

## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate and provide a better understanding of the processes of Bedu livestock marketing system in the Badia of Jordan, particularly farmers' market behaviour, linkages to markets and their decision-making process.

A mixture of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies were utilised. A stratified random sample of 193 Bedu farmers, and interviews with traders were applied. The whole region of the Jordan Badia and Research Development Programme was covered. The questionnaires were distributed and every farmer was interviewed by the researcher in the period from July to November 1995.

A broad conceptual framework was employed to investigate quantitatively the interactions and dependencies between household conditions, socio-economic characteristics and livestock sales. These factors, which are usually outside the livestock enterprise, are important in household marketing decision-making in relation to time and place of sale, and reasons for sale. The results of this study indicate:

Regarding farmers' marketing behaviour, marketing decisions are related to a household's demand for cash, and environmental factors such as the high cost of production, disease, unstable government policy, household characteristics, and labour capacity. The most important of these factors is to generate cash to buy feed or to reduce costs and eliminate the risk of disease. Most households with fewer than 100 head of sheep were more restricted in their sales decisions than households with larger flocks.

The majority of producers were found to have access to market information, which was taken into account when deciding when and where to sell their animals. Market information is also maintained and transformed through social channels. The historical and traditional characteristics of Bedu society have shaped the way and type of information exchanged between market participants. Since Bedu society is inter-linked by tribal and family relationships, members of the society maintain channels of communication between families in different areas.

As the majority of livestock transactions are carried out at the location of animals, mobile middlemen have an important role in the marketing system. The marketing structure and marketing systems were further investigated. Location of animals was the most important place of sale, and over 86 per cent of farmers were found to favour this type of sale.

Analysis of the marketing channels verifies that farmers have many alternatives for selling their animals. However, in reality only two marketing channels are dominant in the Badia, middlemen and exporters respectively.

The present market in the Badia seems to suffer, to some extent, from the growing lack of trust which arrived together with the trappings of modernisation. The main factors affecting trust are the trade in unhealthy animals, forged or bounced cheques and the failure of some traders to repay farmers.

Livestock production and marketing in the Badia of Jordan, dominated by an open-range mode of production, faces an uncertain future. Rangelands in Jordan have deteriorated as a result of a combination of harsh environmental conditions and human misuse. The livestock market in the region is under heavy competition with imports of foreign live animals and chilled red meat. In the light of these findings, clear suggestions are offered in the conclusion of this thesis as to how Bedu livestock marketing should develop in the future.