Harvest Time in Oregon

Oregon is an agricultural state. Agriculture is farming and ranching. The area west of the Cascade Mountains gets lots of rain during the fall, winter, and spring and has good soil. The Willamette Valley is famous for farming. Some of the main crops are grains, berries, nuts, grapes, hops, vegetables, and Christmas trees. A fairly new industry is growing nursery stock, trees, shrubs and lawns for homes. In Southern Oregon near Medford lots of fruit is grown. Hood River Valley, close to the Columbia Gorge and north of Mt. Hood, is famous for apples, pears, peaches, plums, cherries, and other tree fruits. Strawberries, raspberries, blue berries, and others are harvested in the summer in the Willamette Valley, and they make wonderful jams and pies. Many people go to U-pick farms to pick their own berries. Nuts that are grown here are walnuts and hazelnuts (also known as filberts). In the hills southwest of Portland are lots of vineyards and wineries. Oregon is now famous for wine, especially pinot noir. Grapes, tree fruit and nuts are usually harvested in the fall. Christmas trees are harvested in the fall and early winter and are shipped all over the world.

East of the Cascade Mountains is a different climate with little rain and colder winters. Ranching is widespread there. Cattle and sheep are grown on range land. Ranchers dig wells to get water and tap rivers to irrigate hay and wheat. Irrigation is important west of the mountains as well during our summer drought.

Timber harvest used to be an important industry in Oregon, but most of the forests available have been cut. Some timber is still shipped to Asia. Logs are used to make paper as well, but more paper products are now recycled.

Pumpkin patches and corn mazes are fun places to visit in October.

1. What is agriculture?

2. What makes the Willamette Valley good for it?

3. What are some crops that grow in the Willamette Valley?

4. What is nursery stock?

5. What crops are famous in the Hood River Valley?

6. What does U-pick mean?

7. What does harvest mean?

8. How is agriculture different east of the Cascade Mountains?

9. Why is the timber industry not as important as in the past?

10. Why do people go to a pumpkin patch and corn maze in October?