

1203 – Brazilian Agriculture: From Industrial Megafarms to Intimate Minifarms

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Learning Objective	Discussion Prompts	Lesson Activities	Vocabulary
Students will learn how large-scale and small-scale farming in central Brazil differ in their environmental impact, practices, and role in preserving traditional knowledge.	Megafarms provide the country with its trade surplus and global power, while the Minifarms provide the daily calories and cultural heritage of the population. Which side of this "Agricultural Duality" do you find more vital to a country's long-term stability: the ability to feed the world or the ability to feed its own neighbors? The minifarms rely on family members rather than heavy machinery. They are the backbone of rural employment. What is your opinion about the children farming along with the rest of the family. Justify your response.	In a megafarm, wealth is measured in dollars. For the Krahô, wealth is measured in how many different types of seeds they have. Which type of wealth is more likely to survive a climate change crisis? Write an essay examining which type of wealth is more likely to survive a climate change crisis. Include the meaning of wealth to you. If a scientist takes a seed from a Krahô minifarm and uses its DNA to create a new, improved plant in a lab, who owns that new plant? The scientist, or the indigenous people who protected that seed for a thousand years? What information on the video supports your view? Write a solution for the possible dilemma. If a storm blocked the shipping routes from Brazil tomorrow, which parts of your breakfast would disappear, and which would stay? If you visited a farm in your county, would you see more 'high-tech' (drones, automated sprinklers) or 'high touch' (people picking fruit by hand, farmers talking to customers at a market)? Which approach makes you feel more connected to your food and why does it make a difference for the local consumer.	agroforestry agrottoxics cerrado cultural conservation food security megafarms minifarms monoculture savanna sustainable
Social Studies Standard:			
People, Places, & Environments: H, I	Adress the pros and cons of monoculture and polyculture. Which one is the best for the people of Brazil and why? Which one would benefit the rest of the world? How do Brazilian minifarms and megafarms compare to the farms in your area?		

Central Brazil is home to the world's largest farms, industrial agricultural landscapes with individual farms covering thousands of square miles. At the periphery, sequestered at the base of a rugged plateau are farms of smallholders who preserve ancient knowledge of seeds, crops and harvest. With the help of scientists, they resist the onslaught of megafarms and harvest their bounty with assistance from nature and hope that their practices will persevere forever.