

S.G.Wheatcroft, ed., *Challenging Traditional Views of Russian History*, Palgrave: Macmillan, 2002 pp. 69-91

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The Soviet Famine of 1932–33 and the Crisis in Agriculture*

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Many historians have concluded that the central reason for the Soviet famine of 1932–33 was not the *amount* of grain available in these years but the *distribution* of grain. On this basis it is argued that this was an 'organised famine' in which Stalin deliberately withheld available grain from the population of Ukraine and elsewhere. An extreme position is taken by Robert Conquest, who argues that 'the famine of 1933 was deliberately carried out by terror' and that this was demonstrated by 'the figures on the millions of tons of available grain reserves'.¹

We do not at all absolve Stalin – or the Bolshevik leadership as a whole – from responsibility for the famine. But we believe that there was a much more deep-seated crisis than Conquest assumes. In our opinion, the harvests of 1931 and 1932 were extremely poor, and the absolute shortage of grain was the immediate factor in the crisis which led to the famine.

In this chapter, we consider three issues:

- (i) the size of the grain harvest, particularly in 1931 and 1932;
- (ii) the reasons for the poor harvests. We devote particular attention to agricultural and agro-technical problems which are neglected in most studies of the period; and
- (iii) the grain crisis of 1932–33.

4.1 The grain harvest

The usual figures cited for the gross harvest of grain are those approved by TsSU (the Central Statistical Administration) after Khrushchev had exposed the falsification brought about by the use of the 'biological harvest' (the harvest on the root) from 1933 onwards (million tons).²

1909–13 (average)	65.2
1913	76.5
1928	73.3

1930	83.5
1931	69.5
1932	69.9
1933	68.4

In our opinion these figures are most misleading. It should be noted in particular that the figure for 1932 was cited unchanged in all Soviet statistics because it was officially approved by the Politburo and Sovnarkom (the Council for People's Commissars). On 8 October 1932, the Politburo ruled that all discussion of the areas sown in the spring of 1931 and 1932 should cease; only figures based on the Narkomzem (People's Commissariat for Agriculture) summary reports (*svodki*) should be published.³ Then a year later, Sovnarkom, following a decision of the Politburo, ruled that the gross harvest of grain crops in 1932 was to be taken as 698.7 million tsentners (69.9 million tons).⁴

Many Russian, Ukrainian and western historians assume that the official figures are correct and that the harvest of 1932 was a reasonable one, at least as large as in 1931. Thus I. Zelenin wrote that 'the total gross harvest of grain in the country in 1932 was even somewhat larger than in 1931 (698.7 mln. tsentners against 694.8 mln)'.⁵ N. Ivnitiskii stated in the same volume that 'documents testify that in 1932, in spite of a partial drought in a number of areas no less grain was harvested than in the previous year'.⁶ But more recently he has accepted the view that the current published estimates of the 1932 harvest may be exaggerated.⁷

The official rulings were part of a very long series of disputes about the size of the harvest. Twenty years ago Stephen Wheatcroft undertook a detailed investigation of the basis of Soviet grain statistics.⁸ This showed that the famous 'Ivantsov correction', which increased the pre-1914 grain production figures, was invalid. Moreover, comparison of pre-1914 and post-revolution figures, and of one post-revolution year with another, is very difficult. From the late 1920s onwards, the amount of data collected from the peasants and the kolkhozy was increased by statisticians under pressure from politicians. Historians, like Khrushchev's statisticians, have assumed that the only substantial increase was made from 1933 onwards, when the 'biological yield' replaced the 'barn harvest'. In fact there had already been increases in the 1920s and, in the early 1930s, statisticians were persuaded to increase the raw data to a yet greater extent. If the losses between field and barn are removed from the 1933 harvest, an appropriate amount must also be removed from the harvests of the previous post-revolution years.

We can reach more accurate figures for the harvests in various ways. Let us take 1932 as an example. Numerous reports and statements made at the time showed very low yield figures in the main grain areas. At a conference

on the harvest held in the summer of 1932 the report from the North Caucasus claimed that the yield was 6–7 tsentners per hectare, far less than in 1931; an investigation of two districts in the region found that the yield was one-third to one-half of that in 1931.⁹ The report from the Central Volga region claimed that the yield of rye in kolkhozy was 6–7 tsentners, the yield of wheat no more than 4 tsentners.¹⁰ The much more systematic kolkhoz reports submitted to the centre also show yields which were significantly lower than the centrally corrected figures that were reported by Osinskii (the head of TsSU) and others throughout 1932. Some of the data from these reports have been available for many years through Soviet scholars, particularly Zelenin and Vyltsan, and the reports are now openly available in the archives.

The uncorrected data, and various other ways of aggregating the available harvest data, all lead us to the conclusion that the harvest was broadly in the range 53 to 58 million tons (the outside upper limit, in our opinion, is 62 million tons).

The centrally compiled grain–fodder balances in the archives confirm that the harvest was this order of magnitude. They were put together so as not to challenge the official harvest figure for 1932. But they achieved this only by including a large figure for losses and/or an item frankly entitled '*nevyazka*' ('discrepancy'). If these are excluded, the grain–fodder balances give a harvest figure for 1932 of 58.1 million tons, compared with 69 in 1931 and 77 in 1930 – figures which may themselves be too high.

Table 4.1 shows the various alternative series for the harvest; our preferred series is the penultimate column, the low SIPS estimate.¹¹ In our opinion the 1932 harvest was 16–20 per cent smaller than the 1928 harvests, while the generally accepted figures show that it was only 4.8 per cent lower than in 1928 (69.8 against 73.3 million tons). The 1932 harvest was thus lower than that in the drought year 1931; and the 1933 harvest was considerably higher than both the 1931 and the 1932 harvests. The occurrence of two bad harvests in succession greatly added to the difficulties of the authorities in distributing grain.

4.2 Why was grain production so low in 1931 and 1932?

The optimum variant of the Five-Year Plan approved in the spring of 1929 anticipated that the 1932 harvest would be 45 per cent larger than in 1928, 106 against 73 million tons (see Table 4.1). In discussing the failure of this important element in the Five-Year Plan, most historians have emphasised two factors: the harmful effect of chaos caused by rapid collectivisation; and the lack of incentives for collective farmers to work well, which was in turn the result of the high state grain collections (*zagotovki*) which removed nearly all the off-farm grain (*tovarnyi khleb*). Some historians have also

Table 4.1 Grain production, 1909-13 - 1933: alternative series (million tons)

	TsSU (1925)	Expert Soviet (1920s)	First five-year plan	Soviet 1930s	TsUNKhU Grain balances	Soviet 1950s	Wheatcroft & Davies (1998)	
							Low estimate	High estimate
1909-13	65	81.6/73.3		67.6		65.2	68	80
1913		[93.2]		80.1		76.5	79	93
1924	45.7	51.6				51.6	44	51
1925	66.6	72.4				72.4	62	73
1926		76.6				76.6	66	77
1927		71.7	73.1			71.7	62	73
1928		73.3	73.5			73.3	63	73
1929			81.4	71.7		71.7	62	72
1930			87/88.3	83.5	77.1	83.5	67	78
1931			92.9/96.1	69.5	69.4	69.5	60	69
1932			99.7/105.9	69.8	62.6/58.2	69.8	53	58/63
1933			107.7/116.4	89.8	75.2	68.4	65	71-/-8%

Sources: This table is based on S. G. Wheatcroft's article 'The Reliability of Russian Prewar Grain Output Statistics', *Soviet Studies*, XXXVI (1974), and on R. W. Davies, M. Harrison and S. G. Wheatcroft, eds, *The Economic Transformation of the Soviet Union, 1913-1945* (Cambridge University Press, 1994). The estimates in the last two columns will be further discussed in R. W. Davies and S. G. Wheatcroft, *The Years of Hunger: Soviet Agriculture, 1931-1933* (forthcoming).

pointed out that dekulakisation removed the most capable peasants from the villages.

