

advantageous relationship between the farmer and the intermediary, especially when the latter is himself the landlord, was discussed in some detail in Chapter 10. Crop sales through the commission-agent continue to be the central method of marketing in Zbeidat. Because of the surplus in disposable income after the high yields, farmers are no longer indebted to commission-agents for their credit advances - at least not to the same extent as before and are, therefore, free to sell at the market of their choice. They still need the commission-agent for the transport and auctioneering of produce, and for the provision of packing boxes.

Export to Jordan: representatives of the Jordan Government issue special "certificates of origin" which (in theory) allow farmers to ship up to 50 per cent of their estimated yields to Jordan. Marketing in this system, which is highly advantageous to the farmer because of the (usually) higher prices in Jordan, is also conducted through wholesale merchants and commission-agents. Zbeidat farmers over the last two years exported about 25 percent of their produce to Jordan. The main obstacles facing such export arrangements come from the delay of granting "certificates of origin" to farmers beyond the period during which their vegetables can fetch satisfactory prices. This is caused, apparently, by the pressure exerted on the Jordanian government by the wholesale merchants in the East Bank (who act as agents and commission-agents for the East Ghor big landlords) to prevent lowering their prices through competition with the West Bank crops. The pro-consumer policies of the late Prime Minister Abdul-Hameed Sharaf (died July, 1980), however, began to rectify these practices (Abdul 'Al, 1980:Inter.). Jordanian policies