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Agriculture Ministry expands tomato cultivation across Israel

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The Agriculture Ministry reports that Israeli farmers are now producing 90 per cent of the tomatoes consumed domesticallyâ??an increase compared to levels before the war sparked by Hamasâ??s attack on the Gaza border on October 7 last year. The conflict had previously caused a sharp decline in local production, and Turkeyâ??s subsequent ban on tomato exports to Israel further impacted supply. Turkish imports accounted for a quarter of the 200,000 tons consumed annually in Israel.

According to the Israel Times, to address these challenges, the ministry has expanded tomato cultivation areas along the Gaza Strip border and provided alternative farmland for farmers unable to access their fields due to military restrictions. It has also increased tomato cultivation in northern Israel and the Golan Heights.

Currently, tomatoes in stores are sourced from the Arava region in the far south, the Jordan Valley in the east, and the western Negev, according to the ministry.