Finding Aid for the Chalco, Mexico - Collection of original manuscripts... relating to famine, 1741-1743; bulk (September-October 1741)

Cataloged by Pablo Sierra with assistance from Kelley Bachli in February 2008, in the Center For Primary Research and Training (CFPRT); machine-readable finding aid created by Caroline Cubé.

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Descriptive Summary
Title: Chalco, Mexico - Collection of original manuscripts... relating to famine
Date (inclusive): 1741-1743; bulk (September-October 1741)
Collection number: 170/654
Extent: 385 leaves : paper; 315 mm x 220 mm., bound to 330 mm x 225 mm.
Abstract: Manuscript of the 1741 famine that struck Mexico City and the central region of New Spain. Several bound, hand-written notebooks attest to the efforts of Mexico City officials in their recollection of maize from the intra-lake region and central valleys. Entries consist of official paperwork between Joseph Francisco Aguirre Espinosa, the farmers of the greater Chalco region and the administrators of Mexico City's corn granary, the "alhondiga" or "posito."
Language: Finding aid is written in English.
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Los Angeles, California 90095-1575
Physical location: Stored off-site at SRLF. Advance notice is required for access to the collection. Please contact the UCLA Library Special Collections Reference Desk for paging information.
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Processing Note
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Biography
During the period in question, the colony of New Spain experienced extremely difficult years following the disastrous matlazáhuatl epidemic of 1736, which decimated the indigenous population of Mexico City and the surrounding valleys. Charles Gibson's "The Aztecs under Spanish Rule" presents a valuable chronology of the agricultural conditions at the time and suggests that from 1737 to 1741 a series of droughts and poor harvests affected maize production throughout the central valleys. The year 1741 was also a time of political transition as evidenced by the arrival of the new viceroy Pedro de Castro Figueroa y Salazar (1741-1742) in August, just before the famine reached critical levels. Figueroa y Salazar took the place of the archbishop-viceroy Juan Antonio Vizarron y Eguiarreta (1734-1740), after an entire year of rule by the Real Audiencia.
In the mid-eighteenth century, the greater metropolitan area also witnessed the transition from community-based repartimiento labor to the more private character of hacienda labor and its dependence on individually contracted Indigenous workers or "gañanes." Despite considerable environmental degradation, the intra-lake shipping system to and from Mexico City continued in operation. As a result, Chalco's haciendas served as the principal breadbasket for Mexico City and its suburbs throughout the colonial period. Nine shipping warehouses or "embarcaderos" functioned as the points of departure, from where the canoes filled with corn would traverse the lake region through a series of waterways and canals until arrival at the Mexico City alhondiga.
Scope and Content
The manuscript is organized into thirteen bound notebooks, which are divided into three main sections. The first set of six notebooks consists of Aguirre Espinosa's operations as Commissary Judge for Chalco, Texcoco and Tierra Caliente. The second set of three notebooks concerns Ambrocio Melgarejo and his management of the Mexico City alhondiga, the subsequent visit to Chalco and the cleaning operations of the Tlahuac canal. The final four notebooks in the collection are financial books, which detail the expenses and transactions of the year 1741 under the administration of Aguirre Espinosa.
The first pages of the manuscript are devoted to the January 1741 arrival of Joseph Francisco Aguirre Espinosa as Commissary Judge for the provinces of Chalco and Tierra Caliente. As the representative of the Real Audiencia, Aguirre Espinosa was responsible for purchasing large amounts of corn for the Mexico City "posito" directly from the region's hacienda owners. As a result, the first half of the manuscript consists of inspections of the province's farms, which the Commissary Judge compiled into several charts of expected agricultural output. Despite the official's prompt actions, by early-to-mid September 1741 the indigenous populations of both Mexico City and Chalco faced starvation. The famine was aggravated by a particularly harsh winter in Texcoco, where farmer testimonies revealed that unseasonal frosts resulted in poor harvests throughout the entire colony. The agricultural problem was increasingly affected by the market battle waged between the officials of the "Alhondiga" and the hacienda owners of Chalco. In this respect, the manuscript contains a series of edicts which Aguirre Espinosa proclaimed for the recollection of corn, but these and their subsequent fines do not appear to have had a positive effect among the "labrador" class.

As a result, while the Mexico City granary was selling at a loss in order to feed the masses, the "labradores" continued selling on the free market where they could find buyers for much more than the authorities could offer. Several transcriptions of these important debates appear throughout the manuscript, which forced Aguirre Espinosa and his commissaries to conduct more hacienda inspections outside of the Chalco region, "a los cuatro vientos." A collection of official receipts or "boletas" is included in the manuscript, which documents the series of transactions by which corn prices rose 400% in Mexico City to reach the eight to ten peso mark (64-80 reales). Prices shot up even higher in the agricultural hinterland of the city of Puebla. Official pony express correspondence, "de correo a caballo," between Aguirre Espinosa and his administrators suggests that the famine may have spread to towns as far away as Chiautla de la Sal and Xolalpa.

The arrival of the Privative Judge Ambrosio Melgarejo in September 1741 remedied the increasingly tense relationship between the hacienda owners and Aguirre Espinosa. The Privative judge summoned several regional meetings with the "labradores," which were transcribed by the public notary Phelipe Antonio de la Peña. Melgarejo confronted and persuaded the powerful land-owners, who repeatedly violated Aguirre Espinosa's edicts or "vandos," to sell their corn to him for the sustenance of Mexico City. By late October-early November 1741, the crisis appears to have been controlled at the expense of the alhondiga's funds, as seen in the financial reports sent from Mexico City to the Commissary and Privative Judge. Although it does not seem that the 1741 famine reached the levels of desperation seen in 1624 and 1692, the warnings of the latter event still resonated nearly fifty years later, "aquellas fatales lloradas consecuencias del año de seiscientos y nobenta y dos, ni extinguidas con el tiempo, ni olvidadas con su curso" (339v). In effect, the teamwork of Aguirre Espinosa and Melgarejo appears to have mitigated the effects of the famine for the lower-classes of Mexico City.

