



ANERA News

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Groups of singing women picking olives...the loud buzzing of bees...the dry heat of the summer sun...vendors with overflowing bins of vegetables and fruits...

For thousands of years these images have come from the farmlands of the Middle East, where agriculture is a way of life. To this day, farming continues to feed and generate work for local communities all over the region. It is one of the few opportunities open to families to become self-reliant in an uncertain political and economic climate.

ANERA has renewed an ongoing commitment to farming in the Middle East with a plan to grow our agricultural program substantially over the next three years. Our projects will help families learn the most ecologically sustainable means possible for supporting themselves.

The ANERA newsletter is published quarterly by American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA), a non-profit agency established in 1968 and dedicated to providing development, health, education and employment programs to Palestinian communities and impoverished families throughout the Middle East.

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"By the Numbers": the U.N.
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COVER PHOTO: A family gets ready to return home after a day of laboring in their field in the Qalqilia area of the West Bank.

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by the Numbers

Agriculture in the Palestinian Territory

West Bank

Percentage of agricultural land in the West Bank: **25%**

Approximate percentage of that land that is irrigated: **12%**

Percentage of family farms in the West Bank with less than 2.5 acres: **50%**

Percentage of local West Bank communities relying on agriculture as their primary source of income: **36%**

Gaza

Percentage of agricultural areas destroyed by the attack on Gaza in December 2009 (including bulldozing and chemical contamination): **17%**

Number of truckloads of strawberry and flowers exports permitted to exit Gaza since December 10, 2009: **118**

Average daily number of truckloads exported in the period before the blockade began in June 2007: **70**

Percentage increase of market price for locally grown vegetables in Gaza since the blockade: **12%**

Cooped up in Gaza

Dr. Kathleen Kalil was born and raised in the metropolitan Detroit area. Her father was a philanthropist and humanitarian who worked diligently toward achieving human rights for people in the Middle East. Dr. Kalil, a clinical psychologist and mother of two, began thinking about options to help counteract the lack of food in Gaza.

She felt there was a need to develop a sustainable plan that feeds families while bringing some independence and stability to their lives. The poultry project was hatched: one Gaza family is provided with 10 chickens, a rooster, food, and a cage. She proposed the idea to ANERA and the staff in Gaza made it a reality.

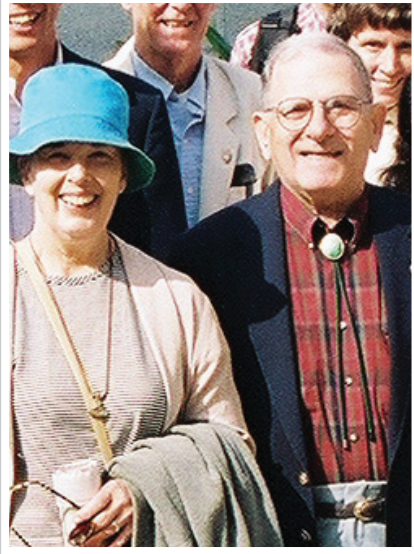
The initial donation from Dr. Kalil provided 200 families with chickens. Since then, ANERA has received additional support from Dr. Kalil as well as other individual donors and the Moriah Fund to expand the poultry project. We have provided chickens to 550 families in total.

Thank you to Dr. Kathleen Kalil for her wonderful insight and support in starting up this beneficial project.



The chickens lay an average of 8 eggs a day, adding up to some 200 a month. They are a great source of nutrition for families.

In Remembrance: Aref Jamil Jabr



The Jabrs – Barbara and Aref

ANERA announces with great sadness that long-time friend and Board member Aref Jamil Jabr died in Minneapolis, MN on May 17 at the age of 86.

Mr. Jabr was born in Jaffa, Palestine and studied law at the Jerusalem Law School. After the fall of Palestine in 1948, he moved to Jordan and, in 1950, was asked to help establish the first Jordanian mission in Washington, DC. He also represented Jordan at the United Nations. For 34 years he worked at the West Publishing Company in St. Paul, MN, where he rose to the position of Manager of Statute Planning in the Editorial Department.

Mr. Jabr was a strong supporter of ANERA's education programs. In the 1990s and 2000s, he served as a member of the ANERA Board and Advisory Council. In 1997, he went with several other ANERA Board members on a trip to visit projects in the West Bank and Gaza.

ANERA is grateful for Mr. Jabr's long-time commitment to our work and for the generous bequest he left ANERA in his will.

Mr. Jabr is survived by wife Barbara, children Jamil and Nadia, and grandchildren Jennifer and Gabriel.

Season to Season

(continued from page 1)

Throughout all of our agricultural work and plans, ANERA's consistent themes are:

- to foster self-reliance,
- to give people jobs,
- to operate on a small-scale and environmentally sustainable level, and
- to improve food security for individual families and whole communities.

