

## **Problems of food supply in Turkestan**

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### **Abstract**

This article partially analyzes the emergence of food shortages in Turkestan, its impact on the provision of food to the population and the measures taken by the government. In addition, attention is paid to issues related to the delivery of grain from the Central regions of Russia and the North Caucasus.

**Keywords:** turkestan, russia, aulie ata, transcaspian, food products, grain, food committees, provision, center, pood.

### **Introduction**

The beginning of the 20th century was a time of serious test for Turkestan in the specific economic and socio-political situation. This was especially noticeable during the First World War (1914-1918) and the national liberation revolution that encompassed Turkestan in 1916. The economic and social downturn during this period has expanded the scope of the disaster, making food the political issue on the agenda. It is known that Turkestan is the region's main supplier of cotton to Russia and at the same time supporting the textile industry. Since the end of 1916, grain imports have declined dramatically due to traffic congestion. This has led to the destruction of farms and the collapse of economic ties. As a result, the export of cotton to the country from Russia has also declined, reducing the planting area, in particular, the planting of cotton. These have contributed to the destruction of dehkan farms on the ground, attracting able-bodied men to work, sending more animals to the front (horses), and a sharp reduction in per capita mortality rates. The harsh winter in Turkestan led to the drought in the spring of 1917, which resulted in the drought and the inevitable death of most of the nomads.

The harvest of 1917 was about a quarter of the usual. This has led to mass extinction of animals [1,p.48]. In addition, during the war years, 59 million pounds of cotton, 8.5 million pounds of cotton oil, 950,000 pounds of cocoons, 2925,000 pounds of poultry, 300,000 pounds of meat, 229,000 pounds of soap and 474,000 pounds of fish were exported from Russia to Turkestan. The population collected 70,000 horses, 12,000 camels, 38,000 square meters of carpets and 240,000 sums of cash. This, of course, led to a sharp rise in prices for rice, meat, sugar and other foodstuffs, shoes and textiles in the country, which made living conditions in Turkestan difficult [2,p.415].

It is worth noting that from the spring of 1917, the food shortage was exacerbated. This is not only because of the lack of grain, but also because of the shortcomings in addressing the local food problem. For example, let's take a look at the efforts at addressing the food problem in the case of Avlioota and the Caspian regions. In mid-March 1917, the Food Committee was established at the Avlioota, and it was in fact an effort to provide the population with food. He even negotiated with the military garrison and in June 1917 received 16069 poods of wheat. The remaining grain was

bought at the Avlyoota district's villages free of charge. At the same time, the price of grain increased day by day and by the end of May 1917 the price of one pound of wheat reached 25 sums. The city's food committee was able to buy 1.5 pounds a day for everyone, despite the high cost. However, the Avlioota County District Food Committee has been disrupted by the establishment of a standard grain supply. In particular, the county Food Committee set a fixed price for grain, with one pound of flour at 6 sums. As a result, the grain seller, who is selling 25 sums a kilo, did not want to sell it for 6 sums. In addition, the district's chairman of the Food Committee said that the city and district of Avlyoota were able to "join the ranks of famine through Tashkent... soum. At the same time, a fixed price of 6 rubles per pound of grain in June eventually led to "disappearance of open sales of grain and an increase in its [hourly] price by hour." The increase in prices was also due to the fact that the county had a shortage of grain"[3, p.482-485].

With such a difficult situation, the head of Avlioota city court A. Moshechkov in his address to the Turkestan Interim Government Committee, the Food Committee, and the Syrdarya Regional Food Committee on September 25, 1917, stated that in order to provide the population with food, one should achieve at least 1 pound of grain per day, otherwise "by the crowd..." of course, one can expect that there will be new unrest and a mass slaughter and death.[4,p.286] The appeal also states that "the local population has not been getting grain since the second half of August. So far, they eat corn grown in their own home and eat only a small amount of food. The population of Avlyoota should have at least 15,000 pounds of flour for food to avoid spreading the hunger strike and the hunger strike... it should be calculated that there should be no interruptions in the supply of flour. and confirming my fears that infectious diseases may occur." However, the existing written request from the management (who could not specify who and what the title is - RN) "should not be an exception to the City of Avilyuta and should be reported [as] everywhere  $\frac{3}{4}$  pounds. A. In response to Moshechkov's request, on October 12, 1917, 2 wagons were shipped and other supplies were intended[5,p.286].

