

Teacher Manual

Definitions of Livelihood Systems

Webster's (1997) dictionary defines livelihood as "a means of support or subsistence" (p. 434).

Webster's (1997) dictionary defines a system as "a group of units so combined as to form a whole and to operate in unison" (p. 735).

A livelihood system is defined as the numerous bio-physical and socio-economic forces and factors that affect the family (Pomeroy, Gough, Baker, & Hildebrand, 2002).

Discuss and review answers with students.

What are some key components present in a livelihood system of the Southern High Plains?

Possible answers to stimulate discussion:

Cotton
Underground water
Family weather patterns
Specialty crops

Why are family decisions such a major component of all definitions of livelihood systems?

Possible answers to stimulate discussion:

Most farms in the Southern High Plains are family farms. The farm revolves around the family

What are some governmental and political issues that affect livelihood systems in the Southern High Plains?

Possible answers to stimulate discussion:

Commodity subsidies
Farm bill's insurance rates
Pesticide or herbicide regulations
Emergency disaster payments
Water issues
Imports and exports

What are some economic issues that affect the livelihood systems if the Southern High Plains?

Possible answers to stimulate discussion:

Commodity prices
Price supports
Natural gas prices
Diesel prices
Pesticide and herbicide prices
Equipment costs

What are some personal examples of how and why your family changed its farming system in the past?

What is your personal definition of a livelihood system for the Southern High Plains?

A Southern High Plains livelihood system is:

Write an essay describing why the family is the most important aspect of any farming system and why the family is the most important consideration in making decisions that affect the farm.