

Tefron Textile Enterprises Ltd

## Low-Cost Elegance

Another company that demonstrates the Israeli flair for the original, is Tefron Textile Enterprises Ltd. The successful undergarment firm proves Israeli brainpower can be applied to areas outside high technology, with equally rewarding results.

In under six years, the number of employees has risen from 12 to 350, and export sales from \$260,000 to \$3.3 million. This year company founder and Director Mr Sigi Rabinowicz expects export turnover to reach \$5 million.

### "A New Type of Garment"

Mr Rabinowicz says he realized that Israel could not compete with Spain and the Far East for cheap mass-produced items. Nor was his company interested in producing an expensive undergarment to rival boutique wear. "We wanted something totally original. Finally we found a loophole in the European market and decided to capitalize on it. No one had designed low-cost elegant women's underwear. So, using fine fabrics and embroidery, we created a new type of garment."

The company began exporting in early 1978. Its first customer was the German Bodingen firm. Now Tefron boasts a clientele of Europe's most famous fashion houses including Marks and Spencer, the French Monoprix, the Dutch Hema firm and the German Hertie concern. And its offices are scattered throughout Europe, with another soon to be opened in London. "We are also investigating the US, although we don't know how successful such underwear would be there."

"The only way an Israeli firm can survive today, is to keep expanding. We are extending out lines to include pyjamas, nightgowns and baby underclothes. And of course, we are always trying to improve the quality of our garments."

He says that Israeli creativity must be tapped at all times. This way of thinking earned Tefron a 1982 Outstanding Exporter prize.

Dan Sprinklers

## Exports Flow

"Israeli knowhow is wanted everywhere — especially agricultural knowhow" according to the Manager of Dan Sprinklers, Mr Amiram Efrati. And his company's success proves there is truth in this point. The company — the first in Israel, if not the world, to regulate the flow of water in each individual irrigation sprinkler — has won an Outstanding Export prize for more than doubling its exports over the past few years.

Motivated by the need to survive in an arid climate, Kibbutz Dan began ex-

perimenting with different methods of water conservation. In 1970 the kibbutz set up Dan Sprinklers, and soon after that, company engineers and farmers discovered some unique methods of irrigation. Finally, a system of water control where each individual sprinkler, could be regulated, was discovered. The new invention meant that equal amounts of water would be distributed to each plant and no water would be wasted. In 1975 the company started exporting to Australia. Today, 70% of its products are exported to Mexico, the US, Europe, Asia and Africa. Last year's export turnover totalled \$1.7 million.

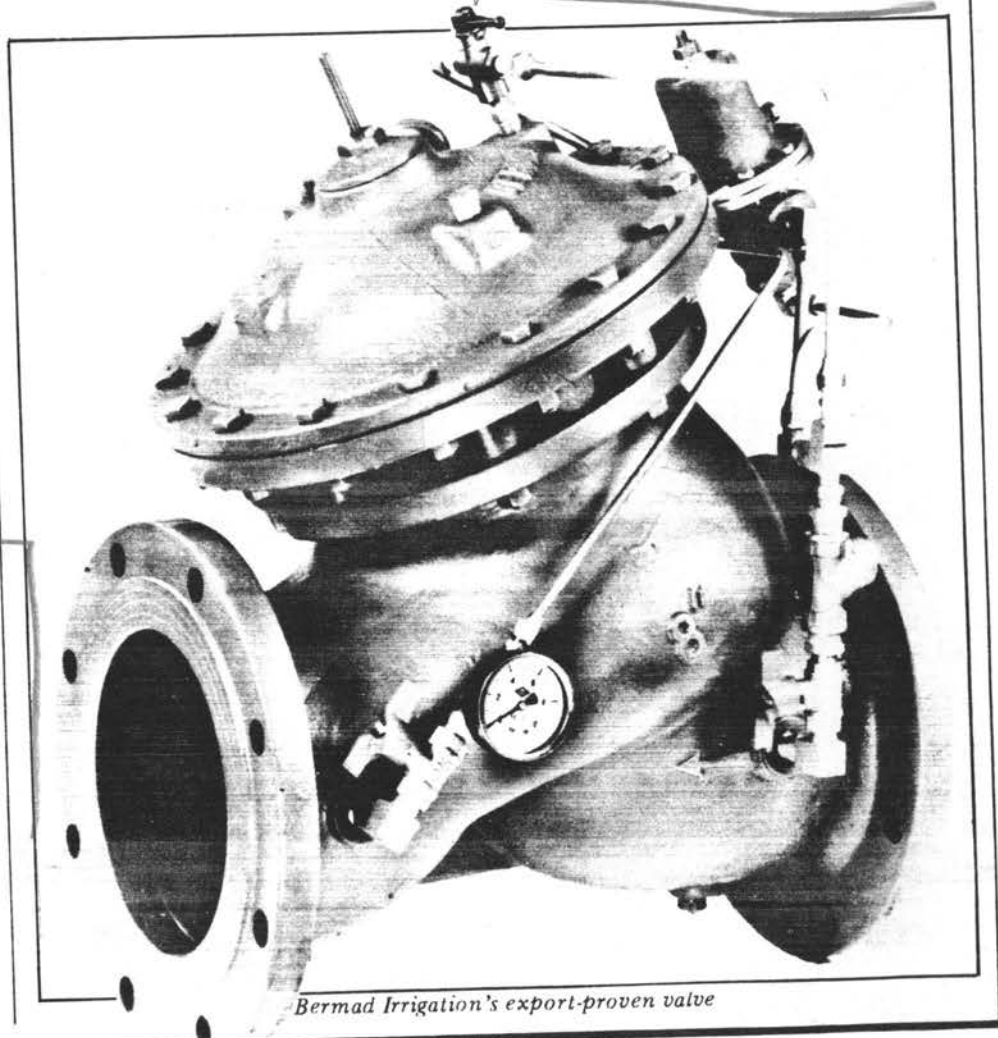
But Mr Efrati claims that not all the company's success is due to its original products. "We also have learned to handle our clients in a unique fashion. There is a strong temptation for customers to turn to cheaper locally-produced items, so we must present them with a package too good to refuse. We offer to adjust any of our products to the customer's individual request, give free lectures and advice, and prompt, reliable service. We are also very informal with our clients and they really like that." He says the company spends a good deal of its earnings on research and development, and is presently about to release several new items.

Bermad Irrigation Controls

## \$3 Million Exports

Bermad Irrigation Controls of Kibbutz Evron and Kibbutz Saar has also proved that agricultural knowhow is a marketable commodity. The company recorded an export turnover of more than \$3 million last year from sales to the US, Japan, South Africa, Europe and New Zealand. While Dan Sprinklers deals exclusively with small sprinklers, Bermad's main products are large irrigation valves that automatically shut off according to pre-set instructions.

The company produces a wide range of hydraulic, electromechanical, metered and air-release valves, all geared toward saving water. Managing Director Adam Rand says the valves are used for land irrigation, but also sold for use in dams, large industries, pumps and pipes. He says that the company places a good deal of emphasis on research and development, with 45% of yearly income going towards the discovery of new and better products. The company's cheapest item sells for \$4, while its most complicated — a 500-lb multi-function control valve — sells for \$3,500.



Bermad Irrigation's export-proven valve

U. 37