Recent archaeobotanical results from early Aceramic, Neolithic sites on Cyprus have put the island in the forefront of debates on the spread of Near Eastern agriculture, with domestic cereal crops appearing at nearly the same time as on the mainland. Cyprus demonstrates the earliest definite evidence of a targeted migration by farmers. However, what happened after the introduction of agriculture to Cyprus has been relatively unknown to this point. Further consideration is needed of the role of new introductions, local agricultural developments, and intensification in subsequent phases.

To address these issues, a summary of the prehistoric Cypriot archaeobotanical record will be presented along with preliminary results from three newly excavated sites: Kritisou Marattou ‘Ais Yiorkis, Kissonerga-Shala, & Souskiou Laona.

**Souskiou Laona**
Souskiou Laona is an Early to Middle Chalcolithic settlement currently being excavated by Professor E. Peletzburg, University of Edinburgh. The samples from Souskiou Laona were taken from the 2005-2006 excavation seasons. 2190 liters from 70 different contexts. The list of taxa identified include the grains and glume bases of emmer wheat, barley, grape, fig, pistachio, lentil, and Lithospermum arvense (field gromwell).

**Kissonerga Shala**
Kissonerga Shala is an Early/Middle Bronze Age coastal site. Excavations at Kissonerga-Shala, under the direction of C. Lindsay Crewe with the University of Manchester, have included flotation of 1232 liters from 45 different contexts. The list of taxa identified for Kissonerga Shala include grass, vines, fig, pistachio, broad bean, pea, lentil, and wheat.

**Ais Yiorkis**
‘Ais Yiorkis is a Late Neolithic to Early Bronze Age lowland settlement located on the foothills of the Troodos Mountains. So far investigations have demonstrated a unique architectural phenomenon. The material culture includes imported obsidian blades, piceolite ornaments, carnelian bead fragments, stone vessels, ground stone for food processing and a rich chipped stone assemblage totalling nearly 200,000 pieces. Of particular significance is the presence of cattle, which demonstrates its introduction to the island during the Aceramic Neolithic (c. 6500 BC).

**Photograph of ‘Ais Yiorkis**

**Cumulative number of publications with Cypriot botanical data through time**

As part of my PhD research, I have compiled a botanical database of the 50 sites that have published archaeobotanical data. The evidence for economic plant species from the Neolithic/Chalcolithic to the Classical period was previously reviewed by Hansen (1991), who highlights changes in the Cypriot Neolithic with the Introduction of Sicilian cereals (rye) and Triticum aestivum (bread wheat) and the decline of glume wheats.

**Percent presence of domestic cereals per phase**
1. einkorn (emmer wheat) is the most common cereal in Cyprus prehistory, but there is a significant decrease in the number of sites with the taxon in the Late Bronze Age. Einkorn also declines significantly from the Neolithic to the Late Cypriot. The first unambiguous evidence for a two-bering wheat in Cyprus is the Chalcolithic, after which it characterizes the glume wheats. Both six-row and two-row barley are present in the Aceramic Neolithic. Six-row barley continues to be present up to the Late Cypriot. However, two-row barley disappears after the Chalcolithic.

**Percent presence of taxa from Souskiou Laona and Kissonerga Shala**

**Cumulative number of publications with Cypriot botanical data through time**

**References**

**Aceramic Neolithic of Cyprus**
The ‘Ais Yiorkis plant assemblage is dominated by two-grained einkorn, and has an absence of T. dicoccum. With the exception of ‘Ais Yiorkis, the evidence for emmer wheat is in the Aceramic Neolithic, Ceramic Neolithic, and Late Cypriot occupations is near the one-grained variety. The ‘Ais Yiorkis assemblage suggests a possible second wave of crop introductions to the island in the Late Neolithic-Early Bronze Age, whereas the one-grained emmer was common.

**Photograph of ‘Ais Yiorkis**

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