

as I observed it during 1980, four years after the switch:

1. A substantial increase in crop yield over that obtained from open furrow irrigation from between five times to 8 times tonnage per dunum.
2. An earlier harvest of vegetables allowing Zbeidat farmers to start marketing such crops as eggplants and squash by December, and cauliflower and tomatoes (their main crop) by January. This means a higher price at a period of limited supply in the vegetable markets of the West Bank, Israel, and East Jordan. This perhaps explains the crucial factor in the increase of income for the Zbeidat community.
3. The increased income allowed Zbeidat farmers for the first time throughout their residence in the Jordan Valley, to confront the exploitative relations they have been compelled to contract with the commission agents and merchants of the Nablus vegetable market. This new flexibility was caused by the creation of a disposable surplus which allowed the small farmers to finance a new agricultural cycle (i.e., double cropping) without resort to high-interest linked credit.
4. Increased productivity per labour unit also contributed to the increase in bargaining power sharecroppers now have in relation to their landlords on their leased plots, especially when -- as the case in Zbeidat -- the farmers contribute to the installation cost of the drip. This trend, however, is only hypothetical and tentative as it is too early to observe.