Glossary

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

A

aquaculture (AK wuh KUHL chur) the raising of aquatic plants and animals for human use or consumption

arable land farmland that can be used to grow crops

B

biological pest control the use of certain organisms by humans to eliminate or control pests

C

compost a mixture of decomposing organic matter, such as manure and rotting plants, that is used as fertilizer and soil conditioner

D

desertification the process by which human activities or climatic changes make arid or semiarid areas more desertlike

diet the type and amount of food that a person eats

domesticated describes organisms that have been bred and managed for human use

E

erosion a process in which the materials of the Earth's surface are loosened, dissolved, or worn away and transported from one place to another by a natural agent, such as wind, water, ice, or gravity

F

famine widespread malnutrition and starvation in an area due to a shortage of food, usually caused by a catastrophic event

G

genetic engineering a technology in which the genome of a living cell is modified for medical or industrial use

L

livestock domesticated animals that are raised to be used on a farm or ranch or to be sold for profit

M

malnutrition a disorder of nutrition that results when a person does not consume enough of each of the nutrients that are needed by the human body

O

overharvesting catching or removing from a population more organisms than the population can replace

P

pesticide a poison used to destroy pests, such as insects, rodents, or weeds; examples include insecticides, rodenticides, and herbicides

R

ruminant (ROO muh nuhnt) a cud-chewing mammal that has a three- or four-chambered stomach; examples include sheep, goats, and cattle

S

salinization (SAL uh nie ZAY shuhn) the accumulation of salts in soil

T

topsoil the surface layer of the soil, which is usually richer in organic matter than the subsoil is

Y

yield the amount of crops produced per unit area