

Lesson B

Industrialization of Agriculture



Farms, Then and Now



Photo credits: Carl G. von Iwonski. John Mack Farragher. Yeoman farm families. *One Out of Many: A History of the American People*, Pearson, 2011.

Dan Davison. John Deere combine and tractor at work. Wikimedia Commons. Creative Commons CC BY 2.0.

Photo credit: Grave chamber of an Egyptian public official, circa 1250 BCE. Photo public domain.

Agriculture Timeline

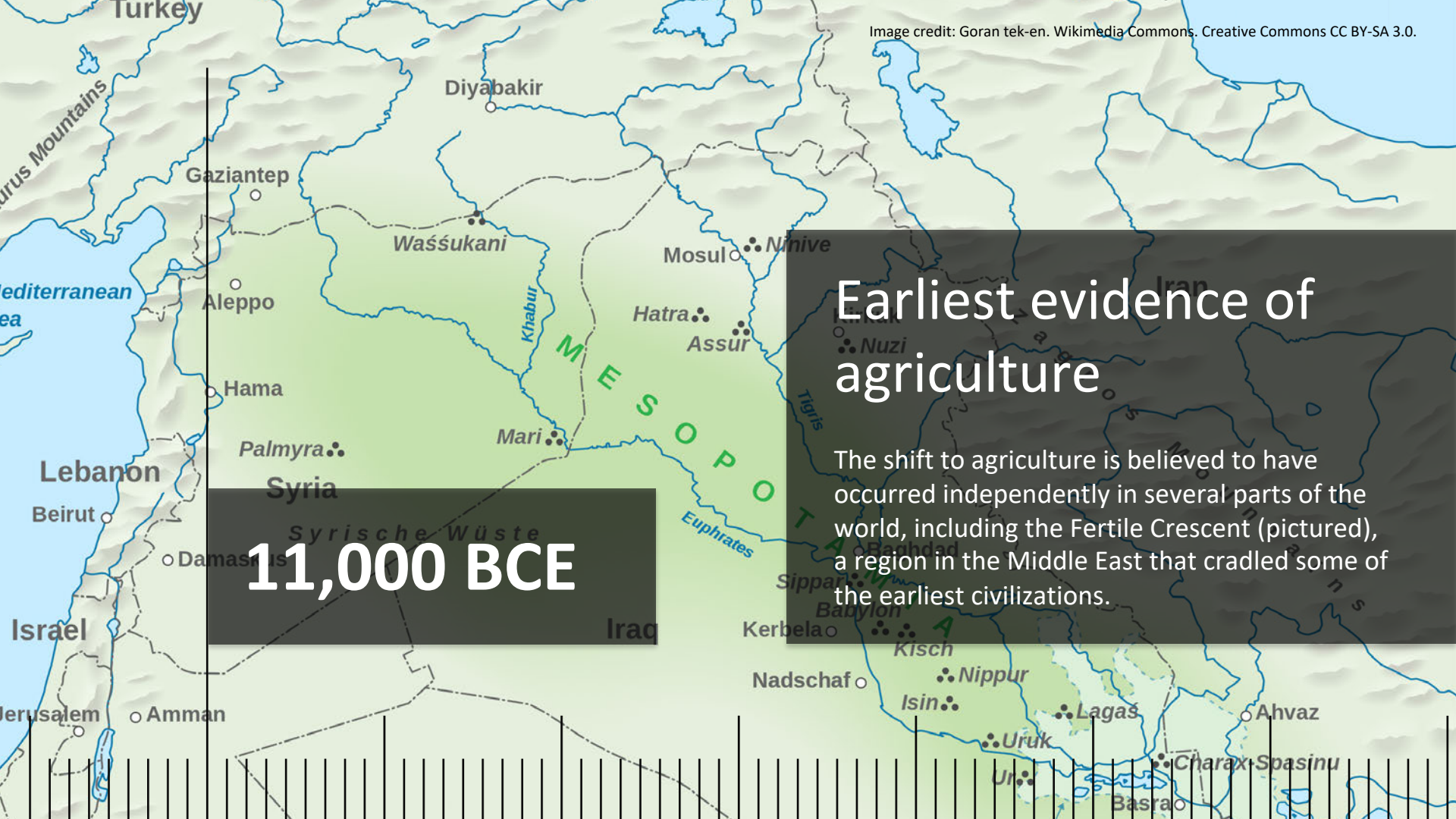


A photograph of two San people in Southern Africa. On the left, a man with a weathered face and a slight smile looks towards the camera. On the right, a woman is shown in profile, blowing air through a bundle of dry sticks or grass that she is holding. The background is a soft-focus natural setting. Two semi-transparent dark rectangular boxes are overlaid on the image, containing text. At the bottom of the image, there is a series of vertical white lines of varying heights, resembling a stylized bar chart or a timeline.

194,000 BCE

Earliest evidence of Homo sapiens

For the vast majority of human history, food was acquired through hunting and gathering. Some peoples, such as the San (pictured), who live in Southern Africa, still follow a hunter-gatherer lifestyle.



Earliest evidence of agriculture

The shift to agriculture is believed to have occurred independently in several parts of the world, including the Fertile Crescent (pictured), a region in the Middle East that cradled some of the earliest civilizations.

11,000 BCE

An ancient Egyptian wall painting from the tomb of Menna, showing a scene of domestication. On the left, a man in a white kilt and a woman in a white headscarf and dark dress are walking through a field of yellow grain. The man is holding a long wooden staff. In the center, a large brown bull with prominent grey horns is walking. To the right, another man in a white kilt and a woman in a white headscarf and dark dress are walking. The woman is holding a long wooden staff. The background is a light beige color with some faint outlines of plants.

6,000 BCE

**Most species of
farm animals
domesticated**

A world map with a blue background. The continents are color-coded: North America is yellow, South America is pink, Europe is olive green, Africa is orange, and Asia is light green. Australia is dark grey. Two black rectangular boxes with white text are overlaid on the map. The first box is over South America and says '5,000 BCE'. The second box is over Africa and Asia and says 'Agriculture practiced on every major continent except Australia'.

North America

5,000 BCE

Africa

Europe

Asia

Agriculture practiced on
every major continent
except Australia

A green tractor is pulling a white cylindrical ammonia tank across a field of harvested crops. The tank has red text that reads "CAUTION AMMONIA" and a red diamond-shaped hazard symbol with the letters "FS". The background shows a rural landscape with green fields, a brown field, and a blue sky with scattered clouds.

1900s

Widespread adoption of industrial agriculture

Synthetic nitrogen fertilizers (pictured), introduced in the 1900s, have been credited with providing the lion's share of the world's food over the 20th century. Pesticides and monocultures are also hallmarks of industrial agriculture.