The expenses of cleaning and guarding the canals and causeways leading to the "alhondiga," perhaps the turning point in the crisis, were carefully tabulated into a series of financial books by the scribe de la Peña (based on the accounts reported to him by Ignacio Aristizabal). The manuscript concludes in March of 1743, with two extremely detailed reports of the expenses incurred during Melgarejo and Aguirre Espinosa's stay in Chalco. The first report presents a priceless view into the weekly consumption patterns of an elite colonial family. The latter calculates all the financial transactions that took place during Aguirre Espinosa's commission, including the arrival of funds from the Mexico City alhondiga and their disposal through wholesale purchases of different varieties of corn, "maiz ancho y delgado."

Text in Spanish.

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Genres and Forms of Material
Manuscripts.

Related Material
Bound Manuscripts Collection (Collection 170) . Available at UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

Mexico City famine manuscript. Recollection of maize in the intra-lake region and central valleys.

1r-4r Start of 1st notebook. Viceroy Figueroa y Salazar orders Chalco hacienda owners to send maize surplus to Joseph Francisco de Aguirre Espinosa. n.d.

4v Joseph Francisco de Aguirre y Espinosa appoints scribe Phelipe Antonio de la Peña to report on price of maize being sold in the market. 1741/01/19

5r Viceroy orders Aguirre y Espinosa to execute orders in a number of different jurisdictions and under several other local judges. 1741/01/18
5v Order for neighboring Tenant General and other government officials to assist in the administration of justice in Chalco. 1741/01/22
6r Auto ordering all shippers of maize are to present declarations of their produce and redirect it to the "Alhondiga" of Mexico City. 1741/01/23
6v Maize being sold between twenty eight and twenty nine and half reales, higher than the average price of twenty six reales. 1741/01/23
7r Declaration of Santiago Garcia, administrator for the San Joseph "embarcadero" owned by Don Manuel Rivas Cacho. 1741/01/23
7v Ignacio Aristizabal presents his declaration at Don Lucas Serafin Chacon's embarcadero, unable to ship due to lack of corn sacks. 1741/01/23
8r Don Francisco Recalde, administrator of the San Juan Baptista embarcadero owned by Antonio de Messa. 1741/01/23
8v Dionisio de Bustos presents declaration at Nuestra Señora de los Remedios embarcadero, also known as Gordon. 1741/01/23
9r Declaration of Don Miguel de Acosta, administrator for the embarcadero La Coleturia that houses the Church's maize tithes. 1741/01/23
9v Corn sacks or "costales" purchased in order to send six canoes of maize from Chalco to the Mexico City alhondiga. 1741/01/23
10r Diego Alonso de Matheos de Baena responds to Aguirre's letter as the commissary of Ayotzingo, not as tenant. 1741/01/24
10r Tenant general for the province, Marcos de Anayo, arrives in Chalco as according to Aguirre's previous letter. 1741/01/24
10v Declaration taken from Benito Arias, manager for the embarcadero Santa Barbara in the town of Ystapaluca. 1741/01/24
11r Don Fernando Texada from Ystapaluca declares to only have two canoes of maize in Bartolome de Rivera's embarcadero. 1741/01/24
11v Investigation to collect information on the prices and harvests of Tierra Calienta and to have all produce brought directly to Chalco. 1741/01/24
12r Santiago Garcia declares that during November and December of 1740 maize prices averaged between 28 and 29.5 reales. 1741/01/25
12v Don Miguel de Acosta states that the highest maize prices have reached 31 reales, but only averaged 26 reales in the last weeks. 1741/01/25
13r Antonio Ponze, canoe transporter or "trajinero" from Mexico City, declares that prices maize prices have remained at 26 reales. 1741/01/26
13v Ignacio de Aristizabal declares that maize prices in Tierra Calienta average three to four reales less than in Chalco. 1741/01/26
14r-16r Tenant general of Chalco to vist the "comarca" lake region and expedite the transportation of canoes in the town of San Francisco. 1741/01/26
16r Aguirre orders guards to protect the transportation the road coming from Mexico City due to recent thefts of maize. 1741/01/26
16v Five men hired for the purpose of guarding the corn entering Chalco, especially at the Paso de San Francisco. 1741/01/26
17r Public announcement forbidding the shipping of corn from Chalco to Mexico City without a proper declaration form or "voleta." 1741/01/27
17v Aguirre orders investigation into the number of canoes and of the prices and quality of the maize sold at the alhóndiga in Mexico City. 1741/01/27
18r Francisco Recalde declares that no more maize has been stored since Aguirre's last inspection of the embarcadero. 1741/01/28
18v Miguel de Acosta declares that the only maize left in the embarcadero belongs to the Church and will be sent to its own alhóndiga. 1741/01/28
19r Santiago Garcia swears under oath that he has received no new maize except for that belonging to a few begging priests, "limosneros." 1741/01/28
19v Ignacio Aristizabal states that he received a canoe of maize from Joseph Martin Ramirez which will be shipped out to Mexico City. 1741/01/28
20r Declaration from Nicolas Narvaes in the town of Tetelco, announcing that his recently purchased hacienda has no stored maize. 1741/01/29
20r Domingo Muñoz states he has not received any maize since his embarcadero normally stores firewood, fruit and honey. 1741/01/29
20v Don Francisco Caravallo in the town of Ayotzingo declares that the only maize from Tierra Caliente has passed through his embarcadero. 1741/01/29
