

Competition from Abroad

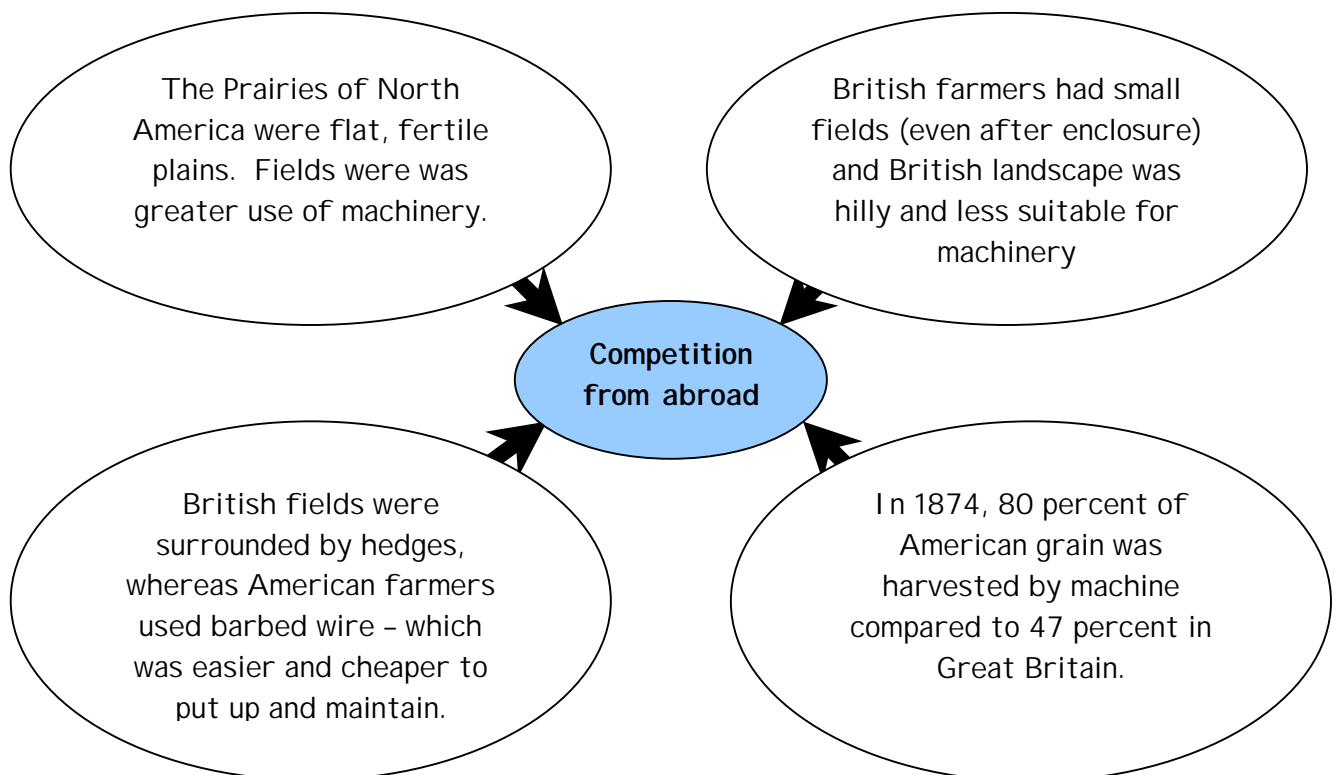
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For British farmers the years 1870 – 1900 became known as the 'great depression'. From 1875 there were seven years of cold, wet weather and farmers had smaller crops to send to market. As the weather grew worse in Great Britain farmers earned less and began to neglect their ditches, fences and buildings. Some were able to survive by paying lower rents. Other farmers just gave up altogether. This brought hardship to many farmers in Great Britain, a situation made worse by competition from abroad.

America and Canada

The most important factor in the 'great depression' was competition from abroad. British farmers were confident that they could compete against European imports. However by the 1870s, farmers in the USA and Canada also began to export their grain to Britain at a price which no farmers could match. This became possible because American farmers were very efficient. American wheat was taken to ports and then transported by steamship when they realised that there was a good market in Great Britain. They then cut their costs by using more machinery, larger warehouses and bigger ships. This meant that the cost of American grain went from 11/- a quarter in 1870 to 3/- in 1900.



TASKS

Complete these tasks. Write out the question and write the answers in full sentences and paragraphs.

- ☺ Use the first paragraph to describe in your own words how the 'great depression' affected farmers in England. This should not be just one sentence.
- ☺ What was the most important factor of the 'great depression'?
- ☺ What happened during the 1870s which threatened British agriculture?
- ☺ Why could American farmers provide cheaper grain?
- ☺ Copy out the bubble diagram.