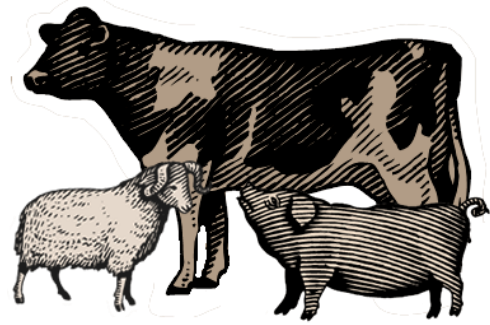


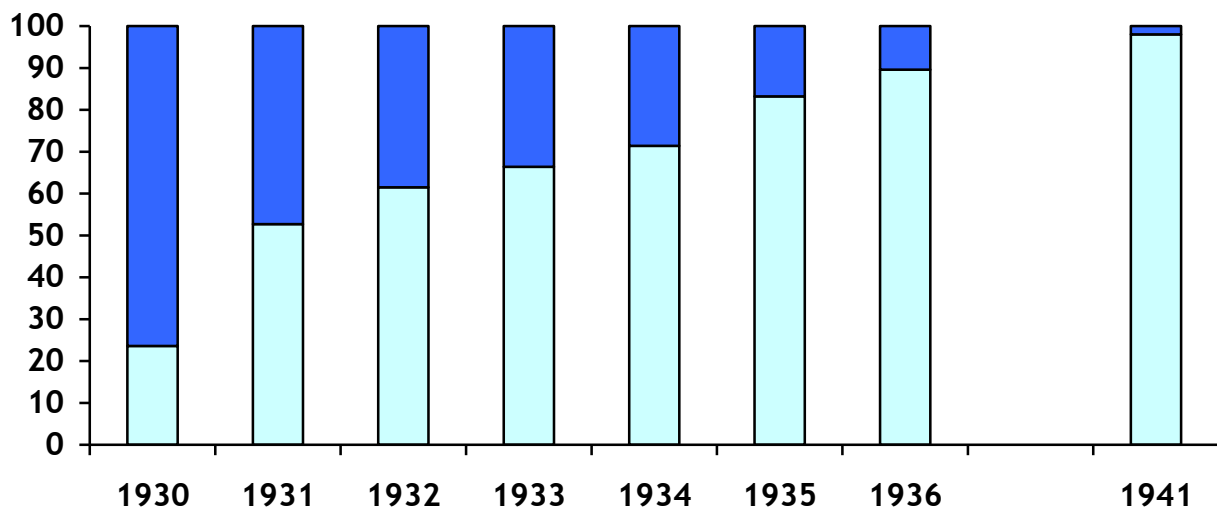
On 27 December 1929 the Central Committee resolution ordered the start of enforced collectivisation. The idea was to collectivise 25% of Russia by the end of 1930. Because many local party officials opposed the policy, Stalin recruited the ‘twenty-five thousanders’: urban Party officials sent into the countryside to organise the compulsory collectivisation of all farming land in the Soviet Union.



**How successful was this policy?**

Look at each of the graphs. The raw data is given in tables below each graph. Use the data and the sources to answer the questions on p.3.

