

2.2 The Pampas Economy

TECHTREK

myNConnect.com For a map of land use and photos of agriculture in Argentina

Maps and
GraphsDigital
Library

Main Idea The Pampas is a fertile region that contributes to the economic success of Argentina.

The wide, grassy Pampas is South America's major crop-growing region. The Pampas is also the grazing ground for another valuable export—cattle.

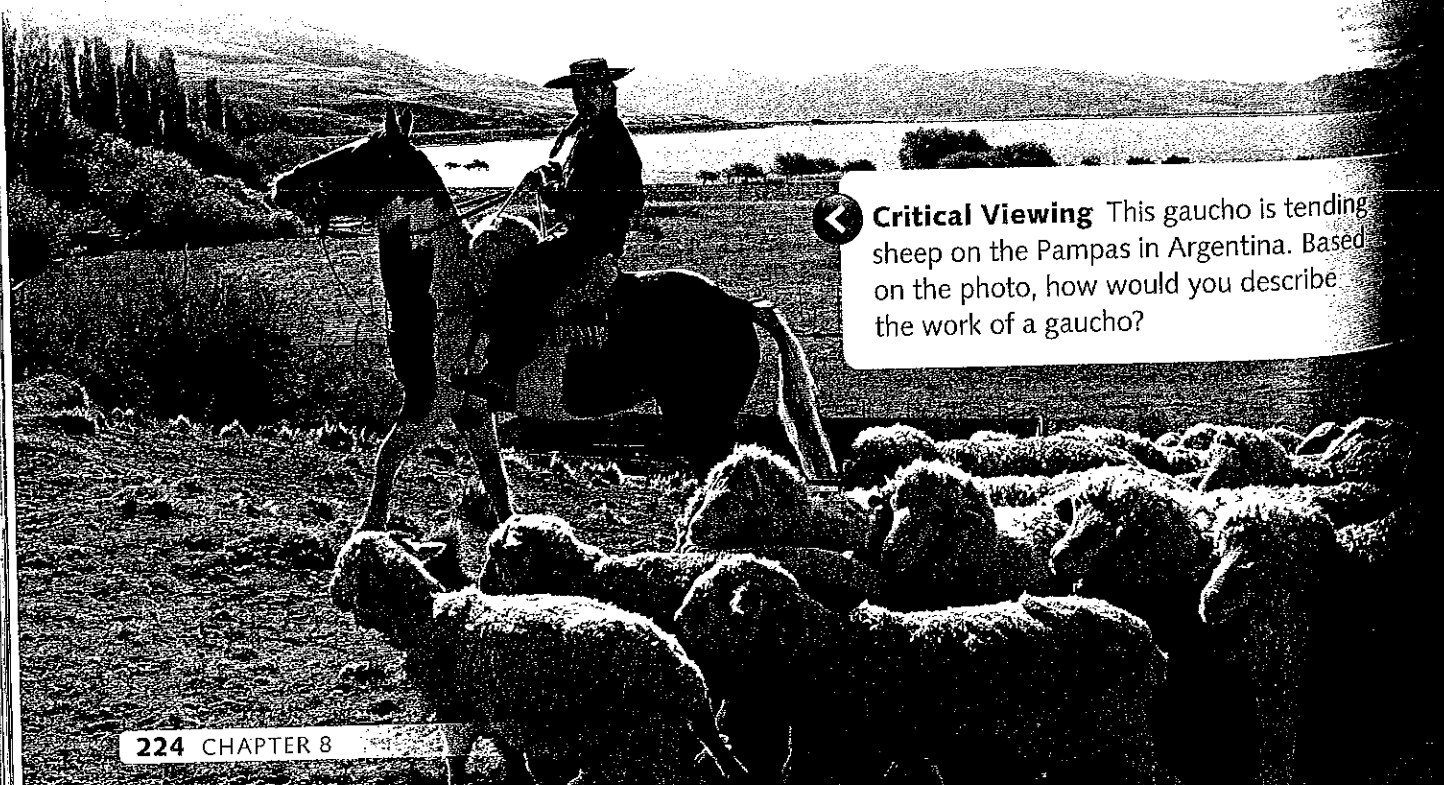
An Agricultural Heart

The Pampas is a large plain that stretches across central Argentina from the Atlantic Ocean to the foothills of the Andes Mountains. The Pampas covers about 295,000 square miles in the northern half of the country, nearly one-quarter of Argentina's land area.

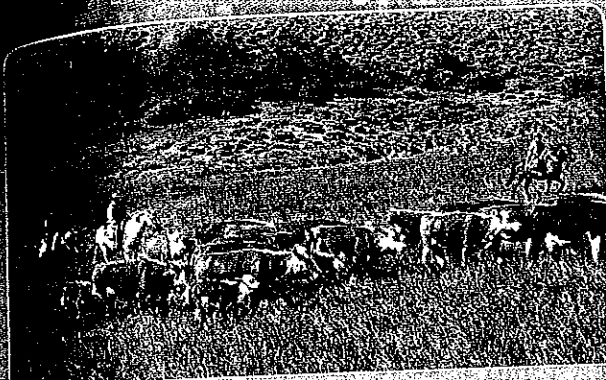
During the colonial period in the 1800s, the Spanish imported horses and cattle to the region. Spanish and mestizo cowboys, called gauchos, herded cattle and sheep on the Pampas, a practice continued by modern gauchos.

