

ORIGINS OF AGRICULTURE



BBC NEWS | Science/Nature | Farming origins gain 10,000 years



Humans made their first tentative steps towards farming

23,000 years ago, much earlier than previously thought.

Stone Age people in Israel collected the seeds of wild grasses some 10,000 years earlier than previously recognised, experts say.

These grasses included wild emmer wheat and barley, which were forerunners of the varieties grown today.

A US-Israeli team report their findings in the latest Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

The evidence comes from a collection of 90,000 prehistoric plant remains dug up at Ohalo in the north of the country.

There is no surprise that the technics of agriculture were around long before it took off. Innovation is not driven by technical invention or discovery, but by the creation of networks of connection – cultural ecologies that bind together old and new. Agriculture needed architecture, cult and new intimate relationships with other species to be realized. All the evidence is against the origins of agriculture being primarily economic.

Part of the argument of my new book that presents a new overview of 50,000 years of archaeological history.