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**Level 6 – 30th March 2026**

## War in Middle East creating fertilizer shortages

**FREE online quizzes, mp3 listening and more for this lesson here:**

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

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**Please try Levels 4 and 5 (they are easier).**

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# THE ARTICLE

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

The war in Iran has sharply increased fertilizer prices because it has disrupted shipping through the strategic Strait of Hormuz. Iran's near shutdown of the Strait is in retaliation for attacks by the U.S. and Israel. The Persian Gulf region is a critical supplier of fertilizer ingredients. Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Oman are among the world's top exporters. The ongoing hostilities have resulted in around 30 to 40 per cent of the world's fertilizer trade being significantly disrupted. Farmers worldwide are having to pay up to 35 per cent more for fertilizer. Experts predict farmers will be planting fewer crops like corn, rice, and wheat, which will lead to lower yields and higher food prices.

The United Nations has stated that the crisis will cause a global food shortage. Carl Skau of the World Food Programme spoke about the impact the conflict might have. He 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." Maximo Torero, Chief Economist of the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization, said: "It is a systemic shock affecting agrifood systems globally." He added: "Farmers are facing a dual cost shock. They have more expensive fertilizers alongside rising fuel costs, affecting the entire agricultural value chain, including irrigation and transport."

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>

# WARM-UPS

**1. FERTILIZER:** Students walk around the class and talk to other students about fertilizer. Change partners often and share your findings.

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, talk about these topics or words from the article. What will the article say about them? What can you say about these words and your life?

war / Iran / fertilizer / shipping / retaliation / ingredients / hostilities / farmers / crops  
United Nations / food shortage / conflict / food prices / fuel costs / irrigation / chain

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

**3. NATURAL:** Students A **strongly** believe we should grow food naturally, without fertilizers; Students B **strongly** believe the opposite. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

**4. CROPS:** What do you know about these crops? What can we do with them? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners often and share what you wrote.

	What I Know	Uses
Rice		
Wheat		
Corn		
Potatoes		
Soy beans		
Cassava		

**5. WAR:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "war". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

**6. SHORTAGES:** Rank these with your partner. Put the worst things to be in short supply at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- Oil
- Rare earth materials
- Natural gas
- Semiconductors
- Salt
- Cocoa beans
- Milk
- Sugar

# VOCABULARY MATCHING

## Paragraph 1

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| 1. disrupted     | a. Very important.   |
| 2. strategic     | b. A narrow area of water between two pieces of land.                                    |
| 3. strait        | c. About the identification of long-term or overall aims and the ways of achieving them. |
| 4. retaliation   | d. The quantity of crops, fruit, vegetables, etc. produced by farmers or growers.        |
| 5. critical      | e. Stopped or changed in a way that caused problems.                                     |
| 6. hostilities   | f. An action done to hurt someone because they hurt you first.                           |
| 7. yields (noun) | g. Fighting or angry actions between groups or countries.                                |

## Paragraph 2

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| 8. impact (noun) | h. Described the main points of something.                  |
| 9. outlined      | i. Affecting a whole system, not only one part.             |
| 10. scenarios    | j. The way water is brought to land so plants can grow.     |
| 11. crop         | k. Possible situations or ways that something could happen. |
| 12. systemic     | l. Having two parts or two uses.                            |
| 13. dual         | m. A plant grown on a farm for food.                        |
| 14. irrigation   | n. An effect or change caused by something.                 |

# BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

1. The article says fertilizer prices have disrupted international shipping. **T / F**
2. Persian Gulf nations produce much of the world's fertilizer ingredients. **T / F**
3. The article says farmers may have to use up to 35% more fertilizers. **T / F**
4. The article says farmers may plant less wheat and corn. **T / F**
5. The U.N. has warned of a possible global food shortage. **T / F**
6. The World Food Programme outlined three dangerous scenarios. **T / F**
7. The Food and Agriculture Organization said farmers will get two shocks. **T / F**
8. Rising fuel costs could affect irrigation. **T / F**

