

Farm Work



Eighteenth century farms in Tameside were devoted almost entirely to dairy, beef or sheep farming. Corn, hay, and root crops were grown for animal feed, although local farmers also kept a few pigs and chickens and grew other crops for their own use or to sell at market. Many farmers topped up their income by hand loom weaving or hatting.

As Tameside became industrialised, more and more people left farms to work in towns. But farming was still important and the growing population needed feeding. There were advances in technology, including improved breeds, better drainage and the introduction of chemical fertilisers. Market gardens were established on Ashton Moss to produce fruit and vegetables for the region's towns.

Poor families who lived in the countryside would also send their children out to work. There would have been many roles and duties, both for adults and children. Some of the children's roles included guarding the animals, sowing and picking potatoes and other crops, as well as taking the livestock to market. They would fill sacks and collect firewood. As they became young adults they would have more physical tasks, including ploughing the fields. During harvest time everyone had to work together to get the job done.

Seven and eight year olds could work as bird scarers, out in the fields from four in the morning until seven at night, stopping briefly for a lunch of bread and sometimes they would receive cheese. For tea they would have bread again or potato and if they were lucky they might have some bacon.

Questions

Retrieval

1. What could seven or eight year olds work as?
2. Why did more and more people leave farms to work in towns?

Vocabulary

- 3. Eighteenth century farms in Tameside were devoted almost entirely to dairy, beef or sheep farming.**

What does devoted mean? Use devoted in a sentence.

Inference

4. Why do you think 'everyone had to work together to get the job done' in harvest time?

Devoted

Being *devoted* to something means being focused on that particular thing almost exclusively

Sentence

James devoted his whole evening to completing the level of his game he had been stuck on for the last fortnight.

