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Level 5 – 30th March 2026

War in Middle East creating fertilizer shortages

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<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2603/260330-fertilizer-shortages-5.html>

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Please try Levels 4 and 6. They are (a little) harder.

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THE READING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2603/260330-fertilizer-shortages-5.html>

The war in Iran has increased fertilizer prices. It has disrupted shipping through the Strait of Hormuz. Iran's near shutdown of the Strait is because of attacks by the U.S. and Israel. The Persian Gulf region is a key supplier of fertilizer ingredients. Gulf nations are among the world's top exporters. The recent fighting has resulted in around 35 per cent of the world's fertilizer trade being disrupted. Farmers are having to pay up to 35 per cent more for fertilizer. Experts predict farmers will be planting less corn, rice, and wheat. This will lead to smaller harvests and higher food prices.

The United Nations said the crisis will cause a global food shortage. The World Food Programme outlined two scenarios, saying: "In the worst case, this means lower yields and crop failures next season. In the best case, higher input costs will be included in food prices next year." An economist at the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization said: "It is a systemic shock affecting agrifood systems globally." It added: "Farmers are facing a dual cost shock. They have more expensive fertilizers alongside rising fuel costs, affecting the entire agricultural value chain."

Sources: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2026/03/1167205>
<https://www.npr.org/2026/03/26/g-s1-115240/iran-war-strait-hormuz-fertilizer-exports-farmers-planting-season>
<https://apnews.com/article/iran-war-fertilizer-exports-farming-3b7c92d58dba0817c3aa8f1db47464b7>

PHRASE MATCHING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2603/260330-fertilizer-shortages-5.html>

PARAGRAPH ONE:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. The war in Iran has | a. exporters |
| 2. It has disrupted | b. of the Strait |
| 3. Iran's near shutdown | c. fighting |
| 4. a key | d. increased fertilizer prices |
| 5. among the world's top | e. planting less corn |
| 6. The recent | f. supplier |
| 7. farmers will be | g. harvests |
| 8. This will lead to smaller | h. shipping |

PARAGRAPH TWO:

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| 1. the crisis will cause a global food | a. costs |
| 2. outlined two | b. globally |
| 3. In the worst | c. shortage |
| 4. costs will be included | d. value chain |
| 5. affecting agrifood systems | e. shock |
| 6. Farmers are facing a dual cost | f. case |
| 7. alongside rising fuel | g. in food prices |
| 8. affecting the entire agricultural | h. scenarios |

LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2603/260330-fertilizer-shortages-5.html>

The war in Iran has (1) _____. It has disrupted shipping through the Strait of Hormuz. Iran's near shutdown of the Strait is because (2) _____ the U.S. and Israel. The Persian Gulf region is a key supplier of fertilizer ingredients. Gulf (3) _____ the world's top exporters. The recent fighting has resulted in around 35 per cent of the world's fertilizer (4) _____. Farmers are having to pay up to 35 per cent (5) _____. Experts predict farmers will be planting less corn, rice, and wheat. This will lead (6) _____ and higher food prices.

The United Nations said the (7) _____ a global food shortage. The World Food Programme outlined two scenarios, saying: "In (8) _____, this means lower yields and crop (9) _____. In the best case, higher input costs will be included in food prices next year." An (10) _____ UN's Food and Agriculture Organization said: "It is a systemic shock affecting agrifood systems globally." It added: "Farmers are (11) _____ cost shock. They have more expensive fertilizers alongside rising fuel costs, (12) _____ agricultural value chain."

PUT A SLASH (/) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2603/260330-fertilizer-shortages-5.html>

The war in Iran has increased fertilizer prices. It has disrupted shipping through the Strait of Hormuz. Iran's near shutdown of the Strait is because of attacks by the U.S. and Israel. The Persian Gulf region is a key supplier of fertilizer ingredients. Gulf nations are among the world's top exporters. Their recent fighting has resulted in around 35 percent of the world's fertilizer trade being disrupted. Farmers are having to pay up to 35 percent more for fertilizer. Experts predict farmers will be planting less corn, rice, and wheat. This will lead to smaller harvests and higher food prices. The United Nations said the crisis will cause a global food shortage. The World Food Programme outlined two scenarios, saying: "In the worst case, this means lower yields and crop failures next season. In the best case, higher input costs will be included in food prices next year." An economist at the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization said: "It is a systemic shock affecting agricultural systems globally." It added: "Farmers are facing a dual cost shock. They have more expensive fertilizers alongside rising fuel costs, affecting the entire agricultural value chain."

FERTILIZER SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2603/260330-fertilizer-shortages-4.html>

Write five GOOD questions about fertilizer in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____
- e) _____
- f) _____

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WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____
- e) _____
- f) _____

