Be sure to click on the *Agriculture and Irrigation* Map and explore the major products of Idaho.

1. If you are going to be a farmer, what types of factors would you have to consider for the land and area on which you would like to farm? -Factors that must be considered include rainfall, climate, soil conditions, amount of trees or rocks, problem wildlife, and irrigation.
2. Before farming, what was Idaho's leading economic activity? -Before farming, Idaho's leading economic activity was mining.
3. How did the "captive market" help farmers in the late 1800s and early 1900s? -It was not easy to ship goods into the area, so farmers could set their price and there was not that much other competition that farmers had to deal with.
4. a) What is "dryland farming" and how did it help farming in the southern area of Idaho? -Dryland farming is a method used in areas that do not get much rain, like much of Southern Idaho.

b) Why was it necessary? -In this method crops are sometimes planted every other year and in off years the land was left unplanted in order to conserve moisture.
5. Why was farming easier in northern Idaho compared to southern Idaho? -Northern Idaho receives more rain and the land is more fertile in some ways. Irrigation is not necessary in Northern Idaho fields.
6. What did the Carey Act do for agriculture in southern Idaho? -The Carey act of 1894 offered 1 million acres to anyone who would be able to irrigate the land. This act encouraged farming and irrigation. By 1910, much of Idaho was under irrigation.
7. What are the seven major agricultural products of Idaho? -The seven major agricultural products of Idaho are barley, beef, trout, sugar beets, sheep, potatoes, and apples. Idaho also competes with California for the production of the largest amount of alfalfa seed.
8. For which of these agricultural products is Idaho the nation's #1 producer? -Idaho is the nation's number one producer of potatoes and trout.
9. What variety is Idaho's "famous potato"? -Idaho's "famous potato" is the Russet Burbank, which is a variety that originally arose in 1873.
10. Why are some areas of Idaho ideal for aquaculture? -The Thousand Springs area of Magic Valley is ideal because the water comes straight from the Snake River Plain aquifer where it is purified and cooled to 58 degrees, which is ideal for raising rainbow trout.