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# Planting Roots, Claiming Space

How the tangled histories of dryland farming in the U.S. West shaped political aspirations in early Palestine and post-revolutionary Mexico



Dry farming techniques depicted in New Mexico in the 1940s Irving RUSINOW/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

In the early twentieth century, the United States began to intensively settle the arid regions of the West. At the same time, agricultural experts around the world started to develop a new agroecological zone: the drylands—landscapes that were considered too arid to be agriculturally productive in the conventional sense. Without the use of irrigation, available agronomists

discovered that these drylands could be rendered productive through rain-fed agriculture, a combination of practices through which fields, crops, or fruits are adapted to rely only on rainwater for growth.

Though much has been written about this era in U.S. history, how it is less known the reorganization of disparate geographic areas into modern dryland regions