

# Humans began farming sooner than scientists thought

When did humans first begin farming?

Scientists have long thought that our prehistoric ancestors didn't start [raising crops until some 12,000 years ago](#). But a new study suggests that the age of agriculture might have dawned much earlier.

"From what our current research reveals, the first indication for the earliest cultivation is 23,000 years ago on the shores of the Sea of Galilee in Israel," Dr. Ehud Weiss, [professor of palaeoethnobotany at Bar-Ilan University](#) in Israel and the lead author of the study, told The Huffington Post in an email. "This is one of the most amazing finds a researcher can dream on. No one had previously imagined humans had started cultivating in such an early date."

For the study, the researchers analyzed a [23,000-year-old hunter-gatherer campsite](#), which was discovered in 1989 at the archaeological site Ohalo II near the Sea of Galilee. They examined about 150,000 plant specimens at the site and noticed evidence not only of domestic-type wheat and barley, but also of weeds known to flourish in the fields of domesticated crops.

"The [plant remains from the site were unusually well-preserved](#) because of being charred and then covered by sediment and water which sealed them in low-oxygen conditions," Weiss said in a written statement. "Due to this, it was possible to recover an extensive amount of information on the site and its inhabitants."

The site also yielded flint tools that might have been used for harvesting cereal plants.

Given the findings, the researchers concluded that the campsite is probably the earliest known example of small-scale farming.

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [Farming May Have Started Way Earlier Than Scientists Thought](#)**