



TREES FOR LIFE REPORT 2025-2026

PALESTINE FAIR TRADE
ASSOCIATION





INTRODUCTION

For Palestinians, agriculture is far more than a source of income—it is a living expression of history, identity, and resilience. Farming carries deep cultural and spiritual meaning, representing a steadfast connection to the land and a quiet yet powerful form of resistance. Through cultivating their fields, Palestinians affirm their belonging, sustain their communities, and hold on to their hope for freedom.



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At the same time, this connection is under constant threat. Land confiscation continues through settlement expansion, control over natural resources, bypass roads, and the separation wall. Farmers often face the painful loss of their olive trees—enduring symbols of heritage and perseverance—uprooted before their eyes. Many are left waiting at locked gates, struggling for access to land they have tended for generations, hoping simply to plant, care for, or harvest their crops. Young and small-scale farmers are especially vulnerable, facing significant barriers to building and maintaining their livelihoods. Despite these challenges, the Palestine Fair Trade Association (PFTA), alongside solidarity groups, continues to support farmers, helping restore production and renew a sense of hope.

This year in particular, restrictions have severely limited farmers' ability to harvest, especially in areas near or beyond the wall. Beyond the immediate economic impact, these measures erode cultural heritage and deepen the hardship faced by countless families who depend on agriculture as their primary source of income.

THE HISTORY OF THE PROGRAM

The program began in 2006 and has grown steadily in both reach and impact. Over time, participation has expanded significantly, with more farmers joining each year. While the income generated from the trees has provided meaningful financial support to farmers and their families, the program's greatest achievement lies in restoring a sense of hope and strengthening farmers' connection to their land.

Since its launch, more than 457,000 seedlings have been distributed to over 7,751 Palestinian farmers, contributing to the revival and sustainability of agriculture across the region.






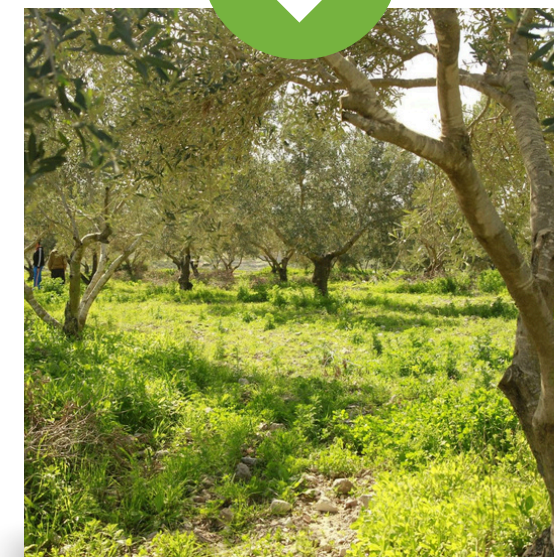
TARGET GROUPS AND SELECTION CRITERIA

The Trees for Life committee prioritizes support for young families, emerging and small-scale farmers, women farmers, and those working on land affected by the separation wall or military measures. The selection process is guided by the level of hardship faced by applicants, ensuring that assistance reaches those most in need.

These resources have been provided to more than 921 farmers across 46 villages in the West Bank, supporting local agriculture and strengthening farmers' resilience in the face of ongoing challenges

During 2025-2026 season :

-  **Olive saplings distributed: 60,536**
-  **Various saplings distributed: 9,000 (including almonds, grapes, figs, carob, pomegranate, and irrigated almonds)**
-  **In addition, around 8,000 kg of landrace seeds were distributed.**





REGENERATIVE FARMING & LANDRACE SEEDS PROGRAM UPDATE

This planting season, PFTA has expanded its efforts to embrace regenerative agriculture and the use of landrace seeds, with a strong focus on improving topsoil health and nurturing a vibrant, living ecosystem throughout the year. This approach enhances soil carbon storage, increases moisture retention, and strengthens the overall resilience of farmlands. Our farm management strategy combines several key practices:



Promoting biodiversity to maintain ecological balance



Applying cover cropping and intercropping for more sustainable land use



Using composting to enrich soil fertility



Integrating animals—including dairy livestock, chickens, and beekeeping—to boost productivity and improve food quality

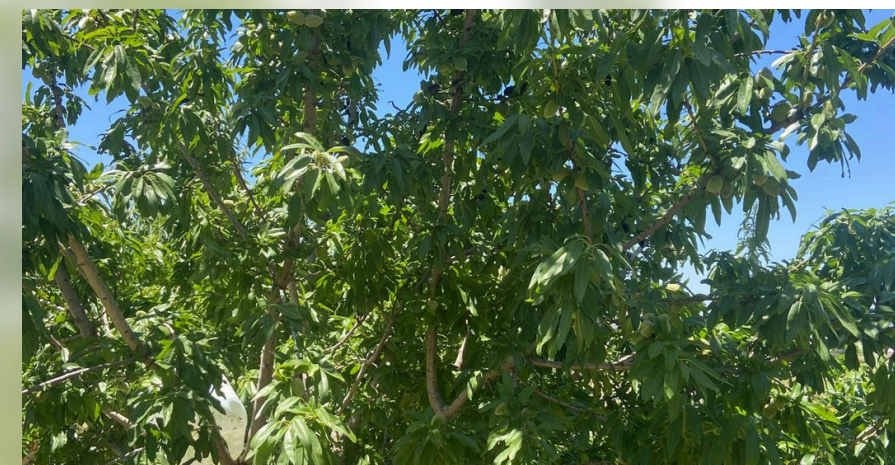


We are proud to provide original landrace seeds, carefully sourced from native varieties preserved by our organic farmers. These seeds are distributed free of charge to new farmers, selected according to soil conditions and suitable crops. After harvest, a portion of the seeds is collected and stored in a seed bank, ensuring a sustainable and continuous supply for future seasons

