



TITHE RECORDS AND THE RECONSTRUCTION OF WINTER, SPRING AND SUMMER TEMPERATURES IN THE LOW COUNTRIES, 1600 TO 1800

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This paper focuses on climate reconstruction and methodology. In particular it deals with the reconstruction of Winter, Spring and Summer temperatures in the Low Countries based on tithe records. Although results of research on similar proxy data is already known from different European countries, those coming from the Low Countries are the first results of this kind. The results of two series of tithe records will be presented. The first high quality tithe record series comes from the region south of Ghent. It is composed of at least eight different series which are homogeneous, uniform and continuous throughout the 17th and 18th century. The second high quality series comes from the region between Amsterdam and Rotterdam and is composed of three series of tithe renting records. This Holland time series also covers the 17th and 18th centuries, however, it is a series of particular interest because it distinguishes between crops specific for winter growing conditions and crops that are conditioned by spring and early summer conditions. Whereas the Ghent and Holland tithe record series come from a different latitude, this enables us to also have a spatial variability in reconstructed temperatures.