20v Juan Francisco Lopez de la Torre of the Convent’s embarcadero swears he has only received sugar, honey and fruit from Tierra Caliente. 1741/01/29
21r Auto promulgated by Aguirre collects all local farmers’ declarations for Chalco province regarding their maize harvests and their shipping. 1741/01/30
22v-27r Chalco farmers present their declarations to Aguirre, arguing that they have sent all their surplus corn to the Mexico City alhondiga. 1741/01/31
28r-28v Phelipe Narvarte excuses clarifies incorrect declarations made by his hacienda’s administrator and agrees to sell Aguirre his maize at set price. 1741/02/05
29r-29v Order suspending Chalco inquiries of farmers’ maize production, investigation now to focus on neighboring town of Tlayacapan. 1741/02/07
30r-31r Manuel de Castro, mayor of Tlayacapan to present himself in four days before the Viceroy in Mexico City to answer charges of mismanagement. 1741/02/08
32r-34v Local hacienda administrators account for the percentages of production given to the church as tithe and part consumed for workers. 1741/02/09
34v-36r Series of autos imposing ten day deadline for farmers to send half their maize surplus to Mexico City or pay a 2000 peso fine to the Viceroy. 1741/02/11
36v-39r Hacienda owners officially notified of Aguirre’s promulgation and ordered to comply or present legitimate excuses for non-compliance. 1741/02/14
39v Auto forbidding shipping authorities from detaining or stopping without reason the maize- filled canoes in transit to Mexico City. 1741/02/18
39v-43r Hacienda administrators request more time to comply with Aguirre’s order due to distance needed to travel and the present lack of mules. 1741/02/19
43r-43v From the tenth of February, 7479 fanegas of maize have been sent to the Mexico City alhón歧ga at set price of thirty reales. 1741/02/20
44r-47r Diligencia proclaimed ordering hacienda owner to present himself before Aguirre and his scribe Antonio de la Peña to present declaration. 1741/02/26
47r-48r Aguirre forbids guards from taxing the corn coming from Tierra Calienta and heading towards “El Pozito” in Mexico City. 1741/03/03
48r General call to all neighbors of Chalco to declare how much corn they harvested and to whom, where and when they sold their corn. 1741/03/05
48v-52v Chalco “peujaleros,” full-time hacienda workers, accept Aguirre’s order and will sell the remainder of their maize to the alhondiga. 1741/03/07
52r-52v Aguirre orders Antonto de Acosta to inspect houses in the town of Totolapan in search of maize storage containers called “cuitlapiles.” 1741/03/08
53r-54v Joaquin de Longara and Domingo Leutaria declare on their harvests for the year, several other farmers are absent from their houses. 1741/03/08
54v-55r Town of Tlayacapan will receive all the surplus maize that has been declared by the region’s farmers, same process to occur in Totolapan. 1741/03/09
55v-56r Juan Bruno, Cayetano Cruz, Juan Frias, Miguel Perez accused of diverting maize to Cuernavaca despite orders to send it to Mexico City. 1741/03/09
56r-61r Missing Totolapan peujaleros present their declarations to Aguirre, alleging that all their surplus corn has been sold to Chalco and/or Mexico City. 1741/03/10
61-62r Auto imposing a 1000 peso fine to any peujaleros that have failed to declare their maize harvests or failed to sell them to the alhondiga. 1741/03/12
62r-66r Amecameca and Ozumba farmers declare that after contributing the tithe, all their surplus maize is needed to feed their families and workers. 1741/03/13
66r-67r Tenant of Ozumba ordered all corn to be sold at the prices stipulated by the Mexico City alhondiga, six reales lower than local market prices. 1741/03/16
67r-68v Bonifacio de Bargas and Francisco Ruiz de Castañeda presented their respective haciendas’ declarations to the scribe Antonio de la Peña. 1741/03/20
68v-69r Antonio de Acosta nominated “regulador” for the inspection of the haciendas production for Chalco province. Acosta accepts the position. 1741/03/21
Acosta and de la Peña conduct province-wide inspection of the Chalco's haciendas with annotations of the number of maize fanegas produced. 1741/03/21
Temporary suspension of hacienda investigation due to owners and administrators absence for the upcoming "Semana Santa" celebrations. 1741/03/29
Auto reinitiating hacienda investigation as soon as hacienda owners return to their properties, declarations to resume the following day. 1741/04/05
Acosta completes his inspection of the province with visit to five hacienda and four ranches whose administrators had not yet declared. 1741/04/06
Aguirre liquidates the Viceroy's debt with the regions' corn growers and renews the order to send all surplus maize to Mexico City. 1741/04/23
Auto ordering all surplus maize to be sent to Mexico City within eight days, a 500 peso fine will be assessed to any recalcitrants. 1741/07/11
Ignacio de Aristizábal and Francisco Recalde state that they have already sent all their corn to the Mexico City alhondiga. 1741/07/12
Aguirre announces that Viceroy has issued the order that all corn in a twenty-league radius will be sold at the prices stipulated by Mexico City. 1741/07/13
Maize merchants and shippers protest that their losses are caused by buying their maize at four pesos six reales and selling them at five pesos. 1741/07/14
Commissary orders de la Peña to notify the region's producers of the corn scarcity in Mexico City and to send their maize under penalty of law. 1741/07/14
Corn growers receive de la Peña's notification and retort that they have already sent all their surplus corn to the alhondiga. 1741/07/17
Matheo Joseph de Larre, Secretary of the Viceroy writes to assure Chalco's hacenderos that they will receive rational prices for their corn. 1741/07/15
