

Table 10:1

Jordan Valley Cultivation, by Land Category at
the Beginning of Refugee Resettlement (Dunums)

	<u>East Ghor</u>	<u>West Ghor</u>	<u>Total</u>
Dry farming	24,133	3,974	28,107
Partial irrigation	21,502	30,110	51,612
Full irrigation	167,247	43,249	210,496
a. crops	157,377	37,665	195,041
b. fruit plantations	<u>9,870</u>	<u>5,585</u>	<u>15,455</u>
Total <u>Gross</u> Cultivated Area	212,882	77,333	290,215
Total <u>Net</u> Cultivated Area*	191,786	69,669	261,455

Source: UNRWA: Jordan Valley Agricultural Economic Survey (Amman, 1954:9).

*Calculated on the basis of double cropping at 11% of area.

Ecology and demography were the key factors in the late development of the Jordan Valley as an agricultural area. The harsh climatic conditions, the high salinity in the soil, and the control of the area by tribal settlements hostile to outside intrusions made it difficult for sedentary peasants from the highlands to cultivate the region, except for the fruit plantations around the urban centers of Jericho and Shuneh. In addition, the clearly political aims of the Jordan government, backed by U.S. funds, in settling dispossessed Palestinian refugees permanently in the Valley, made the latter resist land distribution schemes which they saw, at the time, as a meager compensation for their lost lands occupied by Israel. Their options for sources of livelihood, however, were extremely limited, and thousands of landless peasants who found themselves settled in camps in the proximity of the Valley became sharecroppers and agricultural workers