

Judea and Samaria Civil Administration
Agriculture Staff Officer Unit

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Agriculture Staff Officer/Coordinator
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Re: **Opinion regarding Agricultural Needs in the Seam Zone**

1. General Background – the Seam Zone
 - a. In the beginning of 2002 it was decided to build a security fence alongside the seam line between Israel and the Judea and Samaria area (Judea and Samaria). The route of the security fence was determined based on a collection of considerations, including security and topographic considerations. Given the above, the route of the separation fence does not completely overlap the Judea and Samaria border line, and in certain areas the security fence was built inside Judea and Samaria, in a manner which created a zone consisting of Judea and Samaria lands located west of the fence, between the security fence and the Judea and Samaria border line. These areas are referred to as the "seam zone".
2. The Seam Zone as an Agricultural Area
 - a. More than 95% of the agricultural areas in the seam zone consist of olive groves. In the remaining area, small quantities of different crops may be found, such as: wheat, barley, tobacco, avocado, hyssop (za'atar), cucumbers and tomatoes.
 - b. The vast majority of olive groves consist of mature trees. As such and given the planting method, each dunam of land consists of 10 trees, in the average.
 - c. In general, mature olive trees do not require constant tending. They grow and bear olives without artificial irrigation and are nourished from the ground. However, tending is required on certain dates, to preserve the trees' health and to produce maximum yield. These treatments include: pruning once annually, plowing once every two years and specific treatment in the event of disease or pests. Olives are picked once annually in the harvest season
3. The Use of Olives Grown in the Seam Zone
 - a. Olives grown in the seam zone are used for two purposes: for pickling and for producing olive oil. The vast majority of the olives are used to produce olive oil since only certain olives in each tree are suitable for pickling.
 - b. For the purpose of producing a small quantity of a single 16 kg olive oil canister at least 64 kg of olives are required. Each mature olive tree in the seam zone, over the last ten years, produces about 16 kg of olives, in the average (according to the

annual report for 2018 each tree produces, in the average, only 4 Kg). Hence, in the average, at least 4 olive trees are required to produce one olive oil tin per annum. Given the planting method in the seam zone, 4 trees occupy at least 400 square meters of land.

- c. Of the average quantity of 16 kg per tree, only 2 kg, in the average, are suitable for pickling. Frequently, about a month before the harvest, the olives which are suitable for pickling are picked, hence reducing the number of olives used for olive oil production. Therefore, if the olives suitable for pickling are picked, an additional tree is required to produce a single olive oil tin.

4. Conclusion and Recommendation

- a. As noted above, more than 95% of the agricultural area in the seam zone consists of mature olive trees which do not require constant tending throughout the year and grow without human care. The above, subject to certain treatments aimed at achieving maximum produce in the harvest season and securing the health of the trees.
- b. The vast majority of the olives are used to produce olive oil. To produce a single olive oil canister per year four trees are required, in the average, spread over an area of 400 sq. meters, even if we assume that some of the olives are not used for oil.
- c. Accordingly, and for the removal of any doubt, the presumption is that sustainable agriculture is not feasible in an area spreading over less than 330 sq. meter.
- d. It should be emphasized that it is not an un-rebuttable presumption, given the fact that other crops may be grown in the seam zone.

Sincerely,

[signed & stamped]
Samir Mo'adi
Agriculture Staff Officer/Coordinator