

STUDY MATERIALS FOR BA (HONS) ECONOMICS

PART – 3

PAPER- 6

PAPER NAME – ECONOMIC HISTORY OF UK  
USA USSR AND JAPAN

TOPIC – AGRICULTURE REVOLUTION IN UNITED  
KINGDOM

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## **Agriculture revolution in England (1500-1850)**

The Agricultural Revolution, the unprecedented increase in agricultural production in Britain between the mid-17th and late 19th centuries, was linked to such new agricultural practices as crop rotation, selective breeding, and a more productive use of arable land. Agricultural output grew faster than the population over the century to 1770 and thereafter productivity remained among the highest in the world. This increase in the food supply contributed to the rapid growth of population in England and Wales, from 5.5 million in 1700 to over 9 million by 1801, although domestic production gave way to food imports in the 19th century as population more than tripled to over 32 million. The rise in productivity accelerated the decline of the agricultural share of the labour force, adding to the urban workforce on which industrialization depended. The Agricultural Revolution has therefore been cited as a cause of the Industrial Revolution. However, historians also continue to dispute whether the developments leading to the unprecedented agricultural growth can be seen as “a revolution,” since the growth was, in fact, a result of a series of significant changes over a her long period of time. Consequently, the question of when exactly such a revolution took place and of what it consisted remains open.

### **Causes of agriculture revolution:-**

- 1- The Increased availability of farmland
- 2- A favourable climate
- 3- More livestock
- 4- Improve crop yields

### **Main features of agriculture revolution:-**

- Certain practices that contributed to a more productive use of land intensified, such as converting some pasture land into arable land and recovering fen land and pastures.
- The four-field rotation system allowed farmers to restore soil fertility and restore some of the plant nutrients removed with the crops.
- One of the most important innovations of the Agricultural Revolution was the development of the Norfolk four-course rotation, which greatly increased crop and livestock yields by improving soil fertility and reducing fallow
- An important factor of the Agricultural Revolution was the invention of new tools and advancement of old ones, including the plough, seed drill, and threshing machine, to improve the efficiency of agricultural operations.
- The mechanization and rationalization of agriculture was a key factor of the Agricultural Revolution. New tools were invented and old ones perfected to improve the efficiency of various agricultural operations.
- Enclosure, or the process that ended traditional rights on common land formerly held in the open field system and restricted the use of land to the owner, is one of the causes of the Agricultural Revolution and a key factor behind the labour migration from rural areas to gradually industrializing cities.