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"Frontier Foods for Late Medieval Consumers: Culture, Economy, Ecology"

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Hoffmann, Richard C. "Frontier Foods for Late Medieval Consumers: Culture, Economy, Ecology." *Environment and History* 7, no. 2, "Beyond Local, Natural Ecosystems" special issue (May, 2001): 131–167. doi:10.3197/096734001129342432 . A continual western history of humans feeding beyond the bounds of natural local ecosystems goes back to Europe's high and later Middle Ages. This essay considers medieval long distance trades in grain, cattle, and preserved fish as antecedents to today's globalised movements of foodstuffs. Pulled by demand from consumers in populous and wealthy western Europe, significant amounts of plants, animals, their biomass, and their calories moved across major ecological boundaries, notably from thinly populated areas on Europe's peripheries. As today, the large cultural, economic, and ecological consequences are unevenly acknowledged. Distant zones of perceived abundance let consumers avoid changing their own cultural preferences and social practices by externalising, even forgetting, the social and environmental costs of satisfying them. All rights reserved. © 2001 The White Horse Press

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"Frontier Foods for Late Medieval Consumers: Culture, Economy, Ecology"
Source URL: http://www.environmentandsociety.org/node/3077
Print date: 24 November 2026 10:43:35