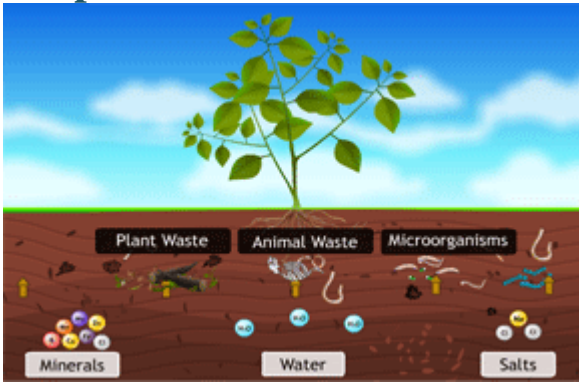


Crop Protection



Crop Protection

Agriculture is cultivating on large areas. **Manure** provides **soil** with **nutrients**. The **crop** has been **harvested** last week and is left fallow to **recover nutrients**. **Decomposition** occurs in **pits** dumped with **organic** waste with the help of **earthworms** and bacteria.

Fertilisers are **chemicals** used to add minerals like **potassium**, **phosphorus** and **nitrates** to the soil. The supply of **water** to crop is **irrigation**. The **frequency** of irrigation varies from **season** to season. Manure increases the water retention capacity of soil, making it **porous**. Plants contain nearly **90%** water, and need water for proper **development** of **flowers**, **fruits** and **seeds**. In dry conditions, seeds do not **germinate**. Water protects plants from **frostbite** and **hot air currents**. Water protects crops from hot air by **evaporation**, and **traps** cold breeze. **Traditional methods** of irrigation include **moat**, **chain pump**, **dhekli** and **rahat**, and need **animal** and **human labour** to draw water.

Wells, **tube wells**, **ponds**, **lakes**, **rivers**, **dams** and **canals** are sources of water. **Sprinklers** and **drip** systems are used when the soil is **sandy** or **uneven**. **Pumps** lift water and run on biogas or solar energy. During **summer**, it is difficult for farmers to water crops. **Weeds** are removed **manually** before they produce **flowers** and **seeds**. Weeds are controlled by **chemicals** such as 2, 4-D, a systemic **weedicide** that kills weeds. Weedicides are **poisonous** to humans. **Drip** irrigation waters **fruit** plants and suits regions that have **scarcity** of water. **Khurpi** is used to remove weeds. Farmers use weedicides in **diluted** form and they **handle** weedicides **carefully** by **covering** their **nose** and **mouth** while **spraying**. This stops their **propagation** in the field. **Tilling** the soil uproots the weeds.

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