millet crop by selling the stalks for building materials. Thus, the high cash value of millet, its use as a building material and its desirability as a basic foodstuff explain farmers' interest in growing it.

As for sesame, farmers were receiving 1.66 L.S. for every L.S. spent on labor. This is a lower ratio than for millet. According to our figures, only 13.65 L.S. were gained by farmers for every mukhammas in sesame they grew when labor expenditures were subtracted. This cash gain when compared with that of millet does not seem great enough to account for its importance as a crop. However, there are several reasons for farmers' preference for sesame despite its lower cash gain: 1) it is one of the few cash crops that will grow in the area; 2) it has fewer major pests than millet; and 3) sesame is used as a source of savings to help reserve cash for labor expenditures during the cropping season. For these reasons, sesame is well integrated into the cropping patterns of this area and will continue to be grown.

Farmers who grew groundnuts received a better return for their labor than they did for sesame. For every L.S. they spent on labor, they received 1.75 L.S. in return. The rate of return for groundnuts was second only to millet. Of greater importance, however, is that for every mukhammas in groundnuts, a farmer received 25.11 L.S. after total labor costs were deducted. This was the highest cash sum gained of any of the crops. Although these figures indicate that groundnuts are worth growing, the initial labor investment is a prohibiting factor. The high labor costs restrict most farmers (except better-off farmers) from growing large plots of groundnuts. This limitation accounts for the small plots of this cash crop commonly found in this area.

Of all the crops grown, sorghum had the lowest return to labor. Our findings indicate that farmers only received 1.21 L.S. for every L.S. they invested in labor at current market prices. Farmers only gained 4.40 L.S. over labor costs for every mukhammas of sorghum they grew. Clearly the profit ratio does not provide a satisfactory explanation for the extensive cultivation of sorghum in Umm Ramad.

What must be taken into consideration is the importance of sorghum in beer manufacture. Much of the sorghum grown in Umm Ramad is used for the production of beer, which greatly increases the value of the crop. Homemade beer from sorghum is sold at considerably higher rate of return than sorghum sold in the market, so farmers increase their cash gains considerably. Sorghum also is an important source of cattle fodder. These factors explain the extensive cultivation of sorghum in villages like Umm Ramad.

47 This figure was based on the average current price of one of the more expensive white sorghums (dabar) sold in the El Obeid Crop market. If the average price of feterita were used instead, the calculations for the return to labor would show a net loss of 51 piasters per mukhammas. The locally grown white sorghum (zunaari abyad) is preferred as a human food over feterita. The villagers regard its quality to be comparable to dabar.