

Food in Egypt

I. Agriculture

Crops were planted along the floodplains in the rich soil deposited from the annual flooding of the Nile. Tracked days and based a calendar on the predictable flooding of the Nile and to know when to plant (365 days, 12 months with 30 days in each...the last five added on at the end of the year)

- A. **Akhet** (July-October) - Time of flooding, a season of rest. In the non-farming season, farmers repaired tools and helped build in the city
- B. **Peret** (November-February) - Light rain and fertile fields. Farmers prepared the fields for irrigation.
- C. **Shemu** (March-June) – Harvest time. Farmers bring in their harvest before the floods begin again.

II. Crops

A. Emmer wheat and barley (for at least 40 kinds of bread and beer)

B. Fruit

1. Figs (trained monkeys to help pick)
2. Grapes (wine and raisins)
3. Dates
4. Plums
5. Pomegranates
6. Melons

C. Vegetables

1. Beets
2. Onions
3. Radishes
4. Turnips
5. Garlic
6. Lettuce
7. Beans

D. Meat

1. Beef, Mutton, Pork and Hyenas
2. Fish (catfish, mullet, boliti and perch)
3. Fowl (geese, pigeons, herons, pelicans, cranes and ducks)

E. Spices

1. Rosemary
2. Sage
3. Coriander
4. Cinnamon
5. Cumin
6. Dill
7. Fennel
8. Mustard
9. Thyme

III. Diet was often determined by social class.

A. Rich

1. While the rich regularly feasted on most meat.
2. Food was often sweetened with honey.
3. Beer and Wine
4. Because of Egypt's rich soil and lush vegetation, the rich of Egypt probably always ate well, even during times of draught.

B. Poor

1. The poor mostly ate bread, cereals and onions. Occasionally, they ate geese, ducks, quails, cranes and other avian species. Beef or cattle rarely appeared on the tables of common people usually only during festive occasions.
2. Food was often sweetened with fruits.
3. Beer
4. In the worst of times, common people probably suffered to some extent, but mostly they were probably fed well, though not as lavishly as the rich.

Banquets were frequent, as were various festivals and other celebrations, and at these times, it is likely that everyone enjoyed the bounty of the Black Land.