Feeding the City
Rome and the *Annona*
# Population of Augustan Rome

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plebs frumentaria + families</td>
<td>520,000</td>
<td>520,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedmen + families</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slaves</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor &amp; recent migrants</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soldiers and members of elite</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>790,000</td>
<td>1,090,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Diocletian’s Price Edict – AD 301

• Price of Wheat
  – 1 *modius castrensis* (= 1.5 *modii*) = 100 *denarii*

• Cost of transport of wagon-load (= 90 *modii*) of wheat
  – 20 *denarii* per mile
Diocletian’s Price Edict – AD 301

• Transportation of wheat by sea:
  – Alexandria to Rome
    • 16 denarii per castrensis modius
  – Syria to Lusitania
    • 26 denarii per castrensis modius
Forum Boarium

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Reconstruction in Museo della Civiltà Romana
Severan Marble Plan, showing the Theatre of Pompey, AD 203-11

Monte Testaccio

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Grain laws of the late RP

123 BC – Gaius Gracchus’ law: subsidized monthly ration at a fixed price for all citizens at Rome.

90s BC – Law of Octavius: reduces number of recipients?

81-80 BC – Sulla abolishes distributions.

73 BC – Law of consuls Terentius and Cassius re-establishes Gracchan rations at fixed price, but for limited number.
Grain laws of the late RP

62 BC – Cato increases number of recipients.

58 BC – Popular tribune Clodius makes the distributions absolutely free.