



# Escaping Famine

The Irish potato famine, its impact on Ireland, and the leading impact on the United States.

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# Cause of the Potato Blight

*blight-* (n.) a plant disease, especially one caused by fungi, such as mildew, rusts, and smuts.

During the summer of 1845, a blight devastated Ireland's potato crop. This is a main component of the Irish diet, but the potatoes were blackened and decaying. The cause was a fungus that had traveled to Ireland from abroad.

# **Irish Potato Famine**

In Ireland, almost half of its population lived on farms with scarce income. People were dependent on potatoes for food, when these crops failed for three years straight, this led to mass famine.

# **Impact on Ireland**

Due to great famine in Ireland, over 750,000 people starved to death. Today, Ireland has about half the population it had in the early 1840's.

# **Impact on the United States**

Over 2 million Irish people moved to the United States. Immigrants built canals and constructed railroads, high intense labor

# Resistance to the Irish and German Immigrants Coming to America

- Large numbers of German and Irish came to America. The hostility between the people increased because the Irish people were willing to work for less income than the workers already receiving low pay.
- Some of the Irish came to America for religious reasons.
- Most of the Irish and Germans were Roman Catholic.