We agree that these factors were important. But we believe that this account underestimates the negative role of various agro-technological factors. Here we will deal with:

- (i) cropping systems;
- (ii) traction power; and
- (iii) the weather.

The first two factors, although agro-technological in the short term, were ultimately an unintended consequence of the errors of the political leadership.

a Cropping systems

The first Five-Year Plan proposed to achieve the expansion of crop production both by extending the sown area by 22.2 per cent and by a more intensive use of the sown area which would increase yields by 25.4 per cent.

The plans for technical improvements which would raise yield aimed to introduce in the course of five years changes which had been introduced in Western Europe over five centuries. Some significant changes did take place. More artificial fertiliser was supplied by industry, but this modest increase was more than outweighed by the concomitant decline in the supply of manure due to the reduction in livestock.

The one technological improvement that was to some extent achieved was the mass application of improved sorted seed. Within five years the proportion of the area sown with grain in the form of sorted seed had increased from 3 per cent to over 25 per cent, roughly as envisaged in the plans.¹² This was a remarkable achievement, the result of considerable efforts to build special seed farms and to establish procedures to exchange seed on a mass scale. The basis for such operations had been laid by the pre-revolutionary *zemstva*, and was extended in the 1920s before the onset of mass collectivisation. The subsequent developments and achievements therefore had a firm base. But remarkable as this achievement was, it utterly failed to compensate for the agro-technological shortcomings.

The sustained attempt to extend the sown area was a major factor in the deterioration of agricultural technology. The Five-Year Plan intended to achieve part of this expansion through the development of sovkhosy on virgin lands; and in terms of sown area a substantial increase was achieved.¹³ But more than half the expansion in sown area depended upon reducing the amount of fallow by 23 per cent. For such a radical transformation not to result in over-cropping, soil exhaustion and reduced yields, it would be essential either to implement improved crop rotation systems or to use large amounts of manure or fertiliser. Neither happened.

Moving to an improved cropping system proved especially difficult in Ukraine. Ukraine already had a much lower level of uncropped arable than any other region of the USSR, with the exception of the highly commercial Leningrad region. According to the planning documents, the Ukrainian level of fallow was equal to 27.7 per cent of the sown area in 1927–28 and was projected to fall to 18.1 per cent in 1932–33.¹⁴ The USSR average was 59.1 per cent, projected to fall to 41.7 per cent. An external factor considerably complicated the situation in Ukraine in the winter of 1927–28 when half the 10.4 million (mln) hectares of winter sowings were struck by winter killings, reducing the winter sown crop to 5.2 mln ha. instead of 10.4 mln ha. The party responded by doing what the peasants would have done instinctively in such circumstances and expanded the spring sowings. Some of the winter-sown land was resown in spring and other winter-sown land was simply left as wasteland. To compensate for the loss, other land that had originally been scheduled for fallow was brought into use. In 1929 Ukraine was again struck by massive winter killings, and again the level of spring sowings was raised to compensate for the losses. By this time rational crop rotation was seriously undermined.

Then in 1930 and 1931, in the hope of increasing grain production, the sown area was drastically increased. The 1931 sowings in Ukraine were a record 28.9 million hectares. Narkomzem estimated that the total stock of arable land was only 29.5 million hectares.¹⁵ If this estimate is correct, it suggests that fallow land had been totally eliminated.

An analogous situation was reported from other regions. The intense pressure to increase sown area added to the disruption of existing land arrangements brought about by the two collectivisation drives of 1930 and 1931 (and by the retreat from collectivisation in the spring of 1930). Rational crop rotation disappeared in many villages and districts. In the North Caucasus in 1932 it was reported that 'there is no crop rotation in the kolkhozy', and in some districts in the Central Volga region, collective farmers complained that 'if we do not introduce crop rotation we shall starve': 'there is no fallow. All the land in these districts has been ploughed up, no pasture remains; the cows have nowhere to go to feed.'¹⁶

It was not until September 1932, after the harvest, that Stalin indicated, in an unpublished message to the Crimean regional party committee, that an extension of the grain sowings would be unwise.¹⁷ A subsequent published decree of Sovnarkom resolved that sown areas had been expanded sufficiently, stressed that the central task was to increase yields, and called for the introduction of crop rotation in all kolkhozy and sovkhozy in 1933.¹⁸

However, much damage had been done in the meantime. Such a dramatic expansion of sown area and reduction of fallow without the careful introduction of alternative means for enriching the soil with nutrients was bound to lead to the reduction of yields and an increased likelihood of crop dis-

eases. By 1932, in many regions, and particularly in Ukraine, soil exhaustion and crop diseases were widespread.

b Traction power

It is well known that the failure to increase the production of grain did not lead the authorities to moderate their pressure for the state collections in the course of 1929–31. The Five-Year Plan envisaged that extra-rural marketing (*vnederevenskii oborot*) of grain in 1932–33 would amount to 19.6 million tons out of a harvest of 106 million tons, and the amount of grain retained in the village would increase during the five years.¹⁹ In fact the state collections in 1931 amounted to nearly 23 million tons out of an official figure for the harvest of 69 million tons (which, as we have seen, was probably an overestimate). Increased collections from a smaller harvest meant that less grain was available in the villages. The supply of grain for animal fodder was also considerably reduced. According to the grain-fodder balances, it declined from 23.3 million tons in 1927–28 to 13.8 million in 1932 (preliminary estimate).²⁰

The decline in the availability of grain as fodder was the major factor resulting in the reduction of the number of workhorses and oxen from 27.4 million in 1928 to 17.9 million in 1932. This was partly compensated for by the rapid increase in tractor horsepower from 0.27 to 2.1 million between 1928 and 1932. One tractor horsepower provides more drawing power than one horse. But even allowing for this, in 1932 total traction power amounted to only some 21–22 million, compared with 28 million in 1928.²¹

Key agricultural operations are greatly affected by the availability of traction power:

- (i) The ploughing of fallow in preparation for winter sowing. Pryanishnikov estimates that delaying the ploughing to May or June reduced the yields by up to 30 per cent;²²
- (ii) The delay in the time of spring sowing enormously reduces the yield. According to the experiments of Gaberland, cited by Pryanishnikov, a delay of 17 days between 18 March and 3 April could reduce the yield as follows in the areas where his experiments were carried out: wheat by over 50 per cent; rye by nearly 60 per cent; oats by 28 per cent; barley by 19 per cent;²³
- (iii) Harvesting losses, which could be up to 20 or 30 per cent or more, are very sensitive to the speed at which harvesting is carried out.

