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TRANSFORMATIONS

CICADA SOUP: ONGOING EDIBLE INSECT CONSUMPTION IN THE UNITED STATES

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Though no single protein source can serve as a panacea for food insecurity or wider

global sustainability issues, entomophagy (eating insects) has attracted growing interest as a

potential alternative to conventional sources of animal protein. Despite this buzz, the average

consumer in the United States is commonly presumed to be wholly averse to insects as food.

Still, past and present cicada consumption in the rural United States (and in particular, in

Appalachia) complicates this assumption. Archival data and semi-structured interviews

related to cicada consumption reveal a distinct place-based practice. People eat cicadas with

varying motivations (i.e., experiential, survivalistic), often differing along lines of race, class,

and geography. Ultimately, while longstanding stigma toward insects as food persists in the

United States, people continue to find opportunities to seek out, prepare, and enjoy insects

(and in particular, cicadas) as food, creating broader implications for entomophagy nationally

and beyond.

Palavras-chave: entomophagy; food justice; sustainability; insects; alternative proteins.