

1. Introduction:

The agro-production calendar in the oPt is diverse, based on the variety of cropping patterns (rain-fed or irrigated), planting systems (open or protected), location, season, availability of water resources, availability of agricultural lands, and other existing economic activities (ARIJ-ACF, Integrated Report, 2008). Several parameters have led to the insecurity of the Palestinian agro-production system as more than 86% of the produced agro-commodities are dependant on levels of precipitation and are affected by limited access to the technology, land and water due to the current political circumstances. The Palestinian agro-production system produces more than 100 crops throughout the year and achieves surpluses in some commodities during the peak-production seasons. The oPt has demonstrated the ability to export surpluses of tomato, cucumber, squash, eggplant, beans, cabbage, cauliflower, olives, grapes, plums and citrus, while still meeting the demands of the Palestinian market.

However, there remains a shortage within local production of potatoes, onions, watermelons, and garlic, which creates an imbalance in the agro-commodities demand-supply chain in the oPt. Due to the water shortage and poor soil fertility there is a general inability to meet the local consumers' fruit production demand. Yet local production of olives, grapes and citrus have achieved self-sufficiency and produced surpluses which are usually marketed to Israel and/or other countries. The Palestinian agricultural production system (especially in the Jordan

Valley) is mainly based on cultivating during certain periods of the year, which creates peaks of production in some periods and shortages in others (ARIJ-ACF, Integrated Report, 2010). In this factsheet, the production calendar in Jericho and Al 'Auja will be summarized according to their type of agriculture.

Jericho lies on a total area of around 58,701 dunums, of which 31,483 dunums are considered 'arable' land as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Division of the agricultural area in Jericho (area in dunum)

Agricultural area [31,483 dunums]			
Permanent Crops	Green-houses	Range-lands	Arable lands
6,577	580	4,926	19,400

Agricultural production in Jericho depends mostly on springs and artesian wells. The city residents cultivate citrus fruits and bananas (Jericho & Al Aghwar Directorate of Agriculture – Jericho, 2011)

While Al 'Auja lies on a total area of around 106,398 dunums, of which 26,032 dunums are considered arable land as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Division of the agricultural area in Al 'Auja (area in dunum)

Agricultural area (26,032 dunums)			
Permanent Crops	Green-houses	Range-lands	Arable lands
2,457	846	9,951	12,778

Source: ARIJ - GIS Unit, 2011.

Agricultural production in Al 'Auja depends mostly on springs and groundwater wells. The town residents cultivate different kinds of

vegetables; mainly tomatoes and cucumbers



Figure 1: Agriculture Practices.

2. Open Field Agriculture

Farmers in the targeted areas (Jericho and Al 'Auja) are cultivating almost 14 vegetable crops under open field irrigated conditions. The main open field irrigated vegetable is squash, which constitutes the highest produced quantity from the irrigated open field crops, followed by cucumber, eggplant, tomato, and potato. The remaining production consists of: broad beans, beans, corn, radishes, cauliflower, spinach, parsley and coriander. For the open field irrigated vegetables there are two peaks of production: the first peak, February through to May, is the largest. The second peak of production is during October through December; whilst the remaining months produce a smaller yield.



Figure 2: Open Field Agriculture

3. Greenhouse Agriculture

The highest quantity of greenhouse agriculture in Jericho and Al 'Auja are cucumbers, closely followed by tomato, fresh beans, peppers, eggplant and Molekhia (Jews Mallow) all form smaller yields. Greenhouses also have two main peaks of production per annum. The ***first peak*** is seen in January, February, March and April; while the ***second peak*** occurs during October, November and December. Comparing the production of both greenhouses and open field irrigated crops, we noticed that both cropping systems operate in parallel; this means that during the peaks of production marketing crises might occur. We found that both production systems have the highest production interval during the months of October, November and December and during February, March, and April they have the second interval.



Figure 3: Greenhouse Agriculture

4. References

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