Palestine from the 1880s. In 1890, seven Sarabian Jews were among the settlers in Sarbia very early on; consequently, Bes -
cent of local Jews over the age of 10 could
IZMIL. In 1897, however, only 27.8 per -
Khotin, Beltsy (B
s schools: two in Kishinev, the others in
Russia. By 1855 there were six such
the first Jewish secular schools in tsarist
Jewish children were studying in heders.
In 1898, a total of 60.9 percent of
Kishinev in 1860, attended by 280 stu-
ners in Bessarabia from at least 1839,

The ideas of the Haskalah were dissemi-
ed Jewish children were studying in heders.

19 agricultural settlements in Bessara-
bia, among them Aleksandreni (1837),
Briceva (1836), Capresti (1853), Dombro-
veni (1836), Lublin (1842), Marculesi
(1837), Valea-lui-Vlad (1836), Vortjeni
(1838), and Zgorita (1851). In 1858 there
were 10,858 Jewish farmers in Bessarabia,
representing 12.5 percent of the Jewish
population. However, after the introduc-
tion of the May Laws of 1882, which pro-
hibited Jewish settlement in villages,
most of the colonies were disbanded; in
1899, only six remained. By 1897, the
percentage of Jews engaged in agriculture
had fallen to 7.1 percent. Another 26.8
percent worked in industry and crafts,
39.5 percent in commerce, and 4.9 per-
cent in services or liberal professions.
Jews constituted 81.2 percent of all mer-
chants and 95.8 percent of all grain deal-
ers in the province.

Hasidism began to spread in Bessarabia
in the second decade of the nineteenth
century. The first Hasidic court was
founded by Aryeh-Leib Wertheim (d.
1854) in Bendery. Another was estab-
lished in Vad-Rashkov. Later, groups of
followers of the tsadikim of the Friedman
dynasty of Sadagora and of the Twersky
family appeared. A yeshiva was opened in
Kishinev in 1860, attended by 280 stu-
dents. In 1898, a total of 60.9 percent of
Jewish children were studying in heders.
The ideas of the Haskalah were dissemi-
ed in Bessarabia from at least 1839,
with the opening in Kishinev of one of
the first Jewish secular schools in tsarist
Russia. By 1855 there were six such
schools: two in Kishinev, the others in
Khotin, Beltsy (Balti), Brichtany, and
Izmail. In 1897, however, only 27.8
percent of local Jews over the age of 10 could
read Russian.

Zionist ideas started to spread in Bessarabia
very early on; consequently, Bes-
sarabian Jews were among the settlers in
Palestine from the 1880s. In 1890, seven

Jewish farmers plowing a field with equipment provided by ORT, the Society for Handicraft and
Agricultural Work among the Jews of Russia, Bessarabia, 1927. (YIVO)