

Table (VII - 2)

Area of olives by district (1980)

District	Area (donums)		Percent of total
	Productive	Non-productive	
Total	665,840	68,900	100.0
Jenin	131,600	7,600	19.8
Tulkarm	210,000	19,100	31.5
Nablus	147,200	8,900	22.1
Ramallah	141,515	6,400	21.3
Jerusalem	1,620	-	0.2
Jericho	36	-	-
Bethlehem	13,769	1,000	2.1
Hebron	20,100	25,900	3.0

Source: Files of district offices of the Department of Agriculture.

Output and income

Production of olives is characterized by such a periodicity that it becomes difficult to talk about a truly representative and reasonably stable output. This is clearly indicated in Table (VII-3) which shows that olive output can go as low as 10,000 tons and as high as 110,000 tons. Accordingly, income from olives fluctuates markedly, though much less than physical output, partly due to an inverse price correlation. Counting on the records for the past six years, olive output has averaged at 49,000 tons and it accounted on the average for 22 percent of all income originating from agriculture.

Table (VII - 3)

Output and income (1974 - 79)

	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	Average
Olive output (000, tons)	100.0	10.0	50	17.0	85.0	21.1	24.4	48.8
Value (JD mill)*	46.2	34.8	42.7	31.2	56.8	9.2	38.9	37.1
% of agr income	34.5	6.6	19.5	7.8	33.9	14.3	38.0	22.1

\* The average of the olive crop is estimated in Jordan Dinars, as it is meaningless to put it in the Israeli pound due to its drastic devaluation during the past six years. Conversion was made at the ruling rates of exchange.

Source: Statistical Abstracts of Israel for respective years.

Significance to local communities

Olive products command a much greater significance to local communities than is indicated by aggregate economic criteria. An over-riding consideration is that income from olives accrues mostly to peasant families who are generally in the lower scale of income brackets. Consequently, any improvement in this sector would help achieve a more equitable distribution of income.

Likewise, olive products meet a critical dietary need for rural communities as being practically the only kind of oil in use. Accordingly, they are estimated to provide village consumers with over half of their fat intake and about 15% of their caloric intake.<sup>1</sup> The extensive prevalence of the tree, mostly in small-holdings owned by peasant families, is instrumental in providing these families with their own oil rather than having to buy it. In this sense olive production helps avoid certain forms of malnutrition among rural communities.

1. According to the nutritional balance sheet for 1978/79, olive oil provides on the average (all West Bank) about 9% of caloric intake and 42% of fat intake (Administered Territories Statistics Quarterly 1980, Vol. X (1-2, p 103)).