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## Review of *Agriculture in History*, 3 volumes (R. Kent Rasmussen, proj. ed.; Salem Press, 2009)

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## Reference

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*Agriculture in History*. Hackensack, N.J.: Salem Press, 2009. 3 vols., 1,296 pp. Series: Magill's Choice. ISBN 978-1-58765-551-7, \$217.00.

As claimed in the publisher's note, the three-volume, chronologically arranged, "*Agriculture in History* is not a comprehensive history of world agriculture, but its articles touch on a remarkably large proportion of important world developments in food production," spanning prehistory through the turn of the twenty-first century. Nearly 150 scholars contributed to this effort, covering the gamut of perspectives, including those of anthropology, technology, animal husbandry, politics, government, human health, climatology, environment, genetic engineering, and more. Each entry is illustrated, and the essays are very readable, allowing one to readily jump around to topics of interest. A span of dates is given at the head of each entry as well as a one-sentence synopsis, a locale, keywords of the basic issues covered, and a summary of the event. There are good lists of further reading and *see also* suggestions, making these volumes very useful as ready reference. The myriad indexes are beautifully composed, giving readers entry by way of geographical location, broad category or subject, historical figure, or food, plant, or animal type.

While not shying away from the political aspects of agriculture, the editorial selections do not yield to polemics, making this group of essays an objective contribution to this area of study. From middle school through post-undergraduate, this set should be considered essential for any collection where readers are interested in the history of agriculture.

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