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** (The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                       |               |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| 1. <b>disrupted</b>   | a. revenge    |
| 2. <b>strategic</b>   | b. whole      |
| 3. <b>retaliation</b> | c. harvests   |
| 4. <b>hostilities</b> | d. double     |
| 5. <b>yields</b>      | e. crucial    |
| 6. <b>shortage</b>    | f. instance   |
| 7. <b>scenarios</b>   | g. scarcity   |
| 8. <b>case</b>        | h. upset      |
| 9. <b>dual</b>        | i. fighting   |
| 10. <b>entire</b>     | j. situations |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. The war in Iran has sharply           | a. global food shortage        |
| 2. it has disrupted                      | b. for attacks by the U.S.     |
| 3. in retaliation                        | c. cost shock                  |
| 4. The Persian Gulf region is a critical | d. conflict might have         |
| 5. Experts predict farmers will be       | e. shipping                    |
| 6. the crisis will cause a               | f. planting fewer crops        |
| 7. the impact the                        | g. rising fuel costs           |
| 8. this means lower yields               | h. increased fertilizer prices |
| 9. Farmers are facing a dual             | i. and crop failures           |
| 10. more expensive fertilizers alongside | j. supplier of fertilizer      |

# GAP FILL

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

The war in Iran has (1) \_\_\_\_\_ increased fertilizer prices because it has disrupted shipping through the (2) \_\_\_\_\_ Strait of Hormuz. Iran's near shutdown of the Strait is in retaliation for attacks by the U.S. and Israel. The Persian Gulf region is a (3) \_\_\_\_\_ supplier of fertilizer ingredients. Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Oman are among the world's top (4) \_\_\_\_\_. The ongoing (5) \_\_\_\_\_ have resulted in around 30 to 40 per cent of the world's fertilizer trade being significantly disrupted. Farmers worldwide are (6) \_\_\_\_\_ to pay up to 35 per cent more for fertilizer. Experts (7) \_\_\_\_\_ farmers will be planting fewer crops like corn, rice, and wheat, which will lead to lower (8) \_\_\_\_\_ and higher food prices.

*hostilities*  
*sharply*  
*critical*  
*predict*  
*yields*  
*exporters*  
*having*  
*strategic*

The United Nations has stated that the (9) \_\_\_\_\_ will cause a global food shortage. Carl Skau of the World Food Programme spoke about the (10) \_\_\_\_\_ the conflict might have. He outlined two scenarios, saying: "In the worst case, this means (11) \_\_\_\_\_ yields and crop failures next (12) \_\_\_\_\_. In the best case, higher input costs will be included in food prices next year." Maximo Torero, Chief Economist of the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization, said: "It is a (13) \_\_\_\_\_ shock affecting agrifood systems globally." He added: "Farmers are facing a (14) \_\_\_\_\_ cost shock. They have more expensive fertilizers alongside rising (15) \_\_\_\_\_ costs, affecting the entire agricultural value chain, including (16) \_\_\_\_\_ and transport."

*season*  
*dual*  
*impact*  
*systemic*  
*irrigation*  
*crisis*  
*lower*  
*fuel*

# LISTENING – Guess the answers. Listen to check.

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

- 1) The war in Iran has sharply increased fertilizer prices because it \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. has disruptive shipping
  - b. has disrupted shipping
  - c. has disrupt it shipping
  - d. has erupted shipping
- 2) Iran's near shutdown of the Strait is in \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. retaliating for attacks
  - b. retaliation for attacks
  - c. retaliation four attacks
  - d. retaliation for attack
- 3) The Persian Gulf region is a critical supplier \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. of fertilizer ingredients
  - b. of fertilizer ingredient
  - c. off fertilizer ingredients
  - d. oft fertilizer ingredients
- 4) resulted in around 30 to 40 per cent of the world's fertilizer trade \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. being significant disrupted
  - b. been significantly disrupted
  - c. being significantly disrupt it
  - d. being significantly disrupted
- 5) Experts predict farmers will be planting fewer crops like corn, \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. lice, and wheat
  - b. rice, and heat
  - c. rice, and wheat
  - d. rice, and whet
- 6) Programme spoke about the impact the \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. convict might have
  - b. conflicted might have
  - c. conflicts might have
  - d. conflict might have
- 7) In the worst case, this means lower yields and crop \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. failures next seasons
  - b. fail lures next season
  - c. failures next season
  - d. failures annexed season
- 8) It is a systemic shock affecting \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. agrifood systems globalize
  - b. agrifood systems global
  - c. agrifood systems globally
  - d. agrifood systems global
- 9) He added: "Farmers are facing a \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. dually cost shock
  - b. duel cost shock
  - c. dual cost shock
  - d. jewel cost shock
- 10) alongside rising fuel costs, affecting the entire agricultural value \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. chain, including irrigation
  - b. chain, including irritation
  - c. chain, including immigration
  - d. chain, including emigration

# LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

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

The war in Iran (1) \_\_\_\_\_ fertilizer prices because it has disrupted shipping through the strategic Strait of Hormuz. Iran's near shutdown of the Strait is (2) \_\_\_\_\_ attacks by the U.S. and Israel. The Persian Gulf region is (3) \_\_\_\_\_ of fertilizer ingredients. Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Oman are among the (4) \_\_\_\_\_. The ongoing hostilities have resulted in around 30 to 40 per cent of the world's fertilizer trade being significantly disrupted. Farmers worldwide are (5) \_\_\_\_\_ up to 35 per cent more for fertilizer. Experts predict farmers will be planting fewer crops like corn, rice, and wheat, which will (6) \_\_\_\_\_ yields and higher food prices.

The United Nations has stated that the (7) \_\_\_\_\_ a global food shortage. Carl Skau of the World Food Programme spoke about the impact the conflict might have. He (8) \_\_\_\_\_, saying: "In the worst case, this means lower yields and crop failures next season. In the best case, (9) \_\_\_\_\_ will be included in food prices next year." Maximo Torero, Chief Economist of the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization, said: "It is (10) \_\_\_\_\_ affecting agrifood systems globally." He added: "Farmers are (11) \_\_\_\_\_ cost shock. They have more expensive fertilizers alongside rising fuel costs, (12) \_\_\_\_\_ agricultural value chain, including irrigation and transport."

# COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

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

1. What adjective does the writer use to describe the Hormuz Strait?
2. What does the writer say is a major supplier of fertilizer ingredients?
3. How much of the world's fertilizer trade has been disrupted?
4. What crops will farmers be planting fewer of?
5. What will the fertilizer crisis lead to besides rising costs and prices?
6. What U.N. agency does Carl Skau work for?
7. What did Carl Skau say would happen in the worst-case scenario?
8. What did Carl Skau say would happen in the best-case scenario?
9. What systems will the fertilizer shock affect?
10. What part of the agricultural chain will be affected besides transport?

# MULTIPLE CHOICE - QUIZ

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

- 1) What adjective does the writer use to describe the Hormuz Strait?
  - a) remote
  - b) scenic
  - c) dangerous
  - d) strategic
- 2) What does the writer say is a major supplier of fertilizer ingredients?
  - a) deserts
  - b) the Persian Gulf region
  - c) the Strait of Hormuz
  - d) factories in Jordan
- 3) How much of the world's fertilizer trade has been disrupted?
  - a) around 20 to 30 per cent
  - b) around 30 to 40 per cent
  - c) around 40 to 50 per cent
  - d) around 50 to 60 per cent
- 4) What crops will farmers be planting fewer of?
  - a) corn, rice, and wheat
  - b) soy beans, potatoes and sugar cane
  - c) tulips, daffodils and roses
  - d) trees
- 5) What will the fertilizer crisis lead to besides rising costs and prices?
  - a) empty supermarket shelves
  - b) poorer quality fruit
  - c) lower yields
  - d) a change in our diets
- 6) What U.N. agency does Carl Skau work for?
  - a) World Health Organization
  - b) World Food Programme
  - c) World Bank
  - d) Food and Agriculture Organization
- 7) What did Carl Skau say would happen in the worst-case scenario?
  - a) drought
  - b) rioting in the streets
  - c) Farms will increase in size.
  - d) lower yields and crop failures
- 8) What did Carl Skau say would happen in the best-case scenario?
  - a) higher food prices
  - b) lower food prices
  - c) better quality produce
  - d) bigger farms
- 9) What systems will the fertilizer shock affect?
  - a) defensive systems
  - b) financial systems
  - c) agrifood systems
  - d) immune systems
- 10) What part of the agricultural chain will be affected besides transport?
  - a) advertising
  - b) irrigation
  - c) research and development
  - d) refuse collection

# ROLE PLAY

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

## **Role A – Oil**

You think oil is the thing we need most. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as necessary. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): semiconductors, cocoa beans or milk.