Antonio de la Peña reviews the account books or "manifestaciones de maizes" used to calculate shipping of corn fanegas to Mexico City. 1741/07/21
Auto ordering delinquent hacienda owners to pay the fine imposed by the Viceroy on February 12th and to account for missing maize. 1741/07/23
Aguirre personally visits hacienda owners, forcing them to open their storage spaces "troxes" and verifying veracity of their arguments. 1741/07/23
Aguirre cancels the March 16th order proclaimed Ozumba's tenant, as a result all corn will be bought on a weekly basis at the market. 1741/07/27
Corn farmers have their storehouses inspected once more, they argue they no longer have enough corn with which to survive the year. 1741/08/02
Oversized chart listing each hacienda, name of the owner, total production, church tithe, surplus maize, expenses, amount sold and "old corn" 1741/01/18
Start of 2nd notebook. New Spain's "Real Audiencia" renews Aguirre Espinosa's commission for the province of Chalco and nearby jurisdictions. 1741/09/02
Aguirre Espinosa rehires Antonio de la Peña as his scribe and presents the Royal Audience's dispatch before Marcos Francisco de Anaya. 1741/09/05
Aguirre issues an order requiring all shipping managers to present their transport logs to de la Peña and declare what has been sent to Mexico. 1741/09/06
De la Peña transcribes the amount of corn shipped to the Mexico City alhondiga as documented in shippers’ or "embarcadero" transport logs. 1741/09/06
Real Audiencia of Mexico alerts Aguirre that there is only tolontle maize of poor quality sufficient for six days, urges to send more immediately. 1741/09/06
Mexico City auto enforces penalties against hacienda owners for not contributing maize, scribe tallies local contributions to the alhondiga. 1741/09/07
Cayetano Martínez de Mereles replaces Antonio de Acosta as inspector "regulador," visits all neighboring haciendas to verify their compliance. 1741/09/10
Francisco de Ibarra, manager for Captain Manuel de Ribas Cacho's hacienda, is discovered to have presented false declarations to de la Peña. 1741/09/14
Great numbers of Indians and poor farmers arrived in Chalco to beg for maize, 50 loads of corn sold at piecemeal according to alhondiga prices. 1741/09/15
Ambrosio Melgarejo, "oidor" of the Real Audiencia, authorizes Aguirre to purchase corn at elevated prices in order to supply the alhondiga. 1741/09/16
140r Estegan Rengifo named inspector for the province of Chalco and Cayetano Martinez de Mereles for the jurisdiction of Tescuco (Texcoco). 1741/09/16
140v-141v Regular maize contributors, Joseph Gutierrez de Castro and Juan Augustin de Esquivel, have ceased sending their daily maize contributions. 1741/09/17
142r-143v Farmers' reticent to sell their maize despite having removed price restrictions, request for Judge and General Procurador immediate presence. 1741/09/18
144r-147v Aguirre responds to a report from Mexico City which states that due to its scarcity, maize is being scalped at eight to ten pesos (64-80 reales). 1741/09/18
147v-149v Ambrosio Melgarejo orders Aguirre to purchase as much corn as possible at "precio libre" and to remove all possible charges against farmers. 1741/09/20
149v-150v Joseph de Arinaga, Joaquin de Vargas, Bartholome de la Cueba, Francisco de Rivera, and Esteban de Rivera hired to supervise corn production. 1741/09/22
150v Aguirre authorizes the inspection and embargo of maize in the haciendas belonging to Anna Basquez de Cabrera and Joseph Martin Ramirez. 1741/09/22
151r-158r Esteban Rengifo conducts inspection of Chalco and Tescuco's cornfields, compiling a list of their total and estimated production for October 1741. 1741/09/24
158v-160v Aguirre calls together all the major hacienda owners, who must provide the Alhondiga with 20,000 fanegas of maize at 4 pesos 4 reales per load. 1741/09/26
160v-162r In violation of the farmers' pact with Aguirre, several labradores sent sacks of rotten corn to the alhondiga, which was rejected and returned. 1741/10/02
162r-163r New meeting of hacienda owners leads to dispute as to whether labradores or the "Posito" itself will pay for the "desgranado" of maize. 1741/10/08
163v-164v Don Miguel Perez Mercadillo confronts the Regent Commissary, Francisco de Aguirre, for having separated and returned maize of poor quality. 1741/10/09
164v-166v Ambrosio de Melgarejo announces that the alhondiga will need 30,500 fanegas of maize, 500 of which will be supplied on a daily basis. 1741/10/14
167r-167v Commissary Judge, Joseph Francisco Aguirre Espinosa y Cuebas, sets out for Mexico City having nothing more to do in Chalco for the year. 1741/10/31
167v-168v Aguirre returns to Chalco, liquidates all outstanding debts with the region's hacienda owners and farmers before returning to Mexico City. 1742/01/02
169r-173v Start of 3rd notebook. Viceroy Figueroa y Salazar sets the maximum price of maize at five pesos for a distance of 20 leagues from the capital. 1741/06/22
174r-175v Letter from the Real Audiencia to Francisco Leite, ecclesiastic judge for Chalco province, urging him to cooperate with Aguirre and send all corn. 1741/09/05
176r-176v Aguirre enforces the Viceroy's June 22nd edict, setting the price of maize at three reales less than the current prices of the Mexico City alhondiga. 1741/09/08
177r-178v Managers for Lucas Seraphin Chacon, Manuel de Rivas Cacho, Antonio de Mesa's "embarcaderos" interrogated for selling above stipulated prices. 1741/09/09
178r Start of 4th notebook. Cover page for Aguirre Espinosa's autos, carried out as Commissary Judge for Tescuco (Texcoco) in the year 1741. 1741
