

Success of the experimental project encouraged the whole village to adopt the new technology. Since the drip system involves a substantial amount of capital investment it was beyond the financial capacity of the villagers to introduce it on their own. In 1978, the infrastructure of the drip system was introduced to the 311 dunums plots of the Zbeidat community. It involved the construction of a network of pressurized distribution pipes (PVC) equipped with "control heads" and fertilizer tanks (for filtering and carrying the soluble chemicals into the drip lines) together with pressure gauges and timer valves, to ensure the even flow of water to the individual plants. It was left for each individual farmer then to connect the PVC lines with the drip lines. 200 dunums of drip were connected in 1978, and a further 67 dunums were covered in 1979.

The initial cost of the infrastructure was about half a million Israeli pounds (\$3,000/Sterling 15,000) in 1978. In addition, the cost of installing individual drip lines came to another million pounds (\$60,000/Sterling 30,000) of which the Zbeidat farmers were subsidized by 30 percent of the cost (during the first year; in 1979 the subsidy was reduced to 25 percent). The Voluntary Agency bore the initial costs, receiving the farmers' contribution in installments due once their yield was marketed. The cost of laying the drip lines amounted, therefore, to an average of \$100 (Sterling 50) per dunum. The infrastructure costs would thus total \$400 (Sterling 200) per dunum.

#### The General Impact of the New Irrigation Technology

The switch from furrow irrigation to drip irrigation had drastic consequences for the Zbeidat community, in terms of productivity, distribution of wealth, social organization of the village and their relationship with the outside world. The following is a summary of these consequences