



Fact sheet: Making a Living

For centuries, saints have made their living from the land and the sea.

Passing sailors and settlers have always taken advantage of the abundant fish in St Helena's waters. Although there have been several attempts to establish larger scale fishing operations, most have been unsuccessful. Since 1979, the St Helena Fishing Corporation has practised viable long-term commercial fishing and employs many Saints.

During the 19th century, American whaling ships regularly call on the island and hired Saints as crew.

The earliest settlers farmed plantations to provide ships with potatoes, yams, beef, fruit and vegetables – often at very high prices! Many of these are still grown here on a much smaller scale today.

In the 1820s lace making was taught to girls at a preparatory school in Jamestown. This profitable handcraft was revived in the 1880s and for decades was a source of income for many saint women.

Commissioning and selling of postage stamps has been one of the island's most dependable industries since 1856. St Helena stamps are sought by collectors around the world.