

mainly on the need to raise the productivity of such an abundant resource. This is further rationalized by existing natural and political constraints on irrigated agriculture.

But the reclamation and active exploitation of rainfed land bears heavily on the volatile (and undoubtedly crucial) issue of land ownership currently disputed between Palestinian Arabs and the Israeli settlement authorities. There is evidence that Israel has utilized limitations and anomalies in existing forms of ownership, of which there are many. But it is still possible to counter Israel's expropriation policies by measures which would make those policies more difficult to implement. An effective step in this direction is to initiate an aggressive policy of extensive land use.

Admittedly this endeavour may not be adequately justified on purely economic grounds. But then it can be argued that Israel has committed considerable economic resources in its efforts to implement its religious commitments in Palestine. If this argument of a political imperative is accepted by Palestinian Arab planners, and the overwhelming evidence suggest that it is, then the priority should go first to where the land is - rainfed agriculture.

Economic setting of dry farming enterprises

The economics of dry farming patterns pose many unresolved questions about their real economic significance and profitability status, despite the abundance of such studies involving farm management and agricultural economics. Evidently, this has left planning of agricultural development unduly dependent on somewhat unreliable statistics or even circumstantial evidence.

This research has had a primary objective of attempting to ascertain a concise economic perspective of major rainfed patterns of agriculture. Each type was evaluated individually in regard to its economic significance (acreage, output income), profitability situation, and production and marketing problems. The results of this study are summarized in chapters VI, VII, VIII. Each chapter is concluded by policy guidelines which are to be observed in later chapters on development planning. It should be emphasized at this point that the mandate of this research does not (and in fact cannot) provide a full-fledged cost/benefit analyses for respective farming enterprises based on a sample fully representative of all important attributes. It does attempt to evaluate de facto profitability in major production areas and taking into consideration dominant production techniques. Realizing the importance of more vigorous economic studies, this assignment will be given a high priority in the future programme of the Rural Research Centre at An-Najah National University.