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Whole Broilers 3 1/2 lb. Average	lb.	\$1.99
Cut-up Broilers Quarters or Eighths	lb.	\$2.29
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Chicken Fingers BBQ or Buffalo Style	lb.	\$6.99
Gazpacho Soup Refreshing Summer Treat	Quart	\$3.99

At Our Service Deli

Turkey Pastrami Sliced to order	lb.	\$6.99
Falafel Salad Served with Tahini	lb.	\$4.99

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*** Attention Chocoholics! ***

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Baking & Snacking Chocolates Manischewitz - Lg. 8 oz. • Parve	2 Bars For	\$3
Chocolate Chips Manischewitz • Parve • 8 oz.	2 Pkgs for	\$3
Chocolate Wafers Alma • 250g.	pkg	99¢

Sabra Super Deals! Bourekas Cheese or Potato	pkg.	\$3.49
NEW! Coffees from Elite Latte • Iced • Tropical	250 gram canister	\$5.99
Marinades Simcha • Grecian or Hickory	12 oz. jars	2 for \$3
Ahava Whipped Cream Cheese Cholev Yisroel	10 oz.	2 for \$5

We have New England's Best Selection of Kosher Wines This Week's Selection:

Sauvignon Blanc & Chardonnay Carmel	750 ml.	\$9.99
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DESPITE DISENGAGEMENT, GUSH KATIF'S



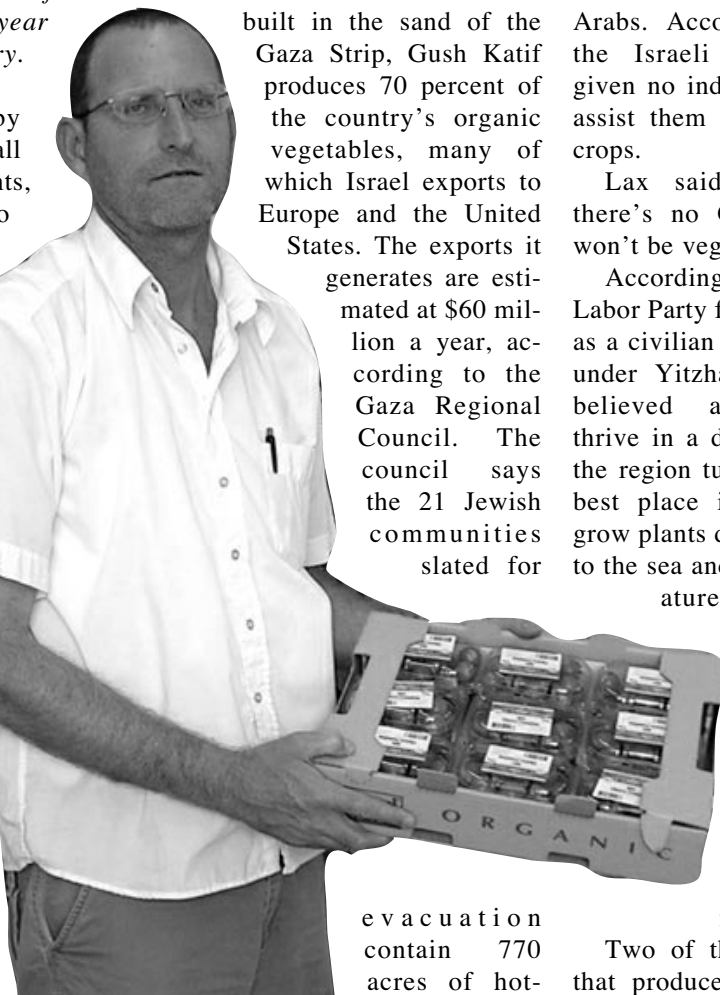
Photos by Shira Schoenberg

Anita Tucker picks stalks of celery from her hothouse in Netzer Hazani

"I'm afraid there won't be vegetables in Israel after disengagement"

SHIRA SCHOENBERG considers the effect Ariel Sharon's Gaza withdrawal plan will have on Gush Katif's \$60 million-a-year agricultural industry.

Surrounded by hardy seven-foot tall cherry tomato plants, Noah Lax points to 10 dead stalks on the edge of his green-house cut off a foot from the ground — that is where a Kassam missile struck. Although the rocket destroyed only a tiny fraction of his crop, if Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's disengagement plan succeeds, next year Lax will lose about 5 acres of vegetables,



for which he claims the government will only minimally compensate him.

