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**CHARACTERISTICS AND PROBLEMS  
OF VEGETABLE PRODUCTION IN  
GREENHOUSES IN RIYADH AREA:  
FARMERS PERSPECTIVE**

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## ABSTRACT

### Characteristics and Problems of Vegetable Production in Greenhouses in Riyadh Area: Farmers Perspective

The study presents an analysis of data concerning farm sizes, costs, years of establishment, administrative and maintenance levels, as well as geographical factors influencing the distribution of Greenhouses in the study area such as climate, location and markets. The role of government subsidy, type of vegetables produced, labour efficiency and competition from imported vegetables were also investigated.

Data were collected via questionnaires distributed in 44 farms (41% of the population) in six geographical subregions of the study area. The systematic random sampling procedures guided the questionnaire distribution. Extracted data were quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed. The results obtained can be summed up as follows:

1. Three types of greenhouses were found in the study area glass, fiberglass and plastic. All were established during 1980-1990 and all range in size from 5000 to 50,000 m<sup>2</sup>.
2. Administrative and maintenance levels stand as major obstacles threatening the continuation of this type of farming. Absence of well-trained Saudi personnel seems to be the major reason.
3. Governmental Subsidies play a major role in both the establishment and the continuation of this type of farming.
4. Marketing and market accessibility are the main influencing factors of green-house farm distribution, and Riyadh offers the greenhouse farmer with both his market and his maintenance appliances.
5. Tomatos and cucumbers are the two main vegetable products. Permanent consumer demand and the high profit margin stand behind the preference given to these two vegetables.
6. Private marketing procedures are dominant; and direct marketing to supermarket in the City of Riyadh is quickly becoming new trend.
7. Absence of frequent soil sterilization, and adequate fertilization have resulted in increasing salinity and the widespread of "Nemotada". Several types of insects and diseases are becoming increasingly threatening. En-