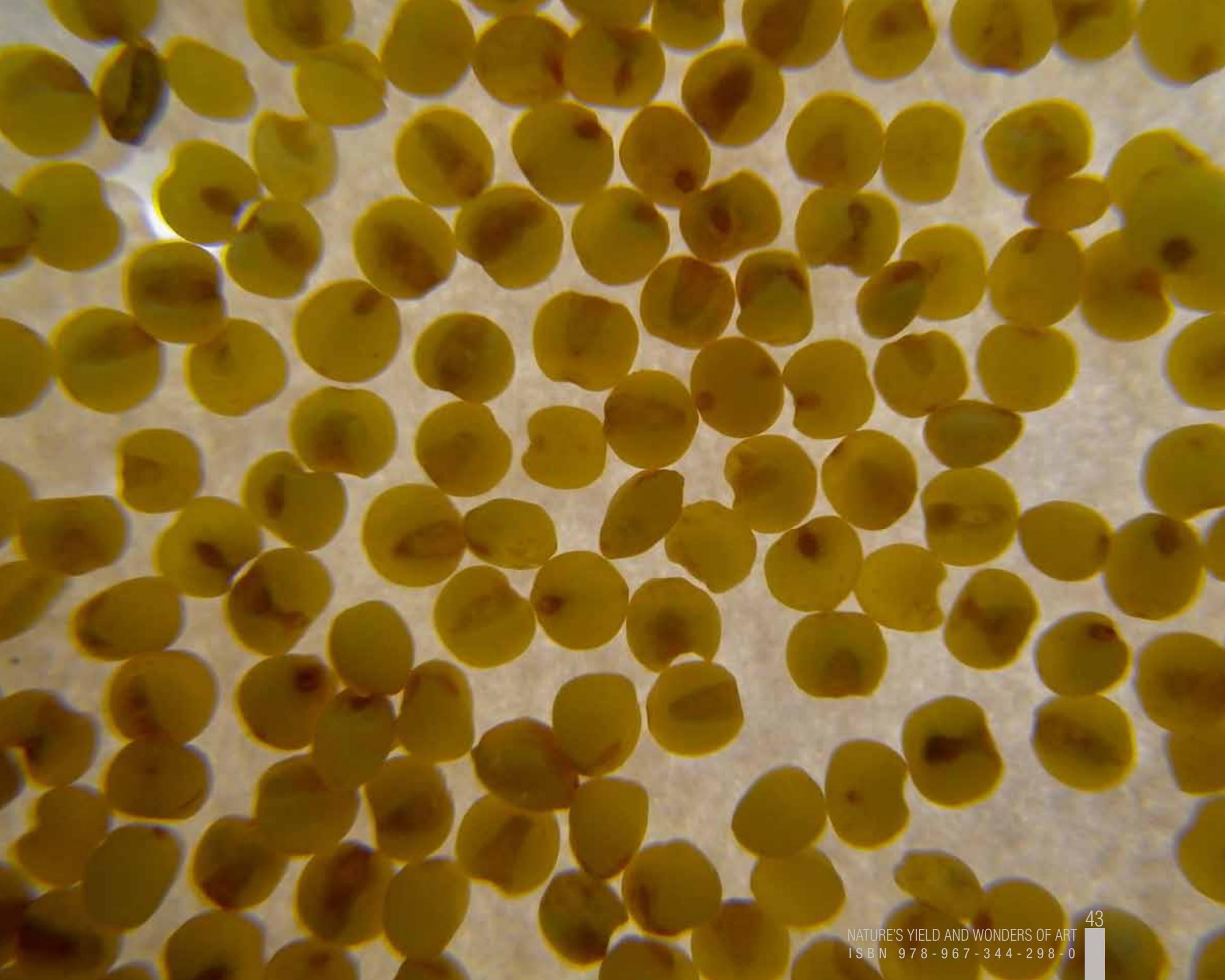


Grassy Starch

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The edible portion of grains or cereals are staple foods consumed throughout the world and through human history. Today they provide more food in quantity and quality than any other plants. These grains, that include rice (*Oryza sativa*), wheat (*Triticum spp.*), maize (*Zea mays*), oats (*Avena sativa*), barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) and many other lesser known species, are nothing but the fruits of grasses.

Millet and wheat were first domesticated approximately 12,000 years ago in Southwest Asia. Rice cultivation has a similar timeline, but originated in China. Simple gathering of grains progressed to systematic cultivation but another 2,000 years would pass before systematic agriculture became established in human communities.



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Rice, though second to maize in annual global yields, is the dominant cereal for human consumption, providing about 20 % of daily global human caloric intake. It is the staple food of tropical and temperate regions, especially in Asia, but also in Latin America, the Middle East, and the West Indies. Wheat in turn is the staple food of European, Australian and American temperate cultures, and mainly used in baked goods.

Grains are not just energy powerhouses, but important sources of vitamins, minerals, fats, and protein.