179r-180r Antonio de Acosta, citizen of Chalco, hired as "regulador" for the inspection of Tescuco's maize production in service of Aguirre Espinosa. 1741/04/10
180r-190r Tescuco hacienda owners and administrators present declarations on the poor corn harvests resulting from frosts earlier during the year. 1741/04/12
191r-191v Aguirre Espinosa orders Texcoco labradores to sell all their surplus corn within their jurisdiction, otherwise will be penalized 1000 pesos. 1741/04/22
192r-193r Start of 5th notebook. Auto imposing 1000 peso fine for Tierra Caliente labradores selling maize outside the province (not going to Chalco). 1741/01/20
193r-194v Don Antonio Perez del Castillo y Rio appointed as Commissary by Joseph Francisco Aguirre Espinosa for the province of Tierra Caliente. 1741/02/02
194r-194v Manuel Sanchez, “teniente de Alcalde Mayor,” appointed as representative of Antonio Perez del Castillo for the province of Tierra Caliente. 1741/03/13
195r Perez del Castillo orders that all labradores send their surplus maize only to Chalco or risk losing their produce and transport mules. 1741/02/03
195v-196r  Thomas Valentin Delgadillo, merchant, and Miguel Antonio Cabrera, labrador, declare that the price of maize has risen from 16 to 20 reales. 1741/02/03
196v-197r  Perez del Castillo calls all Tierra Caliente hacendia owners, "pehujaleros" and labradores to present declarations on their maize harvests. 1741/02/04
197r-204v  Farmers from Apanque Salco, Huasopa, Apizaco and Ozumba report to the city of Yauttepec in response to Perez del Castillo's auto. 1741/02/04
204v  Authorization to document the investigation of Tierra Caliente corn production on common paper, due to lack of official stamped variety. 1741/02/11
205r-208r  Local labradores report normal harvests to Perez del Castillo, argue that they must retain higher percentage of corn for their "gañanes." 1741/02/11
208r-209r  Perez del Castillo sends agricultural reports of Tierra Caliente along with from the town of Tepoztlan to the Commissary Judge Aguirre Espinosa. 1741/03/02
209r  Authorization to document investigation of Yauttepec corn production on common paper, due to lack of official stamped paper in surrounding area. 1741/02/14
209r-214v  Commissary uses nahuatl intepreter Diego de Mondragon to order Indian residents of Tepoztlan and Guauzopa to send surplus maize to Chalco. 1741/02/18
215r  Resident labradores of Quautlan (Cuautla) del Valle de las Milpas must not sell their corn outside their jurisdiction, except to send it to Chalco. 1741/03/15
215r-216r  Nicolas Maldonado, Juan Manuel de Borda and Juan Garcia Palacios declare price of corn rose from 16 to 20-22 reales in January and February. 1741/03/15
216r-216v  Perez del Castillo announces that half of Cuautla's declared corn production will be sent to Chalco, the remainder to be kept by the labradores. 1741/03/15
217r-219r  Quautlan farmers and merchants present their harvest production and portion to be sent to Chalco before the Commissary Perez del Castillo. 1741/03/16
219r-219v  Antonio Perez del Castillo completes report for Tierra Caliente, must be sent to Aguirre Espinosa along with the report from Cuernavaca. 1741/03/20
220r  Start of 6th notebook. Orders carried out by Aguirre Espinosa for repairs to be made to Lake Chalco's road ("camino de la laguna de Chalco"). 1741/01/30
220r-221r  Juan Leonardo de Castilla "alguacil mayor" sent out to investigate the reason for the bottleneck of canoes formed at the San Francisco pass. 1741/01/30
221r-222v  Castilla reports that the San Francisco pass has been blocked by a marshy grass or "cesped," which impedes the canoes from getting across. 1741/01/31
222v-223v  Carlos Gonzales, "trajinero" from Mexico City, suggests closing off the San Francisco pass and re-opening the old San Pedro Tlahuac pass. 1741/02/01
223v-224v  Miguel Diaz, "trajinero" from Mexico City, states that the Indians "remeros" (rowers) began to use the San Francisco pass for contraband trade. 1741/02/01
224v-226r  Guard for the capital's snow deposit declares that repairing the Tlahuac pass and the Mexicalzingo gate will restore the flow of commerce. 1741/02/04
226r-227r  Joseph Veas, trajinero, reports that cleaning the Tlahuac pass of its "tules" grasses would enable canoes to reach Mexico City in 6-8 hours. 1741/02/04
227r-228r  Antonio Ponze, trajinero, states that the San Francisco pass only started to be frequented six years ago (1735) as a shortcut to Mexico City. 1741/02/06
228r-230v  Alguacil mayor, Juan Antonio del Castillo, states that clearing out the San Francisco pass is useless unless a permanent investment is made. 1741/02/09
231r  Start and cover of the 1st of three notebooks containing Ambrocio Melgarejo Santaella's autos as "oidor" of the Real Audiencia of New Spain. 1742/09/15
231r  Real Audiencia appoints Ambrocio Melgarejo for the commission responsible for securing the maize supply for the Mexico City alhondiga. 1741/09/12
232r-233r  Melgarejo reports that there are only 2,209 fanegas of corn left in the alhondiga, must purchase at least 40,000 fanegas to prevent starvation. 1741/09/12
234r-238r  Report on the general state of the alhondiga. 90,000 pesos left for maize purchases, 547 fanegas sold per day at fixed price of 6 pesos, 48 reales. 1741/09/13
239r-239v  Aguirre Espinosa commissioned with traveling to Tescuco and securing the maize harvests being hoarded by secular and ecclesiastic labradores. 1741/09/12
240r  Gaspar Hurtado de Mendoza writes the Corregidor Pedro Manuel Enriquez for a high official to visit Tescuco immediately to enforce the law. 1741/09/02
241r-242v Aguirre Espinosa reports purchase of 1000 fanegas from the Church's holdings, certain labradores explicitly violate orders to send corn to Mexico.
1741/09/11

