DNA changes linked to farming revolution spurred bonding of dogs with humans

Our canine companions developed the ability to digest starchy foods during the farming revolution thousands of years ago, according to DNA evidence.

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Modern dogs can tolerate starch-rich diets, unlike their wolf cousins, which are carnivores.

A study of DNA extracted from the bones and teeth of ancient dogs at archaeological sites in Europe and Asia suggests their ability to eat starchy foods goes back millennia.

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DNA samples from 8,000 to 4,000 years ago show the dog's ability to digest starch is ancient – hailing back to a time when hunter-gatherer societies adopted agriculture.

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Scientists are divided over how dogs became domesticated from wolves.

One suggestion is that ancient hunter-gatherers used wolves as hunting companions or guards, gradually training and taming them.

But others argue that domestication started later, when wolves stole food leftovers from settlements and began to live alongside people.

[The new research] adds weight to the idea that dogs became domesticated when they crept into human settlements to steal food, gradually evolving the ability to thrive on a human diet. The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: Dog's dinner: DNA clue to how dogs became our friends