

Challenges Facing Farmers in the Governorate of Al-Baha, Saudi Arabia

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Abstract : The Governorate of Al-Baha is known for a history of farming that focused on plant products such as Date Palm, olives, figs, pomegranate and cereals as well as raising cattle, sheep, goats and to some extent camels for many decades. However, farmers have been facing with very significant natural and artificial challenges lately. The goal of this study was to determine the most significant challenges facing farmers in the Governorate of Al-Baha. Sixty farms were surveyed during the year of 2013. Farm survey focused on the farm management, farm financial status and governmental support. Our results showed that most farms were dedicated to farming with limited number of farms used parts of its premises for recreation. About 90% of farms were engaged in exclusively farming business. The financial status was good in most of the farms (80%), stable in 16% and hardly standing in less than 5%. Nearly 60% of the farms marketed 1-3 products and 23% marketed up to 6 products, 14% of the farms marketed up to 9 products and 4% marketed more than 9 products. Less than 14% had a chance to market their products over seven times per year while about 11% market their products and 32% of farms market 3-4 per year and 43% of farms market 1-2 per year. Our data showed that most farmers are in good financial status producing healthy food.

Keywords : farming system, Al-Baha, healthy food, Saudi Arabia

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