

# **Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte (JWG) 1996/1:**

## ***Nahrungsmittel und ihre Märkte im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert***

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**Heinz Reif und Rainer Pomp**, Milchproduktion und Milchvermarktung im Ruhrgebiet 1870-1930, in: Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte (JWG) 1996/1, S. 77-108.

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## **Abstracts**

### **I. Abhandlungen und Studien**

#### **Christoph Nonn, Fleischvermarktung in Deutschland im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert**

##### *Abstract*

The market for meat was the most rapidly expanding market for foodstuffs in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Germany. This was true not only in quantitative terms, but in geographic terms as well. Between the 1860s and 1914, the old, mainly local and regional market structures were succeeded by more comprehensive meat marketing. The railroad played a major role, in contrast to the situation in the wheat market. During this process of transformation, intermediary traders acquired increased significance. Yet neither they nor the producers seem to have been able to gain a dominant position in the market. German farmers nonetheless managed to prevent an opening of the national market for international traders through successful political lobbying.

#### **Heinz Reif und Rainer Pomp, Milchproduktion und Milchvermarktung im Ruhrgebiet 1870-1930**

##### *Abstract*

Continually increasing demand in the Ruhr area gave rise to a highly intensive form of milk production in the 1870s, the so called Abmelkwirtschaften. This type of production, typical for the industrial population centers, guaranteed an adequate supply of fresh milk for the urban markets up to the turn of the century. Then new means of transport, storage, and treatment enabled delivery from the countryside of the lower Rhine valley and Westphalia. The farms in those regions were the main source of milk for the Ruhr area in the 1920s. Before the First World War, these farms had supplied the Ruhr area with butter and cheese; now they converted to producing fresh milk. Until 1914, a vast number of small traders had taken care of distributing fresh milk in the cities. After the First World War, the cities' concessioning policy strengthened the position of the small professional traders. They even managed to beat back the wholesale traders and the milk supply organizations created during the war. In the 1920s, increased production and an expanding production area led to a great oversupply of milk. Efforts to increase demand were the result, and they proved successful: advertising and improvements in hygiene and quality led to an increase in consumption. Since, however, neither the traders nor the milk farmers had established regional organizations which could have regulated the supply; the situation grew dramatically worse during the worldwide economic crisis. The Reich milk law of July 1930 was to provide relief. It included a number of hygiene and quality regulations and, above all, mechanisms to regulate the milk supply. Thus it was a predecessor of milk market regulation in the Third Reich, the Federal Republic of Germany, and the European Community.

## **Geneviève Gavignaud, Der Weinmarkt in den Regionen Languedoc und Roussillon 1860-1936**

### *Abstract*

Wine production in Languedoc and Roussillon developed into a monoculture in the second half of the nineteenth century and thus became completely dependent on developments in the national and international wine market. The winegrowers, who had at first profited from the advent of free trade, were increasingly affected by the negative effects of economic fluctuations in the years between 1890 and 1900. It became more and more difficult to sell the wine they had produced, and traders did not manage to adapt to the new situation. To defend their collective, professional, and regional interest, the winegrowers eventually mounted a protest movement directed against the government, which was viewed as being responsible for the crisis of 1907. After these revolts subsided, the Confédération Générale des Vignerons was charged with inspecting the wine trade. The first cooperative wine cellars attempted to rationalize the trade and to eliminate middlemen. The state passed flanking protectionist legislation. The vine growers, pioneers of the cooperative movement, were able to secure several decades of prosperity in the area of wine production through their initiatives to help themselves.

## **Norwich Rübe, Absatzkrisen und Marketingkonzepte der deutschen Landwirtschaft nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg**

### *Abstract*

The article looks at a problem which historians have heretofore neglected: German agriculture's lack of orientation toward the market economy in the Weimar Republic. The main finding is that insufficient market observation and inadequate merchandising structures were definitely one cause for farmers' sales problems at least during the years between 1925 and 1930. In the first part of the article, important changes in the German agricultural market after 1918 are examined. Large urban population centers and changes in consumer habits and wishes became increasingly significant determinants of sales prospects; agricultural producers lost influence to wholesale traders. Higher agricultural imports between 1925 and 1930 were also due to the marketing edge which foreign traders enjoyed; they became the preferred suppliers for retailers in Germany's urban centers. The second part of the article looks at the earlier progress which other countries made in the area of agricultural exporting and asks how Germans viewed and reacted to these developments. It was quite some time before German agricultural trade tried to imitate and catch up, in order to squeeze out agricultural imports. Market research originated as a new branch of the agricultural sciences, strongly oriented toward American and Dutch prototypes, but would truly grow into its own only after World War II. The steps taken in the area of merchandising during the Weimar Republic did little to effectively improve sales, since backwardness was so marked that it was impossible to muster native products of equal quality to set against the agricultural imports then streaming in. It was impossible to influence the global agricultural crisis through better market observation and new merchandising structures alone, and thus the market mechanisms destroyed by overproduction and sinking consumer demand were finally by state intervention.