

AGRICULTURAL METHODS, PROJECTS REVIEWED

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[Text] The State Organisation for Agricultural Establishments (SOAE) supervises some of the most important agricultural areas in Iraq, stretching over the Musayyab, Khalis, Abu Ghraib, Nahrwan, Ishaqi, Shahr Zoor, Dujaila and Dalmaj projects.

Huge land reclamation projects are being carried out by a number of companies. The total area of land to be reclaimed exceeds two million donums, stated Mr. Sedik Abdul Latif al-Wattari the chairman of SOAE. Seven additional smaller projects fall under SOAE management, he added.

Reclamation activities are carried out by SOAE or by the State Organisation for Soil and Land Reclamation (SOSLR); the land is then distributed amongst the peasants or allocated for state farms.

Land in the vicinity of

Baghdad has been given top priority in the Organisation's programme. Semi-fertile lands have also been given special preference in SOAE activities.

The causes for this preferential selection are related to the authorities' wish to provide ample supplies of fresh foodstuff for the expanding city of Baghdad. This is vividly reflected in the land distribution pattern and the conditions attached to such land endowment. Highly fertile lands in the areas surrounding Baghdad are allocated on the basis of 20 donum lots, while less fertile lands located further away from the capital are divided into 30 donum lots.

After the distribution of the land, peasants are obliged to grow certain products to meet most urgent local demand and to comply with a fixed production plan. To provide sufficient supplies of summer and winter vegetables

for the city, peasants with land acquisitions near Baghdad are urged to give priority to these crops.

Already throughout the year a steady flow of fresh vegetables has been witnessed by Baghdad's wholesale vegetable markets. This has been made possible by the high yield of the average donum utilized for vegetable production compared to other cash-crops, in addition to the extensive facilities and support offered by the Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform, in the form of equipment, seeds, fertilizers and maintenance services.

Other major activities of SOAE have concentrated on the production of olive, pear, apple and citrus transplants, in addition to the management of orchards which have already commenced production in the areas of Musayyab and Nahrwan.

In addition to the seven dairy production stations presently in operation, SOAE has begun the setting up of four major dairy stations in Musayyab, Ishaqi, Khalis and Dalmaj. 6881 tons of milk, 8.5 million eggs and 17.5 tons of honey were produced last year.

Although SOAE experi-

ence in the production of plastic and glass houses production is relatively new, remarkable success has been scored. The area under actual cultivation through the utilization of this production method totalled 627 donums, while output of various products is expected to reach 17,200 tons during next year.