Landrace Seeds Distribution & Sustainable Farming

This season, 8,000 kg of organic landrace seeds have been distributed to 100 farmers across 15 villages in the West Bank. As part of a sustainable cycle, a portion of the harvest will be recollected and redistributed to new farmers in the next planting season—supporting seed sovereignty and strengthening long-term agricultural resilience.

Thank you for being part of this mission to advance sustainable agriculture and empower resilient communities.



CONTRIBUTIONS AND DONATIONS:

The Trees for Life Program plays a vital role in connecting Palestinian farmers and producers with the global grassroots fair trade movement in a meaningful and impactful way. In solidarity with olive farmers who have been denied their livelihoods, grassroots organizations around the world have mobilized support—raising funds for the purchase of hundreds of thousands of seedlings since 2006.

The program is funded through the support of PFTA's olive oil buyers, along with a strong network of solidarity organizations in the UK, the USA, and Canada, reflecting a shared commitment to sustaining Palestinian agriculture and livelihoods. This season, key contributors included Zaytoun UK, the US Campaign, Dr. Bronner, Soliver, and Canaan Fairtrade, whose support has been instrumental in expanding the program's reach and impact.





HIGHLIGHT FARMERS STORIES

There are various reforestation techniques that can be used depending on land conditions, climate, and the tree species to be planted:

Qaher Ahmad Abahrah - Al-Yamoun

Qaher Ahmad Abahrah is a 54-year-old farmer from the town of Al-Yamoun and the sole provider for a family of seven. For many years, he worked as a home electrical technician inside Israel, relying on this income to support his household. However, two years ago, ongoing closures and the changing political situation forced him out of work, leaving his family facing significant financial hardship.

Guided by his belief that “there is no life with despair, and no despair with life,” Qaher refused to give up. Instead, he began searching for alternative ways to sustain his family. He started small—raising four sheep to help cover basic expenses—while also turning his focus toward agriculture, managing 33-dunum olive farm shared with his brothers.

Determined to secure better opportunities, Qaher joined the Palestine Fair Trade Association (PFTA) in the same year, enabling him to access fair markets for his olive oil and become part of a supportive farming network. Through this connection, he also benefited from the Trees for Life Program, receiving 50 olive seedlings in the previous season and 40 more this year—helping him gradually expand and strengthen his farm.



Qaher Ahmad Abahrah - Al-Yamoun





Looking ahead, Qaher continues to plan for growth. He has arranged to cultivate an additional 40 dunums of land through a sharecropping agreement with a local landowner, following a promise of support from PFTA to provide seedlings for the upcoming season. This step represents not only an economic opportunity but also a renewed commitment to cultivating the land.

Beyond his daily work, Qaher has developed a passion for propagating rare and traditional tree varieties. He grows and shares seedlings such as sycamore, cactus, hawthorn, and various types of figs with other farmers, contributing to the preservation of local biodiversity and agricultural heritage.

Qaher’s story is one of resilience, determination, and hope. Despite the challenges he faces, he continues to invest in his land, support his family, and inspire others in his community—proving that even in the most difficult circumstances, perseverance can take root and grow.



Qaher Ahmad Abahrah - Al-Yamoun



ALI MOHAMMAD SHARIF SAMOUDI - AL-YAMOUN



Ali Mohammad Sharif Samoudi, a 47-year-old farmer from Al-Yamoun, joined the Palestine Fair Trade Association (PFTA) in 2023 with the goal of improving the marketing of his olive oil. As the youngest among six brothers, Ali has long been part of a family deeply rooted in agriculture.

For years, Ali and his brothers worked in the agricultural sector inside the 1948 territories. However, following the events of October 7, 2023, they all lost their jobs, leaving each of them—along with their individual families and their elderly parents—facing growing economic pressure and uncertainty. In response to these challenges, Ali and his brothers turned back to their land as a source of resilience and stability. The family owns 24 dunums of olive groves, and through the seedlings program, they were able to expand their cultivated area. This season, they successfully planted an additional 6 dunums, including 136 olive trees, 60 grapevines, and a selection of citrus and fig trees.

This expansion marks an important step toward strengthening the family's livelihood. Ali remains hopeful that the increased production from the newly planted land will improve the overall income of the family, helping support not only his own household but also those of his brothers.

