Rural Depopulation

**Rural Depopulation** – people leaving rural areas

The term rural depopulation means that there is a lot of movement from the rural areas into urban regions. People living in rural areas are dissatisfied with their lifestyle. The "bright lights" of the city seem to be a more exciting lifestyle. There are many reasons as to why rural depopulation may occur. Sometimes referred to a Push or Pull factors.

- **Push factors** - forcing people away from rural areas
- **Pull factors** - attracting people to urban areas
Why do people leave?

1. Technology promotes efficiency thus fewer farmers are needed
2. As farm sizes increase, the number of farms decreases
3. Younger people encouraged to leave rural area to seek post-secondary education
4. Rural communities do not have the demand to serve the residents (i.e. services) and so businesses leave taking job opportunities with them

Make your own list

PUSH

PULL
Push factors

• perceived lack of money in rural areas
• limited job opportunities
• mechanization
• natural disaster, ie floods, drought
• uneconomical farming units
• low production prices
• farm consolidation

Pull factors

> perceived abundance of money
> better job opportunities with shorter hours and more pay
> greater social and economic attraction, ie education, health services, housing
> greater educational opportunities
Consequences of Rural Depopulation

- abandoned farmhouses
- schools and shops under-utilized and may close down
- towns no longer serve their original function
- young people move away, old people are left behind
- reduced spending
- employment opportunities decrease
- loss of rural bus routes