

# STARVING THE SOUTH

gets a great review in  
*Civil War Times Magazine!*

## Lean Times at the Old Plantations

**Starving the South:  
How the North Won  
the Civil War**, by Andrew  
F. Smith, St. Martin's Press

Reviewed by  
Thomas Zacharis



Unlike the Midwest, which produced huge quantities of wheat and meat in the 1860s, Southern plantation owners focused mostly on cotton and tobacco. When Union forces in the West seized Fort Henry, Fort Donelson and Nashville, Confederates faced widespread starvation. The situation only worsened after the fall of Vicksburg and Port Hudson severed access to cattle trails from Texas.

In *Starving the South*, Andrew Smith looks at the influence of food, famine and the lack of supplies on the Confederacy's ultimate defeat. He examines, for example, the strange trade developed in February 1865, in which agents exchanged cotton bolls for bacon by using Canada, the Bermuda Islands and Nassau, in the Bahamas, as intermediaries. He also sheds light on Ulysses Grant's reaction to such clandestine trading by sutlers in his own department in 1862. Grant singled out Jews for that transgression in his notorious General Orders No. 11.

After the Rebels won at First Manassas in July 1861, a food shortage was a major reason they could not follow up and march on Washington. In 1864 the absence of soldiers who had dispersed to find food for Jubal Early's army contributed to its destruction at the hands of Phil Sheridan.

*Starving the South* provides an unusual perspective that's likely to whet the appetite of Civil War and general history enthusiasts who may be tired of the same old diet.