

**GAZA UNLOCKED**



#GazaUnlocked



# Think about Gaza when you eat a strawberry.

Strawberries thrive in northern Gaza's sandy agricultural lands. Palestinian strawberry farmers used to produce an average of 7,000 tons of strawberries a year on 3,000 dunums of land (750 acres). They exported the sweet fruit during the winter months to the occupied West Bank, present-day Israel, and Europe. But by the end of 2017, that number had shrunk to 1,500 tons of strawberries produced (with hopes of reaching 3,000 tons in 2018) on 900 dunums (222 acres).

Gaza's delicious strawberries and strawberry farms are disappearing due to the high cost of strawberry production and the lack of opportunity to export due to the blockade. For over 10 years Palestinians in Gaza have lived under a blockade imposed by Israel and enforced by Egypt and the United States that severely limits travel, trade, and everyday life for 2 million people.

The United Nations has stated that Gaza could become "uninhabitable" by 2020, yet few people know how serious the situation is.

- Gaza's unemployment rate is over 40 percent—one of the highest in the world. Youth unemployment is over 60 percent.
- Fifty-seven percent of Gaza households are food insecure, and about 80 percent receive some form of food assistance, largely due to unemployment caused by restrictions on movement and imports and exports.
- 96 percent of Gaza's water supply isn't fit for human consumption. About 60 percent of Gaza's population relies on private water supplies that are expensive, unregulated, and often have lower hygiene standards.



Map adapted from: commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gaza\_Strip\_map2.svg

One of the biggest hurdles to improving the situation for Palestinians living in Gaza is a lack of awareness about the situation. Media stories about Gaza primarily focus on violence and politics, while stories of how the blockade impacts everyday life remain largely untold. At the American Friends Service Committee, we are amplifying the stories of Palestinians living in Gaza under the blockade.

Read their stories and learn how you can make a difference at [gazaunlocked.org](http://gazaunlocked.org).

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