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Report Categories:

Agriculture in the Economy

Agricultural Situation

Agriculture in the News

Policy and Program Announcements

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Report Highlights:

- Jordan's economic growth is forecast at 2.4 percent in 2016
- Jordanian products are among items banned for import by Iraq
- Jordan Valley farmers to sue Israel
- Agricultural exports drop by 12.8 percent in 2016

Executive Summary:

General Information:

World Bank Forecasts Jordan's Economic Growth at 2.4 Percent in 2016

According to the World Bank's economic research unit, Jordan's economic growth during 2016 will be lower than other Middle Eastern and Northern African countries, at 2.4 percent. Average regional growth is 2.6 percent, expecting to reach 3.6 percent by the end of 2018. The World Bank blames the slow growth rate on adverse regional developments, primarily the conflicts in Syria and Iraq, which are pushing refugees into Jordan, disrupting trade routes and negatively impacting tourism.

Jordanian Products Banned by Iraq

Iraq's Ministry of Trade recently banned the import of some Jordanian food and beverages over health and safety concerns. The ministry identified genetic modification and the excessive use of food additives as the reasons for the ban. In response, the Jordanian Foodstuff Traders Association alleged that Iraq's decision was an attempt to tarnish Jordanian industries and to damage the reputation of Jordanian producers. Industry leaders further noted that the ban on Jordanian imports was not the first of its kind made by a neighboring country. Jordan Ministry of Trade spokesperson, Yanal Barmawi, said the ministry was in contact with Iraqi authorities and would release a statement on the matter shortly.

Jordan Valley Farmers to Sue Israel

The President of the Jordan Valley Farmers Union, Adnan Khaddam, revealed that the union, with help from the Jordan Bar Association, is planning to sue Israel to deter them from the continued practice of setting fires along the border strip. Khaddam noted that this practice by the Israelis negatively impacts Jordanian agricultural producers and can no longer be tolerated. Furthermore, the complainants argue that neither government has openly opposed these violations.

US \$260 Million in Irrigation Projects in the Jordan Valley

Water Minister Hazem Nasser estimated the cost of irrigation projects being implemented in the Jordan Valley at US \$260 million. At a meeting with local farmers, Nasser said that the projects are aimed at improving irrigation and assisting Jordanian farmers. The minister added that by encouraging the planting of produce using irrigation, farm revenues could be increased. The Jordanian Ministry of Agriculture is currently in talks to open Russian and certain African markets to Jordanian agricultural exports.

Agricultural Exports Drop by 12.8 Percent in 2016

The Jordanian Ministry of Agriculture announced that agricultural exports dropped by 12.8 percent during the first half of 2016, as compared to the same period last year. Jordan exported 340,000 MT of fruit and vegetables, generating US \$280 million between January and June 2016, as compared to 391,007 MT and US \$325 million during the same period in 2015. The drop in exports is attributed to the ongoing closure of Jordan's borders with Syria and Iraq. These two markets alone used to consume nearly two-thirds of Jordan's vegetables. The border crossing between Jordan and Iraq was closed in the summer of 2015 and remains closed despite recent reports that its reopening is imminent.

