

South America

Learning Objective:

To find out about trade and industry in South America.

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Do you know what trade
is?

What does the word 'trade'
mean in terms of geography?



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Trade essentially is when you swap something for something else. In geography, 'trade' means buying and selling goods and services. This can mean trading within a village or trading with other countries across the world.

There are countless products that are traded across the world, such as fruits, vegetables, meat, wool, cotton, spices, mechanical and electronic goods, metals, minerals, timber and many other products.



Shipping containers like this one transport goods to different countries around the world.

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Countries trade products that they have in abundance for products that they are short of. For example, countries with tropical climates are able to grow a lot of coffee beans. Colder countries do not have the correct climate for growing coffee beans so the tropical countries export the coffee to the colder countries.



Arabica coffee bean fruit

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What products do you think South America produce a lot of that they can export to other countries? Why?

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South America's biggest industry is agriculture. This means that a lot of the money they make comes from selling things they grow on the land. Countries like Colombia and Ecuador, for example, export a lot of bananas because they have the perfect climate for growing bananas.



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If you look closely at the fruits and vegetables you buy in the supermarkets, you will see that lots of them come from South American countries. Grapes, avocados, citrus fruits, peppers and many others are all exported from South American countries, such as Argentina, Chile and Peru.

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South America is famous for its coffee and countries like Colombia, Peru and Brazil produce a large proportion of the world's coffee.

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Some parts of
South
America also
grow, harvest
and export
cacao beans.
It is these
beans which
make
chocolate!

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Cacao beans drying up in Cunday (Tres Esquinas), Colombia Author: Pipeafcr (wikimediacommons)

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Another product South America exports is timber, particularly from Brazil. Trees from the vast areas of forests are cut down to provide plywood, sawn lumber and decking for many other countries.

Many people are concerned at the rate at which the rainforests are being cut down for lumber and strict rules are in place to protect the forests. However, illegal logging is a big problem in Brazil.



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Another agricultural export from South America is cattle. Countries such as Uruguay produce a lot of dairy products, and Brazil and Argentina export lots of meat.

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The wine industry in Chile and Argentina is booming. The climate in these countries produces grapes that make world-class wine. Chile and Argentina are both in the top ten wine producing countries in the world.



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South America also produces lots of metal and metal ore that is exported around the world. Ecuador and Guyana, for example, extract a lot of gold. Chile is the world's biggest copper producer and Brazil exports a lot of metal ore.



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There are many other products that South America exports to other countries but the ones we have looked at are some of the biggest exporters. Here are some other examples:

Chile - salmon

Brazil - cars

Guyana - rice and sugar

Venezuela - petroleum

Ecuador - oil and shrimp

Bolivia - soybeans

Colombia - cotton and textiles

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Plenary:



Have a look at the pictures on the next slide. Which of these do you think could have come from South America? Which do you think would have come from other parts of the world?

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avocado



gold ring



strawberries



wool



wine



chocolate



bricks



paper

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