In addition there was a qualitative aspect to this work. Ploughing, sowing and harvesting could always be speeded up by carrying out the work in a slipshod manner, and this is undoubtedly what happened. Shallow ploughing was quicker than deep ploughing, and was normally less effective.

Sowing was quicker if you did not waste time regulating the density of the spread of the seed and ensuring that corners of fields and inaccessible areas were covered. Harvesting could also be speeded up if you were less concerned about minimising harvesting losses.

Additional traction power would have allowed all these operations to have been carried out more quickly and better, at the most optimal period. This would undoubtedly have resulted in larger biological yields (that is, larger yields before harvesting losses were deducted) and lower levels of harvesting losses. But the decline in traction power in association with an increase in sown area resulted in a deterioration in the quality of ploughing, sowing and harvesting, with the inevitable consequences of reduced yields and greater losses. The problem was compounded by the low morale of the peasants. The available operational control data on the timing of the ploughing, sowing and harvesting campaigns indicate the great delay in 1931 and 1932 in the commencement of spring sowings, and the even greater delay in the completion of the reaping and threshing operations in the 1932 harvest.²⁴ For example, in Ukraine only 8 million hectares had been sown by 15 May 1932, compared with 15.9 million in 1930 and 12.3 in 1931.

The lack of horses carried with it other troubles. Both collective farmers and individual peasants had great difficulty in conveying the grain to the collection points. And fewer horses, as we have seen, meant less manure and therefore poorer soil.

c The weather

Fluctuations in annual temperature and rainfall in the territory of the USSR are greater than in major grain-producing areas elsewhere in the world. The weather pattern is highly continental, and is complicated by the frequent but irregular dry winds (*sukhovei*) which blow from Central Asia across the Volga region, North Caucasus and Ukraine in the critical growing months of late spring and early summer. Moreover, critically low rainfall makes this territory particularly susceptible to drought. In normal times changes in the weather are the main cause of the large annual fluctuations in yield per hectare.

Was the weather a significant factor in the low grain yields which predominated in the 1930s, or were these entirely due to the technical and political factors which we have already discussed? In a preliminary attempt to answer this question, Wheatcroft has constructed a 'drought index' using weather data for 1883–1940. This assesses how far the annual fluctuation in the degree of drought in late spring and early summer might be expected to affect the grain yield. This estimate of annual fluctuation in yield due to the weather was then compared with the extent to which the actual yield in each year differed from the long-term expected trend.

It is often assumed that good weather years tend to cancel out bad years, so that over a five-year period fluctuations can be ignored. This is demon-

strably not the case. As we have already noted, the weather was largely responsible for the above-average yield over the whole five years, 1909–13, not only for the bumper harvest year in 1913. In 1925–29, however, the weather was only slightly worse than average, though as we have seen the unusual weather conditions in Ukraine after the autumn sowings of 1927 and 1928 resulted in extensive winter losses. In the 1930s, bad weather also played a significant role, particularly in the crucial years of the collectivisation drive of the early 1930s. Wheatcroft's index of the predicted agrometeorological deviation from grain yield shows below average weather in both 1930–34 and 1935–39, and particularly in the crucial years 1931 and 1932 (measured in tsentners per hectare).²⁵

1904–08 (average)	–0.13
1909–13 (average)	+0.31
1920–24 (average)	–0.82
1925–29 (average)	–0.10
1930	+0.84
1931	–1.75
1932	–0.55
1933	+0.29
1934	–0.67
1930–34 (average)	–0.37
1935–39 (average)	–0.22

The year-on-year changes are very relevant to our understanding of agricultural processes in the 1930s. In 1930, the year in which collectivisation was launched, the weather – and the harvest – were particularly favourable. The good harvest in a year of turmoil undoubtedly strengthened the illusion among the political leaders that agricultural difficulties could be overcome easily. But the drought of 1931 was particularly severe, and drought conditions continued in 1932. This certainly helped to worsen the conditions for obtaining the harvest in 1932.

The attitude of political leaders and principal planning officials to the weather compounded what was already a serious problem. Although the

inevitability of fluctuations in the weather from year to year was well known, in every year the Soviet government gambled on good weather – and was often unlucky.

4.3 The grain crisis of 1932–33

a The switch to 'neo-Nep' (Spring 1932)

In spite of the drought and the poor harvest of 1931, which were publicly acknowledged, at the beginning of 1932 the plans of the authorities assumed that the harvest of 1932 would be successful. Apparently no specific target for the 1932 grain harvest was adopted. But the grain collection plans were predicated upon a massive increase in production. In December 1931 Narkomsnab (the People's Commissariat for Supply) approved an immense grain collection plan of 29.5 million tons, an increase of over four million tons on the planned grain collections from the 1931 harvest.²⁶ In conformity with this, the Politburo agreed in January 1932 that as much as 6.235 million tons of grain should be exported in 1932, including nearly 3 million tons of wheat.²⁷ Nearly all of this would have to come from the 1932 harvest.

But the severity of the grain crisis in the spring of 1932 evidently persuaded the Politburo that this optimistic plan for the state collections must be modified. It launched the reform measures widely known as 'neo-NEP'.²⁸ At the heart of this new policy was the reduction of the planned collections from the 1932 harvest and the legalisation of the collective-farm market. The reduction was not as great as the published decree indicated. It compared the new plan with the *planned* collections from the 1931 harvest, which were not achieved. Compared with the actual collections in 1931–32, including the milling levy, the reduction was only from 22.7 to 22.2 million tons (see Table 4.2); and in addition the agricultural sector was required to return a seed loan of 1.27 million tons, compared with 0.16 millions in 1931–32.

But the grain collection plan did mark an important change. It proposed to increase the grain taken from the *sovkhozy*, and somewhat reduce the grain from the peasant sector (that is, *kolkhozy* plus individual peasants – *edinolichniki*). Moreover, the 1932 collection plan represented a huge reduction compared with the plans for 1932–33 drafted at the beginning of 1932; by the spring of 1932 agricultural policy was more realistic (or rather less unrealistic).