## **Role B – Semiconductors**

You think semiconductors is the thing we need most. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as necessary. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): oil, cocoa beans or milk.

## **Role C – Cocoa Beans**

You think cocoa beans are the things we need most. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as necessary. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): semiconductors, oil or milk.

## **Role D – Milk**

You think milk is the thing we need most. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as necessary. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): semiconductors, cocoa beans or oil.

# AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look online / in your dictionary to find collocates, information on, synonyms for... the words 'fertilizer' and 'shortages'.

fertilizer	shortages

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• sharply</li><li>• near</li><li>• critical</li><li>• top</li><li>• pay</li><li>• fewer</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• crisis</li><li>• outlined</li><li>• means</li><li>• shock</li><li>• added</li><li>• value</li></ul>
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# FERTILIZER SURVEY

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

# FERTILIZER DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

1. What did you think when you read the headline?
2. What images are in your mind when you hear the word 'fertilizer'?
3. What do you know about fertilizers?
4. What do you know about the Strait of Hormuz?
5. How has the war in Iran affected you?
6. What is the best way to end the war in the Middle East?
7. Have you seen prices rising in the shops?
8. What will you do if prices get really high?
9. Should farmers use less fertilizer?
10. What advice do you have for the leaders of the US, Israel and Iran?

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# FERTILIZER DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

11. Did you like reading this article? Why/not?
12. What do you think of when you hear the word 'shortages'?
13. What do you think about what you read?
14. How important are fertilizers?
15. What do you think of everyone growing some food?
16. How do you think the crisis in the Middle East will end?
17. What role does the U.N. have in this crisis?
18. Should we change what we eat to crops needing fewer fertilizers?
19. What do you think the region will be like in a month from now?
20. What questions would you like to ask the leaders of the US and Iran?

# DISCUSSION (Write your own questions)

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

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# DISCUSSION (Write your own questions)

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

# LANGUAGE - CLOZE

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

The war in Iran has (1) \_\_\_\_\_ increased fertilizer prices because it has disrupted shipping through the strategic Strait of Hormuz. Iran's (2) \_\_\_\_\_ shutdown of the Strait is (3) \_\_\_\_\_ retaliation for attacks by the U.S. and Israel. The Persian Gulf region is a critical supplier of fertilizer ingredients. Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Oman are (4) \_\_\_\_\_ the world's top exporters. The ongoing hostilities have resulted in around 30 to 40 per cent of the world's fertilizer trade (5) \_\_\_\_\_ significantly disrupted. Farmers worldwide are having to pay up to 35 per cent more for fertilizer. Experts predict farmers will be planting fewer crops like corn, rice, and wheat, which will lead to lower (6) \_\_\_\_\_ and higher food prices.

The United Nations has stated that the crisis will cause a global food shortage. Carl Skau of the World Food Programme spoke about the (7) \_\_\_\_\_ the conflict might have. He outlined two scenarios, saying: "In the worst case, this means lower yields and crop failures next (8) \_\_\_\_\_. In the best case, higher input costs will be (9) \_\_\_\_\_ in food prices next year." Maximo Torero, Chief Economist of the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization, said: "It is a (10) \_\_\_\_\_ shock affecting agrifood systems globally." He added: "Farmers are facing a (11) \_\_\_\_\_ cost shock. They have more expensive fertilizers alongside rising fuel costs, affecting the entire agricultural value chain, including (12) \_\_\_\_\_ and transport."

**Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.**

- |     |                |              |                  |                |
|-----|----------------|--------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1.  | (a) sharpen    | (b) sharply  | (c) sharpish     | (d) sharp-eyed |
| 2.  | (a) nearly     | (b) near     | (c) neared       | (d) nears      |
| 3.  | (a) by         | (b) of       | (c) at           | (d) in         |
| 4.  | (a) between    | (b) among    | (c) over         | (d) under      |
| 5.  | (a) be         | (b) been     | (c) was          | (d) being      |
| 6.  | (a) wiolds     | (b) fields   | (c) yields       | (d) fells      |
| 7.  | (a) impact     | (b) pact     | (c) compact      | (d) packed     |
| 8.  | (a) seasonal   | (b) seasoned | (c) season       | (d) seasons    |
| 9.  | (a) inclusion  | (b) includes | (c) inclusive    | (d) included   |
| 10. | (a) systemic   | (b) endemic  | (c) pandemic     | (d) polemic    |
| 11. | (a) dual       | (b) triple   | (c) quadruple    | (d) quintuple  |
| 12. | (a) irrigation | (b) sewerage | (c) desalination | (d) deluging   |

