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Food Supply of the Kalinin Region Population in 1943

Abstract

The article studies the situation with food supply in the Kalinin region in 1943. It aims to reveal the reasons for a considerable decline in delivery and distribution of food products at the local level and to analyze the actions of the local authorities in their efforts to solve the problems of food shortage. The research rationale consists in touching upon a subject that hasn't yet drawn the local historians' attention and hasn't been highlighted in regional historiography. The study is based on the analysis of archival sources and on the implementation of microhistorical approach. The data from various documents reveals a decline in local residents' food consumption in the studied period. There were problems with food supply in Eastern and front

line areas, but the situation was most severe in the areas freed from occupation. The mortality rate due to starvation was registered in a number of areas. Apart from objective necessity to send some part of food supplies to the front line, there were also subjective factors affecting the situation with food supply in the region. Among them were malfunctioning of regional procurement, inability of trade units to achieve proper planning, timely delivery of goods, and effective control over their distribution. Food shortage was aggravated by looting, self-supply that heads of organizations and authorities practiced. Personnel issues were an acute problem. The senior posts in the kolkhozes, village Soviets, and party bodies were held by citizens who lacked managerial skills, were prone to influence peddling and often callous to the people. Therefore, mismanagement and malconduct of some administrators resulted in a situation when the potential of centralized food supply system aimed at giving help to the most vulnerable and insuring their survival under the conditions of war was not fulfilled.

Keywords

Historical sources, archive, bread tickets, foodstuffs, plundering of foodstuffs, death from starvation, village Soviets, kolkhozes.

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