Ali's story reflects the determination of Palestinian farmers to adapt and persevere, using the land as a foundation for resilience, dignity, and a more secure future



**ALI MOHAMMAD SHARIF SAMOUDI
FAMILY**



ALI MOHAMMAD SHARIF SAMOUDI

AHMAD ABDUL KARIM AL-ALAOUNI - MASLIYA VILLAGE

Ahmad Abdul Karim Al-Alaouni was born in the village of Masliya. After many years of working abroad in the UAE, he eventually returned to his homeland following the passing of his father. His return marked a turning point in his life, as he took responsibility for managing the family's olive lands and preserving their agricultural heritage.

Now 75 years old, Ahmad has dedicated his life to olive and grape cultivation. He joined the Palestine Fair Trade Association (PFTA) in 2016, becoming part of a network that supports small-scale farmers and helps connect their products to fair markets. He owns approximately 70 dunums of olive groves and produces around 3,500 kilograms of olive oil annually, which he markets and sells through PFTA. His lands include ancient olive trees (Rumi), some estimated to be 200–300 years old, reflecting generations of deep connection between his family and the land. Over the years, Ahmad has also benefited from the Trees for Life Program, receiving more than 300 olive seedlings to help renew and expand his groves.

Ahmad explains that his decision to return from abroad was driven by a strong commitment to protect his family's land from being lost or neglected. Today, he works on the land daily, tending to it alongside his children and grandchildren. For him, farming is not only a livelihood but also a lesson in identity and continuity—an opportunity to teach younger generations the importance of staying connected to the land and preserving it for the future.



AHMAD ABDUL KARIM AL-ALAOUNI



RUMI TREES IN HIS LAND

ASIM YASEEN - ASIRA AL-SHAMALIYA, NABLUS



Asim Yaseen is a 57-year-old Palestinian farmer from the village of Asira Al-Shamaliya, north of Nablus. Alongside his work in agriculture, Asim has dedicated more than 25 years of his life to teaching, serving as a schoolteacher and a mentor to generations of students in his village. Now approaching retirement, he reflects on a life deeply rooted in both education and the land.

Born in 1969 in a village well known for its olive cultivation, Asim grew up in a community where the olive tree is not only a source of livelihood but also a symbol of identity and belonging. From a young age, he developed a strong connection to the land, like many youth Palestinian who inherit this deep agricultural heritage.

In recent years, Asim has increasingly identified himself more as a farmer than a teacher, as agriculture has become his main source of income. With the current political and economic challenges, his earnings from education have declined, making olive oil production the primary financial support for his family.

Today, Asim owns more than 70 dunums of olive groves. In his early years, his land did not exceed 30 dunums, but through determination and continuous effort, he has significantly expanded his cultivation. Through the Trees for Life Program implemented by the Palestine Fair Trade Association (PFTA), Asim was able to plant more than 40 additional dunums between 2013, 2025, and 2026, receiving approximately 1,000 olive seedlings. More than half of these trees are now productive this season.

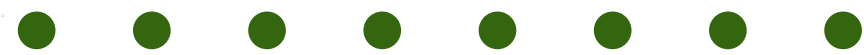
As a result, his olive oil production has increased from around 2,000 kg in the early years to approximately 4,000 kg today.

Asim's story reflects the journey of a teacher-farmer who has dedicated his life to nurturing both minds and land. His work stands as a powerful example of resilience, continuity, and the enduring connection between Palestinian farmers and their land.



ASIM YASEEN

AHMAD MUTHANNA ZIYOUN



AHMAD MUTHANNA ZIYOUN

Ahmad Muthanna Ziyoud is a 29-year-old farmer, married and a father of two young daughters. Like many young men in his community, Ahmad spent most of his working life employed in the construction sector inside the 1948 territories. However, in 2023, he suddenly lost his job, along with thousands of other workers, leaving him facing an uncertain future.

Rather than giving in to these difficult circumstances, Ahmad chose to return to what he believes is the foundation of everything—the land. Growing up, he would spend his days off helping his father harvest olives from the family’s land. Yet, with a large extended family depending on that land, Ahmad knew that its limited yield would not be enough to support everyone.

Determined to build his own path, Ahmad made a bold decision to start from scratch. Using his personal savings, he purchased a piece of uncultivated land that required significant rehabilitation. Through hard work and perseverance, he managed to reclaim and prepare 24 dunums of land. However, due to limited financial resources, he was only able to plant 8 dunums initially.

To continue his journey, Ahmad turned to the Trees for Life Program implemented by the Palestine Fair Trade Association (PFTA), a program he was already familiar with through his father, who has been a member since 2008. Through this support, Ahmad was able to gradually expand his farm. Over two seasons, he received 60 olive trees and 60 almond trees in 2024, followed by 300 olive trees along with almond, grapevine, fig, and carob trees in 2026.

Today, Ahmad continues to invest in his land with hope and determination. His journey reflects the resilience of a new generation of farmers—one that, despite economic hardship and uncertainty, is choosing to rebuild livelihoods from the soil, creating a more secure future for their families.



THANK YOU!

**Your continued support is the driving force
behind our success .**

 www.palestinefairtrade.org

