

by agricultural experts is, at best, a 1 1/2 ton yield per dunum of vegetables under furrow irrigation. Since the average plot cultivated by a Zbeidat household is less than half the area estimated by Dajani for the southern Ghors, and the average cultivating household is 9.7 members per household, the income of a Zbeidat peasant household would have been substantially lower than 400 JD's per annum had the family relied on its farm income exclusively (cf. Dajani, 1979:16).

In fact, interviews with Zbeidat farmers and landlords show that the incidence of wage labour outside their land has been on the increase since the early 1979's, together with wide-spread negligence of their farms. This trend was confirmed by the secretary of the nearby Jewish settlement of Argaman, which employed Zbeidat workers (Levi, 1980:Inter.). Only the introduction of drip irrigation methods helped to reverse this trend.

#### Argaman and Zbeidat: Settlers and Peasants

The growth of Argaman as an Israeli settlement adjoining Zbeidat is reviewed in Appendix F. One of the main problems that have plagued Argaman since its establishment in 1968, and one which also determines its relationship to both Zbeidat and Marj Na'je, is labour shortage. In Argaman there are currently thirty couples and fifty children (Jordan Rift S.A., 1980). Utilizing highly capital-intensive cultivation (flowers for export and field crops) a 25-dunum plot appears to be beyond the cropping capacity of the nuclear household during harvest time. There are no sources of Jewish labour supply to tap in the area, except for the occasional European volunteer workers from abroad.

Several Argaman farmers attempted to solve this problem a few years ago by leasing their plots an Arab melon farmers from Nazareth, (a practice prohibited by the Jewish Agency). When the leases became known in the