

Qat and its Role in Yemen's Agriculture Recommendations for the Agricultural Census

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Qat and its Role in Yemen's Agriculture Recommendations for the Agricultural Census

Since our knowledge on the extent of Qat cultivation in Yemen is largely based on estimates, and until today official statistics are based on the findings of an Agricultural Census carried out in Yemen between 1978 and 1983, an update is very much needed.

The upcoming Agricultural Census will provide a chance for this. In order to find answers to many open questions concerning the Qat phenomenon it would be desirable to integrate the questions listed below in the Agricultural Census that will be undertaken in Yemen shortly.

General

- what are the qat seasons.
- what are the estimates of total area under qat by agroclimatic zone, by husbandry system, by major variety, by administrative division, by farm size and by qat unit size?

Economic Aspects

- what is the number of farmers involved, average farm size, income, spread of income
- total value added, total employment, total profit generated by qat
- what are the upstream and downstream linkages, what are the knock on effects on the rural economy of qat production (e.g. relation to production of other food and cash crops in qat areas and in neighbouring areas)
- distribution of revenues and profits - the farmer, the labourer, the well owner, the middleman, the retailer
- what are the returns to various factors, particularly to water, in both financial and economic terms.
- what is the labour requirement (for production, harvesting, marketing), labour absorption per ha, per tree...
- what are farmer's outputs (how many Qat bundles (*rubtas*), respectively Rials, do you get out of one hectare/planting unit?
- how many twigs does one *rubta* contain?
- Qat crop budgets - when is maturity (after 5 years?), yields, profitability incomes. What is this in economic terms - DRC etc?
- what are the decisive constraints in qat cultivation - technical, agroclimatic, financial, labour, capital, water, social.
- how much do farmers get for their Qat, do prices fluctuate?
- how much land does a farmer on average have under Qat?
- how much taxes do they pay (zakat/dharab)?

Water

- what are the means of irrigation in Qat areas?
- what are the costs of irrigation?
- how much water does Qat use compared to other crops?
- do Qat farmers face difficulties with the water supply?
- where do Qat farmers see a solution to water problems?
- are there links of qat to monopolization of water, and to local concentrations of economic and political power.
- does credit policy, or well drilling “policy” favour concentration of qat production? This question concerns equity aspects.

Qat variety, Quality

- what makes good Qat?
- what varieties of Qat do occur in the different regions?
- what are considered the best Qat varieties?

Other crops, change in planted crops

- why do farmers plant Qat, what are the benefits compared to other crops?
- which crops do farmers prefer apart from Qat?
- which problems, costs, and profits do these crops bring?
- what crops did farmers plant before they predominantly grew Qat?
- what are the substitute crops for qat, and what crops has qat displaced - and why?
- what share did the different crops account for in their overall production before planting predominantly Qat, what is the share today?
- how did the size of the area of cultivated land change in this process of switching to Qat?
- what crop varieties did farmers have before switching to Qat and after?
- did the crop varieties (e.g. of Sorghum) become less due to this switch?

Fertilizers, pesticides

- what fertilizers do farmers use, how often, why?
- what are the benefits of fertilizers (quantity of output, quality)?
- what pesticides do farmers use, why, against what?
- what are the benefits of pesticides (quantity of output, quality)?
- are farmers aware of the dangers of pesticides for their and their families health?

Marketing

- what is the organization of qat marketing. Is there concentration, monopoly, restrictive practices (by region).
- price formation and fluctuation - seasonally, geographically