

Proposed projects

8.0 Fruit trees - olives.

8.1 Wider distribution of seedlings.

Olive seedlings are currently distributed at the scale of 200,000 seedlings per season. This plan calls for doubling the number of seedlings grown annually during the next three years. Most of distributed seedlings would go into new orchards (mainly in Hebron district) but many of them would be used in patching existing orchards in order to raise their productivity and render investment in improved cultural practices more feasible.

Due to the experience they have acquired in recent years, it is proposed to entrust the proposed programme to the MCC and CDF.* The cost of seedlings would continue to be subsidized at the rate of 33 percent. Extra funds needed for this purpose would be allocated by PACC and channelled through third parties.

8.2. Raising the production capacity of producing nurseries.

Olive seedlings are produced currently in three nurseries, one in Nablus (Abdul-Hadi) and two small nurseries in Jenin district. The former has a production capacity of 450,000 and the other two produce around 150,000 seedlings. Much of the produce of Abdul-Hadi's nursery is sold in Jordan where it commands higher prices. A fourth nursery has been recently constructed in Hebron district as a side-project

* MCC: Mennonite Central Committee
CDF: Community Development Foundation.

of Hebron's Agricultural Marketing Cooperative. Anticipated capacity is 100,000 seedlings.

It is proposed to help the Hebron nursery expand its capacity to 200,000 seedlings per year, which may cover the entire needs for that district. Likewise, it is suggested to assist the two nurseries in Jenin raise their capacity to 250,000 seedlings. The fourth nursery (Abdul-Hadi's in Nablus) is viable enough - both financially and technically - to cover its own needs for further expansion. By helping smaller nurseries expand their capacity it would be possible to reduce monopolistic advantages prevailing currently in the olive seedling market.

8.3 Rejuvenation of aged olive orchards.

The most important single cultural operation needed by old olive trees is rejuvenation pruning. This practice is very helpful in reinvigorating old trees and raising their productivity, in addition to reducing the cost of picking by trimming tree size to a manageable height. Although farmers are well aware of these advantages, they believe that the cost of pruning (which is usually done by power chain saws) is excessively high. Consequently, rejuvenation could become much more popular if costs were subsidized.

The suggested programme calls for the dissemination of chain saws through a wider range of potential operators, such as cooperative societies, service units (see 5.5) and eligible individuals. Owners would be provided with the needed