243r-243v Official request to post guards along the road behind the Colegio de San Pablo and Calzada del Santuario de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe. 1741/09/19

244r-245v Ambrocio Melgarejo orders the alcalde mayor of Mexicalzingo to repair the San Francisco pass, in order to expedite canoes' arrival to Mexico. 1741/09/13

246r-246v Francisco Xavier Gomez de Cervantes threatens ecclesiastic labradores with excommunication upon failure of cooperating with maize recollection. 1741/09/12

247r-249r Aguirre Espinosa suggests limiting the alhondiga's sales to two hundred fifty (piecemeal) fanegas per day, as practiced during the 1698 famine. 1741/09/21

250r-250v Juan Francisco Fortuno, alcalde mayor de Mextitlán, receives Melgarejo's order to convince the region's labradores to sell maize to the Pozito. 1741/09/13

250v-252r Letter from Melgarejo to Juan de Esquibel Maldonado, urging him to raise among the "Cavalleros" in order to alleviate Mexico's food shortage. 1741/09/13

252r-256v Melgarejo asks Aguirre Espinosa to persuade Chalco's hacienda owners to sell him their corn at a reasonable price, but no higher than six pesos. 1741/09/14

256r-259v Orders instructing Chalco's labradores to set aside the maize needed until December 15, 1541 and to send the rest immediately to the capital. 1741/09/14

260r Lorenzo Caballero writes that in the last two days thirteen canoes loaded with corn have been sent to Mexico City by way of Mexicalzingo. 1741/09/14

261r After opening the San Francisco pass, Caballero finds three canoes loaded with corn in Mexicalzingo, which he rerouted to the Mexico alhondiga. 1741/09/15

262r-262v Suggestion to install a series of checkpoints along the road to Mexico City, in order to prevent the indigenous rowers from stealing the corn. 1741/09/15

263r-265v Aguirre Espinosa writes Melgarejo, notifying that twenty canoes carrying 1,400 fanegas of maize will be arriving in Mexico City shortly. 1741/09/15

266r-267v Melgarejo appoints two regents, the Marques de Villahermosa and Francisco Marcel Pablo for corn collection in Tacuba, Juchimilco and Cuyoacan. 1741/09/16

268r-268v One hundred forty fanegas of maize are sent to the alhondiga from the Yztapaluca embarcadero, leaving less than 400 for the rest of October. 1741/09/17

269r-269v Letter informing Melgarejo of an inspection to be carried out for the jurisdictions of Yautepeque and Amilpas in search of corn for the Pozito. 1741/09/17

270r-271v Aguirre Espinosa asks Melgarejo to personally visit the region of Chalco in order to understand the current difficulties had with the labradores. 1741/09/18

272r-272v Request for Melgarejo to leave Mexico City and inspect Chalco, where Joseph de Castro and Juan de Esquivel have entirely ceased to send maize. 1741/09/17

273r-274r Correspondence between Melgarejo and Aguirre, in which the latter reports that in the city of Puebla the price of corn is sold at 10-12 pesos. 1741/09/18

275r Start and cover page for the 2nd of Ambrocio Melgarejo's three notebooks. Recorded by the scribe Phelipe Antonio de la Peña, in Chalco. 1741

275r-276r Nicolas Antonio de Aguilar, authorized to send to the alhondiga all maize without proper documentation (boleta) in the Cerro Gordo region. 1741/09/18

276r-278v Melgarejo commissions Ignacio Aristizabal with cleaning out the canal and especially the Tlapacoya, Laguneta and San Diego embarcaderos. 1741/09/21

278r-281r Commission for the General Tenant to inspect the Jesuits' hacienda, in addition to La Cordova, owned by the widow Anna Vasquez de Cabrera. 1741/09/22

282r-285r Joseph Davalos, alcalde mayor of Mextitlán, requests Melgarejo to send mules from Mexico City in order to furnish the capital with region's corn. 1741/09/21

286v-289v Decree ordering all mule owners of the lake and river region (Riberas y Pueblos Comarcados) to supply their "requas" immediately to Davalos. 1741/09/24

290r List of towns in the central region where mules can be found to carry one thousand loads of corn being sent by Joseph Davalos to Mexico City. n.d.
Melgarejo calls together all the labradores of the Chalco region for a general meeting regarding the scarcity of maize in the capital's alhondiga. 1741/09/25

Register of 27 hacienda inspections carried out by Francisco Marzelo Pablo Fernandez during the month of September 1741 in the Tacuba region. 1741/09/27

Melgarejo summarizes the events leading to his arrival in Chalco, the cleaning operations of the canal and prohibits sale of maize "desgranado." 1741/10/10

Cover page of the orders, "diligencias," commissioned by the Private Judge, Ambrosio Melgarejo, for the recollection of maize in Tierra Caliente. 1741

Melgarejo commissions Marcos Francisco de Anaya to assist in purchasing maize from Quautla, Yautepex, Chautla and Jolalpa in Tierra Caliente. 1741/10/06

Anaya compells all the "labradores y peujaleros" in the jurisdiction of Cuernavaca to sell their corn, which will be sent to the Province of Chalco. 1741/10/09

Maize farmers of Yautepex, Cuatla de las Amilpas and Ocuituco present declarations before Anaya, allege that corn is not ready to be picked yet. 1741/10/09

Anaya reports that there is no corn readily available throughout Tierra Caliente, estimate harvest will not be collected until month of November. 1741/10/13

Anaya writes Melgarajo that he intends to visit the Temoc tianguis with hopes of finding corn to purchase and send to Chalco and Mexico City. 1741/10/11

Melgarejo and Anaya commissions Thomas Bravo de Acuña, Chalco's commissary to assist in locating and buying maize in Chiaautla and Jolalpa. 1741/10/06

Residents of Chiautla de la Sal, Xolalpa, San Francisco de Chiatlan and Yzucar are living off of squash (calabaza) due to dire scarcity of maize. 1741/10/10

Hacienda owners of Chalco send a letter petitioning Aguirre Espinosa to purchase their corn at 8 pesos per load in November and December. 1741/10/09

Meeting between Melgarejo, Aguirre Espinosa, and several of Chalco's labradores, establish prorated quota for purchase of 500 fanegas per day. 1741/10/13

Several labradores inform the scribe Antonio de la Peña that they will be unable to satisfy the maize quotas established at the April 10th meeting. 1741/10/18

Bernardo Joseph de Ortega and Francisco Fernandez Veles unable to send 54 loads of maize of unripe, green maize (en leche) to Mexico City. 1741/10/14

