

for a whole year. However, this is partly offset by the work done before and during the sowing of the summer crops, which includes three plowings and constant weeding. Sesame, a major summer crop,

demands much labour [sic] both for preparation of the soil, and when picked at harvest. It is not possible to wait until all the sesame crop ripens, because the pods, when they ripen, split, and the seeds fall out onto the ground; and as the crop does not ripen all at the same time, the harvester goes into the field daily and pulls, by hand, each stalk whose pods are ripe. . . . Sesame does not exhaust the soil, while the constant hoeing, which it requires, loosens the ground and preserves its moisture. The constant weeding which it also requires destroys weeds, which is an essential condition for the success of the succeeding wheat crop. This crop is not very remunerative unless the soil be [sic] fertile and the rainy season favorable. But wherever it is grown, the succeeding wheat crop is larger in consequence.³⁴

In order to have a three-year rotation in which the third field would lie fallow the whole year or be planted with fodder that would be turned under as green manure, peasants needed more land. Otherwise, a three-year rotation would reduce the yield of wheat and barley, which they needed to have every year.³⁵

However, by the 1940s, it has been noted that a three-year rotation became the most common,³⁶ not only without a fallow field for the whole year but even with a shorter fallow than the two-year rotation. Now, each field had a fallow period of eight to nine months once every third year instead of every other year. This obviously affected the fertility of the soil. Kamen notes that if a shift to a

³⁴Brown, "Agriculture," 133; also see Hope-Simpson Report, 103.

³⁵For a good and fuller treatment of crop rotation, see Kamen, 196-200.

³⁶*Abstract 1944/45*, 217.