

Trees for life report

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Trees for Life report 2025

For Palestinians, agriculture is more than just a means of livelihood—it is deeply intertwined with their history, identity, and resistance. Farming holds profound spiritual and cultural significance, serving as a powerful act of defiance against the ongoing Israeli efforts to sever the connection between farmers and their land. Through cultivation, Palestinians assert their right to reclaim their lands, sustain their communities, and fight for their freedom.

However, Israel continues to confiscate Palestinian land through settlement expansion, resource theft, bypass roads, and the construction of the separation wall. Farmers are often left helpless as their olive trees—symbols of Palestinian heritage and resilience—are uprooted. Many stand at locked gates along the Wall, hoping for access to tend, plant, or harvest crops on land that rightfully belongs to them. Young and small-scale farmers, in particular, face immense challenges in establishing and expanding their operations. Despite these hardships, the Palestine Fair Trade Association (PFTA) and solidarity groups have worked tirelessly to restore production and instill hope in affected farmers.

This year, Israeli restrictions have prevented many Palestinian farmers from harvesting their crops, particularly on lands near or beyond the Wall. These actions not only erase Palestinian cultural heritage but also deprive countless families of their primary source of income, exacerbating economic and social hardships in an already challenging reality.

The History of the Programme

The programme began its journey in 2006, steadily growing in both impact and participation. Over the years, the number of participating farmers has increased significantly. While the financial benefits from the trees have greatly supported farmers and their families, the most profound impact has been the renewed sense of hope and dedication to the land. Since its inception, the programme has distributed more than 429,873 seedlings to over 6,925 Palestinian farmers, helping to restore and sustain agriculture in the region.





Targeted Groups and Selection Criteria

The Trees for Life committee prioritizes young families, new and small-scale farmers, women farmers, and those cultivating land affected by the Israeli wall or military actions. Selection criteria focus on the challenges these groups face, ensuring that the support reaches those who need it most.



This Planting Season (2025)

During 2025, the programme has distributed:

- 01 45,000 olive seedlings
- 02 2,500 irrigated olive seedlings
- 03 1000 irrigated soft-shell almond seedlings
- 04 5,000 other seedlings, including grapes, figs , pomegranates, and carob
- 05 Over 9 tons of landrace seeds
- 06 3390 forest trees

These resources have been provided to more than 750 farmers across 40 villages in the West Bank, supporting local agriculture and strengthening farmers' resilience in the face of ongoing challenges

Regenerative Farming & Landrace Seeds Programme Update

This planting season, PFTA has expanded its efforts to include regenerative farming and landrace seeds, with a strong focus on improving topsoil health and fostering a thriving biological environment year-round. This regenerative approach enhances soil carbon storage, improves moisture retention, and strengthens the resilience of farmlands.

Our farm management strategy integrates:

- Biodiversity to maintain ecological balance
- Composting to enrich soil fertility
- Cover cropping and inter-cropping for sustainable land use
- Animal integration, including dairy animals, chickens, and beekeeping, to enhance farm productivity and food quality

We take pride in offering original landrace seeds, carefully sourced from native varieties cultivated by our organic farmers. These seeds are distributed free of charge to new farmers, selected based on soil types and major crops suited to their land. After harvest, a portion of the produced seeds is recollected to build a Seeds Bank, ensuring a sustainable supply for future planting seasons



Landrace Seeds Distribution

This season, 9,000 kg of organic landrace seeds have been distributed to 100 farmers across 15 villages in the West Bank. As part of our sustainable cycle, a portion of their production will be recollected and redistributed to new farmers in the next planting season, ensuring seed sovereignty and long-term agricultural resilience.

Thank you for being part of our mission to promote sustainable agriculture and community resilience!





Contributions and Donations:

The Trees for Life Programme helps to connect the Palestinian farmers and producers to the grassroots fair trade movement worldwide in a meaningful way. In solidarity with olive farmers denied their livelihood, grassroots solidarity organizations abroad have raised funds for the purchase of hundreds of thousands of seedlings since 2006. Trees for Life is funded by PFTA's olive oil buyers, and a network of solidarity organizations in UK, USA and Canada.



Thank you for being part of our mission to promote sustainable agriculture and community resilience!

Wael Hassoun :

Wael Hassoun is one of the kind-hearted farmers whose story serves as an inspiring example. He briefly worked as a taxi driver before spending many years working inside the occupied territories. However, due to the war and repeated closures most recently he was forced to stop working there and decided to return to his land and home. Drawing from the skills he acquired over the years, Wael even built his own house with his own hands. "I'm a man of many trades," he proudly describes himself.

Wael shares a relationship of mutual respect with his four children, a bond that extends to the 30 dunams of land he reclaimed with his brothers. Together, they planted 400 trees, benefiting from the Trees for Life programme. Wael inherited his land from his father, continuing the tradition of land preservation across generations, from father to son and eventually to grandchildren. Restoring the land was no easy task, but through shared effort and unwavering dedication, he and his brothers succeeded in transforming it into a flourishing farm.



Wael Hassoun:

Wael explains, "I never part with the land, and it never parts with me. I built my house nearby so I could wake up to it every day. It means everything to me." He sees the land as his most valuable investment, stating, "It's not just about money; it's a way of life, a foundation for raising a family, and a refuge for people like me." After losing his job, the land became his primary—and only—source of income. Reflecting on recent hardships, he adds, "This war has taken so much from us, but it has also taught us a lot—above all, that no effort truly matters unless it is invested in your own land."

For Wael, his trees are like his children. "I love them as if they were my own," he says. His words serve as a testament to his unbreakable bond with the land, a relationship of loyalty, love, and permanence—one that neither he nor his land will ever abandon.

