# Fields to Cities

How farming regions shape settlements and food routes

**WG.C.5.1** "Analyze settlement patterns associated with major agricultural regions and linkages among regions of food production and consumption."

NAME _____ DATE _____

## 1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Underline where people or businesses cluster in each farming region. Number the places food passes through on its way from a farm to a consumer.

### Where Food Grows, Where People Gather

1 On the Great Plains, broad, relatively level fields and machinery let farmers grow wheat across large areas. Because a small crew can work many acres, farmhouses are often far apart. Small towns tend to gather around grain elevators, where growers store wheat before shipping it. Rail lines helped many of these towns develop by connecting elevators to flour mills and distant markets. Wheat moves from fields to elevators, then often by rail to mills that turn it into flour. A family buying bread in a faraway city depends on those farms, storage sites, and transportation links.

2 California's Central Valley has a different settlement pattern. Warm growing seasons and irrigation support fruit and vegetable farms, including crops that need careful picking and packing. Farmworkers and food-processing businesses often live or operate near fields, irrigation supplies, and roads. Some valley towns have packing houses and warehouses that employ people beyond the harvest season. Since fresh produce can spoil, refrigerated trucks carry packed crops to city markets and grocery distribution centers. Water systems make intensive farming possible in this dry-summer region, while highways connect its concentrated farming towns to consumers well beyond California.

3 These two regions connect to cities in different ways. Wheat can be stored for months, so grain elevators and rail shipments help bridge long distances between farms and mills. Fresh produce needs faster handling and cooling, so packing facilities and highways matter more for its trip to stores. A large city such as New York receives food from many producing regions rather than relying only on nearby farms. Its shoppers support jobs in farming towns, mills, warehouses, and trucking. If a major route closes, deliveries may be delayed, showing that settlement patterns and food supply depend on connections between regions.

## 2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do Great Plains farmhouses and towns differ in where they are located? Explain how wheat farming helps create that pattern.

2. How do dry summers and irrigation help shape where Central Valley farmworkers and food businesses locate?

3. Trace wheat from a Great Plains field to a family buying bread in a distant city. Name two places it passes through and explain what happens at each.

4. If a shipping route closes, why might fresh produce be affected sooner than wheat? Use the passage's food routes to explain.

## 3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a new region that grows apples on cool hills beside a river, 300 miles from a large city. In four or five sentences, predict where workers and food businesses might cluster, give two geographic or transport reasons, and trace how apples could reach city consumers.

ANSWER KEY

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HIGH SCHOOL · WG.C.5.1

## PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline where people or businesses cluster in each farming region. Number the places food passes through on its way from a farm to a consumer. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

## PART 2 · ANSWERS

| # | QUESTION | ANSWER |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | How do Great Plains farmhouses and towns differ in where they are located? Explain how wheat farming helps create that pattern. | **Farmhouses are often far apart because small crews farm large areas. Towns gather around grain elevators where growers store wheat for shipment.** |
| 2 | How do dry summers and irrigation help shape where Central Valley farmworkers and food businesses locate? | **Irrigation makes farming possible during dry summers, so workers and food businesses locate near fields and irrigation supplies.** |
| 3 | Trace wheat from a Great Plains field to a family buying bread in a distant city. Name two places it passes through and explain what happens at each. | **Wheat goes to a grain elevator for storage, then to a mill where it becomes flour before reaching bread buyers in a distant city.** |
| 4 | If a shipping route closes, why might fresh produce be affected sooner than wheat? Use the passage's food routes to explain. | **Fresh produce can spoil and needs quick handling and refrigerated transport. Wheat can be stored for months in grain elevators while shipments are delayed.** |

## PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Orchard workers might live in a town on flatter land beside the river rather than on steep slopes. A packing and cold-storage center could cluster near the town's main road, making it easier to ship apples soon after harvest. Trucks could carry the packed apples to warehouses near the city. Stores would receive apples from those warehouses for city shoppers.

Accept other plausible settlement locations and food routes when students connect them to the stated hills, river, distance, or transportation needs. Question 3 need not name every step between flour and bread.