Melgarejo relieves Ortega and Fernandez Veles of their previous obligation, thanks to having secured enough maize to send to the alhondiga. 1741/10/17

Cover page for copies of letters answered by Ambrosio Melgarejo during his inspection of the haciendas in the greater Chalco region. 1741

Correspondence between Melgarejo and Aguirre Espinosa related to the 2520 fanegas being sent to Mexico City for the week of October 25th. 1741/10/20

Aguirre Espinosa informs Diego de Baena of the canal and embarcadero cleaning operations being orchestrated by Ambrosio Melgarejo. 1741/10/21

Melgarejo writes Joseph Gutierrez de Castro in relation to having paid Indian laborers to clear the Tlapacoya pass along with Aguirre Espinosa. 1741/10/21

Marques de Villahermosa de Alfaro informs Melgarejo that one of the residents of Santiago Tianguistengo is hoarding maize, asks for instructions. 1741/10/21

In letter to Gutierrez de Castro, the privative judge Melgarejo cites documents related to a past famine during the time of the Conde de Galve. 1741/10/22

Correspondence between the directors of the Alhondiga and Melgarejo, the latter suggests buying corn from Mestitian even at elevated prices. 1741/10/23

Letter from Melgarejo to the directors of the Mexico City alhondiga, celebrating 11000 fanegas have been sent instead of the estimated 5000. 1741/10/25
Melgarejo writes the alhondiga's "Corregidores" informing that he has reached an agreement to purchase Chalco maize at four pesos four reales.

1741/10/30

Privative judge Melgarejo notifies Mexico City that on October 4 it will receive 604 sacks of corn which should be sold upon arrival at the Pozito.

1741/10/03

Aguirre Espinosa writes that the six to seven canoes of maize being sent to Mexico City is of inferior quality, due to lack of proper drying out.

1741/10/07

Eight canoes with 420 sacks ("costales") of corn sent to supply the alhondiga for October 11 and 12, Melgarejo requests update from Mexico City.

1741/10/10

Melgarejo replies Aguirre Espinosa's previous letter by asking him to refer to the October 10 auto, which has also been sent to the Corregidor.

1741/10/11

Phelipe Antonio de la Peña summarizes Ambrocio Melgarejos's actions since his arrival to Chalco on September 19 up until October 19.

1741/10/19

Joseph Gutierrez de Castro agrees to cooperate with Melgarejo by selling him maize, despite consistently refusing to do so for Aguirre Espinosa.

1741/10/19

Pedro Frexomill y Figueroa informs he has purchased 1000 fanegas of corn from Pedro Prienoteran, who asks to be repaid in maize for his workers.

1741/10/11

Melgarejo forbids the "trajineros" canoe shippers to continue operating during the months of November and December in order to curb theft.

1741/10/20

Privative Judge and Oidor of the Real Audiencia, Ambrocio Melgarejo announces his return to Mexico City after securing maize for the alhondiga.

1741/10/25

Hacienda San Andres administrator, Angela Eugenia de Calzado y Terreros, excuses herself, aunt and cousin for not supplying any more corn.

1741/10/31

Labradores report that they are unable to provide corn "desgranado" because of the physical damage that threshing does to the Indians' hands.

1741/10/31

Melgarejo pardons certain hacenderos their debt of corn to the alhondiga, stipulates that the remainder will be penalized for failure of contract.

1741/11/07

Ambrocio Melgarejo presents the final report of his actions during the famine, asks to restore the Alhondiga with its previous autonomy.

1741/11/10

Start and cover page for the 3rd of Ambrocio Melgarejo's three notebooks.

Letters written in relation to the famine and cleaning of the lake.

1741

Francisco Antonio de Echevarri writes letter of support for Melgarejo's endeavor in Chalco for the relief of the famine in the city of Mexico.

1741/09/20

Alhondiga transaction report, "boleta," states that after excluding crop from Hacienda La Cartagena, there is not enough corn for the next week.

1741/09/21

Alhondiga officials state that there are no mules available to transport the corn from Mestitlan to Mexico City due to their use in the Royal Service.

1741/09/24

Letter from Davalos to Aguirre Espinosa, requesting the latter to start buying "mazorcas" or whole ears of corn, rather than threshed kernels.

1741/09/24

Letter from Davalos to Melgarejo, reports that the payment of 5000 pesos to the mayor of Mestitlan has been suspended due to lack of transport.

1741/09/26

Correspondence between Francisco Marcelo Pablo Fernandez and the alhondiga as the former reports back from Tlanepantla.

1741/09/25

The Marques de Villahermosa sends a sample of six mazorcas from the region of Toluca to see if these satisfy the requirements of the alhondiga.

1741/09/27

Officials of the alhondiga suggest contacting Bernardo Serrano from the jurisdiction of Toluca and Metepeque (Metepec) for further food relief.

1741/09/28

Juan Baptista writes Melgarejo that Mextitlan has abundant maize but no mules to transport the crop, mules must come from Mexico City.

1741/09/28

Large crowds bought 900 fanegas of corn in one day. Alhondiga officials receive proposal from San Juan Teotiguacan to sell them 400 fanegas.

