

# *FADS1* and the timing of human adaptation to agriculture

Sara Mathieson<sup>1</sup> & Iain Mathieson<sup>2\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Computer Science, Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, PA 19081

<sup>2</sup> Department of Genetics, Perelman School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia PA 19104

\* Correspondence to: [mathi@penmedicine.upenn.edu](mailto:mathi@penmedicine.upenn.edu)

## 1 Abstract

2 Variation at the *FADS1/FADS2* gene cluster is functionally associated with differences in lipid  
3 metabolism and is often hypothesized to reflect adaptation to an agricultural diet. Here, we test the  
4 evidence for this relationship using both modern and ancient DNA data. We document pre-out-of-Africa  
5 selection for both the derived and ancestral *FADS1* alleles and show that almost all the inhabitants of  
6 Europe carried the ancestral allele until the derived allele was introduced approximately 8,500 years ago  
7 by Early Neolithic farming populations. However, we also show that it was not under strong selection in  
8 these populations. Further, we find that this allele, and other proposed agricultural adaptations including  
9 variants at *LCT/MCM6*, *SLC22A4* and *NAT2*, were not strongly selected until the Bronze Age, 2,000-  
10 4,000 years ago. Similarly, increased copy number variation at the salivary amylase gene *AMY1* is not  
11 linked to the development of agriculture although in this case, the putative adaptation precedes the  
12 agricultural transition. Our analysis shows that selection at the *FADS* locus was not tightly linked to the  
13 development of agriculture. Further, it suggests that the strongest signals of recent human adaptation may  
14 not have been driven by the agricultural transition but by more recent changes in environment or by  
15 increased efficiency of selection due to increases in effective population size.

## 16 Introduction

17 Human history has seen a number of major transitions in diet (Luca, et al. 2010). The most recent were  
18 the transition to a modern “industrialized” diet and, before that, the transition in many parts of the world  
19 to a diet heavily based on the products of agriculture. Even outside these periods, differences in diet based  
20 on both culture and food source availability would have been a major aspect of environmental differences  
21 between human populations—differences that would likely lead to genetic adaptation. Thus, by identifying  
22 and studying the evolution of genetic adaptations to diet, we learn not only about historical changes in  
23 diet, but also about the genetic basis of diet-related phenotypic differences among present-day humans.

24  
25 One previously identified adaptation involves the fatty acid desaturase genes *FADS1* and *FADS2*. These  
26 genes encode proteins which catalyze key steps in the  $\omega$ -3 and  $\omega$ -6 lipid biosynthesis pathways  
27 (Nakamura and Nara 2004). These pathways synthesize long-chain (LC) polyunsaturated fatty acids  
28 (PUFA) necessary for cell- and, particularly, neuronal-membrane development from short-chain (SC)  
29 PUFA (Darios and Davletov 2006). The evolutionary interaction with diet stems from the fact that  
30 different diets contain different ratios of SC- and LC-PUFA. Specifically, diets that are high in meat or  
31 marine products contain relatively high LC-PUFA levels, and thus may require lower levels of *FADS1*  
32 and *FADS2* activity compared to diets that are high in plant-based fats (Ameur, et al. 2012; Mathias, et al.

33 2012; Fumagalli, et al. 2015; Kothapalli, et al. 2016; Buckley, et al. 2017; Ye, et al. 2017). As a result of  
34 this environmental interaction, these genes have been repeatedly targeted by natural selection.

35  
36 Most dramatically, a derived haplotype (“haplotype D”, following Aneur, et al. (2012)) containing the 3’  
37 end of *FADSI* is at very high frequency in present-day African populations and intermediate to high  
38 frequency in present-day Eurasians (Aneur, et al. 2012; Mathias, et al. 2012), and experienced ancient  
39 positive selection in Africa (Aneur, et al. 2012; Mathias, et al. 2012). The derived haplotype increases  
40 expression of *FADSI* (Aneur, et al. 2012) and likely represents an adaptation to a high ratio of SC- to  
41 LC-PUFA, *i.e.* to a plant-based diet. Direct evidence from ancient DNA has shown that haplotype D was  
42 rare in European hunter-gatherers around 10,000 years before present (BP) but has increased in frequency  
43 since then, likely due to selection, to its present-day frequency of ~60% in Europe (Mathieson, et al.  
44 2015). This increase was plausibly associated with the adoption, starting around 8,500 BP, of an  
45 agricultural lifestyle and diet that would have a higher SC- to LC-PUFA ratio than the previous hunter-  
46 gatherer diet (Mathieson, et al. 2015; Buckley, et al. 2017; Ye, et al. 2017). Interestingly, the Altai  
47 Neanderthal genome shares at least a partial version of haplotype D (Buckley, et al. 2017; Harris, et al.  
48 2017), suggesting that the functional variation at this locus may predate the split of Neanderthals and  
49 modern humans.

