of households revealed that nearly two-thirds of the members were productive in some way during a part of the year. The usefulness of children as producers and income-earners is well understood by parents.

The average cultivated landholding of a household head is 18 makhammas. Most farmers are cultivating more than one-half of their total land holdings, a fact that supports the view that soil fertility in the region is steadily declining due to insufficient fallowing. One-third of all cultivated lands are rented rather than owned by farm managers. Most of the rented land is leased by better-off farmers from farmers who are poorer than average. Because labor is the key constraint on cultivating land and because poorer farmers lack the equity to hire labor, they gain an income from idle land that they own by renting it to others.

The four most common crops are millet, sorghum, sesame and groundnuts. The cereals are primarily subsistence crops though surpluses are sold to other farmers and at local markets. Millet is the preferred staple of the rural diet, and the stalks of the millet plant are ubiquitously used as a building material. Thirty-eight per cent of the cultivated lands were found to be cultivated in millet, while 95 percent of the households grew it. Sorghum is not nearly as important a crop although about three-quarters of the farmers do grow some sorghum. Local varieties (milo type, red and white) are frequently seen intercropped (in the same hole) with sesame. White sorghum is preferred for making bread and porridges. Red sorghum is used to make beer. Sorghum is also an important animal fodder and both the seed and the stover are used for this purpose.

Forty-eight per cent of the cultivated land is planted in sesame, while 93% of the farmers grew sesame in their fields. Sesame is often intercropped with sorghum, cowpeas, watermelon or karkadee. Some farmers sow varieties of sesame which mature at different rates in order to avoid the labor bottlenecks that can occur during the busy harvest season. Since sesame is threshed by hand, it must have the characteristic of shattering easily. Sesame is the bread-and-butter crop. Most of it is sold at regional markets and is destined for processing into oil which is consumed in the urban centers. Market prices of sesame tend to be stable and predictable. Ten per cent of the cultivated land was planted in groundnuts during the 1980-1981 season. Barbiton variety is grown exclusively and seed quality is said to be very poor. Groundnuts are grown primarily for the export market where wide price fluctuations have occurred in recent years. Price instability makes this a high-risk crop for farmers.

Besides these four major crops, a variety of lesser-important crops are grown. Roselle is usually sold for cash or traded in kind. Cowpeas and okra are intended for domestic consumption but may also be sold or traded. Watermelon is grown as a water source and fodder for livestock during the dry season. It is also consumed domestically and sold in local markets. These minor crops are frequently interplanted with sesame and sorghum.

The cropping cycle begins in the period of January to April with land clearing. Then, between April and August all four major crops are planted. Millet is planted earliest because the locally preferred variety is long-maturing. If the early plantings succeed in germinating owing to an early arrival of the rains the crop will mature before the season in which insects and birds usually attack the immature candles. If the early plantings of millet do not germinate the farmer may replant after a month. Alternatively he may switch to a shorter