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**Cultivation of Flax (*Linum usitatissimum* L.) and Textile Production in Neolithic Wetland Sites at Lake Constance and in Upper Swabia (Southwest Germany)**

Neolithic wetland sites of the northern alpine foreland provide large amounts of excellently preserved waterlogged plant remains. Therefore, during recent decades excavation activities of the Landesamt für Denkmalpflege (Cultural Heritage) Baden-Württemberg have been constantly accompanied by archaeobotanical research. In lots of sites dated from 3,900 to 2,900 cal BC large amounts of uncharred and charred flax remains have been found giving a wealth of information about cultivation and processing of this crop plant.

Common findings are linseeds and parts of flax capsules, but also stems, stem fragments, roots and branchings occur as well as threads, fish-nets and textiles made from flax fibres. Seeds and capsule fragments give evidence of threshing and linseed production. Heaps or even layers of flax stem fragments (shives) are characteristic by-products of flax preparation. They show that fibres must have been produced in the sites. In the settlement *Torwiesen II* in the Federsee bog (3283-3278 cal BC) it even was possible to locate the flax preparation activities at the entrance of the village. In the whole Late Neolithic flax husbandry was very important, but an increase can be observed at the appearance of the Horgen Culture about 3300 cal BC. Differences in linseed size between the early and the later phases of the Late Neolithic raise the question if different varieties of oil or fibre flax had been cultivated.

**Literature:**

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