

# Gaza Export Cash Crops

## Some Relevant Facts:

- 5,000 hectares of vegetables can reach 7,000
- Main Export Crops: Strawberries, Carnations, Cherry Tomatoes, Bell Peppers



# Gaza Export Cash Crops cont'd.



- 2003/2004 season:  
Strawberries: 1650 tons,  
carnations: 51 million  
flowers, cherry  
tomatoes: 680 tons
- Over 85% to EU
- 2004/2005: Witnessed  
45 day total closure

# Strengths

- Off-season availability (Mid November)
- Long seasons (November – May)
- Experienced and dedicated farmers
- Existing opportunities (FTAs)



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# Impediments

- Political instability and insecurity
- Inaccessibility to external markets
- Modest post-harvest handling and infrastructure
- Absence of local sources of input materials
- Fragmentation & small land ownership

# ACDI/VOCA's Program

- Phased
- Distributed
- Business Focus
- Capacity Building
- Sustainable



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# Phase I (Oct 2004 – Sep 2005)

- 6 small grants
- 150 farmers in 4 cooperatives
- Introduction to Eurepgap
- Implementation of **Traceability** and **Plant Protection**
- Crop harvesting and post-harvest handling

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# Phase I Results

- Traceability software used at 4 cooperatives
- 150 farmers adhering to a strict plant protection program
- Farmers earned \$0.40/kg extra for improved sorting and packing
- Trained local team of engineers

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# Drawbacks

- 45-day closure on Gaza resulting in total halt to exports.
- Cancellation of some field visits

# Phase II (Oct 2005-Mar 2006)

- Managed by PalTrade
- 40 farmers in 2 cooperatives
  - 27 strawberry farmers
  - 13 cherry tomato farmers
- Implementation of all (14) Eurepgap requirement
- Achieve first certifications in PA areas
- Build up local capacity for further expansion



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# Phase II Interventions

- Advanced and Practical Eurepgap training
- Development of required systems, procedures and tests.
- Rehabilitation of 40 farms (packing and sorting rooms, toilets, clothing, fencing, etc.)

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# Progress

- Initial training course
- Risk assessments of farms and transit stations
- 8 review sessions and 3 field visits
- Currently installing crop handling rooms
- First farm certifications expected in February

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# Drawbacks

- Repeated closures imposed on Gaza and difficulties for Gaza team to leave
- Closure of Karni goods terminal resulting in great losses by farmers who are selling their crop at 10% of export price

# Future Work

- Certification of 200 farms
- Assist farmers in upgrading crop quality and improved sorting and packaging
- Expansion to other cooperatives and agribusinesses in Gaza
- Expansion of program to West Bank

