

but according to data collected in 1981 relative to the 1980 season, melon producers also netted a profit of about JD 26 per donum (see Table VIII-3).

Profitability of melons, however, varies so widely even within the same season that it becomes almost impossible to talk about a reasonably stable profit margin. Within a brief picking season of less than five weeks prices of Jenin cantaloupe in Amman market declined from JFils 250 to JFils 30 per kilogram.

Problems

Using highly advanced technologies, melon producers in Jenin district face no serious problems in their production operations. On the other hand, they do face problems related to marketing and prices.

In the domestic market, producers have to compete with Israeli produce, which enjoys certain forms of subsidy. Furthermore, there are rigid restrictions on the flow of West Bank melons into Israel.

Marketing problems are more severe in regard to shipment to Jordan. Wooden boxes are not permitted to be returned from Jordan by the Israelis, which entails a significant expense to producers. Cost of transportation is very high due to monopolies enjoyed by truck owners permitted to cross the frontier bridges. Lack of cold storage facilities deprives producers of any flexibility to extend the marketing season for more than a few weeks, which otherwise could well help stabilize prices.

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