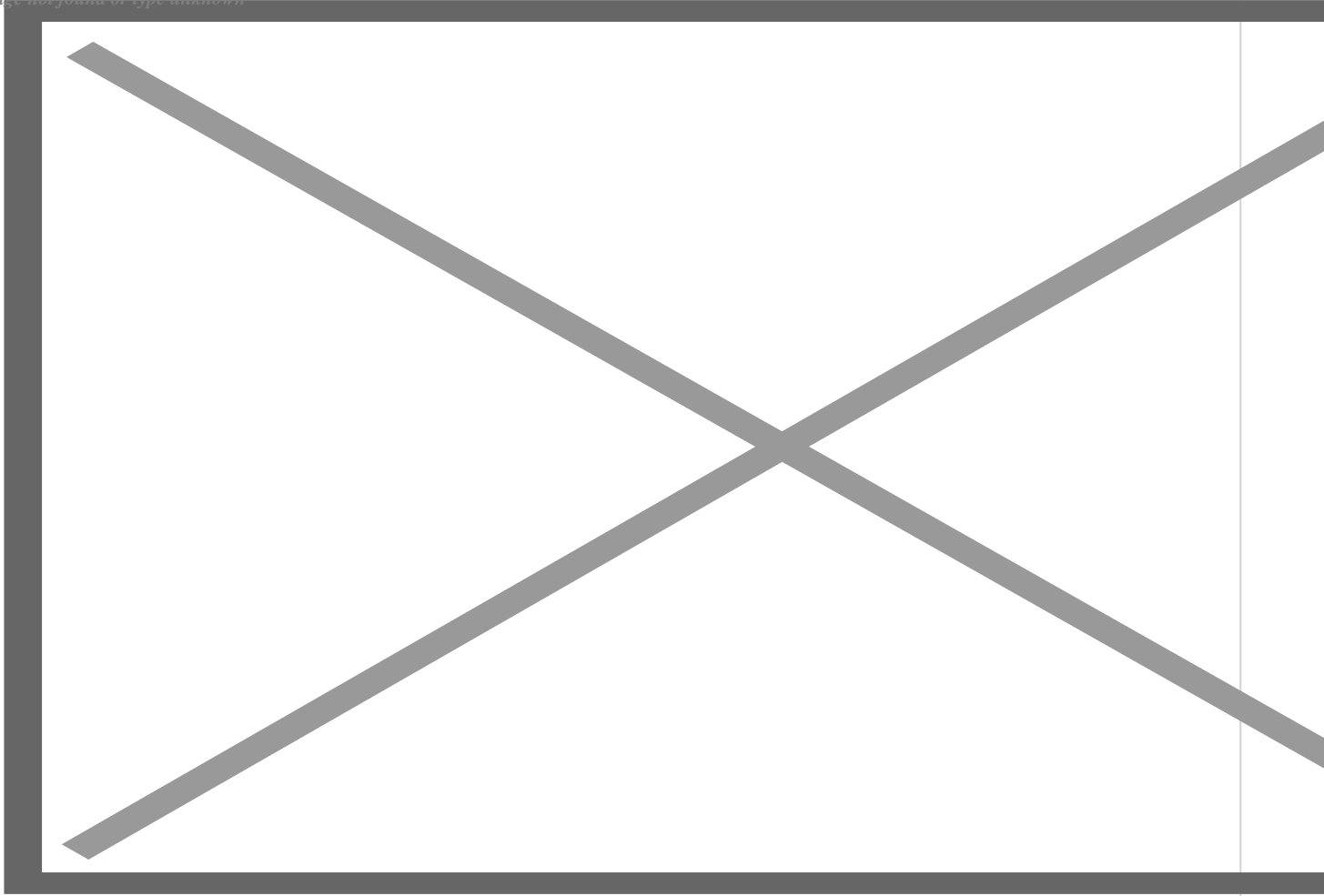


Agricultural sector in Gaza suffers \$204 million in losses

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A Palestinian youth pets a cat in a building heavily damaged during recent Israeli strikes, on June 1, 2021, in Beit Hanun in the northern Gaza Strip, more than a week after a ceasefire brought an end to 11 days of hostilities between Israel and Palestinian resistance fighters. (Photo by AFP)

Gaza City, June 7 (RHC)-- Palestinian agricultural authorities say the total losses that the sector suffered as a result of the recent Israeli military offensive on the Gaza Strip are estimated to stand at \$204 million.

The Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture in the densely populated coastal enclave said Gazan farmers were forcibly displaced during the 11 days of the Israeli onslaught as Tel Aviv indiscriminately bombarded the blockaded territory, and prevented them from reaching and working on their land.

“The losses included the destruction of hundreds of acres of vegetable crops and trees as a result of direct targeting, as well as the disruption of water for irrigation purposes,” the ministry announced in a statement. “Livestock owners also incurred losses, as a large number of birds and animals died as a result of the interruption of the supply of animal feed due to the closure of border crossings.”

The Palestinian agricultural authorities warned that the latest offensive on Gaza made access to land, the availability of an open market for produce as well as export opportunities worse. “There is also an environmental disaster looming in the north of the Gaza Strip, as a result of Israel's bombing of the warehouses belonging to the supplier of agricultural necessities including fertilizers, pesticides and plastic,” the officials argued.

They called on international and human rights institutions to take the necessary steps to address the issue and its negative repercussions on human beings, animals, the environment and public health. And officials concluded, saying that compensation should be paid to farmers and other workers in the agricultural sector.

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