

CHAPTER II

THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE WEST BANK

A study of West Bank agriculture bears directly on many of its geographical attributes, since many of these attributes help define the physical and human resources which are deployed in this sector. The impact of the area's distinctive physical features on its agriculture, as we shall see later in this chapter, has always been crucial in determining the pace of agricultural development, especially when this is viewed on purely economic grounds.

Similarly, the process of agricultural development is influenced materially by a number of demographic and sociological attributes of population, such as growth rates, age and sex composition, and education. This chapter presents a brief exposition of the physical and human geography of the West Bank, with particular emphasis on their interaction with agricultural production. The earlier part on physical geography includes a discussion of the physical attributes of land and water resources. The political ramifications of both of these resources will be explored in chapter III in a discussion of the politics of development.

Physical GeographyLocation

The West Bank is located in the interior middle regions of Palestine about 16-40 kilometers away from the eastern shores of the Mediterranean. It falls between longitudes $30^{\circ}5$ and $31^{\circ}4E$. Despite a relatively long Palestinian coast line the West Bank emerged in 1949 as a totally land-locked region. It is surrounded by Israel to the north, west, and south, and by Jordan to the east (see Map 1).