

5. Occasional shortages in drinking water. This problem makes it sometimes difficult to supply adequate drinking water for large flocks in eastern and southern hills. The problem is rendered more acute in view of remoteness from municipal water supplies and the gradual breakdown of cisterns used for collecting runoff water in the rainy season. Shortage of drinking water is sometimes so severe that it limits the size of flocks which could be supported through the rainless summer months extending from April through October.

6. Early slaughtering of new lamb flocks. A common practice is to dispose of the greater share of the new lamb and kid flocks at an early age, long before making satisfactory use of their growth potential. Counting on the number of heads slaughtered in municipal slaughter-houses (about half of all animals slaughtered) the ratio of sheep slaughtered in 1978/79 amounted to 27 percent of the total population, and that of goats was 20 percent.¹ This means that about half of the sheep and goat population is slaughtered annually. Raisers are obliged to follow this unpleasant practice for fear of severe drought hazards and mounting credit obligations.

Cattle

Number and distribution

There are two major types of cattle on the West Bank, one is an indigenous breed called Baladi and the other consists of improved strains which are mainly Holstein Freisians. According to the latest data (1980), there were 6,131 Baladi cows and 2,512 of improved strains (see Table IX-10). Adding to these 5,200,

1. Derived from slaughter figures published in the Administered Territories Statistics Quarterly 1980, *op cit*, p 40. Total size of sheep and goat populations is quoted from official files.

heifers, calves, and bulls brings the total number of cattle to 13,843.¹ This represents a substantial drop from the 1966 aggregate figure of 34,492 heads, consisting of 30,604 Baladis and 3,888 of foreign breeds.²

Table (IX - 10)

Number of milking cows, 1980

<u>District</u>	<u>Baladi</u>	<u>Improved</u>	<u>Total</u>
Total	6,131	2,512	8,643
Jenin	2,045	285	2,330
Tulkarm	854	528	1,382
Nablus	1,917	678	2,595
Ramallah	682	216	898
Jerusalem		112	112
Jericho	-	97	97
Bethlehem	10	146	156
Hebron	623	450	1,073

Source: Files of the Department of Agriculture.

Notwithstanding the crudeness of data released during the Jordanian and Israeli rules, the drop in the population of cattle has been one of the most significant features in post-occupation agriculture. This was most pronounced in relatively large flocks kept on commercial farms. After several years of gradual decline, most commercial farms have closed down totally and their owners switched to other forms of business.* The dynamics of this phenomenon will be evaluated when assessing the profitability of this type of agriculture.

1. Files of the Department of Agriculture.
2. Agricultural Atlas of Jordan, *op cit*, pp 88-90.

* A particularly pronounced example was the closure of Waheed Masri's dairy farm in Nablus (around 50 heads), which was a thriving enterprise for more than 20 years prior to occupation.