**Graph 1: The percentage of land collectivised**

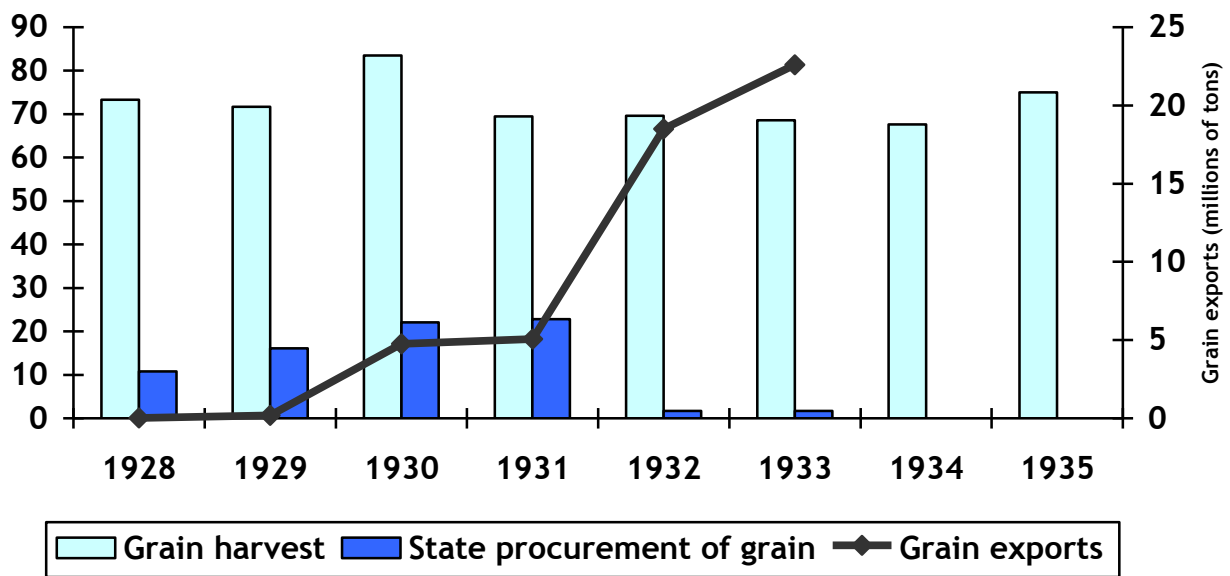


	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936		1941
<b>% of land collectivised</b>	23.6	52.7	61.5	66.4	71.4	83.2	89.6		98

**Source 1:** Stalin writing in *Pravda*, March 1930.

It is a fact that by February of this year 50% of the peasant farms have been collectivised ... it is a tremendous achievement ... Such successes sometimes lead to a spirit of vanity and conceit: ‘We can do anything! There is nothing we can’t do!’ People become intoxicated by such successes; they become dizzy with success, lose all sense of proportion and the ability to understand realities.

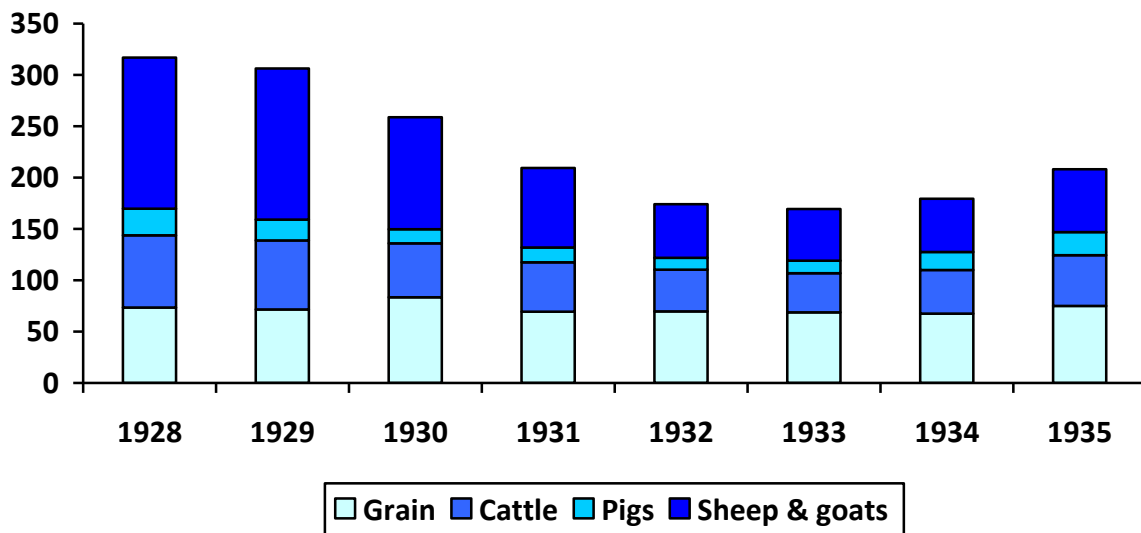
Graph 2: Grain harvest and collectivisation



	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935
Grain harvest	73.3	71.7	83.5	69.5	69.6	68.6	67.6	75
State procurement of grain	10.8	16.1	22.1	22.8	18.5	22.6		
Grain exports	0.03	0.18	4.76	5.06	1.73	1.69		

Figures are in millions of tons.

Graph 3: Agricultural production 1928-35



	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935
Grain	73.3	71.7	83.5	69.5	69.6	68.6	67.6	75
Cattle	70.5	67.1	52.5	47.9	40.7	38.4	42.4	49.3
Pigs	26	20.4	13.6	14.4	11.6	12.1	17.4	22.6
Sheep & goats	147	147	109	77.7	52.1	50.2	51.9	61.1

Figures are in millions of tons / millions of head of livestock.