1741/09/30

Alhondiga officials separate threshed corn from mazorcas, the former will only be sold after the whole ears of corn have all been consumed.
Francisco Marcelo Pablo Fernandez receives order to force labradores to bring their maize threshed and dried, or face fine of 1000 pesos. 1741/10/04

Letter to Aguirre Espinosa reporting at least one third of Ricaldo's corn deficient, consisting of rotting molcates. Will revert to sale of threshed corn. 1741/10/05

The posito receives large amounts of rotting molcates in loose and small sacks, which has to begun to affect the institution's finances. 1741/10/06

Report of the alhondiga's maize purchases for October 2 through October 9, total of 2012 fanegas of corn are left within the posito itself. 1741/10/12

Alhondiga notifies Aguirre Espinosa that its doors remained closed during the morning, no ears of corn left to sell to the public until new shipment. 1741/10/12

Maize from the Tacuba region begins to arrive to Mexico City alhondiga, cannot be sold due to Melgarejo's restriction of only selling mazorcas. 1741/10/17

Register of taxes owed by Chalco hacienda owners for the Paso de San Francisco cleaning operations undertaken by Aguirre Espinosa. 1741/10/25

Start and cover page of the 1st notebook of receipts. Collected by Francisco de Aguirre Espinosa for purchase of maize in the Province of Chalco. 1741

Phelipe Antonio de la Peña testifies to the money sent to Aguirre Espinosa and received from Mexico City, including several irregularities. 1741/08/01

Perez del Castillo owes the Alhondiga 360 pesos due to delays in corn shipments, will visit farmers for indemnization in specie or in maize. 1741/07/31

The scribe De la Peña receives 480 pesos for services rendered to Aguirre Espinosa, the latter administrator is owed 1188 pesos by the Crown. 1741/08/08

Register of various miscellaneous payments made to by residents of Chalco for their services in the transport, vigilance and recollection of maize. 1741/10/29

Testimony of the cleaning operations orchestrated by Ambrocio Melgarejo and Ignacio Aristizabal along the Tlapacoia outlet (desembocadero). 1741/09/21

Account of Aristizabal's cleaning expenses amount to 1448 pesos, suggests condemning the San Francisco pass to avoid further expenditures. 1741/10/31

Aguirre Espinosa awards the corporal Juan Lopez 532 pesos to be distributed among twelve commissaries for thirty-eight days of service. 1741/10/25

Melgarejo sends thirty two pesos for the wages of Marcos Francisco Anaya's two commissaries and two ministers at the rate of one peso per day. 1741/10/20

Diego Alonso de Baena, tenant for the town of Ayotzingo, and his guards receive their pay from the funds of the Posito, authorized by Aguirre. 1741/10/25

Joseph Antonio Davalos remits 9000 pesos to Ambrocio Melgarejo for the purchase of maize and various other expenses in the province of Chalco. 1741/09/21

Antonio de Leca y Guzman reports that from start of October to the 10th of November 1741, Aguirre Espinosa sent 9929 sacks of corn to Mexico. 1742/02/09

Melgarejo asks the alhondiga to finance the "desgranado" and threshing of maize in Chalco, as requested by the hacienda owners of Chalco. 1741/09/29

Receipt for 150 pesos paid to Esteban Rengifo for two hundred fifty loads of corn (maiz ancho), must be shipped by the first week of November. 1741/10/20

Pedro Valiente disagrees with Aguirre Espinosa's decision to purchase maize from Joseph de Leon, given the latter's previous negligent behavior. 1742/01/08

Valiente awaits a concrete decision from Aguirre Espinosa regarding a transaction involving seventy five loads of corn for one hundred fifty pesos. 1742/01/29

Joseph Martin Ramirez fined 2000 pesos by Aguirre Espinosa for failing to provide the equivalent of 1450 pesos in corn as previously stipulated. 1742/02/16

The scribe De la Peña receives 256 pesos for overtime work performed during Ambrocio Melgarejo's commission in the province of Chalco. 1742/02/17

Antonio Phelipe de la Peña requests monetary compensation for the three commissions served under both Aguirre Espinosa and Melgarejo. 1742/11/02

Julian "mulato" owes Juan Antonio Flores two loads of corn out of the six he agreed to sell, labrador Leon agreed to sell twelve loads to Chalco. 1742/02/06
Juan de Ozan, administrator of the alhondiga, pays Bartholome de Ribera 420 pesos for two canoes-worth of "maiz delgado" at six pesos a load. 1742/02/10

Receipt for seventy fanegas of maize purchased by Aguirre Espinosa, to deposit in the storehouse of Antonio de Mesa for transport to Mexico. 1741/03/16

Francisco de Aguiara complains of 12,000 peso profit the alhondiga made on his produce, remits canoe of corn at four pesos two reales per load. 1741/02/10

Official receipts or "voletas" issued by Joseph Francisco Aguirre Espinosa and Ambrocio Melgarejo for transport to the Posito in Mexico City. 1741/07/14

The Posito received 16175 fanegas of "maiz delgado" from purchases made by Aguirre Espinosa from February 21 to November 1, 1741. 1741/12/30

Cayetano Antonio de Moratilla excuses his failure in remitting the amount of maize he agreed to send due to not having his mules for transport. 1741/08/09

Antonio de Leca y Guzman, mayor of the Posito, received 8907 fanegas of "maiz ancho" from Aguirre Espinosa from February-October 1741. 1742/02/09

Start and cover page of 2nd expense notebook. Account book detailing the expenses incurred by Melgarejo during his stay, "hospicio," in Chalco. 1742

2977 pesos to be paid by the alhondiga for Ambrocio Melgarejo and his family's stay in Chalco, thirty-nine days of service during the year 1741. 1742/03/01

Thomas Alberto de Eslava receives 117 pesos from Aguirre Espinosa for "reposteria" baking/dessert making for Ambrosio Melgarejo and family. 1741/10/26

Aguirre Espinosa pays Juan Bautista Bueno, cook, 156 pesos for thirty-nine days of work for Melgarejo and his family during their stay in Chalco. 1741/10/26

Start and cover page of 3rd expense notebook. Financial book tabulating the maize purchases, transactions and debts under Aguirre Espinosa. 1742/03/01

Start and cover page for 4th expense notebook. Financial report submitted to the capital for revision of Aguirre Espinosa's expenses in 1741. 1742/11/06

Procurador General notes two small errors in Aguirre Espinosa's accounts, which amount to a difference of 58 pesos 1 tomin 6 granos. 1743/02/21

Officials of the alhondiga and Audience of New Spain notify Aguirre Espinosa of a 58 peso discrepancy in his report, thank him for his arduous work. 1743/03/15