Among the aforementioned disadvantages are the unfair distribution of food. It should be noted that in Turkestan, the provision of food was not based on a unified management

system, but the Committee on Population Feeding operated separately, and the Russian Food Service Committee. Existing archival sources indicate that the activities of the relevant food committees were not always coordinated [6, 296]

Circumstances addressing the food problem in the avenue have affected not only the local population, but also the Russian food committees. The failure to solve the supply cuts eventually led to the population's refusal to work in the relevant food departments and committees, including ethnic and Russian populations. As a result, the mayor "had to petition the [food] department every day for patience and [work on] this. I had to keep people [in the ministry] literally[7,p.296]"

At a time when food shortages in Turkestan continue to be so severe and controversial, chaos in the governance system is permissible. In particular, as a result of a directive issued by Russian government officials to prevent obstruction of economic relations between the provinces and provinces, in particular, the exchange of commodities, not only raw materials, such as cotton, karakul skins and other products, but also grain. In February 1917, according to the above instructions, "the grain was exported from Bukhara to Bukhara, but the population was left without grain... it (wheat-R.N) was expected to be imported from Russia (provinces, R.N.) and Siberia.". They were sending the grain from Tejen to Orenburg and [then] waiting for the grain to come from there." As a result of these misunderstandings and chaos, it can be said that the grain harvest in the population has created frustration, confusion, and a growing hunger[8,p.402]. Because, as mentioned above, the Caspian region itself had to be supplied with grain from abroad. In general, "Caspian region does not only have excess grain, it is also in need of imported grain and, therefore, cannot export its grain to other regions." On the contrary, flour and wheat, which had to be imported from Russia in November-December 1916, did not arrive in the Caspian in early February 1917. The reason for this was the lack of rail cars. The grain imported from Chechnya had to be provided first of all by the military and later by the population.

Grain operations in Turkestan have become increasingly difficult, but efforts to address this problem have been ineffective. For example, on March 16, 1917, under the chairmanship of Lieutenant-General Bachinsky, a food problem in Turkestan, a meeting was held, which stated that only 100 wagons and 375 wagons of grain were given to Turkestan by March. Lieutenant-General Bachinsky sent a telegram to the Minister of Land Affairs addressing the problem, saying that there was a shortage of grain in the country. was the basis for his condition[9,p.29]

While the demand for grain in Turkestan is increasing day by day, the North Caucasus Food Committee focuses on tight grain pricing. In turn, representatives of Turkestan and Astrakhan attended various food councils in the Caucasus and all organizations that wanted to get grain immediately joined in the preparation and delivery of food, convened a meeting of famine and local food committees and the army. Developing drastic measures to get grain from the North Caucasus to the Turkestan representatives, such as grain harvesting at the "spots" through the introduction of commodity exchange. asked to take action[10, p.29]

Giving grain to the country outside of Turkestan presents certain difficulties. An analysis of available archival sources shows that the supply of grain from Turkestan to the North

Caucasus region is poorly regulated, especially for grain producers. Caucasus Food Committee fails to systematically supply grain to Turkestan Even on December 10, 1917, during the Stavropol Food and Democratic Movement's collapse, the poor grain supply process of the country was poorly understood. For the Caucasus food committee, the provision of distant Turkestan with grain was not considered the main task, but they were looking at the situation[10,p.8]. However, Turkestan needed more and more grain to import. According to archival sources, in 1917, Turkestan's central provinces of Russia were the cause of the revolutionary coups that expected grain from the Caucasus had failed. In particular, in a letter addressed to the Orenburg Food Committee-Makayev from Turkestan on June 20, 1917, reminding that according to the plan, 200 grains of grain were to be shipped to the country, "urgently take steps to implement the June [grain supply] plan in a very difficult situation." I ask. " Moreover, on June 21, 1917, Sadyrin sent a telegram to the food committees of the governors of Yekaterinburg, Stavropol, Vladikavkaz, Tbilisi, Omsk and said that the provision of food to the population was "very difficult... and in some areas, hunger strikes. thrown in... which makes it quicker to ask for a June plan[11,p.50].