Rami Owais and His Father Mahmoud:

Rami Owais and his father Mahmoud represent two generations tied to one piece of land in the village of Nisf Jbeil, located north of Nablus. In their family, love and care for the land are passed down, just as names and memories are, through the generations. Their bond to the land is not merely as a source of livelihood but as a continuous narrative woven between the olive trees and the fields. For Rami, his father Mahmoud has always been inseparable from the land. He never saw his father away from the fields but instead saw in him the farming ideal - one who tends to his land with his own hands, who puts his own sweat into caring for olives, and is dedicated to the quality of the soil. Mahmoud not only passed down practical farming skills but also instilled in Rami a profound understanding that the land is a living being, interacting with those who nurture it. From him, Rami learned to read the weather patterns, recognize soil quality, and be patient until the trees bear fruit. For Rami, his father's presence in the field is a source of inspiration, a feeling that the land is another family member that binds them together. When the Owais family benefited from Trees for Life, it meant more than just receiving seedlings—it was an opportunity to cultivate additional land they had dreamed of planting for years. They reclaimed new areas and planted olive and almond trees, as well as other species, letting the land expand the family's legacy. For Mahmoud, every newly planted tree is a promise—a guarantee for the future of his son and grandchildren. For Rami, it is a responsibility to continue the work in his father's presence and absence.



Rami Owais & his father Mahmoud

Today, Rami sees himself as a custodian, responsible for passing this trust on to his children. In Nisf Jbeil, as in many Palestinian villages, wealth is not measured by what you own but by what you plant and what remains of your roots in the soil. Rami Owais and Mahmoud, both, are part of this shared story—where the bond with the land doesn't end with the season but lives on through generations.

Hand in hand, they pass this sacred duty to

Ali Ahmed Faksi :

In the town of Silat al-Harithiya, where the fragrance of the soil blends with the scent of olives, Ali was born with a love for his land. From a young age, farming was in his blood, and he was dedicated to working and nurturing the fields.

Ali joined the Palestine Fair Trade Association in 2012, but prior to that he earned a wage working on other farmers' fields, loving the land but not actually caring for his own. Despite getting on in age, he never lost hope of cultivating his own piece of land – that was his dream.

Ali persevered, refusing to accept he might be too old. His dream motivated both himself and his children to work continuously and save every penny to transform it into reality. After years of hard work, he came to own 40 dunams of land—a land that was more than just soil and plants; it was an extension of his very existence.



Ali Ahmed Faksi

Ali says, "**If it weren't for the need to rest at home occasionally, I wouldn't leave my land until my last breath.**" The land became more than just a workplace; it became his true home, his steadfast companion, and so much more familiar than life in the city. People didn't bother to try and find him at home, they knew to look for him in the fields. It was not easy, but every hardship along the way was worth it. This land is not just property; it is an intrinsic part of who Ali is. When asked about rest, he smiles and says, "**My comfort is here, among these trees, under the shade of these olive trees, in every sapling I planted with my own hands.**" The land was never merely a space to be bought; it has always been a living entity to be preserved and to live on for the next generations, embodying our spirits and the legacy of our good work.

Abdel-Moati Haydariyah

65-year-old farmer Abdel-Moati Haydariyah, joined the Palestine Fair Trade Association in 2007. At the time, he owned 50 dunams of olive groves, producing 2,500 kg of olive oil during a good harvest year.

Over the years, he benefited from Trees for Life receiving approximately 650 seedlings. With these, he expanded his olive groves by planting 15 additional dunams, increasing his total farmland to 67 dunams. As a result, his olive oil production has doubled, reaching 5,000 kg in the current harvest season. Abdel-Moati's journey reflects not only his dedication to the land but also the vital role of sustainable farming in strengthening Palestinian agriculture. In addition to working on his olive farm, Abdel-Moati Haydariyah also held a job to support his large family of 36 members. Together, they worked collectively on the land, strengthening their connection to their heritage and livelihood.



Abdel-Moati Haydariyah

In recent years, Abdel-Moati has benefited from the Regenerative Farming Programme and the distribution of landrace seeds, which was introduced as part of Trees for Life programme. Initially, he received a small amount of seeds, but as he recognized their value, his share increased to 300 kg of various seeds. He emphasizes the significant benefits these seeds bring—not only improving soil and tree health but also providing economic returns that supplement his olive oil sales.

Today, during a good harvest season, Abdel-Moati sells approximately 3,500 kg of olive oil to Canaan Fair Trade, while reserving around 1,000 kg for household consumption. This dual approach allows him to sustain his family while contributing to the local economy.

Abdel-Moati shares a heartfelt message to donors, expressing his gratitude and hope:

"I wish for these donations to continue supporting Palestinian farmers, helping us preserve our land from loss and settlement expansion."



Abd AlRahman -Alnouri

Farmer from Al-Naqoura village who works in construction in addition to cultivating olive fields. His 105-year-old father was also a farmer, engaging in plowing and pruning, with Abdul Rahman assisting him. In 2014, he joined Palestine Fair Trade Association to sell his produce.

He owns 21 dunams of olive trees, 7.5 dunams of almond trees, and 2 dunams of lemon trees, supporting his 11 children.

Seven years ago, through "Trees for life " program, he planted almonds on his land adjacent to the settlement to protect it. Since then, he has annually applied to the program to add new trees. Additionally, he plants landrace seeds provided by PFTA among the olive and almond fields to enrich the soil and benefit from crops other than olives. He cultivates lemons, almonds, and various vegetables like cabbage and local cauliflower alongside his primary olive crop.





Palestine fairtrade Association



Thank You

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