

PALEOETHNOBOTANY OF BUENA VISTA:
A CASE STUDY OF RITUAL FEASTING IN LATE PRECERAMIC PERU

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ABSTRACT

This project examines plant macroremains, phytoliths and starch remains recovered from special archaeological and architectural contexts at Buena Vista (11°43'51.72"S, 76°58'5.45"W), an inland site in the lower Chillón Valley of Perú. The primary goal of this work is to evaluate the evidence for feasting at a Late Preceramic site. The identification of feasting activities provides a way of examining the social practices, ritual and political, of the people who built Buena Vista. These results can be compared to other archaeological contexts in the Late Preceramic. Consequentially, this paleoethnobotanical study provides several corollary lines of investigation. The plant remains provide significant information on the agricultural component of subsistence in comparison to coastal sites of the time, as well as evidence for the use of special or specially prepared foods in a ritual context. The materials also add to our knowledge of interregional interaction that linked the coast of Perú to the northern and eastern lowlands.