Please note how many wagons are shipped." It is also worth noting that appeals to the central provinces of Russia and special grain supplies were also carried out by the provincial, district and Turkestan Food Departments. For example, in a letter to the Food Committees in the provinces of Ekaterinodar, Vladikavkaz and Stavropol on October 3, 1917, the Food Committee drew attention to the urgency of the food problem, saying, "There are people who die from starvation every day... the food committee is surrounded, there is growing discontent all over the country, and there are cases of grain stealing from one or another area... I urge you to take urgent action to improve the situation [12,p.206]"

On December 15, 1917, in the certificate issued by the district district of Tashkent, Matthew Matasha and VI Mospan, they were sent to Russia, the Caucasus and Siberia, to "bring two wagons of wheat, wherever they may be found." This certificate is again in place in Turkey as the famine continues, and the relevant people and administration have been asked to assist in the purchase of the wheat. This certificate was also given to D. Matasha and VI Mospan from the county Food Department on December 19, 1917, in the province of Samara. and Siberia were asked to help them purchase 2,000 seeds of wheat and bring them to Turkestan[13,p.302].

The aforementioned evidence shows that food shortages in Turkestan were still relevant. It should also be noted that the supply of Turkestan to Russia's provinces and the Caucasus continued not only during the reign but also after the Bolsheviks seized power. In May 1917 grain harvesting was carried out to 80%, and from subsequent months the supply of grain fell monthly. By November 1917, only 11% of the total amount of grain had been fulfilled. By December 1917, the supply of grain from the Caucasus to Turkestan was completely stopped [14,p.8]

Among the problems of grain supply in 1917, there were enough organizational issues related to not only the lack of grain, but also the grain harvesting on the ground. For example, on the eve of the February 1917 revolution, Russia's socio-political and economic situation became so aggravated that it eventually worsened the situation in

Turkestan. Specifically, "there is a lack of wagons, supply failures, justified and unjustified seizures, financial problems, and a disruptive distribution system." Such chaos has had its negative effects on relations between Turkestan and Russia during World War I, particularly in the provision of grain to the country and cotton in the central provinces of Russia. Because "there were no railcars in the railroad, far to Turkestan [grain transportation] was very slow[15,p.402].

While some of the above problems are inherited from the Russian kingdom, another part may be added or enriched after the February (1917) revolution. In other words, although the food problem existed before the February Revolution, and even after the revolution, the system or name changed, the relationship to the solution remained the same. In solving this problem, the Special Council for Food of Turkestan decided to preserve the highest food authority in the country after the February 1917 Revolution and emphasized the need to rename the Country Food Council in Tashkent as the Turkestan Food Committee. In a letter to the Ferghana Regional Council of Workers and Soldiers dated June 6, 1917, it was stated that there was a need for the establishment of a regional food department under the Turkestan Food Committee and the development of regulations. The letter also says that the Ministry of Food has also donated the preservation of the highest food organizations in Turkestan. On June 12, 1917, the Statute of the Turkestan Food Committee and the Department of the Country were considered in Tashkent. The Ferghana Regional Council of Workers and Soldiers was asked to send a permanent representative to this country committee[16,p.6].

Although the name has been changed, efforts to solve the problem have not changed in essence. The efforts of local food managers in the Center and at the Center did not always yield the expected results. Moreover, the centralized implementation of food preparation and sale to the population was practically ineffective. As of October, 1917, the food departments of the country did not have a special food preparation unit, mainly a grain department, through this department. other groceries were also purchased. Purchases are not out of place, as is usually the case in the "office room" of the chairman of the food preparation department, without good market research and analysis. The population suffered from the negative consequences of the "out of the room" purchases. For example, in October 1917 5,000 50 coin - 11,000 soums for 2,000 pound potatoes from Fizailova in Samarkand was paid by the Food Department at a market price of 6 Soums 44 coin. But the Samarkand Food Authority paid 2,000 pound potatoes, but in fact lost 1727 pound potatoes. As a result, the city food committee received 8 sums and 40 rubles each. In turn, the Samarkand City Food Committee had to sell potatoes for 9 soums and 15 coins for this purchase. Whereas, in early October, potatoes were sold in the old city of Samarkand for 5-6 sums, and by the end of October they were sold for 5 to 50 coin. However, the Samarkand City Food Committee sold their potatoes at 7 sums 20 coin in October. The damage to the welfare of the population was to be borne by the same people. Clearly, the status of "buy-and-sell" in the governance system has worked to the detriment of the population[17,p.12].

In conclusion, it is important to note that on the eve of the political transitions of 1917 and in the years that followed, the food problem was the most important issue on the

agenda. The country itself was unable to solve these problems on its own, and needed food, especially grain. However, it should be noted that the problems in the North Caucasus and central regions of Russia did not allow this problem to be resolved positively.

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