

Table 29. A Qualitative Analysis of Crop Marketing in the El-Obeid Area (Continued)

<u>Seller</u>	<u>Buyer</u>	<u>Channel</u>	<u>Incentives and Constraints</u>
Village Merchant	Urban Merchant/ Agency	Direct Sale	Direct sales of crops by village merchant to a merchant/agency in <u>el-Obeid</u> escapes taxation. This marketing strategy is generally available only to the relatively prosperous merchants who have vehicles available.
		Urban Market Sale	An alternative to the direct sale to an urban merchant is to sell the crop at the official crop market. All taxes will be duly assessed. This strategy is rarely attractive unless the price at the urban market is very good.
Agent/ Assembler	Urban Merchant/ Agency	Direct Sale	Agents and assemblers almost invariably sell at crop agencies rather than at the urban crop market. Partly this is due to smuggling, an activity that agents and assemblers routinely undertake. But mention also needs to be made of the strong relationship that tends to develop between the urban crop merchant and the agent. Sometimes, this relationship is given extra moral weight by a kinship bond, but this is not essential. The relationship is actually a mutual benefit pact. The merchant prefers to assemble crops through his agents who buy in the villages where the prices are lowest. The agent/assembler prefers to sell directly to the merchant rather than through the urban crop market because (a) he will be paid in the same day (immediately by check if there is a reason to be in a hurry), (b) the agency provides the agent/assembler with sacks, (c) the agent may on occasion receive loans or cash advances to buy crops, and (d) when selling to the agency there are no commissioned agents to be paid and no taxes.
		Urban Market Sale	Rarely does an agent/assembler sell at the urban crop market. There would have to be something to off-set the commissioned agent's fee and the high <u>9ushuur</u> tax at the urban market. Possibly the prospect of a long delay at the crop agency might under certain circumstances off-set these costs.