Images

Development of the Plow

Development of Hand Plows and Weeders

Two primitive Egyptian hoes from the Middle Kingdom. (Source: Singer, 1963)

Soil preparation by hoeing; from a Tomb at Ti at Saqqara, ca. 2400 bce. Source: Singer et al., 1954, p. 375.

January. Wielding primitive hoes, a couple cultivates its fields in the rain. Another farmer sits before a fire and keeps a sharp eye out for crop robbers.

Foot Plows of the Incas


December. To plant potatoes, one woman inserts the tubers into a hole in the earth made by the man, while another stands by to smooth the soil with a cultivating tool.

August. In a symbolic ceremony, the Inca emperor and noblemen turn over the first earth in a sacred field, while three women bow and the empress offers corn beer.
**Egyptian Plows**

Plowing and hoeing; from a tomb at Beni Hasan, ca. 1900 BCE. Note that the plow is essentially a large hoe dragged through the soil. Source: Singer et al., 1954, Fig. 43.

Two handled Egyptian plow from Leonard. The symbol above the plow is the ancient pictorial word symbol for the plow.

**Mesopotamian Plows**

Plow from Assyrian bas-relief, 670 BCE. Note the funnel which allowed seed to be added the furrow during plowing.

Babylonian scratch plow with seed drill.

**Greek Plows**

Greeks plowing with a primitive scratch plow, a sharp pointed hard-wood pulled by oxen. From a black-figured Nikostenes cup, 6th century BCE. A = draught pole; B = draught beam; C = stock; D = stilt; E = handle. Source: Singer, 1956.

Medieval Plows

Light plow with mould-board from an English fourteenth century bible. Note the donkey in the plow team of oxen.


De Limbourg Brothers: The Month of March (detail) from Les Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry. Source: Perspectives of European Agriculture.

Plough with iron ploughshare and coulter, in a 16th century Flemish miniature. Source: Perspectives of European Agriculture.

Symmetrical wooden plough with an iron ploughshare in use in 1787.

20th Century Plows

Horse-drawn plow, 1933.

Tractor drawn three-bottom Oliver plow, 1918.