50  
51 Other haplotypes at the locus have been shown to be under selection in different populations in more  
52 recent history. In particular, another haplotype that is common in, but largely restricted to, the  
53 Greenlandic Inuit population reduces the activity of *FADSI*, is associated with PUFA levels, and is likely  
54 an adaptation to a diet that is extremely high in LC-PUFA from marine sources (Fumagalli, et al. 2015).  
55 Conversely, a variant that increases expression of *FADS2* has been selected in South Asian populations –  
56 and may be a specific adaptation to a vegetarian diet (Kothapalli, et al. 2016). Reflecting its important  
57 role in lipid metabolism, variation at the *FADS* locus also contributes significantly to variation in lipid  
58 levels in present-day populations. As well as directly contributing to variation in PUFA levels, SNPs in  
59 haplotype D are among the strongest genome-wide association study (GWAS) signals for triglyceride and  
60 cholesterol levels (Teslovich, et al. 2010). Thus, the complex evolutionary history of the region is not  
61 only informative about ancient human diets, but also directly relevant for understanding the distribution  
62 of lipid-related disease risk both within and between populations. We therefore aimed to characterize the  
63 history of the region, by combining inference from ancient and modern DNA data, in order to understand  
64 the evolutionary basis of this important functional variation and its relationship with changes in diet. We  
65 also compared the evolutionary history of the *FADS* locus with the histories of other loci involved in  
66 dietary adaptation, to see whether we could detect shared patterns of adaptation.

