



An Assessment of the Israeli Practices on the Palestinian Agricultural Sector

29 September 2000–31 December 2001



Restrictive measures by the Israeli occupation authority against the Palestinian economy and especially during the period 29/9/2000 – 30/6/2001 created numerous obstacles, which have further complicated and aggravated an already precarious situation.

Agriculture is a major contributor to the Palestinian gross domestic product and employs a high percentage of the Palestinian work force.

Marketing of farm products to the Palestinian, Israeli or world markets is one of many Israeli obstacles faced by the Palestinian farmers. The closure and complete seal of the cities hindered the capability of marketing the agriculture products. Other potential working activities such as transportation were hindered by the Israeli closure of the Palestinian towns and villages. This in addition to the loss of revenue as a result of Israeli uprooting of 385808 trees.

The following is a list of some of Israeli practices that have affected the agricultural sector:

1. The policy of closure and separation between villages and districts.
2. Uprooting, bulldozing and burning trees.
3. Harassing farmers while working on the land and preventing them from picking their produce.
4. Limiting the movement of herds.
5. Destroying agricultural lands and uprooting trees in order to construct military locations at the entrances of Palestinian districts and villages.
6. Destroying green houses.
7. Closing the fishing harbor and limiting the movements of the fishermen.

These practices have led to the following results:

- Hindering marketing process and reducing prices of agricultural products.
- Stopping any agricultural projects that aimed to enhance the infrastructure and the production efficiency of the sector.

- Limiting the provision of agricultural inputs and an increase in their prices.
- Paralyzing the movement of agricultural laborers.
- Restricting the transport of agricultural products, the Israeli lorries only being allowed to transfer goods to the entrances of districts.
- The difficulty in providing the agricultural services has led to a fall in production and the spread of various diseases in both plant and animal production.

The Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) has formed emergency committees in all districts in order to continue to provide the MOA services under closure. These committees have worked with institutions on the national level in order to evaluate the losses. This report summarized the various damages exposed to the Palestinian agricultural sector as in the following:

The following represent a summary of the Palestinian losses in the agricultural sector as a result of Israeli aggression and closure of the Palestinian cities and communities.

I. Loss from stopping the exports to Israeli and world markets

Sub total of losses = \$ 15,997,500

II. Reduction of agricultural product prices in local markets

The closure policy prohibited the farmers from reaching their marketing areas within the local markets. As a result, the farmers sold their products at the site of production with lower prices. The losses as a result of that can estimated as:

Sub total of losses = \$55,200,000

III. Uprooting of plants and destruction of green houses and farming equipment

Table 1: Numbers of uprooted trees during the period 29/9/2000 – 31/8/2001

Type	Olive	Citrus	Stone fruits	Forest	Dates	Bananas	Vine	Others	Total
No.	115569	121793	40158	13371	13251	12000	43494	35006	394642

Sub total of losses = \$ 97,012,168

IV. Reduction of revenues from agricultural transportation, marketing and exporting

Sub total of losses = \$ 27,950,000

V. Loss in livestock production

As a result of the continue closure, the price of animal feed increased and farmers reduced the amount of food required to animals and birds, which led to loss in the weights of animals, chickens and egg production.

Sub total of losses = \$ 25,667,000

VI. Fishing

As a result of closing Gaza harbor and preventing the fishermen to get out to the Palestinian water:

Sub total of losses = \$ 3,853,876

VII. Olive sector

The deterioration of security conditions and the dangers farmers were exposed led to difficulties for the farmers in accessing their lands to pick olives. In addition, there were tens of tons of olive fruits stolen and confiscated

Sub total of losses = \$ 13,404,237

VIII. Agricultural workers

The proportion of agricultural workers in Palestine reaches to 13% of the total working force. For example, there are 10,000 workers from southern districts working in picking and packaging of agricultural products in the northern districts. These contract labors could not make it to their working areas because of the Israeli closure. If we added the losses of working days from other agricultural workers in other parts of Palestine, the actual losses in productivity can reach to

Subtotal of contract farm workers losses = \$ 156,400,000

IX. Bulldozing of 30000 Dunums of land which was prepared for planting with field crops and bulldozing 1283 Dunums planted with field crops

Sub total of losses = \$ 46,892,600

Thus, the total direct losses since the beginning of Al-Aqsa Intifada in September 29, 2000 up to December, 2001 as a result of Israeli aggression on the Palestinian agricultural sector is \$ 442,377,481 (€499,298,000 @ 1.12867, 31 Dec 2001)

Table 2: Damages caused by the Israeli aggression on the Palestinian agricultural sector, including the destruction of agricultural wells and other agricultural constructions during the period of 29/9/2000 – 31/12/2001

Type of losses	Number of losses
Demolition of agricultural stores	148
Demolition of poultry farms	68
Demolition of animal enclosures	19
Killing sheep and goats	1135 head
Killing cattle	395 head
Damaging hive bees	5278 hive
Well destruction	144
Demolition of farmer houses .	207
Poultry death	136193 bird
Bulldozing of irrigation networks	7029 dunums
Destruction of agricultural pond	616
Bulldozing of farms walls and fences	69976 meters
Destruction of main lines of water pipe	186492 meters
Area of vegetables planted under green houses destroyed	579 dunums
Area of vegetables planted in open fields under plastic tunnels destroyed	7781 dunums
Number of farmers affected	5073 farmers
Total of bulldozed agricultural land	32470

Notes:

- *Some areas that were bulldozed in April, May, and June were not included in this report because of the danger to the fieldworkers, but they will be included in later reports.*
- *This report does not include the losses caused by the destruction of assets and imposed dues on Palestinian importers in exchange of the availability of goods in Israeli harbor, which will enter in evaluations*

Source: Ministry of Agriculture. Report on Palestinian agricultural losses due to recent Israeli actions. Ramallah (29 September 2000– 31 December 2001), Palestine.

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