With its fertile hothouses built in the sand of the Gaza Strip, Gush Katif produces 70 percent of the country's organic vegetables, many of which Israel exports to Europe and the United States. The exports it generates are estimated at \$60 million a year, according to the Gaza Regional Council. The council says the 21 Jewish communities slated for

grow pest-free and organic vegetables, flowers, house plants, and other produce. Jewish farmers also employ some 5,000 Arabs. According to farmers, the Israeli government has given no indication that it will assist them in relocating their crops.

Lax said: "If next year there's no Gush Katif, there won't be vegetables in Israel."

According to Lax, when the Labor Party founded Gush Katif as a civilian settlement in 1977 under Yitzhak Rabin, no one believed agriculture could thrive in a desert of sand. Yet the region turned out to be the best place in the country to grow plants due to its proximity to the sea and its stable temperatures during the day and night. Farmers quickly developed ways to grow vegetables in the sand, and now Gush Katif is at the forefront of agricultural technology.

evacuation contain 770 acres of hothouses, which

Two of the five companies that produce pest-free vegetables in Israel are in Gush Katif.

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FARMERS STILL PLANT FOR THE FUTURE

One of those, Chasalat, whose factory is in Kfar Darom, distributes 90 million bags a year throughout Israel, according to the region's head tour guide Naor Zilberman. The community of Katif also owns 700 cows, which produce milk for the Israeli dairy company Tnuva.

Lax, a tall, thin sabra who speaks angrily about government policy, has lived in the community of Ganei Tal for 23 years. He began growing organ-

gy, Tucker monitors computerized watering and cooling systems, hangs netting to keep insects out, and uses plastic sheets attached to a temperature sensor to keep in the ideal amount of heat. Tucker explained the success of Gush Katif's farmers: "If you have a good Jewish head, are a good farmer and businessman, and have a blessing from Hashem, you can do anything."

Tucker recalls when two years ago Scandinavia boycotted the region, forcing farmers to label their products with stickers identifying their origin. After two weeks, sales in the country doubled and the government made them remove the stickers. "Their stomachs spoke first," Tucker said.

Tucker claimed that most area farmers already signed export contracts for next year, and expect to plant as usual. "Every year for 29 years, someone has said maybe there shouldn't be Jews here. Every year, I tell reporters, next year you'll come back and ask again the same question, and I'll give you the same answer and another cup of coffee."

Some agriculturalists have gone beyond traditional farming. Avraham Berrebi, who immigrated 24 years ago from France, lives in the community of Gadid and uses local insect-free plants to make medicinal extracts, produced according to the medical writings of Mai-

monides and the traditions of folk medicine.

As visitors traipse through his home, admiring the metal vat and spigot pressure cooker that he uses to make the extracts, Berrebi pulls people aside to spray refreshing geranium extract in their eyes, hand them a glassful of mint water, or spray sweet-smelling eucalyptus into their mouths. He sells deodorant, headache medicine, and all types of herbal drugs.

He shrugs off the question of disengagement as a non-issue, before turning back to explain the uses of geranium and etrog. "We're patient. We're not scared of leaving."

Editorial comment, page 22

Fact file

- Gush Katif exports are estimated at \$60 million a year.
- Of Israeli produce intended for export, Gush Katif produces:

90 percent of the country's cherry tomatoes
80 percent of lettuce
70 percent of organic vegetables
60 percent of geraniums

From Gush Katif tour guide Naor Zilberman and the Gaza Regional Council

"If you have a good Jewish head, are a good farmer and businessman, and have a blessing from Hashem, you can do anything."