In planning the distribution of grain in the agricultural year 1932–33 the authorities had anticipated that they would have approximately the same amount of grain at their disposal as in 1931–32. But they envisaged important changes in the allocation of grain (see Table 4.4). The grain balance, prepared on 2 June 1932, proposed that general supply (*obshchee snabzhenie*) would increase by 0.95 million tons compared with the actual issue in

Table 4.2 Grain collections (*zagotovki*), 1931–32 and 1932–33 (thousand tons)

	1931–32 (actual)	1932–33 (initial plan)	1932–33 (actual)
Peasant sector	19363	18067	14878
Sovkhozy	1774	2490	1623
Milling levy	1521	1638	1230
Other	17	–	100
Total	22675	22195	17831
Return of seeds	164	1268	686
Purchases (<i>zakupki</i>)	–	557	229
Total	22839	24020	18746

Sources: 1931–32 and 1932–33 (actual): *Ezhegodnik khlebooborota*, [vi], 1934, except *zakupki* (from Chernov – see below). The *zakupki* figure is preliminary. 1932–33 (plan) from *Sobranie zakonov*, 1932, art. 190 (6 May), except for milling levy, return of seeds, and *zakupki*, from RGASPI, f. 17, op. 163, d. 36, ll. 161–2 (report by Chernov to conference of 19–21 May 1933).

1931–32. In addition, as much as 2.877 million tons would be allocated to the state reserves in the so-called 'Untouchable Fund' (Nepfond) and in Gosfond (the state fund to be assembled in case of mobilisation).²⁹ In the previous year total grain stocks, including the Nepfond and Gosfond as well as transitional stocks, had actually fallen from 2.332 million tons at 1 July 1931, to a mere 1.360 million tons at 1 July 1932 – about one month's supply of the grain required for internal use from centralised funds.

As the amount of grain available to the centre was expected to be about the same in 1932–33 as in 1931–32, the grain balance of 2 June 1932 was intended to compensate for these increases by reducing exports in 1932–33 by 2.826 million tons (or nearly 60 per cent) compared with the previous year. It was also proposed that in 1932–33 there should be no seed or food loans – following the drought in 1931–32 these amounted to 1.37 million tons. Cuts were also made in the planned allocation of centrally supplied fodder for livestock and in the allocation of grain to the timber industry and to urban horse transport (*guzhevoi transport*).

Nearly all accounts of the harvest of 1932 and the grain collections of 1932–33 argue that once the 'reduced' collections plan had been approved in May 1932 Stalin and the Politburo pursued a ruthless policy of attempting to secure the planned grain at all costs. No compromise of any kind was permitted.³⁰ Stalin's policy was certainly extremely ruthless, but in subsections (b) and (c) below we seek to show that it also involved further important compromises and retreats.

b The desperate battle for grain, July 1932–February 1933

We do not need to recite here the extensive information now available about the ruthless struggle to obtain grain, which, by the beginning of 1933, involved the arrest and exile of hundreds of thousands of peasants.³¹

But what has not generally been noted is that during the months of the collections the Politburo, and Stalin personally, reluctantly conceded that the plans of May 1932 could not be achieved, and in response to numerous appeals from districts, regions and republics substantially reduced the grain collection plans for the peasant sector in Ukraine, the North Caucasus and the Lower Volga region. The main Politburo decisions are listed in Table 4.3. Between August 1932 and January 1933, the plan was reduced from 18.07 to 15.30 million tons.

The largest cuts were made in Ukraine, where the original plan, already more modest than if it had expected the amount collected in 1931–32, was further reduced on three occasions by a total of 35 per cent. The Politburo referred to the Ukrainian plan as the 'thrice reduced already reduced plan' (*'trizhdy umen'shennyi uzhe umen'shennyi plan'*),³² and this phrase was frequently repeated in criticism of the alleged inadequacies of the organisation of the Ukrainian collections.

The first reduction in the Ukrainian plan was made as early as August. On

Table 4.3 State grain collections, agricultural year July 1932–June 1933: peasant sector (kolkhozy plus individual peasants) (thousand tons)

	Ukraine	North Caucasus	Central Volga	Lower Volga	Central Black- Earth	West Siberia	Other	Total
1931–32 Final Plan	7109	2522	1736	1638	2097	1212	6077	22391
1931–2 Actual	6471	2506	1045	1138	2091	898	5227	19376
1932–33 Plan (6 May 1932)	5831	2228	1179	1261	1900	1016	4652	18067
Main revisions to plan by Politburo:								
17 August	5171							
2 October		1786						
30 October	4223							
3 November		1589						
29 November				1195				
12 January 1933	3766							
1932–33 Actual	3584	1593	1159	1185	1797	1054	4506	14878

Sources: For final plan, 1931–32, see *Sobranie zakonov* (1932), art. 190 (6 May). For actual, 1931–32 and plan and actual, 1932–33, see sources to Table 4.2. For revisions to plan, see text of this chapter.

25 July 1932, Stalin, in a letter to Kaganovich, mistakenly claimed that in the USSR as a whole 'the prospects for the harvest . . . are without any doubt good', but also acknowledged that 'a closer acquaintance with Ukrainian affairs for this period has already revealed the necessity of helping the Ukrainian kolkhozy in the form of a partial reduction of the plan', and proposed that the same assistance should be provided for individual non-collectivised peasants (individually). Then on 17 August the Politburo resolved to accept Stalin's proposal and reduce the plan by 40 million puds in the districts which had been particularly badly affected.³³ On 28 August, a further Politburo resolution setting out more detailed provisions for the cut specifically resolved that the decision to reduce the plan should not be published. This was evidently because it feared that such an announcement would encourage other lagging districts and regions to press for a reduction in their plan. This principle was maintained with later decisions, all of which appeared only in the special files – with the paradoxical result that in public the Politburo appeared more uncompromising than behind the scenes.

A savage struggle to achieve the reduced Ukrainian collection plan culminated in Molotov's protracted stay there as an emissary of the USSR Politburo at the end of October and during November. While Molotov reproved Ukrainian leaders at all levels for their lack of zeal, soon after he arrived he also recommended to the USSR Politburo that the Ukrainian plan should be reduced by a further 1.15 million tons and this recommendation was approved.³⁴ The total collection plan for Ukraine now amounted to 4.561 million tons compared with the original 6.306 million, a reduction of 28 per cent. A further reduction of 0.457 million tons was made on 12 January 1933.³⁵

The North Caucasus was the other area for which substantial cuts were made in the collection plan. At the end of September the Politburo, noting extremely unfavourable conditions, reduced the plan by 0.605 million tons, 21 per cent of the original plan.³⁶ But even this reduced plan was quite unrealistic, and a further reduction of 0.360 million tons was agreed upon on 3 November.³⁷ These two decisions meant that the new plan was based on two-thirds of the collection levels of the original plan. The performance of the sovkhozy had been particularly poor (as in the case of Ukraine), and their new plan aimed at less than half the original collection.

