

1 The soil is tested to make sure it can support healthy crops.



2 The soil is tilled and fertilizers are added. Seeds are planted, usually by machine.



3 The crops are kept watered as they grow. Sometimes additional chemicals are added to fight pests and disease.



4 When the grain is mature, it is harvested. Depending on the cereal, a machine called a combine might be used. It cuts the cereal and separates the grains from the inedible parts.

From Farm to Table

9 The flour or other product is packaged and sent to supermarkets and factories.



8 If flour is produced, it may be bleached and enriched with vitamins and minerals.



7 The grains are milled, or processed, and may be refined to remove the bran layer.



6 The grains are transported to the mill, where they are cleaned.



5 The grains are stored in a cool, dry place.





Many people add fruit and other toppings to their morning oatmeal.

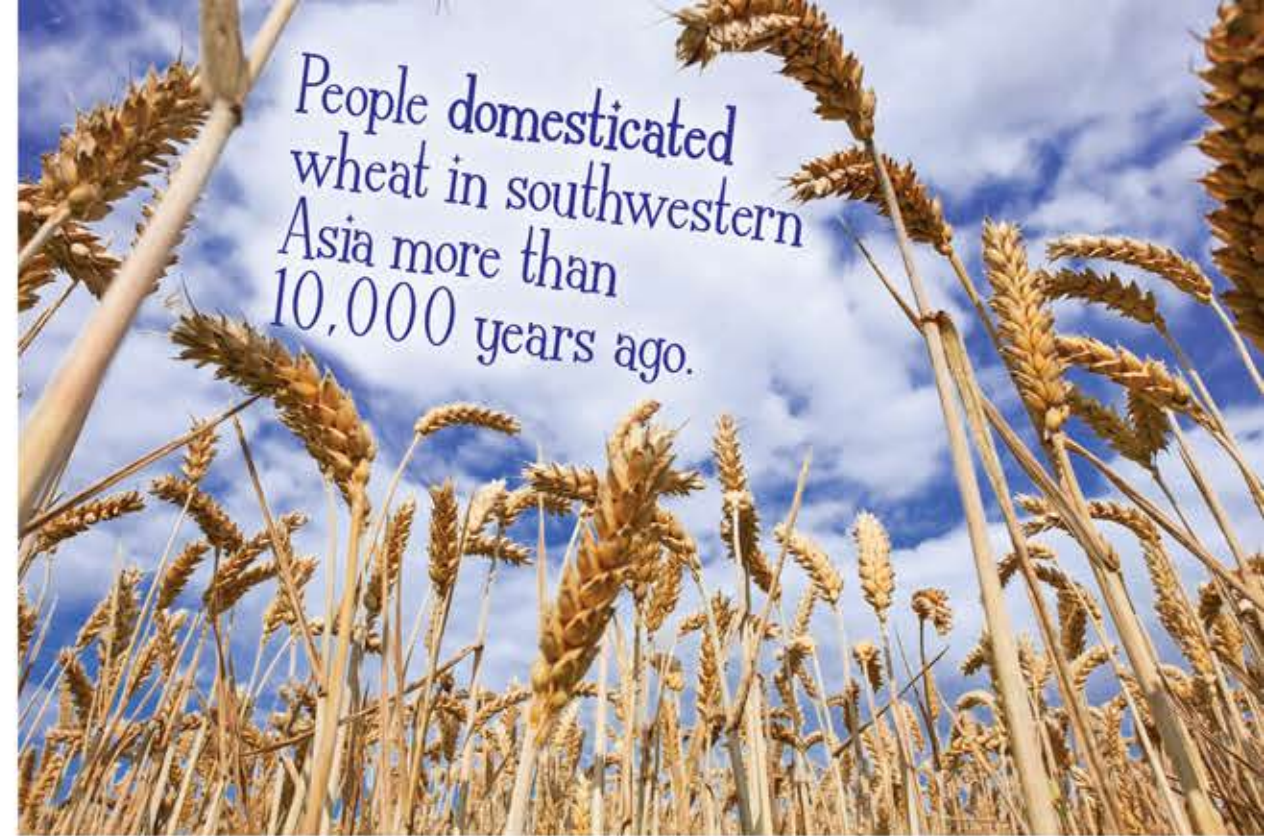
Where Does Your Food Come From?

What do you usually eat for breakfast? A bowl of oatmeal? Eggs and a slice of toast? Maybe an adult in your house makes you pancakes, waffles, or French toast. For many people, breakfast consists of bread, **cereal**, or other **grain**-based foods. Did you ever wonder where these breakfast treats come from? How are they made? How different are they from the grains that go into them?

← Grains have been an important part of human diets for thousands of years.

Ancient Cereals

The cereal in your breakfast bowl is made from wheat, corn, oats, or other types of grain. The bread in your sandwich might include rye, barley, or millet. These are all examples of cereals and the grains they produce. Cereals are grasses that are grown for food. Grains are the seeds of these cereals. Humans have been growing cereal crops and eating their grains for thousands of years.



Grain seeds are called kernels. They contain all the nutrients necessary to nourish a sprouting cereal plant. Whole grains also provide people with fiber, carbohydrates, protein, and important vitamins and minerals that keep us healthy. Grains are tough and durable so they last from season to season. This means people can store harvested grain for long periods before it spoils.