

TITLE: Spanish agriculture in the little divergence

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Abstract: This paper explores the role of agriculture in Spain's contribution to the *little divergence* in Europe. On the basis of tithes, long-run trends in agricultural output are drawn. After a long period of relative stability, output suffered a severe contraction during 1570–1620, followed by stagnation to 1650, and steady expansion thereafter. Output per head shifted from a relatively high to a low path that persisted until the nineteenth century. The decline in agricultural output per head and per worker from a relatively high level contributed to Spain falling behind and, hence, to the *Little Divergence* in Europe. Output per worker moved along labour force in agriculture over the long run, supporting the depiction of Spain as a frontier economy. Institutional factors, in a context of financial and monetary instability and war, along climatic anomalies, provide explanatory hypotheses that deserve further research.

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