Anita Tucker, resident of Gush Katif

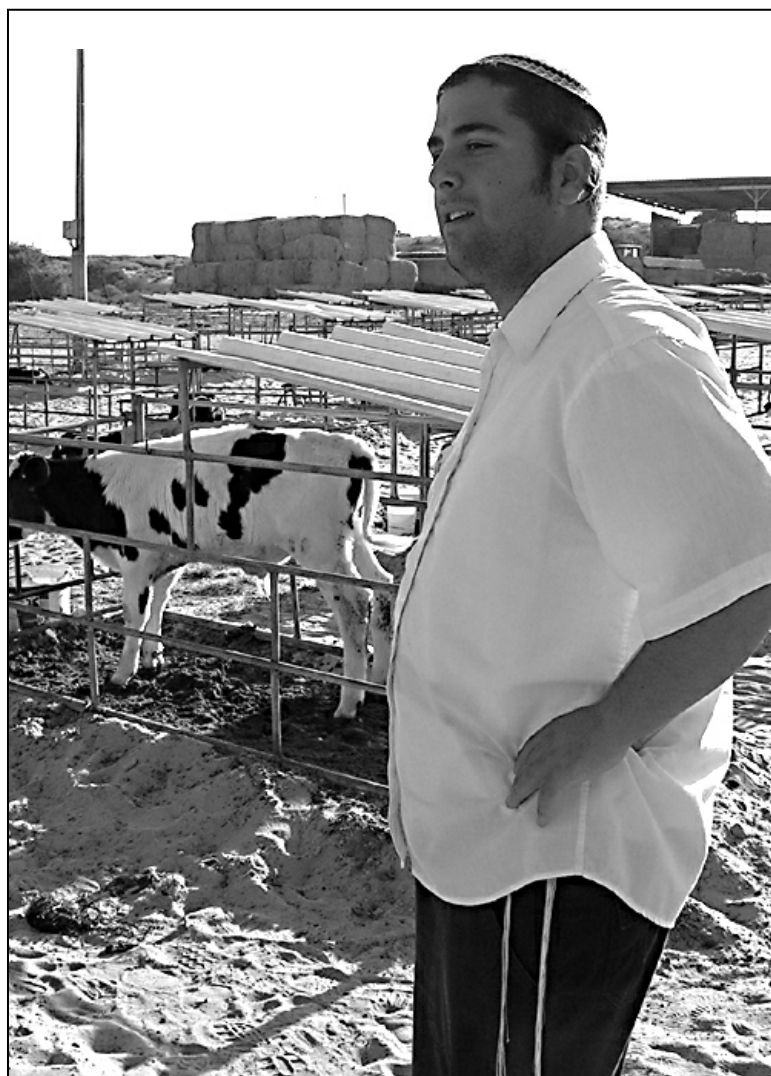
ic cherry tomatoes in 1982 and now produces 420 tons per year, employing 30 Arab workers. Although the Kassam hit his hothouse only 400 meters from where his workers were fixing the roof, he has never considered relocating.

Lax said, "It's a problem in all of Israel. Buses blow up in Jerusalem. Do we have to leave Jerusalem? We need to do the opposite - to fight terror, not to run from it."

Another long-term resident and farmer is Anita Tucker. Tucker moved to Israel from New York in 1969, and in 1977 she became one of the founding members of the community of Netzer Hazani. She wanted her children to live in a rural environment, and all that existed then in Netzer Hazani were "bald, empty sand dunes." She was nervous, but she said, "My four, three, and two-year-old children slid down the sand dunes, saw the sea and didn't want to leave."

The Ministry of Agriculture assured her that nothing would grow in the sand. But Tucker was not dissuaded. Today, she grows 30,000 heads of celery across 2 acres of hothouses. This Pesach, she sold 1,500 boxes of celery with 20 heads per box.

Tucker, a grandmotherly woman, wears a sculley cap to shade her eyes from the sun and picks crisp celery from the ground to offer her visitors. "This place has turned into a paradise of vegetables," she said. Using the latest technolo-



Tour guide Naor Zilberman visits the cows of Katif

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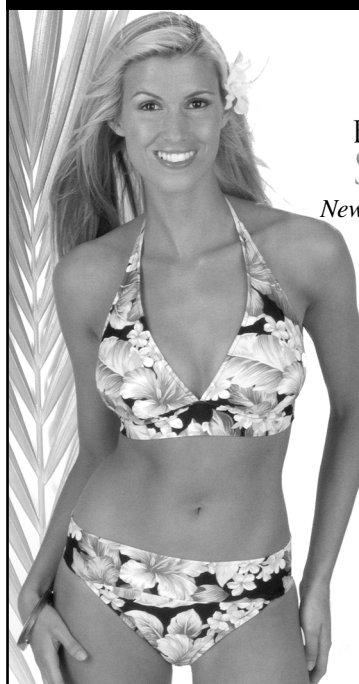
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