

Iowa agriculture

The Ripple Effect

When Iowa farmers grow crops and livestock, they do more than just produce food. Other things happen as a result of agriculture. That's called a "ripple effect." Agriculture creates food that must be transported, processed and sold. And many things are necessary to raise food. It's a good estimate that one out of every 15 jobs in Iowa is directly or indirectly associated with the soybean industry. (Maybe you have a friend who works in a fast-food restaurant.)

Look at the items on the left. Guess the "ripple effect" that happened because of what the farmer did. Write the letter of the ripple effect by its matching statement.

- _____ 1. Mary Duncanson grows corn on her farm in Ottumwa and needs to buy seed.
- _____ 2. Dan Hunter has a dairy farm and needs someone to pick up his milk every day.
- _____ 3. American farmers produce more goods than what Americans need.
- _____ 4. Jeff Wilson has a hog farm and needs a new software program for his computer to help market hogs.
- _____ 5. To plant her soybean crop, Nancy Kelly needs to get a loan to buy seed.

The Ripple Effect

- A. A computer company develops software programs especially for the farm.
- B. A city bank has a special department for handling agriculture loans.
- C. A truck driver picks up farm products from the farm.
- D. A new store opened in town so farmers can buy seed, feed and other supplies.
- E. The United States ships food to other countries in the world.

Soybean History

An ancient Chinese legend tells that the wild soybeans nutritious properties were first discovered by a band of traveling merchants.

In ancient times, soybeans were also valued for their medicinal properties. The first written record of soybean cultivation appeared in 2838 B.C. in the "materia Medica" by Chinese Emperor Sheng-Nung.

In the 19th century, agricultural experiment stations in the United States began working with soybeans. By the turn of the century, many American farmers were growing the crop for forage.

World War II put traditional sources of protein and edible oils in short supply, spurring the American soybean industry to new levels of production.



2838 B.C.

1500 B.C.



1700

1800



1990

Soybeans were first cultivated in northern China. Their use spread into Japan, Korea and the rest of Southeast Asia.



Soybeans were brought to America in the early 19th century as ballast in trading ships returning from the East.



In 1904, the famous American chemist George Washington Carver discovered that soybeans are a valuable source of protein and oil.



In the 1950s, soybean meal became available as an ingredient in livestock and poultry feed, and U.S. soybean production boomed. Today, the United States produces about 50% of the world's supply - and soybean oil and protein products are found on every shelf of the supermarket.