

FARMING AND FOOD

Most people in ancient Greece lived by farming, although the land wasn't always easy to cultivate. There was good farmland by the coast and in the valleys. But the rest of the country was rugged, rocky and mountainous - suitable only for grazing mountain sheep and goats.

A TYPICAL FARM

Ancient Greek farms were usually fairly small and only produced enough food to feed one family, with a little extra to sell at the local market. They were worked by the owner, his family, and a few workers or slaves. Citizens from the towns often owned farms too, and paid a manager to look after them.

WHEAT AND BARLEY

Wheat and barley were the most important crops. They were used to make bread and porridge, which formed the major part of the diet - at least for poorer people. The grain was sown in October and harvested in April or May. After this, the field was left fallow (unplanted) for a time, so that the soil could regain its goodness.

This is a modern photograph of a typical Greek landscape. It still looks much as it would have in ancient times.

