

## Discussion Session

### "The Agricultural Challenges in Al-Hasakah Governorate"

Warshin Association: 30 July 2026  
Qamishly/ Al-Hasakah Governorate / Syria



#### 1. Introduction

As part of efforts to address the agricultural and environmental situation in Al-Hasakah Governorate, and given the important role that the agricultural sector plays in the lives of the population and the economy of the region, a specialized discussion session was held at the headquarters of Warshin Association.

The session focused on the current state of agriculture in the governorate, the main challenges and risks facing the sector, existing agricultural practices, and the role of relevant stakeholders and farmers in addressing these challenges and developing practical solutions.

The session was attended by academics, agricultural engineers, experts, farmers, representatives of agricultural authorities, and agricultural input shop owners. It provided an opportunity to exchange views and practical experiences from different perspectives and to discuss the main issues affecting the sustainability of the agricultural sector.

The discussion covered several key topics, including the current state of the agricultural sector; the most affected crops and the reasons for their decline; improper agricultural practices; the role of agricultural and environmental authorities and farmers; local and new agricultural varieties; risks facing agriculture; natural resource management; and key solutions and recommendations.

## **2. First Discussion Topic: (How do you assess the current state of the agricultural sector in Al-Hasakah Governorate?)**

Participants agreed that the agricultural sector in Al-Hasakah Governorate is facing increasing difficulties due to a combination of interconnected economic, climatic, technical, and administrative factors.

One of the main challenges is the significant increase in the prices of agricultural inputs, particularly seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and fuel, while agricultural product prices remain low and do not match production costs. This has reduced the economic viability of farming.

Participants also highlighted the limited support available to the agricultural sector, which has increased the financial burden on farmers. They emphasized that the continued gap between production costs and agricultural returns may push more farmers to seek alternative sources of income and leave agricultural work.

In this context, participants stressed the need to achieve a balance between agricultural support, price liberalization, and encouraging competition in a way that protects farmers from exploitation while allowing them to freely market their products and obtain a fair return.

## **3. Most Affected Crops and Reasons for Decline**

Wheat and barley, particularly wheat, received significant attention during the discussion, as they are among the region's strategic and essential crops.

Participants noted that recurring droughts have had a significant impact on crop productivity, particularly rain-fed wheat, which depends mainly on rainfall.

Regarding irrigated wheat, the increase in agricultural fuel prices and its limited availability have affected farmers' ability to secure irrigation during critical stages of plant growth, negatively affecting productivity.

Participants also pointed out that the increasing cost of agricultural inputs, together with improper agricultural practices, has further aggravated the situation and reduced agricultural yields.

- Cultivation of plant types and varieties that are unsuitable for the environmental and climatic conditions of the region.
- Unplanned tree planting, which may contribute to the depletion of water resources.
- Insufficient monitoring of agricultural pests, particularly the emergence of new pests affecting vegetable crops.

Participants emphasized that addressing these practices requires strengthening agricultural extension services, increasing farmers' awareness, and improving monitoring and regulation by the relevant authorities.



## **5. What is the role of agricultural, environmental and farmers' organizations in reducing the problems facing the agricultural sector?**

Participants agreed that the decline in agricultural extension services is one of the main problems affecting the agricultural sector.

a member from the agriculture research's mentioned that the conditions resulting from the Syrian crisis and war have led to the closure or suspension of a large number of agricultural extension units, creating a gap between farmers and scientific agricultural information.

Participants noted that farmers have, in many cases, become dependent on their personal experience or non-specialized sources when making decisions related to seeds, fertilization, irrigation, and pest control.

Therefore, participants emphasized the need to reactivate agricultural extension units and develop agricultural extension approaches that are more closely aligned with farmers' needs and the new climatic and environmental challenges.

## **6. Local and New Agricultural Varieties (What is its impact on agricultural and environmental production in the region? And is it subject to monitoring or inspection before being put on the market?)**

One of the participating farmers confirmed that they buy varieties based on traders' recommendations, and most of them discover after a while that they are unproductive and unsuitable varieties.

Participants emphasized the importance of preserving local varieties and increasing their production, considering them an important part of the region's agricultural and genetic diversity.

They also called for the development of new varieties based on scientific approaches that are suitable for local climatic conditions, drought-tolerant, and capable of providing good yields.

Representatives of the agricultural authorities referred to efforts being made to preserve and multiply existing varieties in cooperation with relevant institutions, despite the difficulties and challenges facing this work.

At the same time, participants emphasized the importance of strengthening control over agricultural varieties and inputs entering the region, verifying their sources, and testing them before they are introduced into the market in order to prevent potential negative impacts on local varieties and the agricultural environment.

The importance of activating agricultural quarantine procedures and monitoring the movement of agricultural inputs was also emphasized



## 7. Agricultural Pests and Emerging Risks

Participants highlighted the need to strengthen agricultural pest monitoring, particularly in vegetable crops, given the emergence of new pests that were not previously common in the region.

