

Discussion of results:

Chickpea production in Jenin district is profitable, even if conducted on a strictly commercial basis, ie. paying at market rates for all production inputs and services. In reality, however, the margin of profit is even wider. A large part of the labour input is provided free by members of farm families, who usually possess little or no real opportunity cost.

Table (VII-7) shows that the cost of land rent accounts for about 45 percent of all cost outlay. While this makes out-of-pocket loss for owner-cultivators less likely it means, on the other hand, that tenant-cultivators must run their farms with considerable efficiency if they are to make a profit.

Profitability of chickpeas, it should be noted, is closely related to variations in market prices. This point will be elaborated in the next section.

Problems

Production problems are fairly well controlled, and farmers appear to be constantly improving their productivity. The extensive presence of service machinery units in Jenin district has expedited the process of modernizing production practices. This process has been accentuated by the very close proximity of Palestinian and Israeli farms lying on both sides of the Green Line (pre-1967 frontier).

The real problem, however, relates to marketing. The market price of produce during the harvest season may drop in good years to a non-profitable level. The problem is aggravated by the free entry of chickpeas imported from Israel and Bulgaria - the former

producing under a system of heavy subsidies, the latter anxious to earn foreign currencies. While the West Bank continues under occupation there is little hope of altering such terms of trade. Nevertheless, a lot could and should be done even within present constraints, such as the introduction of more efficient practices, collective purchase of inputs, and processing of a part of the produce in food industries.

LentilsArea and distribution

This is the most important human-edible legume on the West Bank. The area under lentils (1980) is estimated at 35.2 thousand donums with a production of 1849 tons (see Table VIII-8). About half of all output is produced in Hebron district and about one third in Jenin.

Table (VIII - 8)

Area, yield, and total output of lentils
(1980)

<u>District</u>	<u>Area (don)</u>	<u>Yield (kg/don)</u>	<u>Output (tons)</u>
Total	35,186	52	1849
Jenin	10,554	50	528
Tulkarm	2,036	40	82
Nablus	2,210	60	133
Ramallah	1,870	40	70
Jerusalem	250	100	25
Jericho	-	-	-
Bethlehem	2,401	35	84
Hebron	15,975	58	927

Source: Files of the Department of Agriculture.