

Have humans manipulated ‘natural’ foods before modern GMOs? Look at a Renaissance painting

Over time, we’ve bred watermelons to have the bright red color we recognize today. That fleshy interior is actually the watermelon’s placenta, which holds the seeds. Before it was fully domesticated, that placenta lacked the high amounts of [lycopene](#) that give it the red color. Through hundreds of years of domestication, we’ve modified smaller watermelons with a white interior into the larger, lycopene-loaded versions we know today.

Of course, we haven’t only changed the color of watermelon. Lately, we’ve also been experimenting with getting rid of the seeds — which Nienhuis reluctantly calls “the logical progression in domestication.”

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [A Renaissance painting reveals how breeding changed watermelons](#)