# SPELLING

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

## Paragraph 1

1. it has pisdteurd shipping
2. the gciesatrt Strait of Hormuz
3. in oaelitrian for attacks by the U.S.
4. a critical supplier of fertilizer dnntreigise
5. ongoing ieoitshist
6. lead to lower ysdlie

## Paragraph 2

7. He outlined two eaicsosrn
8. crop aesifulr
9. affecting ogfdoiar systems
10. facing a ldua cost shock
11. the entire ugarlralctiu value chain
12. otgaiinirr and transport

# PUT THE TEXT BACK TOGETHER

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

**Number these lines in the correct order.**

- ( ) 30 to 40 per cent of the world's fertilizer trade being significantly disrupted. Farmers worldwide are
- ( ) and Oman are among the world's top exporters. The ongoing hostilities have resulted in around
- ( ) by the U.S. and Israel. The Persian Gulf region is a critical supplier of fertilizer ingredients. Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Iran,
- ( ) 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." Maximo Torero, Chief Economist
- ( ) fertilizers alongside rising fuel costs, affecting the entire agricultural value chain, including irrigation and transport."
- ( ) fewer crops like corn, rice, and wheat, which will lead to lower yields and higher food prices.
- ( ) globally." He added: "Farmers are facing a dual cost shock. They have more expensive
- ( ) having to pay up to 35 per cent more for fertilizer. Experts predict farmers will be planting
- ( ) of the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization, said: "It is a systemic shock affecting agrifood systems
- ( ) Strait of Hormuz. Iran's near shutdown of the Strait is in retaliation for attacks
- ( ) The United Nations has stated that the crisis will cause a global food shortage. Carl Skau of the
- ( **1** ) The war in Iran has sharply increased fertilizer prices because it has disrupted shipping through the strategic
- ( ) World Food Programme spoke about the impact the conflict might have. He outlined two scenarios, saying: "In the worst

# PUT THE WORDS IN THE RIGHT ORDER

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

1. fertilizer has increased in Iran prices . sharply War
2. disrupted has It shipping Strait . strategic the through
3. attacks by for in It's retaliation the U.S.
4. among exporters . is Oman the world's top
5. be crops . Experts farmers fewer planting predict will
6. a cause crisis food global shortage . The will
7. about conflict have . impact might Speak the the
8. be costs food Higher included in prices . will
9. a affecting agrifood It is shock systemic systems .
10. affect agricultural chain . costs entire Fuel the value

# CIRCLE THE CORRECT WORD (20 PAIRS)

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

The war in Iran has *sharply / shapely* increased fertilizer prices because it has disrupted shipping through the *strategy / strategic* Strait of Hormuz. Iran's near shutdown of the Strait is *in / on* retaliation for attacks by the U.S. and Israel. The Persian Gulf *region / legion* is a critical supplier of fertilizer *ingredients / ingredient*. Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Oman are *between / among* the world's top exporters. The *upcoming / ongoing* hostilities have resulted in around 30 to 40 per cent of the world's fertilizer trade *been / being* significantly disrupted. Farmers worldwide are having to pay up to 35 per cent more for fertilizer. Experts *predict / contradict* farmers will be planting fewer crops like corn, rice, and wheat, which will lead to lower *wields / yields* and higher food prices.

The United Nations has stated that the crisis will cause *a / the* global food shortage. Carl Skau of the World Food Programme spoke about the *compact / impact* the conflict might have. He *outlined / outlining* two scenarios, saying: "In the worst case, this means *lower / lowed* yields and crop failures next season. In the best case, higher input costs will be *inclusive / included* in food prices next year." Maximo Torero, Chief Economist of the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization, said: "It is a *systemic / systems* shock affecting agrifood systems *globalized / globally*." He added: "Farmers are facing a *duel / dual* cost shock. They have more expensive fertilizers *ringside / alongside* rising fuel costs, affecting the entire agricultural *value / valuable* chain, including irrigation and transport."