## 67 Results

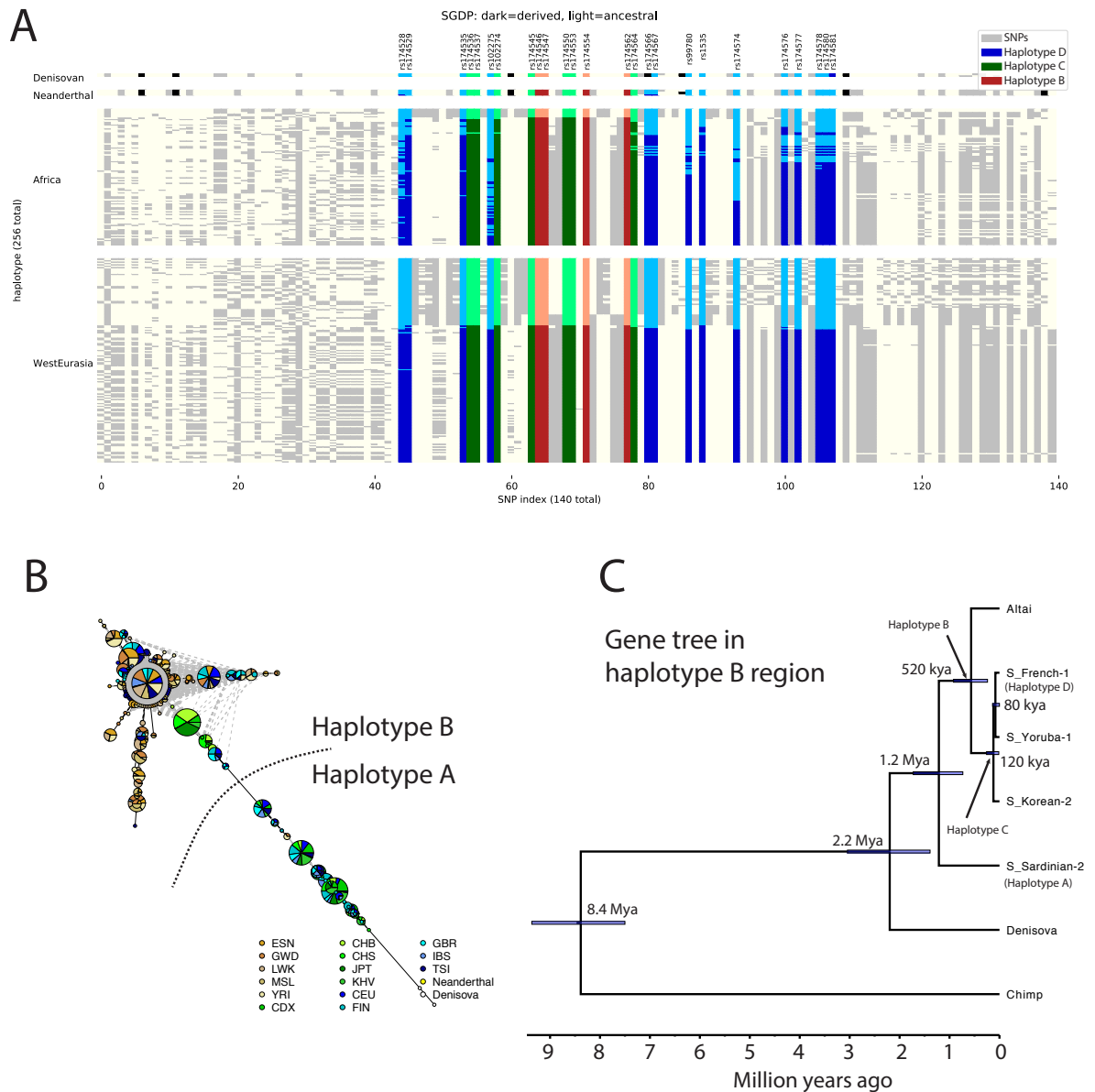
### 68 Haplotype structure at *FADS1*

69

70 We began by investigating 300 high-coverage whole-genome sequences from the Simons Genome  
71 Diversity Project (SGDP) (Mallick, et al. 2016), as well as three archaic human genomes (Meyer, et al.  
72 2012; Prufer, et al. 2014; Prufer, et al. 2017), to fully describe the fine-scale haplotype structure in the  
73 region (Figure 1, Supplementary Figure 1). By clustering haplotypes using a graph-adjacency algorithm  
74 (Methods), we defined three nested “derived” haplotypes (Figure 1A, Supplementary Table 1,  
75 Supplementary Figure 1). Haplotype D extends over 78kb, is specific to Eurasia, and is comparable to the  
76 haplotype D defined by Aneur, et al. (2012). Haplotype C is an 18kb portion of haplotype D that is  
77 shared between African and Eurasian populations. Finally, haplotype B is a 15kb region that represents  
78 the portion of haplotype D that is shared between modern humans and both the Altai (Prufer, et al. 2014)  
79 and Vindija (Prufer, et al. 2017) Neanderthals. We denote the modern human haplotype carrying ancestral  
80 alleles at key SNPs as haplotype A (the “ancestral” haplotype), and we also analyze the Denisovan  
81 (Meyer, et al. 2012) and Chimp (panTro2) (Chimpanzee Sequencing Analysis Consortium 2005)  
82 haplotypes. This analysis also allows us to prioritize likely causal SNPs, which are currently unknown  
83 (Buckley, et al. 2017; Ye, et al. 2017). If the derived SNP that was selected in modern humans was also  
84 selected in Neanderthals, then it must lie in haplotype B, which is defined by just four SNPs (rs174546,  
85 rs174547, rs174554 and rs174562).

86

87 Using data from the 1000 Genomes project (1000 Genomes Project Consortium 2015), we show that  
88 haplotypes in the haplotype B region fall into two clusters (Figure 1B, Supplementary Figure 2),  
89 consistent with previously reported analysis of similar regions (Mathias, et al. 2012; Buckley, et al. 2017;  
90 Harris, et al. 2017). One cluster contains Eurasian-ancestry individuals that carry haplotype A (and all  
91 individuals with Native American ancestry). The other cluster contains Neanderthals, Eurasians that carry  
92 haplotype D, and almost all present-day African-ancestry individuals. A small number of intermediate  
93 haplotypes are either recombinant or the result of phasing errors. We inferred the phylogeny of the  
94 haplotype B region using BEAST2 (Figure 1C) (Bouckaert, et al. 2014). The region is small and has a  
95 very low recombination rate, (average 0.03 cM/mb according to the International HapMap Consortium  
96 (2007) combined recombination map), so we ignored possible recombination events. Assuming that the  
97 common ancestor of human and chimp haplotypes was 7.5-9.5 million years ago (corresponding to a  
98 mutation rate of  $\sim 4\text{-}5 \times 10^{-10}$  per-base per-year), we infer that the most recent common ancestor (MRCA)  
99 of the present-day African and European (D) haplotypes was around 80,000 BP, of haplotype C around



**Figure 1: Haplotype structure at the *FADS1* region.** **A:** Haplotypes from the SGDP African and West Eurasian populations (Mallick, et al. 2016) and the Neanderthal (Prufer, et al. 2014; Prufer, et al. 2017) and Denisovan (Meyer, et al. 2012) genomes. Each column represents a SNP and each row a phased haplotype. Dark and light colors represent derived and ancestral alleles at each SNP and blue, green and red colors indicate SNPs that are part of haplotypes D, C and B, respectively. **B:** Haplotype network for region B constructed from 1000 Genomes (1000 Genomes Project Consortium 2015) and archaic samples. Green, blue and brown indicate East Asian, European and African populations respectively. **C:** Gene tree for the haplotype B region inferred for representative haplotypes.

