

Table (II - 2)

Land classification according to average annual rainfall
(percentage)

	Less than 100 mm	100-400 mm	Less than 400 mm	Over 400 mm
Iraq	22	67	89	11
Jordan	51	47	98	2
Syria	-	90	90	10
Lebanon	-	10	10	90
West Bank	10	37	47	53
Near East	79	16	95	4

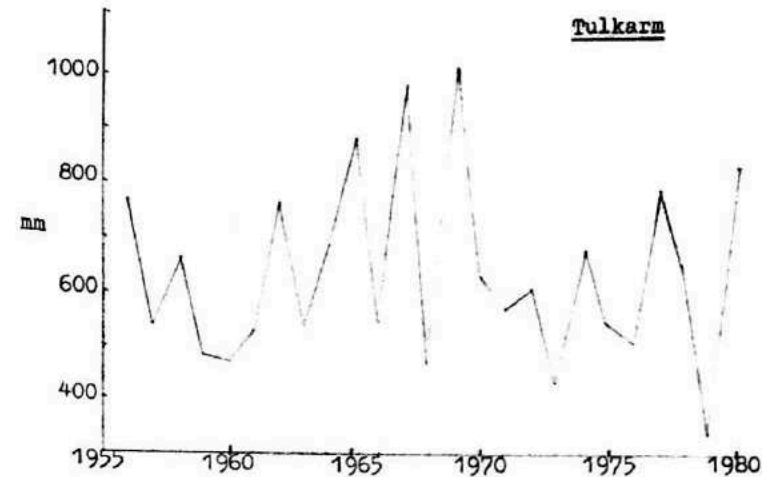
Source: Omar Draz, Rangeland Development in the Arabian Peninsula Based on Syrian Experience, a paper submitted to the FAO Regional Seminar on Rainfed Agriculture in the Near East, Amman 5-10 May 1979, p 3.

There are two main problems associated with the amount of rainfall: length of the rainy season and seasonal variation in precipitation. The interval of the rainy season, as typical of the Middle East in general, is noticeably short extending mainly from December 20 to February 20, when usually 70 percent of total precipitation falls. By the end of March rain ceases almost totally and leaves the soil and its green cover to a baking sun for more than six months. The practical implications of this climatic constraint on cultural practices under dryfarming patterns cannot be overemphasized.

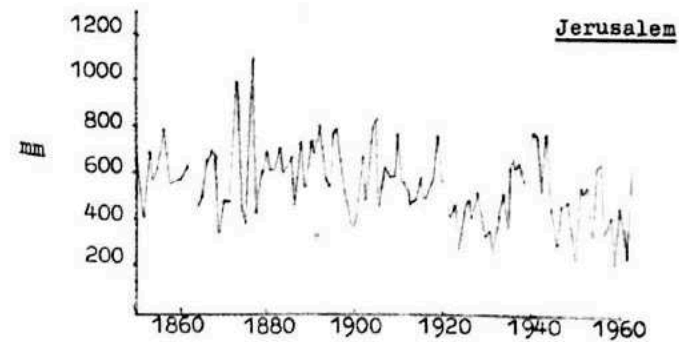
Seasonal variation in the volume of rainfall poses a more serious problem. It is noticeable that there is a very pronounced degree of seasonal fluctuation in the amount of rainfall. This is clearly illustrated in Chart (II-1) which indicates annual precipitation in Jerusalem and Tulkarm over a number of years.

Chart (II - 1)

Fluctuation in annual precipitation



Source: Records of Khadourie Agricultural Institute



Source: P Beaumont et al., The Middle East - a Geographic Study.