



# Farming & the rural landscape

from the Esri GeoInquiries™ collection for Human Geography



Audience – Human geography

Time required – 15 minutes

URL: <http://esriurl.com/humanGeoInquiry10>

APHG: 1.B2. Students will analyze landscapes to understand human-environment relationships.

APHG: 5.A1. Students will investigate the connections between agricultural practices and the alteration of the natural environment.

- Students will identify differences in the distribution of arable land on a global scale.
- Students will use imagery to analyze differences in rural land use and the alteration of the natural environment.

## Where are the world's agricultural lands located?

→ Click the map URL above to start the map.

? What does arable mean?

→ Click on a country to reveal its pop-up.

? Using the World Agricultural Lands legend, which countries have over 60% arable land?

? Which country's data are surprising?

? How does Saudi Arabia increase its agricultural land?

? Which large countries have under 15% arable land?

? Why do Russia and Canada have low percentages?

## Where are agricultural lands in the United States?

? What is the percent of agricultural land in the United States?

? How has that percentage changed over time?

→ With the Details button underlined, click the button, Show Contents of Map (Content).

→ Check the box to the left of layer name, USA Land Cover (2011). Click the layer's name to see the legend.

→ Uncheck the layer, World Agricultural Lands.

? Which colors indicate farming?

→ Click the button, Bookmarks. Select United States.

? Where are large areas of farms located?

## How do rural landscapes within the United States differ?

- Click the button, Basemap. Select Imagery.
- Turn on the layer, USA Land Cover (2011).
- Click the button, Bookmarks. Select Kansas.

? What patterns do you observe?

- Toggle between the land cover and image layers.
- ? Does the land cover map confirm agricultural land use?

? What new crop category appears?

- Click the button, Bookmarks. Select Louisiana.
- ? What do you observe?

? What other land cover category is in this area?

### How does land use differ between rural and urban areas?

The Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge protects 112,000 acres of forested wetlands.

- Click the button, Bookmarks. Select Dismal Swamp 1.
- ? What do you observe?

- Click the button, Bookmarks. Select Dismal Swamp 2.
  - Zoom and pan the map.
- ? What do you see?

- Click the button, Bookmarks. Select Chesapeake.
- ? What do you observe?

### How has human action affected rural areas?

? How has irrigation affected rural areas?

? What are some possible negative aspects of the expansion of agriculture?

? How are cities changing rural areas?