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Agriculture position

Agriculture represents the major source of income for 40% of the population, contributes approximately 17% (1995 - 1996) of GDP and roughly 12% of the country foreign currency revenues, and domestic production meets up to 60% of the total food requirements of the population. A persistent negative agriculture trade balance represents a major component of the overall trades deficit. Agricultural exports represent 11% of the total exports, while agricultural imports 32% of total imports.

Sector policy

Until recently Egypt has followed an economic policy which was dominated by the public sector. In 1991 the first year of the economic stabilization, according to the economic liberalization, the value of agricultural production increased from US$ 7 billions to US $12.2 billions (between 1988 and 1994). The government set, as one of the objectives of its program, a strategy for agricultural development. The strategy was focused on a number of priorities:

- Increasing the exports of agricultural materials.
- Filling the gap between consumption and importation by producing high-yielding varieties and certified fruit tree seedlings.
- The fruit tree industry is more efficient than the local consumption. Moreover, the government policy encourages the fruit tree area and

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production especially in the new reclaimed lands.

Fruit tree industry: Production, trade flows and germplasm

Fruit trees. The fruit species in Egypt account for nearly 46.4 millions of trees of which about 10.2 millions of bearing trees. The fruit tree industry is increasing rapidly considering that in 1990 trees were only 28.3 millions. During 1998, 927,018 tons of fruit were produced, a fruit quantity still sufficient for the local consumption except for apples whose production is still insufficient (Egypt imports apple from Lebanon and from some countries in South America). Egypt has some native varieties especially of Apricot and Peach.

Grapevine. The total production of 1998 was 957,734 tons versus 697,181 tons of 1990. This production is coming mainly from vineyard. The local germplasm is not good economically because berries are seedy and the yield low.

Olive. Olive trees in Egypt are nearly 7.6 millions and the production in 1998 was 231,949 tons. The olive industry is based on the local varieties and some imported varieties. However the olive oil importation has decreased in the last three years.

Citrus. The production of citrus during 1998 was 2,150,256 tons Citrus trees were nearly 47,2 millions in 1998. The citrus exportation was 241,170 tons in the same year.

Sanitary status of the crops with special reference to quarantine agents

Citrus. The first report on CTV was made in 1958. CTV was found in the variety collection of the Horticultural Institute at Giza and El-Kanater at Qualiubia governorate. In 1984 CTV was found in a private orchard in Beni-Sweif governorate, then many strains of CTV were reported from different locations and we have evidence that the virus is naturally distributed. Most of citrus virus dis-

eases have been identified. However we do not have data about the percentage and distribution of citrus virus diseases. Furthermore, we do not have any systems for the production of seedlings.

Recently Egypt has a collaboration project between the ministry of agriculture and GTZ for propagating healthy material.

Fruit trees. PPV was first reported in 1987 in two areas of apricot fruit cultivation. The first area was the Qualiubia governorate where apricot is cultivated, the second Fayoum governorate. Studies carried out in Egypt have showed a compromised sanitary status of stone fruit trees due to the presence of many virus diseases. Distribution of PPV was very low in the first area because most of the cultivated trees are produced by seeds, and are local varieties.

In the second area the percentage was higher than the first one because most of the cultivated trees are produced by grafting. PPV is restricted only to apricot and not to peach or plum. This is due to the fact that the cultivated areas of these crops are separated and far.

The eradication of PPV is still possible in the first area. At present, new nurseries are being established to produce PPV-free seedlings and IPM applied to reduce virus transmission.

"Fire blight" is reported in different pome-growing areas. The main foci are found in the north of Nile delta. The first record of pear fire blight dates back to 1962, when the infection was restricted to pear only. This disease has reduced the cultivated area. So far no data have been available for viral diseases of pome fruit trees.

Olive. So far, a study has been carried out on olive virus diseases. However we have a good collaboration with Italian Institutions (Mediterranean Agronomic Institute and University of Bari) that started last February 2000 for the monitoring of the olive sanitary status.

Grapevine. All major diseases of grapevine were shown to occur in Egypt, including especially fan leaf degeneration (distorting and chromogenic virus strains) and leaf roll, Stem pitting and fleck. No data are available on the distribution and percentage of grapevine virus diseases.

Nursery sector

The nursery activity is not organized to produce healthy material in public and private sector. Productions of fruit tree seedlings annually equal about 3,938,032. At present the Ministry of Agriculture has established a program for the production of virus-free seedlings within the framework of a project of GTZ and of a collaboration with Mediterranean Agronomic Institute and University of Bari.

Plant protection service and institution

The Plant protection service will be organized under the umbrella of the Ministry of Agriculture and Agricultural Research Center. The Plant Protection Institute, the scientific institution under the umbrella of ARC, has a long experience and its facilities offer diagnostic service for all branches of phytopathology and entomology.

Also the Institute of Pomology works with all kinds of fruit trees and vegetables.

Pomology and Certification Institution

A certification system will be organized under the umbrella of Egypt-GTZ project for the production of virus-free fruit tree mother plants with the collaboration of the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute and University of Bari. The certification system in Egypt will be the same as in Apulia region.

The facilities for certification will meet minimum international standards to be satisfactorily installed and continuously operated, such as the greenhouses for indexing and screen house for con-

servation. They will be operational at the end of 2000.

Certification

Legislation. The Egyptian Parliament will issue the laws for grafted plants and plant protection service, (before the system worked to regulate participation). The implementing organizations are:

- Central Administration for Agricultural Extension
- Central Administration for Horticulture.
- Central Administration for Seed testing, and

Certification. The implementing organizations are:

- Pest control Research Institute.
- Horticultural Research Institute.
- Plant Pathology Institute, Department of Phytopathology and Plant Virology.