

Resource 2

Look at the resource below, which explores some of the ways farming has changed over time. Why do you think these changes have happened?

The past

Farming involved more people, as it was much more labour intensive. There were no machines to aid gather crops or look around the animals. Fields were smaller, so there were more hedgerows. There was limited technology and fewer artificial chemicals were used.



Pictured above: ploughing with a horse-drawn plough in a field in Devon (c1930s).

Now

Fewer people are needed, and production has increased as more machinery is used. Fields are larger because hedgerows have been removed. More pesticides are used to kill insects which ruin crops, and fertilisers are used to add nutrients to soil. Some farmers have diversified to increase their income e.g. farm shops, camping and other tourism. Farmers today also receive government grants and subsidies to support the industry.

I grew up on a farm that has been passed on from generation to generation. I still farm now alongside my daughter. Times have certainly changed. As a boy, there was no quad bike to round the sheep up, but we did have a tractor. I remember my grandmother talking about how horses were used to plough fields in her day and there were no tractors!

William, age 68

Pictured below: a quad bike which, has been used to gather sheep.



Changes to farming over time have not always benefitted the environment. Hedgerows have been removed to make fields bigger, taking away the habitat of some wildlife. More machinery, fertilisers and pesticides can also affect the environment.