

E.V. Prokhorova, St. Petersburg, Russian Federation

Materials on the History of Food Control in St. Petersburg–Petrograd–Leningrad in the First Third of the 20th Century from St. Petersburg Archival Fonds

Abstract

Drawing on documents from the Central State Historical Archive and the Central State Archive of St. Petersburg, the article reviews formation and development of food control. It is obvious that the found sources allow retrace the development food sanitation in the 28 years of its existence in Petersburg, from 1900 to 1928. Having analyzed the archival materials, the author concludes that food control remained virtually unchanged until 1930s, great changes in Russian history notwithstanding. The system foundations of were incorrectly laid. In the pre-revolutionary period the number of doctors was inadequate for requirements of a large metropolitan city, such as St. Petersburg. Moreover, the system received insufficient funding. The issue of was reorganization arising when the First World War began, and all proposals remained ink on paper. During the Civil War the food experts did little more than admit the products damage as conditions for transportation and storage of goods were substandard. After reviewing the NEP period the author rightly points out that in addition to all pre-existing problems there was an urgent call for a unified food codex as food falsification was growing yearly and the quality of citizens' basic fare could only be described as unsatisfactory. Despite published regulations prohibiting harmful additives, there remained poor quality products in the market stalls. Available sources suggest that, given massive food consumption by urban residents, the need for a comprehensive food control system was quite urgent. Actually, control, misarranged in pre-revolutionary years, became formal. During the Civil War and the NEP a continuity of the pre-1917 food system basics can be traced.

Written by E.V. Prokhorova

Tuesday, 11 March 2025 00:00



Keywords

Sources, food control, Petrograd – Leningrad, quality, archival documents.

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Tuesday, 11 March 2025 00:00

You can read completely article in the russian historic-archival magazine “The Herald of an Archivist”. Read more about terms of subscription [here](#) .

Полностью материал публикуется в российском историко-архивоведческом журнале ВЕСТНИК АРХИВИСТА. Ознакомьтесь с условиями подписки [здесь](#) .