**Talk about the connection between each pair of words in italics, and why the correct word is correct. Look up the definition of new words.**

# INSERT THE VOWELS (a, e, i, o, u)

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

Th\_ w\_r \_n \_r\_n h\_s sh\_rply \_ncr\_\_s\_d f\_rt\_l\_z\_r  
pr\_c\_s b\_c\_\_s\_ \_t h\_s d\_sr\_pt\_d sh\_pp\_ng thr\_\_gh th\_  
str\_t\_g\_c Str\_\_t \_f H\_rm\_z. \_r\_n's n\_\_r sh\_td\_wn \_f  
th\_ Str\_\_t \_s \_n r\_t\_l\_\_t\_\_n f\_r \_tt\_cks by th\_ \_\_.S.  
\_nd \_sr\_\_l. Th\_ P\_rs\_\_n G\_lf r\_g\_\_n \_s \_ cr\_t\_c\_l  
s\_pp\_l\_\_r \_f f\_rt\_l\_z\_r \_ngr\_d\_\_nts. Q\_t\_r, S\_\_d\_  
\_r\_b\_\_, \_r\_n, \_nd \_m\_n \_r\_ \_m\_ng th\_ w\_rld's t\_p  
\_xp\_rts. Th\_ \_ng\_\_ng h\_st\_l\_t\_\_s h\_v\_ r\_s\_l\_t\_d \_n  
\_r\_\_nd 30 t\_ 40 p\_r c\_nt \_f th\_ w\_rld's f\_rt\_l\_z\_r  
tr\_d\_ b\_\_ng s\_gn\_f\_c\_ntly d\_sr\_pt\_d. F\_rm\_rs w\_rldw\_d\_  
\_r\_ h\_v\_ng t\_ p\_y \_p t\_ 35 p\_r c\_nt m\_r\_ f\_r  
f\_rt\_l\_z\_r. \_xp\_rts pr\_d\_ct f\_rm\_rs w\_ll b\_ pl\_nt\_ng  
f\_w\_r cr\_ps l\_k\_ c\_rn, r\_c\_, \_nd wh\_\_t, wh\_ch w\_ll  
l\_\_d t\_ l\_w\_r y\_\_lds \_nd h\_gh\_r f\_\_d pr\_c\_s.

Th\_ \_n\_t\_d N\_t\_\_ns h\_s st\_t\_d th\_t th\_ cr\_s\_s w\_ll  
c\_\_s\_ \_ gl\_b\_l f\_\_d sh\_rt\_g\_. C\_rl Sk\_\_ \_f th\_ W\_rld  
F\_\_d Pr\_gr\_mm\_ sp\_k\_ \_b\_\_t th\_ \_mp\_ct th\_ c\_nfl\_ct  
m\_gh\_t h\_v\_. H\_ \_\_tl\_n\_d tw\_ sc\_n\_r\_\_s, s\_y\_ng: "\_n  
th\_ w\_rst c\_s\_, th\_s m\_\_ns l\_w\_r y\_\_lds \_nd cr\_p  
f\_\_l\_r\_s n\_xt s\_\_s\_n. \_n th\_ b\_st c\_s\_, h\_gh\_r \_np\_t  
c\_sts w\_ll b\_ \_ncl\_d\_d \_n f\_\_d pr\_c\_s n\_xt y\_\_r."  
M\_x\_m\_ T\_r\_r\_, Ch\_\_f \_c\_n\_m\_st \_f th\_ \_N's F\_\_d \_nd  
\_gr\_c\_ltr\_ \_rg\_n\_z\_t\_\_n, s\_\_d: "\_t \_s \_ syst\_m\_c  
sh\_ck \_ff\_ct\_ng \_gr\_f\_\_d syst\_ms gl\_b\_lly." H\_ \_dd\_d:  
"F\_rm\_rs \_r\_ f\_c\_ng \_ d\_\_l c\_st sh\_ck. Th\_y h\_v\_  
m\_r\_ \_xp\_ns\_v\_ f\_rt\_l\_z\_rs \_l\_ngs\_d\_ r\_s\_ng f\_\_l c\_sts,  
\_ff\_ct\_ng th\_ \_nt\_r\_ \_gr\_c\_ltr\_l v\_l\_\_ ch\_\_n,  
\_ncl\_d\_ng \_rr\_g\_t\_\_n \_nd tr\_nsp\_rt."

