

Taking into consideration the uncertainty of output and cash gained per mukhammas for all crops grown in this area, it is our assessment that farmers are living at the margin. For this reason, they find it necessary to pursue other income generating strategies to meet minimal household needs. Animal husbandry, off-farm labor pursuits, and other economic enterprises help supplement these farmers' meager earnings from cropping activities. These other sources of income are the topic of the following discussion.

Animal Husbandry

Animals play an important part in the farming system of this region. Ninety-three percent (37 of 40) of the farmers in our sample owned animals. The various types commonly owned include cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys, camels, horses and poultry.⁴⁸ Table 17 presents the average number of these animals owned by farmers and their respective ranges.⁴⁹

Table 17. Average Number of Animals Owned by Type of Beast
(n=40)

<u>Type of Animal</u>	<u>Average Number</u>	<u>Range</u>
Cattle	5.8	0-60
Sheep	6.4	0-120
Goats	6.3	0-50
Donkeys	1.0	0-6
Camels	< 1.0	0-2
Horses	< 1.0	0-3

Farmers own an average of six cattle, sheep and goats each. As for donkeys, the average was one per farmer. Camel and/or horse ownership was far less common, as indicated by the averages of less than one.

But animals are not evenly distributed among farmers. In particular, cattle, sheep and goats are unequally distributed.

⁴⁸ Although poultry such as chickens and pigeons are commonly owned by most farmers in this area, accurate figures of these are difficult to obtain. For this reason they will be excluded from our analysis.

⁴⁹ Farmers are very reluctant to report the number of animals they have because of their belief in the evil eye. So the figures presented here are approximations which probably underestimate the actual number.