

LETTER FROM AN ISRAELI OFFICIAL IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

Please read this correspondence between the agricultural minister of Israel and an individual from British Columbia:

HERE I HAVE A LETTER FROM AN ISRAELI OFFICIAL IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE.

The following is an accurate and faithful copy of a letter that I have in my possession. It was written by the DIRECTOR OF FIELD CROPS DEPARTMENT, of the EXTENSION SERVICE of the MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, of the STATE OF ISRAEL.

The author is a Mr. N. Bar-Droma. The date of the letter is JUNE 8TH, 1983. The letter has the REFERENCE NUMBER 35/24. The address is given as HAKIRYA, TEL-AVIV.

Here is the exact text of this letter, without any corrections or alterations having been made. The only thing I have done is delete the recipient's name to preserve his anonymity.

START OF THE LETTER

Mr

Queen's Bay

R.R. #3, Nelson

British Columbia

Canada VIL 5P6

Dear Sir,

I received your letter of May 12, in which you asked for some data about barley. It is real coincidence that recently I have been receiving two other letters from different countries, all dealing with the same subject. Well, first of all, I want to give you some general information about barley growing to day in our country, which may use as a background for better understanding. As a matter of fact, barley has been diminishing steadily in our country for the last 10-15 years and covers today no more than approx. 10% of the total small grain production. This trend is due to the much lower prices for barley in compare with wheat prices, whereas the yields of both grains are more or less at the same level. The main region for barley growing is in the Negeb (South) between Beer Shebah and the Gaza strip. In the Jordan Valley there is hardly any barley left to day. Among the Arab farmers in the vicinity of Jericho there can still be found some small patches of barley.

This year was a very exceptional one, from climatic point of view. We have had an extreme wet and cold winter and therefor there was a great delay in the ripening of wheat and barley. Both are sown as a rule, in November and the harvest starts around the end of April - the beginning of May. As stated, this year the first wheat and barley have been harvested not before mid of May in the Jordan Valley.

[End of page 1 and continues on page 2]

However, it is not right of course to make a comparison between to-day and the Ancient time, not as far as concerns the variety of barley and not the way of harvesting. To-day we have to wait with the harvest until the grain is entirely dry which means a moisture content of 12-13% only. Otherwise the mechanical harvester does not perform a clean threshing and the grain cannot be stored without further