In the autumn of 1932 the reductions in the collection plans for the Volga regions were much less significant than in the case of Ukraine and the North Caucasus, though in 1933 the famine in these regions was also severe. No reductions were made in the Central Volga plan. In the Lower Volga region, Ptukha, the party secretary, made persistent efforts to secure a less stringent plan, but until the end of November the region had been refused any reduction. On 29 November the Politburo firmly rejected Ptukha's new proposal to reduce the Lower Volga plan by 0.262 million tons (18 per cent) as completely unacceptable. But it agreed to a reduction by 0.066 million tons, and

to postpone 0.033 million tons of the seed loan due to be returned – a net reduction of only 7 per cent.³⁸ In his valuable dissertation Kondrashin suggests that if Ptukha's request had been accepted this would have provided enough grain to feed 1.2 million people until the new harvest, and 'then not a single collective farmer would have died from hunger'.³⁹

Together with the cuts made in the plans for other regions, these changes meant that by January 1933 the original collections plan for the whole USSR of 20.557 million tons in 1932–33 (excluding the milling levy) had been reduced by 17 per cent, to 17.045 million tons. This required major changes in the plans for the issue of grain, to which we return in the final section of this chapter.

c Grain in the time of famine, February–July 1933

The drive to collect the remaining grain due to the state continued unabated in January 1933 and in the first week of February. But at this time major changes in policy took place in Moscow. Like the reductions in the collection plans which we have described, these changes were almost entirely made in secrecy, and have not received much attention from historians until recently.

By the end of January the spring sowing for the 1933 harvest was only two months away – nearer in the southern districts – and the collection of an adequate amount of seed was an urgent necessity. On 7 February, a resolution of the plenum of the Ukrainian central committee showed no sign of any change in policy. It even claimed that the *original* plan for the collections had been realistic.⁴⁰ But two days previously the USSR Politburo had resolved that collections of grain in Ukraine should cease from 6 February, and all regions should devote their efforts to the collection of seed.⁴¹

But a far more alarming spectre than seed shortage haunted Ukraine, the North Caucasus and the Volga regions – the spectre of famine. Until this time rural and district authorities had been very reluctant to report cases of famine even in 'top secret' communications. They feared to be accused of being misled by kulaks and other counter-revolutionaries. But by the end of January both OGPU and party reports were far more frankly describing cases of famine both in small towns and in the countryside. Now that historians have some access to OGPU reports, it is obvious that on many matters OGPU reports were unreliable. They were frequently preoccupied with the search for imaginary enemies, when the real enemy was the mistaken policy of the authorities. But in 1933 these reports evidently played a major role in convincing sceptical political leaders, including Stalin himself, that they were confronted with genuine famine. We do not yet have access to the OGPU reports received by Stalin, which are presumably in the Presidential Archive. But crucial reports such as those in the Ukrainian archives were certainly forwarded to Stalin.

Thus on 6 February a comprehensive report from the Kiev GPU reached

the Ukrainian central committee. The report concluded that, since January, there had been twenty cases of sharply increased food difficulties and attested cases of famine. Like other documents prepared at this time, the report described famine both in small towns and in the countryside. According to the report, in one village parents had sent their children begging; in another starvation had affected widows, old people, and in some cases poor individual peasants and collective farmers.⁴²

This report, and many others in the Ukrainian central committee papers, evidently strongly influenced the Ukrainian Politburo. On 8 February, two days after it received the report of the Kiev GPU, and only a day after the Ukrainian central committee plenum adopted its bland resolution on the grain collections, the Ukrainian Politburo admitted the existence of famine for the first time (albeit in a secret resolution).⁴³

As the extent and depth of famine became clearer, the USSR Politburo was faced with urgent and competing demands for additional grain. First and most acute were the needs of tens of millions of peasants, hungry, starving or on the point of dying from hunger in vast areas of the countryside. Secondly, the grain supplied centrally for the rations of the urban population, the army and others had been quite inadequate even before the famine hit the countryside, and had been supplemented by local supplies. But in the areas affected by famine local supplies of all kinds of food were attenuated to vanishing point and industries, local authorities and others responsible for the population on Ration Lists 2 and 3 (the lists which had lower priority than the Special List and List 1), vociferously demanded increased grain allocations. Thirdly, in the famine areas grain was required for the spring sowing – without it the 1933 harvest would fail in the key grain-producing regions. Fourthly, fodder grains were needed by millions of emaciated horses, essential in many kolkhozy for sowing, harvesting and transport.

Confronted by the numerous reports and appeals about the desperate situation in the countryside in the famine areas, the Politburo relinquished its earlier firm decision not to issue grain from centralised funds for seed, or for food- or fodder-aid to the countryside. Between 11 February and 3 March, the Politburo authorised the issue of over 800 000 tons of grain as seed to the North Caucasus, Ukraine, the Lower Volga Region, the Urals and Kazakhstan; and a further 400 000 tons were issued before the end of the spring sowing. The first Politburo decision to release grain for seed was adopted on 11 February. It stated that seed assistance was to be supplied to 'kolkhozy and sovkhozy which are in need' in the North Caucasus as a loan; this was to be returned in kind in the autumn of 1933, plus 10 per cent (also in kind) to cover the cost of administration and transport.⁴⁴ The arrangements for the return of grain set the pattern for all later decisions about seed. A parallel decision on seed assistance for Ukraine followed on 18 February.⁴⁵ The two decisions were promulgated as an open decree of

Sovnarkom and the central committee which was published in *Pravda*. The amounts of seed lent, and the conditions of the loan, were stated in the published decree, which explained that steppe Ukraine and the Kuban' districts of the North Caucasus were short of seed because the unfavourable climatic conditions in a number of districts of Ukraine and the North Caucasus had led to a loss of part of the harvest.⁴⁶

However, the published decree did not mention that grain was also being lent for food; moreover, this was the only occasion during the famine months on which the provision of grain to the countryside from central funds, even for seed, was announced openly in the press. The total amount of grain issued for seed, including the secret allocations, was 1.274 million tons.

Grain for food was issued in much smaller quantities. Between February and July no fewer than 35 Politburo decisions and Sovnarkom decrees – all secret or top secret – authorised in all the issue of a total of 320 000 tons of grain for food (see Table 4.4).

Some of the decisions to issue grain as food were evidently made in direct response to the requests of regional or republican party secretaries. Thus in May 1933 Kosior and Chubar' sent a telegram to Stalin urgently requesting grain:

The particularly difficult food situation which is developing for June undoubtedly requires the provision of food assistance not only for Odessa, Dnepropetrovsk and Donetsk regions but also for Khar'kov, Vinnitsa and Kiev regions. Khar'kov region contains about 20 particularly difficult districts which unconditionally require assistance, and there are already no resources.