# PUNCTUATE THE TEXT AND ADD CAPITALS

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

the war in iran has sharply increased fertilizer prices because it has disrupted shipping through the strategic strait of hormuz irans near shutdown of the strait is in retaliation for attacks by the us and israel the persian gulf region is a critical supplier of fertilizer ingredients qatar saudi arabia iran and oman are among the worlds top exporters the ongoing hostilities have resulted in around 30 to 40 per cent of the worlds fertilizer trade being significantly disrupted farmers worldwide are having to pay up to 35 per cent more for fertilizer experts predict farmers will be planting fewer crops like corn rice and wheat which will lead to lower yields and higher food prices

the united nations has stated that the crisis will cause a global food shortage carl skau of the world food programme spoke about the impact the conflict might have he 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 maximo torero chief economist of the uns food and agriculture organization said it is a systemic shock affecting agrifood systems globally he added farmers are facing a dual cost shock they have more expensive fertilizers alongside rising fuel costs affecting the entire agricultural value chain including irrigation and transport

# PUT A SLASH ( / ) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

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

The war in Iran has sharply increased fertilizer prices because it has disrupted shipping through the strategic Strait of Hormuz. Iran's near shutdown of the Strait is in retaliation for attacks by the U.S. and Israel. The Persian Gulf region is a critical supplier of fertilizing ingredients. Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Oman are among the world's top exporters. The ongoing hostilities have resulted in around 30 to 40 percent of the world's fertilizer trade being significantly disrupted. Farmers worldwide are having to pay up to 35 percent more for fertilizer. Experts predict farmers will be planting fewer crops like corn, rice, and wheat, which will lead to lower yields and higher food prices. The United Nations has stated that the crisis will cause a global food shortage. Carl Skau of the World Food Programme spoke about the impact the conflict might have. He 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." Maximo Torero, Chief Economist of the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization, said: "It is a systemic shock affecting agricultural systems globally." He added: "Farmers are facing a dual cost shock. They have more expensive fertilizers along with rising fuel costs, affecting the entire agricultural value chain, including irrigation and transport."





# HOMework

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find out more about this news story. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. FERTILIZER:** Make a poster about fertilizer. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

**4. GROWING FOOD:** Write a magazine article about all of us growing food. Include imaginary interviews with people who are for and against this.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

**5. WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?** Write a newspaper article about the next stage in this news story. Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Give each other feedback on your articles.

**6. LETTER:** Write a letter to an expert on food shortages. Ask him/her three questions about them. Give him/her three of your ideas on how to solve them. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

# ANSWERS

## VOCABULARY (p.4)

1. e    2. c    3. b    4. f    5. a    6. g    7. d  
8. n    9. h    10. k    11. m    12. i    13. l    14. j

## TRUE / FALSE (p.5)

- 1 F    2 F    3 F    4 T    5 T    6 F    7 T    8 T

## SYNONYM MATCH (p.5)

1. h	2. e	3. a	4. i	5. c
6. g	7. j	8. f	9. d	10. b

## COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS (p.9)

1. Strategic
2. The Persian Gulf region
3. Around 30 to 40 per cent
4. Corn, rice, and wheat
5. Lower yields
6. The World Food Programme
7. Lower yields and crop failures
8. Higher food prices
9. Agrifood systems
10. Irrigation

## WORDS IN THE RIGHT ORDER (p.19)

1. War in Iran has sharply increased fertilizer prices.
2. It has disrupted shipping through the strategic Strait.
3. It's in retaliation for attacks by the U.S.
4. Oman is among the world's top exporters.
5. Experts predict farmers will be planting fewer crops.
6. The crisis will cause a global food shortage.
7. Speak about the impact the conflict might have.
8. Higher costs will be included in food prices.
9. It is a systemic shock affecting agrifood systems.
10. Fuel costs affect the entire agricultural value chain.

## MULTIPLE CHOICE - QUIZ (p.10)

1. d    2. b    3. c    4. a    5. c    6. b    7. d    8. a    9. c    10. b

## ALL OTHER EXERCISES

Please check for yourself by looking at the Article on page 2.  
(It's good for your English ;-)