Cattle grazing takes place in the region's dry zone, or the **Dry Pampas**, located in the west. The humid zone, or the **Wet Pampas**, is in the east. Agriculture abounds in the Wet Pampas, where nearly 40 inches of rain falls on average each year. Together, the cattle industry and agriculture contribute greatly to the region's economic prosperity.

In the 1980s, a new crop became profitable in Argentina: **soybeans**, a type of bean grown for food and also for industrial products such as plastics, inks, and adhesives. Soybeans grow quickly and unlike crops such as wheat and corn, do not need as much **fertilizer**, a substance added to soil to enrich it. In response to demand, Argentines increased soybean production. Low production costs and high prices in global markets make soybeans a valuable crop in Argentina.



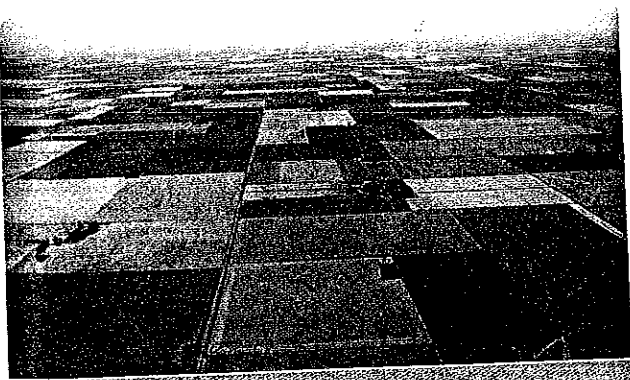
Critical Viewing This gaucho is tending sheep on the Pampas in Argentina. Based on the photo, how would you describe the work of a gaucho?



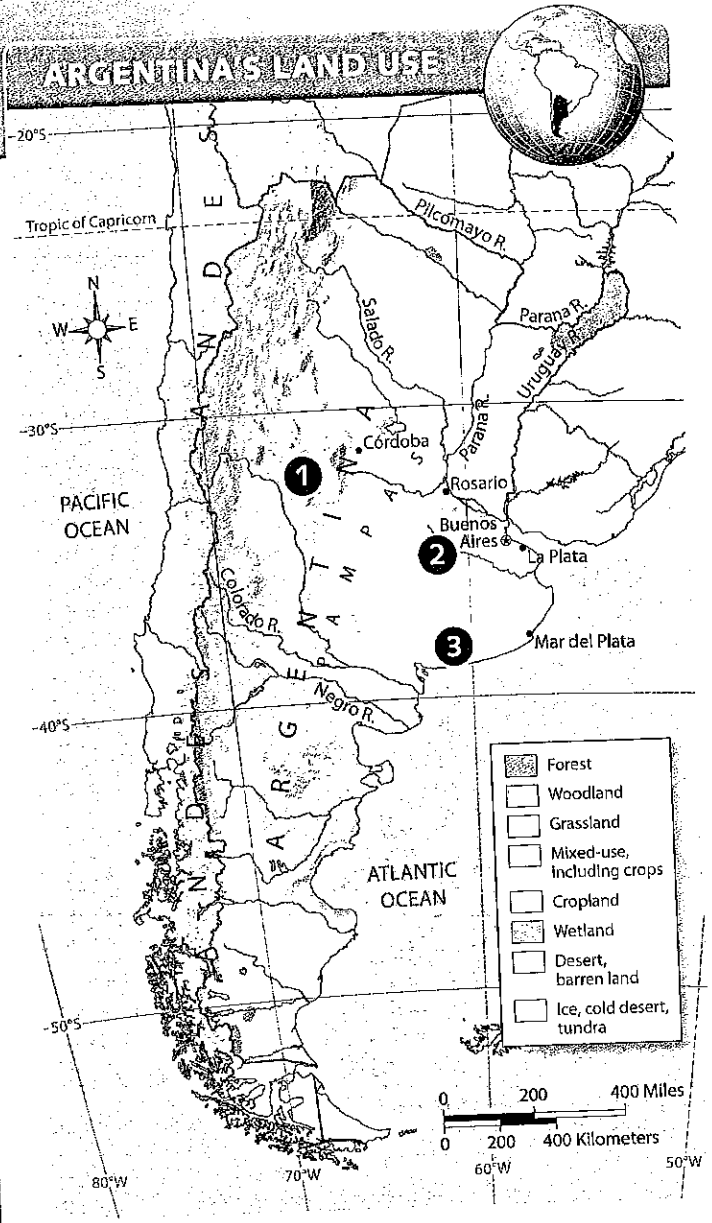
1 DR Argentines are among the world's top consumers of beef. Beef consumption per capita in Argentina is 119 pounds per year compared to 82 pounds per year in the United States.



2 SOYBEANS These soybeans are grown in the Wet Pampas. Soybeans are used to make vegetable oil and livestock feed. Soybeans can also be cooked and eaten, and are a good source of protein.



3 WET PAMPAS This patchwork of crops is in the Wet Pampas, Argentina's main agricultural area. Soybeans, wheat, corn, flax, and alfalfa are some of the crops grown here.



Before You Move On

Summarize How does the rich soil of the Pampas contribute to Argentina's economy?

ONGOING ASSESSMENT
READING LAB Geographical

- 1. Monitor Comprehension** What crop has become an important export in Argentina, and why is it profitable?
- 2. Interpret Maps** How might Argentina's coastal location benefit its agriculture industry?