The telegram specified that Khar'kov region needed 200 000 puds, Kiev and Vinnitsa 150 000 each, and Chernigov 30 000 – a total of 530 000. The Politburo decision which followed on 31 May rounded the total to 500 000 puds, and granted the regions 200 000, 135 000, 135 000 and 30 000 puds respectively.⁴⁷

The most famous case of a positive response by the Politburo – or rather by Stalin – to a request for grain concerned two districts in the North Caucasus, Veshenskii and Upper Don. In 1963 Khrushchev cited one of Sholokhov's letters and Stalin's critical reply, but he was so anxious to blacken Stalin's reputation that he did not reveal either that Stalin had allocated extra grain in response to Sholokhov or that a Politburo commission had investigated the charges and, in principle, supported them.⁴⁸ The full Sholokhov-Stalin correspondence was not released until 1994.⁴⁹ In fact the Politburo advanced grain to these districts on two occasions to the amount of Sholokhov's requests.⁵⁰ This was the only occasion on which the Politburo provided a specific amount of grain for a particular district.

Although the grain loans for food were substantial, most of the grain

Table 4.4 State grain resources and allocation, 1931–32 and 1932–33 (thousand tons)

	1931–32 actual (preliminary) (dated 3 March 1932)	1931–32 actual (final) ¹	1932–33 plan (2 June 1932)	1932–33 actual (final)
<i>Availability</i>				
Stocks on 1 July (beginning of year)	2 143	2 332	996	1 286
Central receipts ²	22 699	22 839	22 180	18 837
TOTAL AVAILABLE	24 842	25 171	23 176	20 123
<i>Allocations:</i>				
General supply ³	8 870	8 956	9 903	8 314
Torgsin ⁴				193
Commercial sales	0	0	160	105
Horse transport ⁵	820		640	464
Timber ⁶	1 039	1 149	935	622
Peat and fisheries	236	264	255	192
Far North	349		330	252
Gold and non-ferrous	224	200	265	285
Vodka, beer industries	1 058	1 032	925	1 199
Other industries	698	569	724	532
Army and OGPU troops	818		928	814
Gulag, special settlers	254		192	226
Livestock	816	715	471	378
Special agriculture ⁷	1 684	1 707	1 397	943
Seed loans	660	1 267	0	1 871 ⁸
Food loans		107	0	
Export	4 546	4 786	1 960	1 441
Losses	654		395	331
TOTAL ALLOCATED	22 725		19 479	18 162
Stocks remaining, 30 June (end of year)	2 117	1 362	3 697	1 949
Of which, addition to reserve funds	-26	-970	2 877	663

Notes:

¹ These figures are taken from the published grain handbook, which does not include army, Gulag, and so on; no comparable total is therefore available.

² These figures differ slightly from those in Table 4.2; they include some miscellaneous receipts and sometimes include only the 90 per cent of the milling levy which was transferred to the centre.

³ 1931/32 (preliminary), 1932/33 (plan) and 1932/33 (final) include fodder grains used for flour and groats, and semolina (*mannaya krupa*). 1931/32 (final) is not explicit: we assume it includes these items, and have deducted from it the allocation to urban horse transport (obtained from the preliminary column) in order to make it consistent with the other columns.

⁴ Foreign-currency shops.

⁵ *Guzhevoi transport*: fodder for urban and industrial horses.

⁶ Cutting and floating.

⁷ Includes grain allocated for food to cotton and other specialised areas, and food allocations to sovkhozy.

⁸ This figure is not given divided into seed and food. The published total in *Ezhegodnik* is seed loans 1 274; food loans 330, a total of 1 604. The reason for the discrepancy is not known.

Sources:

1931–32: (preliminary) and 1932–33 (plan): RGAE, f. 8040, op. 1, d. 12, ll. 74–82.

1931–32 (final): *Ezhegodnik khlebooborota*, [vi] (1934).

1932–33 (final): RGAE, f. 8040, op. 8, d. 8, ll. 572–6 (memorandum from Chernov to Stalin, 29 December 1932).

provided comprised grains which were in normal times mainly used for fodder or for special purposes, rather than the two main food grains (rye and wheat). Only 35.4 per cent of the food loans consisted of rye, wheat and flour, compared with 83 per cent for the 'general supply' of grain and flour for rations to the non-agricultural population. Starving peasants had to make do with the secondary grains.⁵¹

Which of the starving peasants received the grain? Central recommendations, and local practice, were by no means clear-cut. At first the Politburo decisions sought to allocate grain aid only to the rural proletariat and the politically conscious. The decisions of 7 February all stated that the grain was for the food needs of workers in sovkhozy, MTS (Machine-Tractor Stations) and MTM (Machine-Tractor Workshops), and also for the 'party and non-party aktiv of kolkhozy in need'.⁵² This distinction was not maintained. Later decisions simply stated that the grain was 'for kolkhozy and sovkhozy which are in need' (11 February, North Caucasus),⁵³ and even included individual peasants (for example, the decision about Veshenskii district on 19 April). But attempts were made to ensure that 'conscientious' collective farmers were afforded some priority. Thus a directive of Dnepropetrovsk regional committee stated that grain should be provided to MTS and sovkhoz workers, and also to collective farmers who had earned a considerable number of labour days in those kolkhozy in which there had been cases of 'swelling-up and death from hunger'.⁵⁴

Both central and local authorities used the grain in order to ensure that agricultural work was carried out. Thus the Sovnarkom/central committee top secret section of the decrees of 18 February specifically stated that grain for food was advanced for the period of spring field work.⁵⁵

In practice, during the spring sowing bread and other foods were frequently provided on a daily basis for collective farmers out in the fields. See, for example, the instructions of the Vinnitsa regional party committee issued to the district committees on 29 April.⁵⁶ A chilling decision of the Ukrainian central committee explained what was to be done with peasants in the Kiev region who had been sent to hospital suffering from hunger: 'Divide all those hospitalised into the sick and those who are getting better, and significantly increase the food for the latter so that they can be released for work as quickly as possible.'⁵⁷ In practice food was often received only on the basis of ability to work in the fields, and other peasants were left to die. An OGPU report about a district in the Khar'kov region complained that 'food assistance was provided only for those working, and very insignificant help was given to those who were in decline or had swelled up'.⁵⁸

But this was not the whole story. Considerable efforts were made to supply grain to hungry children, irrespective of their parents' role in society. The Vinnitsa decision of 29 April insisting that most grain should be distributed to those who were active in agriculture also allocated grain specifically to crèches and children's institutions in the badly hit districts.⁵⁹ The report of

3 June, which recommended that food should be withdrawn from those who did not work, also argued that 'the People's Commissariat of Education should be obliged to decisively undertake and secure food assistance to the school and pre-school child population, and immediately establish a sufficient quantity of children's homes for the homeless [*besprizornye*]'.⁶⁰ The USSR Politburo issued a grain loan to the Crimea on 20 May which was specifically for children in need and aged invalids.⁶¹ Considerable research is required to establish exactly how the food loans of the famine months were distributed.

4.4 Changes in the grain balance

In the outcome, the central authorities collected a total of 17.8 million tons of grain (including milling levy), 4.4 million tons less than the plan of 6 May 1932 (see Table 4.2).⁶² This failure meant that very considerable changes had to be made in the planned issue of grain. These are set out in Table 4.4. The original planned issue in the grain balance of 2 June 1932 envisaged that as much grain would be available to the centre for distribution as in 1931-32, but proposed major changes in the way in which it was distributed (see section 3a) above).