**Source 2:** Mikhail Sholokhov in his novel *Virgin Soil Upland* (1935)

Kill, it's not ours anymore. Kill, they'll take it for meat anyway. Kill, you won't get meat on the collective farm. And they killed. They ate until they could eat no more. Young and old suffered from stomach ache. At dinner-time tables groaned under boiled and roasted meat. At dinner-time everyone had a greasy mouth. Everyone blinked like an owl, as if drunk from eating.

**Source 3:** Robert Service *A History of Twentieth Century Russia* (1997)

With the exception of 1930, mass collectivisation meant that not until the mid-1950s did agriculture regain the level of output achieved in the last years before the Great War. Conditions in the countryside were so dire that the state had to pump additional resources into the country in order to maintain the new agrarian order ... agronomists, surveyors, and farm chairmen, but also ... soldiers, policemen and informers. Moreover, 'machine-tractor stations' had to be built from 1929 to provide equipment for the introduction of technology.

Yet Stalin could draw up a balance sheet that, from his standpoint, was favourable. From collectivisation he acquired a reservoir of terrified peasants who would supply him with cheap industrial labour. To some extent, too, he secured his ability to export Soviet raw materials in order to pay for imports of industrial machinery. Above all, he put an end to the recurrent crises faced by the state in relation to urban food supplies as the state's grain collections rose from 10.8 million tons in 1928-9 to 22.8 million tons in 1931-32. After collectivisation, it was the countryside, not the towns, which went hungry if the harvest was bad.

### Questions:

- 1) Use the data in Graph 1 to explain the progress of the campaign to collectivise all land in Russia.
- 2) Explain what Stalin is saying in Source 1. Is his claim supported by the data in Graph 1?
- 3) How can you explain the figures (in Graph 2) for the grain harvests from 1928-35?
- 4a) Explain the significance of the state procurement of grain in relation to the overall grain harvest over the same period.
- 4b) Why are the grain export figures significant?
- 5) Analyse and explain the figures for animals over this period (Graph 3). Consider the reasons why productivity dropped. Refer to Source 2 in your answer.
- 6) Use Robert Service's summary in Source 3 to write a balanced judgment on the impact of collectivisation.

## Teaching notes

This resource was designed for the KS5 thematic paper on Russia and its rulers. Through an in-depth interrogation of the data, students can come to a judgement about the success of Stalin's campaign to collectivise agriculture.

It could be useful to start the lesson with a general discussion about what 'success' might look like. You could prompt with the following:

- Extent of implementation?
- Politically?
  - Personally for Stalin?
  - Ideologically?
- Economically?
  - In terms of agriculture or industry?
  - Levels of productivity
- Socially/human-cost?

The graphs and data could then be analysed. You could ask you students to create their own graphs to present the data instead. The raw data is available in an Excel spreadsheet which accompanies this resource.

There are questions based on the data and sources on page 3 of this resource.

"How successful was collectivisation?" data

	% of land collectivised	% not collectivised
1930	23.6	76.4
1931	52.7	47.3
1932	61.5	38.5
1933	66.4	33.6
1934	71.4	28.6
1935	83.2	16.8
1936	89.6	10.4
1941	98	2

'How successful was collectivisation?' data

**Agricultural production 1928-35**

	Grain	Cattle	Pigs	Sheep & goats	Total livestock
1928	73.3	70.5	26	146.7	243.2
1929	71.7	67.1	20.4	147	234.5
1930	83.5	52.5	13.6	108.8	174.9
1931	69.5	47.9	14.4	77.7	140
1932	69.6	40.7	11.6	52.1	104.4
1933	68.6	38.4	12.1	50.2	100.7
1934	67.6	42.4	17.4	51.9	111.7
1935	75	49.3	22.6	61.1	133

**Agricultural production 1928-35**

	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935
Grain	73.3	71.7	83.5	69.5	69.6	68.6	67.6	75
Cattle	70.5	67.1	52.5	47.9	40.7	38.4	42.4	49.3
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Sheep & goats	146.7	147	108.8	77.7	52.1	50.2	51.9	61.1
Total livestock	243.2	234.5	174.9	140	104.4	100.7	111.7	133

**Note:**

Animals - million head

Grain - million tonnes

'How successful was collectivisation?' data

	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935
Grain harvest	73.3	71.7	83.5	69.5	69.6	68.6	67.6	75
State procurement of grain	10.8	16.1	22.1	22.8	18.5	22.6		
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