The emergence of such pests indicates the need to develop a monitoring and early warning system and to strengthen the capacity of relevant authorities and farmers to identify pests and respond to them using appropriate methods.

## 8. Drought and Natural Resource Management

Drought was identified as one of the most significant risks facing the agricultural sector in Al-Hasakah Governorate due to its direct impact on agricultural production, grazing areas, and water resources.

Participants also discussed the issue of unsustainable groundwater use, particularly the random drilling of wells. They emphasized that continuing such practices could lead to the depletion of groundwater reserves and threaten the future of agriculture.

The negative impact of some private farms and swimming pools on water consumption was also highlighted, along with the need to establish regulations and laws governing the construction of such facilities in line with natural resource management plans.

## 9. Unplanned Urban and Agricultural Expansion

Participants pointed out that the unplanned construction of private farms at the expense of agricultural land represents an additional threat to productive areas, particularly when it results in the loss of land previously used to grow strategic crops.

They also emphasized the need to regulate the establishment of private farms and urban expansion through well-planned approaches that take into account the characteristics of the region and its agricultural and water needs.

## 10. Agricultural Fires

Participants referred to the increasing number of fires affecting agricultural lands and crops in recent years and the significant losses they cause to farmers.

In this regard, the need to increase the number of fire stations in rural areas and improve preparedness and response capacities was raised in order to reduce losses and protect crops and agricultural land.

## 11. Main Challenges Facing Farmers

The discussions concluded that farmers in Al-Hasakah Governorate face a range of interconnected challenges, including:

- Drought and declining rainfall.
- High prices of agricultural inputs.
- High fuel prices and insufficient fuel availability.
- Low agricultural product prices compared to production costs.
- Limited agricultural support.
- Decline in agricultural extension services.
- Depletion of groundwater.
- Widespread random drilling of wells.
- Emergence of new agricultural pests.
- Increasing agricultural fires.
- Introduction of agricultural varieties and inputs without sufficient regulatory oversight.
- Unplanned expansion of private farms.
- Improper agricultural practices.
- Weak coordination among institutions and stakeholders working in the agricultural and environmental sectors.

## 12. Key Recommendations and Proposed Solutions



Finally, all participants in the session were asked to provide a recommendation and solution for everything that had been discussed.

Therefore, Based on the discussions and contributions, participants reached a number of recommendations, which are:

1. Review agricultural policies to better reflect the nature, resources, and potential of Al-Hasakah Governorate, including:
2. Involve farmers, experts, and relevant authorities in developing agricultural plans and policies.
3. Provide agricultural inputs at affordable prices, particularly seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and fuel.
4. Support the prices of strategic crops, especially wheat and barley, through incentive prices that ensure farmers can continue production.
5. Open new channels and markets for marketing agricultural products.
6. Promote modern/conservation agricultural practices among farmers in line with the local context through regular awareness sessions and meetings with farmers.
7. Reactivate agricultural extension services and extension centers.
8. Encourage soil testing before planting and provide fertilizer recommendations based on the test results.
9. Preserve and multiply local crop varieties.
10. Develop and breed new crop varieties that are drought-tolerant and adapted to local climatic conditions.
11. Strengthen monitoring of imported agricultural varieties and inputs entering the area.
12. Activate agricultural quarantine measures and inspect seeds and agricultural inputs before they are distributed or traded.
13. Establish an effective system for monitoring agricultural pests and providing early warnings.
14. Establish regulations and laws governing the drilling of wells and the use of groundwater resources.
15. Regulate the establishment of private farms and swimming pools to ensure that they do not negatively affect agricultural land or water resources.
16. Emphasis tree planting and the introduction of plant species in a way that is compatible with the local environment and available water resources.
17. Increase the number of fire stations in rural areas and strengthen their capacities.
18. Strengthen cooperation and coordination among agricultural and environmental authorities, local stakeholders, and farmers.

19. Involve farmers, experts, and relevant authorities in developing agricultural plans and policies.
20. Adopt sustainable agricultural plans that take into account climate change, water scarcity, and the degradation of natural resources.

## Conclusion

The session demonstrated that the agricultural sector in Al-Hasakah Governorate faces a number of interconnected challenges that cannot be addressed by dealing with one problem in isolation. Drought and water scarcity, rising production costs, limited support, the decline of agricultural extension services, improper agricultural practices, pests and fires, as well as weak regulation of natural resource use, all directly or indirectly affect the sustainability of the agricultural sector.

The discussions emphasized that preserving agriculture in the governorate requires a shift from short-term solutions toward sustainable agricultural planning, strengthening the role of institutions and relevant authorities, and involving farmers and experts in decision-making. Particular priority should be given to protecting water resources, agricultural land, and local varieties, while supporting strategic crops.

Participants concluded that the future of agriculture in Al-Hasakah requires balanced policies that combine support for farmers with the protection of natural resources, the development of agricultural technologies and practices, and enhanced capacity to adapt to drought and climate change.