By December 1932, it was absolutely clear that the 2 June 1932 plan could not be achieved, owing to the reduction in the collections compared with the May 1932 plan. On 9 December the Politburo approved a revised grain balance. The new balance reduced general supply by 1.120 million tons, so that the allocation in 1932-33 would now be lower than in 1931-32.⁶³ Several other cuts were also made, particularly in allocations to the stimulation of the production of industrial crops, to timber and to export; but at this stage the allocation to the reserve funds was reduced only slightly.

But the failure to reach even the reduced collection plans, and the emergence of seed shortage and famine conditions, meant that this plan could not last. The amount of grain available was about 1.3 million tons less than the amount expected in December 1932, and some 1.5 million more tons were allocated to seed and food assistance. To accommodate these changes, in the course of January-July 1933 the Committee on Grain Collections (Komzagh) persuaded the Politburo to make a large number of changes to the grain balance. These were often individually small. But the outcome was that further cuts were made in general supply, in the allocation for industrial crops and in the allocation for export. Compared with the June 1932 plan for 1932-33, general supply was cut by over 1.5 million tons and exports by 0.5 million (see Table 4.4).

But the most significant change was that the proposed allocation to the reserve funds - *Nepfond* and *Gosfond* - was gradually whittled away. According to the preliminary grain balance prepared in July 1933, these special *fondy* had vanished altogether. When the head of Komzagh submitted

the grain balance to Stalin, Kaganovich and Molotov on 4 July 1933, he stated that the total remaining stock of grain on 1 July, including *fondy*, was only 1.392 million tons, no more than on 1 July 1932.⁶⁴ But the grain balance for 1933–34 approved by the Politburo a month later recorded that the stock (*nalichie*) of grain on 1 July 1933, was 1.825 million tons.⁶⁵ The final official figure was 1.949 million tons (see Table 4.4). We have not found a satisfactory explanation of the discrepancy between these figures. The additional grain would have enabled substantial increases to be made in the grain supplied to the starving peasantry during the famine. But we have found no evidence that the availability of these additional grain stocks was known either to the officials of Komzag or to Stalin and the Politburo before July or August 1933. In any case the total amount available in stocks was only some six weeks' supply for internal use.

4.5 Conclusion

1. The grain harvests (barn harvest)

From the mid-1920s onwards grain harvests were considerably smaller than the amount recorded in the official handbooks of TsSU published from the 1960s onwards. The 1931 and 1932 harvests were particularly bad. The 1932 harvest was certainly smaller than the harvest of the previous year, some 53–58 million tons, and even in terms of the official TsSU figures it probably amounted to no more than 58 million tons (62 million tons is the upper limit).

2. The reasons for the poor harvests of 1931 and 1932

The crisis was complex and cumulative, resulting from a series of disastrous state agricultural policies from 1927–28 onwards. Serious over-cropping resulted in soil exhaustion and contributed to the upsurge of plant diseases, which were particularly severe in Ukraine. Excessive grain *zagotovki* undoubtedly affected peasant incentives to work, though the extent is difficult to assess. The shortage of grain in the countryside due to the excessive collections certainly made it impossible for the kolkhozy and the individual peasants to maintain livestock levels. The decline in traction power resulted in serious delays in all basic field operations. Delays in ploughing and sowing reduced biological yields, and delays in harvesting, especially in circumstances of widespread plant diseases, greatly increased harvesting losses. All these problems were compounded by the confusion in agricultural organisation to which many commentators refer. The unfavourable weather added to the difficulties.

3. Grain collection and distribution

Our work has confirmed – if confirmation were needed – that the grain campaign in 1932–33 was harsh and repressive to an unprecedented degree.

While this harshness was the dominant factor, we also find that state policy was more ambiguous and confused than is generally believed. In response to pressure from the local authorities and the peasants, the Politburo made large though insufficient reductions in planned collections between August 1932 and January 1933. In the famine months, it made substantial issues of grain for seed and for food to the peasants in the worst-affected areas, entirely contrary to its original policy. All these changes involved major modifications in the grain balance, the most important of which were:

- (i) the reduction in general supply to the population receiving rations, particularly those on Ration Lists 2 and 3, and the removal of many people from rationing altogether; and
- (ii) the failure to accumulate the reserve funds – *Nepfond* and *Gosfond* – for which Stalin had been insistently clamouring ever since 1929.

Notes

*An earlier Russian-language version of this chapter was presented to the Agrarian Seminar organised by V. P. Danilov in Moscow, and was published together with comments of Russian historians in *Otechestvennaya istoriya*, no. 6 (1998) 94–131. An English-language version was also presented to the Annual Conference of the British Association for Slavonic and East European Studies in April 1999.

1. *New York Review of Books*, 23 September 1993.
2. Metric tons are used throughout this chapter.
3. RGASPI, f.17, op. 3, d. 902, l. 6 (item 16).
4. RGASPI, f.17, op. 3, d. 931 (decision by *opros* no. 107/71 dated 23 September); GARF, f. 5446, op. 57, d. 26, l. 119 (article 2121/487s).
5. *Golodomor 1932–1933 rr. v Ukraini: prichini i naslidki* (Kiev, 1995), p. 46.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 36.
7. *Rossiya XX vek: sud'by rossiiskogo krest'yanstva* (Moscow, 1996), pp. 333–4.
8. S. G. Wheatcroft, 'The Reliability of Russian Pre-war Grain Output Statistics', *Soviet Studies*, XXVI (1974); 'Grain Production and Utilisation in Russia and the USSR before Collectivisation' (PhD thesis, University of Birmingham, 1980); and 'A Re-evaluation of Soviet Agricultural Production in the 1920s and 1930s', in R. C. Stuart, ed., *The Soviet Rural Economy* (New Jersey: Rowman & Allanfeld, 1984). See also the revised grain output figures in R. W. Davies, S. G. Wheatcroft and J. M. Cooper, 'Soviet Industrialization Reconsidered: Some Preliminary Considerations about Soviet Economic Development Between 1926 and 1941', *Economic History Review*, second series, XXIX (1986) 280–4. More recently the American historian M. B. Tauger has drawn similar conclusions to our own in relation to the 1931 and 1932 harvests (see his article in N. A. Ivnitkii, ed., *Golod 1932–1933 godov* (Moskva: Rossiiskii gos. gumanitarnyi universitet, 1995), pp. 13–42; in our opinion, however, his estimate that the 1932 harvest might be even less than 50 million tons cannot be safely obtained from the kolkhoz annual reports.
9. RGAE, f. 260, op. 1, d. 217, ll. 2, 16 (reports by Tarakanov and Pliuks).
10. *Ibid.*, l. 6 (Nikulikhin).

