

Crusader dietary information inferred from historical records is briefly discussed in *Chronicles of the Crusades* edited by Elizabeth Hallam (1989 published by Weidenfeld and Nicolson, NY).

Page 180 "In 1120, Baldwin of Jerusalem abolished duties paid on essential foodstuffs being brought into the city: **wheat, barley, beans, lentils and chick peas.**

In addition to these staples, there was an impressive range of culinary raw materials. The **olive oil** of Palestine had been prized since Roman times, while vegetables included **globe artichokes, asparagus, cabbage, lettuces and truffles.** Spices, such as **pepper, cumin, coriander, cinnamon and ginger,** and **mastic,** are common in medieval recipes, and were among commodities exported from Acre to Europe in the late 13th century.

At time time the Dominican friar Burchard of Mount Zion recalled seeing **fennel, sage, and rue** growing wild in the fields, and **parsley, mint** and other herbs also flourished, as today. **Hare, quail, partridge, deer** and **wild boar** might have fallen to hawk or bow, and archaeological excavation has shown evidence of **sheep and goats** as well as cattle.

Dairy products, including **yoghurts** and **cheeses,** were an important part of a meal, and fish were readily available on the coast and around the Sea of Galilee.

The variety and the novelty of fruits were a source of amazement to westerners: **dates, bananas, melons, water melons, gourds** and **grapes,** which came in huge bunches. **Lemons, oranges** and **pomolos** were used for sauces to eat

with **chicken** or **fish**. **Pears, apples, cherries** and **nuts** were imported from Damascus. **Grapes, figs** and **apricots** were often dried, and some were made into conserves or syrups, which were diluted with water to make refreshing drinks, or with snow from Mount Hermon or Lebanon to make sorbets.

**Wine**, although forbidden by Muslim dietary law, was produced by Christians in Bethlehem, the Rafrain Valley, Nazareth and Sidon.

The best **honey** came from Jerusalem, where bees could feed on wild **thyme** in the Judaeian hills; and sugar cane was grown and refined as **sugar** in the Jordan Valley and around Tyre and Acre for export to Europe.

Despite this array of foodstuffs, at least two religious houses in Jerusalem imported sides of **bacon, barrels of tunny fish, cheeses** and **wine** from Sicily for their own use in the 12th century. And the raising and consumption of **pork** (also forbidden to Muslims) increased dramatically in areas where Christian Franks settled."