

Forty-niner

2:30 P.M., August 15, 1850

A mountain stream near Sacramento

Blistered Hand

Swinging his pick since dawn has raised new blisters on this miner's rough hands. He was a bookkeeper from Maine, and all this stooping and digging is harder work than he thought it would be.

Wild Grapes

He found these grapes as he moved downstream to get away from other miners. His food is rarely exciting — flapjacks and bacon every day.

Backpack

He bought this pack in San Francisco for 50 dollars — 10 times what it would have cost back East. Strapped to the top are the first letters he's received from home.

Nugget

"Yahoo! Now that's more like it!" This is the biggest nugget he's ever seen. He'll build a lean-to right here, set up camp, and stake his claim.

Goldmining Pan

He has been working on his twenty-sixth panful of dirt since this morning. The cloudy water just cleared. Until now, he has only seen flakes of gold at the bottom of the pan.

Boots

His cold toes are pressed against soaking wet leather. These boots haven't been dry in weeks.



L E S S O N 1

Farming Takes Hold

**THINKING
FOCUS**

How did California's agriculture change in the years following the gold rush?

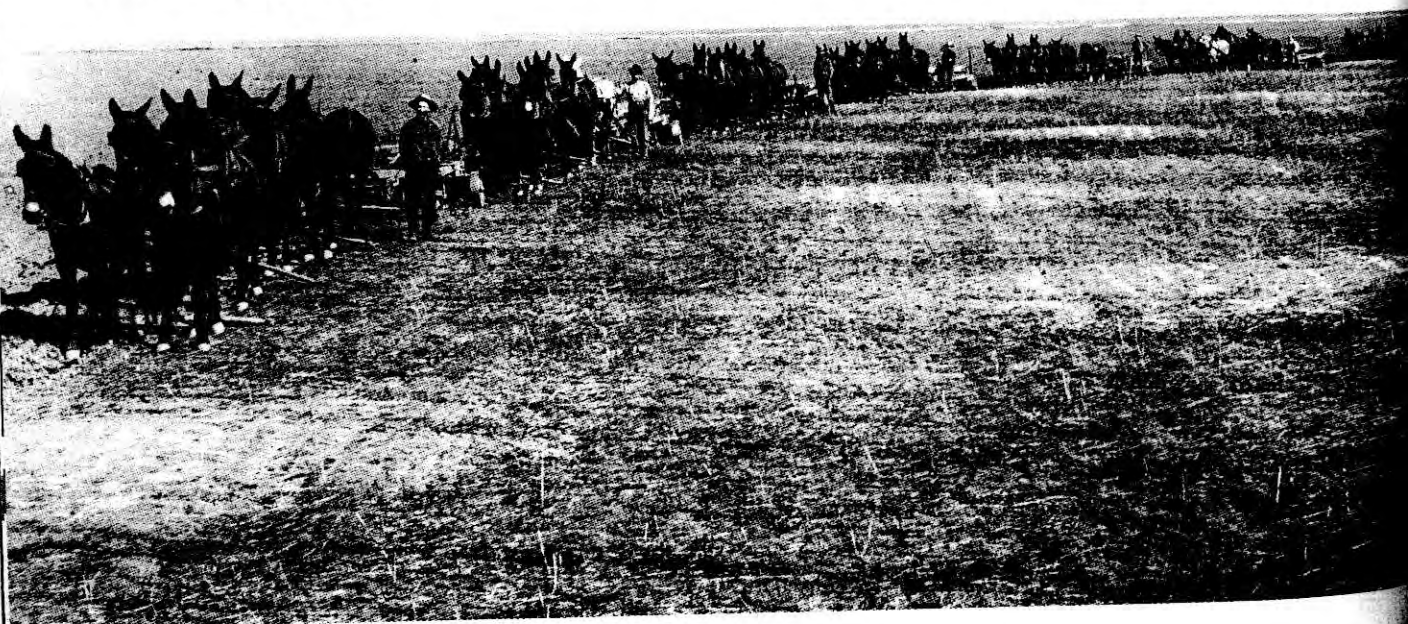
Key Terms

- production
- experiment
- refrigeration

▼ *California's farmers connected many small plows to make one giant gang plow.*

As you look into the distance, the horizon itself appears to be moving. A great machine, which seems nearly a mile long, chews up the rich soil in huge chunks. The machine draws closer, and the earth trembles beneath your feet. Dust fills the air in a thick cloud. A rising wave of sound swells around you as your ears fill with "the click of buckles, the creak of straining leather, the subdued [quiet] clash of machinery, the cracking of whips, the deep breathing of nearly four hundred horses, the abrupt [sharp] commands and cries of the drivers, and, last of all, the prolonged, soothing murmur of the thick brown earth."

Writer Frank Norris described these sights and sounds in his 1901 novel *The Octopus*. These giant machines, pictured below, were called gang plows. They were widely used on California's farmland in the second half of the 1800s. At this time, California's farmers needed all the help they could get in farming the land. As the state grew in the years following the gold rush, so did its need for food. And so did the task facing its farmers.



Changes in Land Use

Giant gang plows were new to California, but farming was not. Long before the 1850s, Indians grew corn and beans on riverbanks. The Spanish grew fruits, vegetables, and grains on the missions. Mexican rancheros raised cows for meat, hides, and tallow.

During the gold rush, people found that they could make money selling food to the many new people pouring into California. The Chinese were among the first to realize this. Next to their mining claims, Chinese miners planted small vegetable gardens. They often found that they could make more money selling vegetables than digging for gold.

Chinese Gardeners

Many Chinese left mining to become full-time farmers. Each day they picked ripe vegetables from their gardens. They loaded the vegetables into baskets, which hung from poles balanced on their shoulders. Then the Chinese gardeners went from house to house selling their vegetables.

Chinese gardeners, with their small farms, helped meet California's growing demand for food. By doing so, they filled an important role during a time of fast growth in the new state. ■

■ Explain why there was such a need for the food that Chinese gardeners grew.

The Growth of Wheat

In the 1850s Californians proved that they could grow enough food for the state's growing number of people. Among the many new settlers in the state were thousands of farmers. They were eager to plow the land. By the 1860s food from California's farms began to feed the rest of the country as well as the world.

Wheat was the favorite crop for these new farmers. Many settled in California's Central Valley, an area that was perfect for wheat farming. There a farmer could plow the land easily because it was flat and had few rocks or trees to get in the way. The rich soil, wet from winter rains, fed the wheat. The dry summer heat helped it ripen. California's

◀ In the late 1800s golden fields of wheat spread across California's Central Valley.

9th Governor (1863-1867)

Henry Haight

10th Governor (1867-1871)

Newton Booth

11th Governor (1871-1875)

Romualdo Pacheco

12th Governor (1875-1875)

William Irwin

13th Governor (1875-1880)

George Perkins

14th Governor (1880-1883)

George Stoneman

15th Governor (1883-1887)

Washington Bartlett

16th Governor (1887-1887)

Robert Waterman

17th Governor (1887-1891)

Henry Markham

18th Governor (1891-1895)

James Budd

19th Governor (1895-1899)

29th Governor (1939-1943)

Earl Warren

30th Governor (1943-1953)

Goodwin Knight

31st Governor (1953-1959)

Edmund G. "Pat" Brown

32nd Governor (1959-1967)

Ronald Reagan

33rd Governor (1967-1975)

Edmund G. "Jerry" Brown

34th Governor (1975-1983)

George Deukmejian

35th Governor (1983-1991)

Pete Wilson

36th Governor (1991-1999)

Gray Davis

37th Governor (1999-2003)

Arnold Schwarzenegger

38th Governor (2003-