AGRICULTURE & CIVILIZATION

A CLOSER LOOK AT FARMING IN SOME OF THE EARLIEST AGRARIAN CIVILIZATIONS

**3500 BCE**

- **The Fertile Crescent**
  - Agriculture emerged in the Fertile Crescent when foraging communities practiced domestication, including the use of the wheel by around 3200 BCE.
  - Civilizations in the Fertile Crescent, such as Sumer, Ur, and Uruk in modern-day Iraq, flourished. Civilization first emerged in the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, stretching from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean Sea.
  - The Fertile Crescent is often referred to as the “cradle of civilization,” though definitions vary.

**6000 BCE**

- **Indus River Valley**
  - The Indus River Valley was a fertile region in what is now Pakistan, featuring the earliest known system of weights and measures, inscribed on stone tablets in the Indus script.
  - The Indus River Valley civilization is thought to be among the first to develop a standardized system of weights and measures, enabling commerce.

**8000 BCE**

- **Yellow & Yangtze River Valleys**
  - The Yellow (or Huang He) River and the Yangtze (or Chang Jiang) Rivers were key to the agricultural development in China.
  - The first farmers in China cultivated millet and rice, enabling the growth of communities settled in the lush lands between the Himalayas and the Yellow River.

**6500 BCE**

- **Papua New Guinea**
  - Human communities on the island of New Guinea have a complex agricultural history.
  - The first human inhabitants of Papua New Guinea arrived from Southeast Asia more than 40,000 years ago. The island receives plentiful rainfall and contains incredible biodiversity.

**5000 BCE**

- **Andes**
  - The first agricultural communities to emerge in South America populated the regions around the Andes.

**1600 BCE**

- **Mesoamerica**
  - Mesoamerica is a region that includes Mexico, Central America, and parts of the southwestern United States.
  - Different civilizations rose and fell in this region including the Olmec, which flourished from about 1600 BCE to 900 BCE; the Maya, which flourished from about 1500 BCE to 900 CE; and the Aztec, which ruled from 1428 to 1521.

**1500 BCE**

- **East Africa Andes**
  - The Andes region in South America is known for its diverse agriculture and complex societies.
  - Inca society was particularly notable, with the Incas having established a vast empire with tremendous architecture, including the city of Machu Picchu.

**2000 BCE**

- **Eastern China**
  - Agriculture and some sustaining activities were practiced here well before the writing was invented.

**9000 BCE**

- **Southeastern Turkey**
  - Agriculture emerged in southeastern Turkey around 9000 BCE.
  - The domestication of species such as sheep and goats, as well as grain crops like wheat, began in this region.

**APPROXIMATE YEAR AGRICULTURE BEGAN**

- **3500 BCE** - The Fertile Crescent
- **6000 BCE** - Indus River Valley
- **8000 BCE** - Yellow & Yangtze River Valleys
- **6500 BCE** - Papua New Guinea
- **5000 BCE** - Andes
- **1600 BCE** - Mesoamerica
- **1500 BCE** - East Africa
- **2000 BCE** - Eastern China
- **9000 BCE** - Southeastern Turkey

**GENUS** (or species), **NUMBER OF SPECIES**: These are the scientific classifications for the plants mentioned:

- **Wheat (Triticum)**
- **Rice (Oryza)**
- **Maize (Zea)**

**NUTRITIONAL VALUE OF RICE**: Rice is a staple food in many parts of the world, providing essential nutrients and energy.

**U.S. MAIZE CORN USAGE**: Corn is a versatile crop used in various industries, including animal feed, ethanol production, and food products.