

towards Palestinian farmers nevertheless continued to fluctuate according to political considerations subject to the prevailing attitude towards the West Bank.

But these policies are also determined by considerations of favouratism within the West Bank, with big landlords and vegetable merchants circumventing the small farmer in the process. Many Zbeidat farmers complained at the attempts of big farmers from the Jiftlek area to acquire "certificates of origin" in their (i.e. Zbeidat) name and then using them to market Jiftlek crops. These attempts constituted a main incentive for Zbeidatis to establish a marketing cooperative of their own.

"Crop Leasing" (daman mahsul): this practice flourished after drip irrigation was installed. It is practiced by farmers who need cash in advance and who, otherwise, have problems in recruiting or paying for extra labour. Wholesale merchants make an estimate of the crop yield immediately after the seedlings blossom and make an offer to the farmer. If he agrees, payment is made in advance and all picking, packing and marketing of the vegetables becomes the responsibility of the wholesale merchant. Crop leasing is done only for a portion of the fields, usually one dunum at a time, as the farmer always hopes to get better prices by marketing his crops at the hisbeh. In the spring of 1980, crop leasing of tomatoes to Haifa wholesalers fetched a gross income of IL.40,000 (\$1,000) per dunum at Zbeidat.

Direct sales to retailers and the public: this takes the form of peddling by the main highway and is performed by children and old people. Zbeidat fields are well situated along the Jericho-Beisan highway and it