

# Beginnings of Agriculture



# The First Farmers



- A warming trend brought an end to the ice ages, and new plants began to grow in some areas.
- As early as 10,000 years ago, in Egypt and Southwest Asia, people came to depend on wild barley and wheat for food.

# Food Producing



- People soon learned that they could plant seeds to grow their own crops. This shift from food gathering to food producing defined the **Neolithic** (nee-uh-LI-thik) **Era**.

# Early Domestication



Map: Early Domestication: This is a map of the world with icons and highlighting representing domestication of plants and animals. In North and South America, it shows the origin of domesticated plants. Corn was shown at the southern tip of North America and potatoes are shown on the west coast of South America. It shows that the domesticated animals like horses, cattle, sheep and goats were found in the western part of Asia. It also shows that wheat and barley were found there. There is a small area at the

# Domestication



- This **domestication** of plants led to the **development of agriculture**, or farming. The first farmers also learned to domesticate animals. Instead of following wild herds, they could now keep sheep and goats for milk, food, and wool. People could also use large animals like cattle to carry loads or to pull large tools used in farming. Domestication greatly improved people's chances of surviving. With survival more certain, people could focus on activities other than finding food.

# Ancient Farmers



# New Skills



- During this time, people also learned to polish stones to make specialized tools like saws and drills.
- People also learned how to make fire. Before learning that skill, people could use only fire that had been started by natural causes, such as lightning.

# Fire



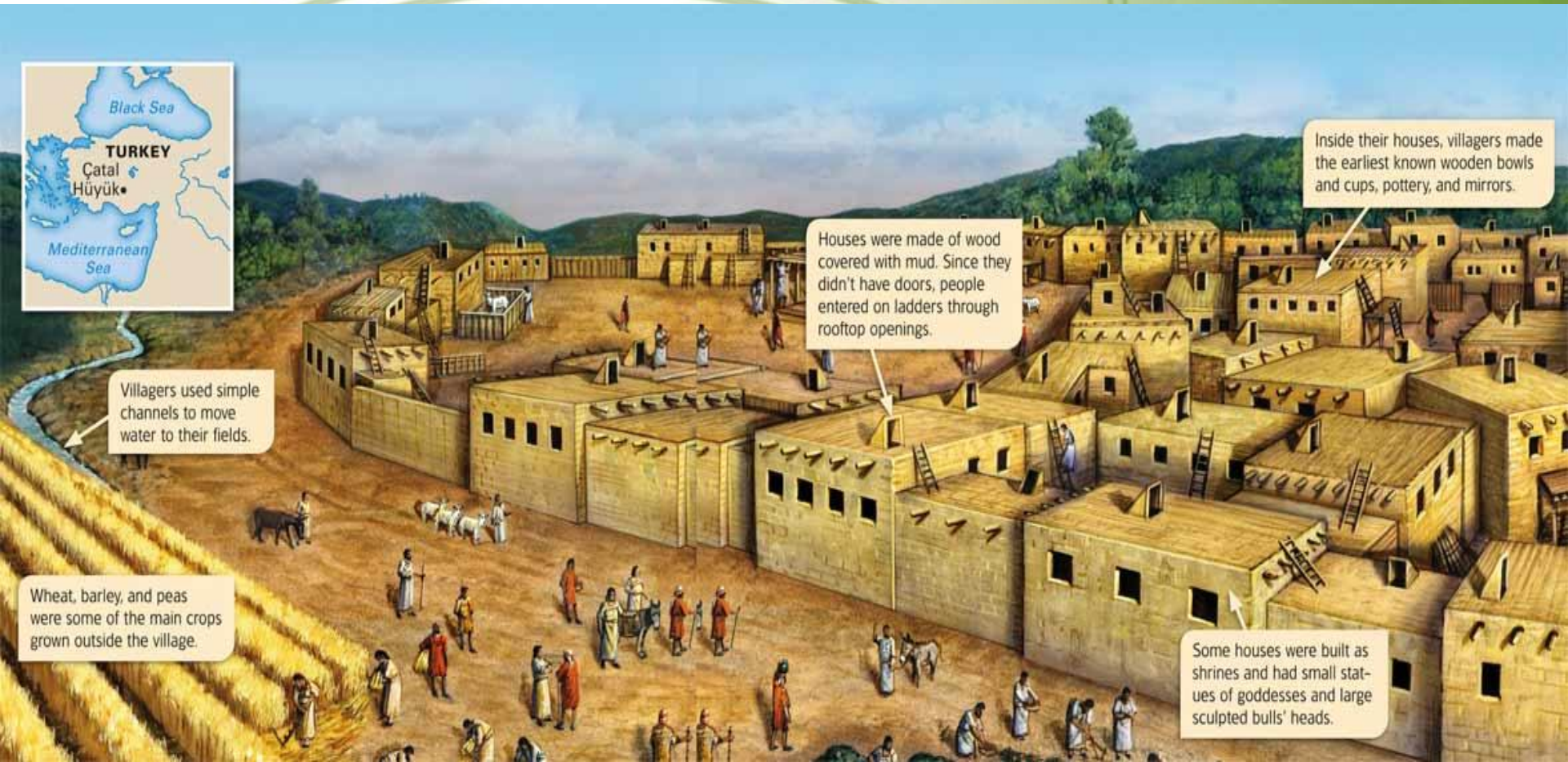
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# Farming Changes Societies



- People began to make clothing from plant fibers and wool as well as from animal skins.
- As these early farmers learned to control their own food production and to make better shelters and clothing, populations grew.
- In some areas farming communities developed into towns.

# An Early Farming Society



The village of Çatal Hüyük in modern Turkey is one of the earliest farming villages discovered. Around 8,000 years ago, the village was home to about 5,000–6,000 people living in more than 1,000 houses. Villagers farmed, hunted and fished, traded with distant lands, and worshipped gods in special shrines.

# Religious Ceremonies



- Some groups gathered to perform religious ceremonies around huge stone monuments called **megaliths**.
- These people probably believed in gods and goddesses associated with the four elements— air, water, fire, and earth—or with animals.
- Some scholars believe that prehistoric people also prayed to their ancestors. Some societies today still hold these beliefs.

# Megalith



# Summary



Hominids developed in Africa and learned how to use tools.

Early humans lived as hunter-gatherers.

Humans migrated around the world, adapting to new environments.

Eventually, people learned how to farm and raise animals.