

increase in agricultural prices during WWII was much more uneven than was thought by the government and some contemporary and later writers.

#### 5.4 Crop Rotation and Fodder

Compared with other countries in the region and the world, cereal cultivation in Palestine was known for its low yields. This was due not only to climatic and soil conditions, but also to the lack of irrigation, fertilizers, or appropriate crop rotation. For wheat, output per *dunum* was less than half that of Syria and less than one-fifth that of Egypt. Similar comparisons were obtained for other countries outside the region.<sup>32</sup> In the absence of intensive methods, crop rotation becomes crucial for increasing the yields.

It appears that throughout the 1920s, a two-year rotation was the most common. Simpson describes it in these words:

The holding is divided into two areas. In one of the areas [the peasant] sows his winter crops [in November or December], while the other lies fallow. In this portion in the spring [April], the summer crop is sown; in the former portion after reaping the winter crops in May and June, the land lies fallow until the following spring, when the summer crops are sown [in August]. In the latter portion, after the reaping of the summer crop, the winter crop is at once sown. Thus in each portion two crops, one summer and one winter, are taken in two years.<sup>33</sup>

This system of rotation allows for each field eight to nine months of fallow in one year and only two to three months in the next year. No field is left fallow

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<sup>32</sup>Nathan et al., 458.

<sup>33</sup>Hope-Simpson Report, 66.