**THE ROLE OF THE CONSUMER**

**Main Idea:** The economy in the United States adapts to consumer’s wants.

Consumers have power in the economy because ultimately they determine which products are produced. If consumers like a new product, the producer will be rewarded with profits. If consumers do not buy it, the firm may lose money or even go out of business. The term consumer sovereignty recognizes the role of the consumer as sovereign, or ruler of the market. The phrase “the customer is always right” reflects this power.

**FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION (FTC)**

**CONSUMER PRODUCTSAFETY COMMISSION (CPSC)**

**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)**

1. What is WHALE and how does it work? Visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration’s website to find out.

2. Visit the United States Department of Agriculture’s website to find two food products that have been recalled. Give the name of the food, the date of the recall, and the company associated with each product.

3. Visit the Consumer Product Safety Commission’s website and find two products that have been recalled. Give the name of the product, the reason the product is being recalled (the hazard), and where the product is sold.

4. Visit the Federal Citizen Information Center’s website and check out “Scams and Frauds.” Read about one and briefly describe it.

5. Visit the Illinois Attorney General’s webpage and list one of the top ten consumer complaints for 2009 & 2010. Look under “Protecting Consumers.”