In Gaza, ANERA is helping families start household gardens so they can produce enough food to take care of themselves by growing fruit and vegetables and raising livestock.

In Lebanon, ANERA is working with farmers in the south who suffered from the war in 2006. We are planting thousands of productive fruit trees that generate an income for families while rejuvenating the natural environment.

In the West Bank, ANERA is encouraging small-scale farming businesses by providing technical support and infrastructure development. We are also working with children and adolescents to foster an interest in farming as a livelihood.

These "green initiatives" are a means of survival for so many families in the Middle East who rely on the generous earth when the political landscape is barren, unrewarding and deadly.

Some of the families we help do not have much more than the ground beneath their feet and the air around them. We are giving them the tools to gain a little more independence.

On behalf of the families you are helping throughout the Middle East from season to season,

thank you.



ANERA Agriculture Glossary

Roads: Farm-to-market roads facilitate farmers' access to their lands and markets while reducing production costs and keeping the quality of their produce high.

Pictured: Road ANERA built near Ramallah, 2009.

Irrigation: In the Middle East water is a precious commodity which ideally is economized through modern irrigation techniques such as drip and sprinkler systems.

Pictured: ANERA drip irrigation project, Tarqumia, 1980s.

Markets: Wholesale markets give farmers a place to come together to market and sell their fresh fruits and vegetables.

Pictured: Halhoul market, built by ANERA, 1985.

Crops: Olives, zatar, lemons, tomatoes, cucumbers, pine nuts, and many other crops have long been favorites of the region.

Pictured: Zatar harvesting in Qalqilia, 2010

Terracing: Terracing creates flattened surfaces out of hilly lands, making them viable for farming [see page 6].

Pictured: ANERA-installed retaining wall, Tulkarem, 1990s.

Greenhouses: Given the arid climate, these structures are vital for retaining moisture and providing protection from the sun.

Pictured: ANERA-built greenhouse in Qalqilia area, 2010.

Equipment: To enlarge cultivatable land areas, tractors, front loaders and other heavy equipment are needed to move large rocks, level the ground, and plow.

Pictured: ANERA-funded tractor, Khan Yunis, 1985.

Cooperatives: These are membership organizations composed of farmers who join to take advantage of shared services, such as equipment, packing & grading facilities, olive presses, etc.

Pictured: A West Bank cooperative, ANERA partner, 2007.



Crops



Greenhouses

Equipment



Terracing



Cooperatives



This scene is on the road between Qalqilia and Ramallah. Like this olive tree, the wall is hundreds of years old.



A Treasured Way of Life

Anybody who knows Palestine immediately recognizes the picture above.

Cultivated terraces of olive trees are an emblematic feature of Palestinian landscape, especially in the northern central highlands of the West Bank.

A terrace, defined in the simplest of terms, is a series of retaining walls built to create cultivatable steps on hilly lands. But they are so much more than that.

The olive tree is a part of the Palestinian people's agricultural heritage and terracing is an ancient example of farmers adapting nature to fit their needs.

Terraces are a long-term, ecologically friendly method of farming because they combat soil erosion and provide habitats for diverse plant species.

They also form an important part of people's lives by creating a sense of identity and belonging. For thousands of years, olive tree terraces have played host to social activities and created folk traditions that have been passed through the generations.

Unfortunately, the impact of development in the surrounding urban areas, political factors, and the negative impact of the separation wall have all made this important aspect of rural life more fragile.

Throughout our history, ANERA has worked to preserve terraces – employing skilled workers to install and repair retaining walls throughout the West Bank.

We hope that our efforts will preserve this treasured way of life for future generations of Palestinian farming families.



ANERA's Annual Dinner & Fundraiser

Friday, October 1, 2010
Capital Hilton
Washington, DC

Season to Season Families · Farms · Food

Farming families in the West Bank, Gaza and Lebanon are feeding themselves and their communities. ANERA is raising funds to create irrigation networks, build greenhouses, plant trees and support agricultural cooperatives.



MAKE A RESERVATION

or make a donation in support of our agriculture work-
by going to www.anera.org/dinner.

QUESTIONS?

dinner@anera.org
or 202-266-9713

Season to Season



from the desk of **Bill Corcoran, President**

Dear Friend of ANERA:

This newsletter focuses on agriculture. ANERA proudly works with farming families in the Middle East to preserve a way of life that goes back millenia.

Again and again, when I visit the region, people tell me they don't want charity, they want ANERA to invest in them so they have the tools to achieve self-reliance. Our agriculture projects do just that. They have the multiplier effect of creating jobs, feeding people, helping the environment, bringing communities together, and much more.

I hope you enjoy this newsletter as it takes you through some of our exciting plans for the future and achievements of the past. Please, too, take a look at our page 7 announcement of our Annual Dinner and Fundraiser to take place in October. This year, we are raising funds for our agriculture work. We hope you can join us.

As always, we are grateful for your ongoing commitment to ANERA,

Bill Corcoran