

HI 262 : Food and the Environment in US History

In 1782, Thomas Jefferson wrote, "Those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God," and declared that democracy could only thrive through the influence of farmers and small town folks. At that time, 90 percent of Americans lived on farms. Today that number stands at less than 2 percent. Yet Jefferson's ideas, and others like them, have had a tremendous influence on the history of the United States, even as it became an increasingly urban, industrial nation. This course explores the social and political aspects of rural America from the colonial period to the present, covering such topics as daily life in colonial America, the institution of slavery, Westward expansion, and the current decline of small towns across the country.

Credits 4.0