

Documentaries & Factual - Human/Social Interest



Forgotten Palate

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As the planet continues to warm, farmers are using more extractive and damaging farming techniques which exacerbate the effects of climate change. But some farmers and scientists are peering back in time to discover alternative solutions. Ancient grains like sorghum, millet and indigenous rice have been planted for centuries and contain a natural genetic makeup that makes them more resilient to changes in our climate. While these indigenous crops might produce lower yields than genetically modified crops, they don't require harmful fertilizers that damage soils; they are also less demanding on our water resources. Will farmers make the switch to ancient grains and will consumers be able to accept them?

Narrator: Dilly Barlow

Information correct at time of printing

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Episode 1

On the island of Adonara in rural Indonesia, farmers are returning to an ancient grain called sorghum. Sorghum did well on the island in the past, but was forgotten with the advent of rice. Many countries in Asia, including the Philippines, were forced to plant a genetically modified version of white rice forgoing the thousands of indigenous species available. But these remote communities are starting to rediscover these lost ancient grains.



Episode 2

In Thailand, some farmers have started to plant a variety of rice that has been crossbred with an ancient local purple rice. It is more nutritious than white rice and does not require harmful fertilisers which damage the soil, but will consumers want to eat these resilient species? In India, years of harmful farming practices have caused immense damage to soils and underground freshwater supplies. There are ancient grains that could help mitigate these issues, but farmers are hesitant to plant crops that have no economic support or Government incentives.

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