11. 'SIPS' is an acronym for the Soviet Industrialisation Project, Centre for Russian and East European Studies, University of Birmingham.
12. *Pyatiletnii plan . . .*, vol. 2, part 1 (Moscow, 1929), 337; *Sel'skoe khozyaistvo SSSR: ezhegodnik 1935* (Moscow, 1936), p. 367.
13. See data in *Sel'skoe khozyaistvo 1935*, p. 715; this early virgin lands campaign is discussed by I. E. Zelenin in *Otechestvennaya istoriya*, no. 2 (1996) 55–70.
14. *Pyatiletnii plan*, vol. 3 (1929), pp. 556–7.
15. *Ezhegodnik po sel'skomu khozyaistvu Sovetskogo Soyuza za 1931 god* (Moscow, 1933), p. 234. This estimate (29.5 million hectares) was much lower than the estimate previously accepted.
16. RGAE, f. 260, op. 1, d. 217, ll. 4, 6ob. (report of conference on the harvest, summer 1932).
17. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 3, d. 899 (no. 2/9).
18. *Sobranie zakonov, 1932*, art. 436, dated 29 September ('O meropriyatiyakh po povysheniyu urozhaya').
19. *Pyatiletnii plan*, vol. 2, part 1, pp. 328–9.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 333; RGAE, f. 4372, op. 30, d. 881, l. 19 (the 1932 figure was originally published from the archives by Moshkov).
21. See S. G. Wheatcroft, 'The Soviet Economic Crisis of 1932: the Crisis in Agriculture', working paper presented to NASEES conference, March 1985.
22. D. N. Pryanishnikov, *Izbrannye sochineniya*, vol. 2 (Moscow, 1931; reprint, 1965), pp. 249–50.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 272.
24. This is shown in detail in diagrams in Wheatcroft, 'Soviet Economic Crisis', appendices 4a and 4b.
25. S. G. Wheatcroft, 'The Significance of Climate and Weather Change on Soviet Agriculture (with Particular Reference to the 1920s and 1930s)', *Discussion Papers*, SIPS no. 11 (Birmingham: Centre for Russian and East European Studies, University of Birmingham, 1977).
26. Narkomsnab decree of 6 December 1931; RGAE, f. 1446, op. 6, d. 143, l. 41. See also Yu. Moshkov, *Zernovaya problema v gody sploshnoi kollektivizatsii sel'skogo khozyaistva SSSR (1929–1932gg.)* (Moscow, 1966), p. 210.
27. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 162, d. 11, ll. 131–54 (16 January).
28. See R. U. Devis (R. W. Davies), 'Sovetskaya ekonomika v period krizisa. 1930–1933 gody', *Istoriya SSSR*, no. 4 (1991) 198–210; and I. E. Zelenin, 'Byl li "kolkhoznyi neonep"?', *Otechestvennaya istoriya*, no. 2 (1994) 105–21.
29. 'Transition stocks' would be reduced by 0.176 million tons, so the net addition to stocks would be 2.701 million tons (see Table 4.4, 1932–33 plan).
30. See, for example, the arguments advanced by Robert Conquest, *Slavic Review*, 53, no. 1 (spring 1994) 318.
31. See, for example, the valuable account in N. A. Ivnitiskii, *Kollektivizatsiya i ras-kulachivanie: nachalo 30-kh godov* (Moscow: Magistre, 1996), pp. 186–207. Part of this material comes from the Politburo working papers currently held in the Presidential Archives and is not generally accessible.
32. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 3, d. 914 (art. 50/32 dated 24 January 1933).
33. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 162, d. 13, 76 (decision 47/4 reported to full Politburo on 25 August).
34. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 162 d. 13, l. 140 (decision by correspondence – *oprosom* – dated 30 October).
35. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 3, d. 913, l. 15 (*oprosom*).
36. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 162, d. 13, l. 118 (decision *oprosom* dated 29 September).
37. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 162, d. 14, l. 2; on the same day the West Siberian plan was reduced.
38. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 16, d. 14, l. 22.
39. V. Kondrashin, 'Golod 1932–1933 godov v derevne Povolzh'ya' (*kandidatskaya dissertatsiya*, Institut istorii SSSR, Moscow, 1991), p. 266.
40. *Pravda*, 10 February 1933; the text from the archives is published in *Golod 1932–1933 godov na Ukraine* (Kiev, 1990), pp. 371–3.
41. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 3, d. 915, l. 16 (*oprosom*).
42. TsDAGOU, f. 1, op. 20, d. 6274, ll. 46–56 (the report is not dated).
43. TsDAGOU, f. 1, op. 16, d. 9, ll. 151–6, published in *Golod 1932–1933*, p. 375.
44. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 162, d. 14, ll. 62–3 – art. 52/17.
45. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 162, d. 14, ll. 64, 74.
46. *Pravda*, 26 February 1933. The decree, dated 25 February, was also published in *Sobranie zakonov* (1933), art. 80.
47. Draft telegram, TsDAGOU, f. 1, op. 20, d. 6378, l. 36.
48. *Pravda*, 10 March 1963.
49. *Voprosy istorii*, no. 3 (1994) 3–25. Even now the original correspondence, preserved in APRE, is not normally accessible to historians.
50. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 162, d. 14, ll. 124, 126 (decisions of 19 and 22 April).
51. *Ezhegodnik khlebooborota za 1931–32, 1932–33 i predvaritel'nye itogi zagotovok 1933 g. (tablitsy)*, [vi], (Moscow, 1934). The other grains received as food assistance included maize (24.2 per cent), oats (14.5 per cent), millet (13.0 per cent) and vetch (6.1 per cent).
52. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 162, d. 14, l. 60.
53. See, for example, RGASPI, f. 17, op. 162, d. 14, ll. 62–3 (food loan to North Caucasus, decision dated 11 February).
54. Directive to districts, 10 February; TsDAGOU, 1/20/6277, 6.
55. GARE, f. 5446, op. 57, d. 23, ll. 73–4 (stat'ya 243/43s).
56. Decision of bureau of Vinnitsa regional committee. TsDAGOU, f. 1, op. 20, d. 6275, ll. 211–15.
57. TsDAGOU, f. 1, op. 6, d. 282, ll. 107–10, published in *Golod 1932–1933*, pp. 471–4.
58. Report on situation as at 10 June; TsDAGOU, f. 1, op. 20, d. 6276, l. 31. A further food loan was given to the region on 13 June.
59. TsDAGOU, f. 1, op. 20 d. 6275, l. 211.
60. TsDAGOU, f. 1, op. 20, d. 6276, ll. 9–10.
61. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 162, d. 14, l. 142.
62. These figures include the milling levy (*garntsevoi sbor*), but exclude the return of seed originally envisaged, and the *zakupki* collected by local authorities under central direction in addition to the *zagotovki*. Including these items, the shortfall was as much as 5.470 million tons.
63. For the 9 December 1932 revision, see RGASPI, f. 17, op. 162, d. 14, ll. 34–5.
64. RGAE, f. 8040, op. 8s, d. 7, ll. 306–17.
65. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 162, d. 15 ll. 24, 38–40 (decision of 7 August, art. 53/39).