100 120,000 BP, of haplotype B around 520,000 BP, and that of haplotypes A and B around 1.2 million BP.  
101 These dates are consistent with previous estimates (Harris, et al. 2017) and suggest that the European-  
102 specific haplotype D diverged around the time of the out-of-Africa bottleneck and the diversification of  
103 non-African lineages (Mallick, et al. 2016). They also suggest that modern human ancestral and derived  
104 haplotypes coexisted in the Denisovan-Neanderthal-modern human ancestral population, with the  
105 Neanderthal haplotype splitting off around the time of mean human-Neanderthal divergence 550-765,000  
106 BP (Prufer, et al. 2014).

107

## 108 [ABC analysis shows ancient selection in Africa and recent selection in Eurasia](#)

109

110 Having established the structure and phylogeny of the haplotypes in the region we used approximate  
111 Bayesian computation (ABC) (Wegmann, et al. 2010; Peter, et al. 2012) to infer the strength and timing  
112 of selection on the derived haplotype in Africa (Table 1, Supplementary Table 2). Using data from the  
113 1000 Genomes project, treating the derived allele of rs174546 as the selected SNP, and fixing the  
114 mutation rate to  $1.25 \times 10^{-8}$  per-base per-generation, we infer that selection most likely but not definitively  
115 acted on a new mutation (posterior probability 0.55, range 0.25-0.81) and began 136,000-447,000 BP.  
116 These estimates are uncertain though, with 95% credible intervals (CrIs) ranging from 44,000-1,251,000  
117 BP. Nonetheless, this analysis suggests that selection began around or before the time of the deepest splits  
118 among human populations (Mallick, et al. 2016; Schlebusch, et al. 2017) 200,000-250,000 BP. This is  
119 consistent with the observation that the derived allele is shared among all present-day African populations  
120 including those, such as Khoe-San and Mbuti, which were substantially diverged from the ancestors of  
121 other present-day African populations at least 100,000 BP.

122

123 In contrast to this ancient selection in Africa, when we analyze present-day European genomes, we find  
124 that strong (selection coefficient  $s=3.6-5.8\%$ ) selection for the derived allele acted on standing variation  
125 (posterior probability=1.0) much more recently – starting around 2600 BP (95% CrIs range from 1000-  
126 13,000 BP). This recent selection is consistent with published analysis of ancient DNA data (Mathieson,  
127 et al. 2015; Buckley, et al. 2017; Ye, et al. 2017) but is hard to reconcile with the suggestion that it is  
128 closely linked to the development of agriculture (Mathieson, et al. 2015; Ye, et al. 2017), which dates  
129 back at least 10,000 BP (Bellwood 2004). It is also unclear why the derived haplotype was at such low  
130 frequency in pre-agricultural Europeans (Mathieson, et al. 2015; Ye, et al. 2017), when ABC results and  
131 derived allele sharing between African populations would imply that the derived allele would have been  
132 at high frequency before the split of African and non-African ancestral populations. To resolve these  
133 questions, we turned to the analysis of ancient DNA data.

134

|   | P(New mutation) | Start (years BP) | Start CrI (years BP) |
|---|-----------------|------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Selection for the derived allele in the ancestors of present-day Africans    | 0.55            | 246,805          | 136,389-446,609      |
| 2. Selection for the ancestral allele in the ancestors of present-day Europeans | 0.04            | 147,888          | 58,092-377,659       |
| 3. Selection for the derived allele in Europe                                   | 0.00            | 2,664            | 1,559-4,554          |

**Table 1: Summary of ABC results for three episodes of selection.** We inferred the probability of selection on a new mutation (as opposed to standing variation), estimated selection-onset time, and 95% credible intervals for this time. See Supplementary Table 1 for more detailed results. Note that for the first episode we infer selection in a population that is ancestral to present-day African populations, but that population is also likely ancestral to present-day European populations, given the timing of the divergence between the two.

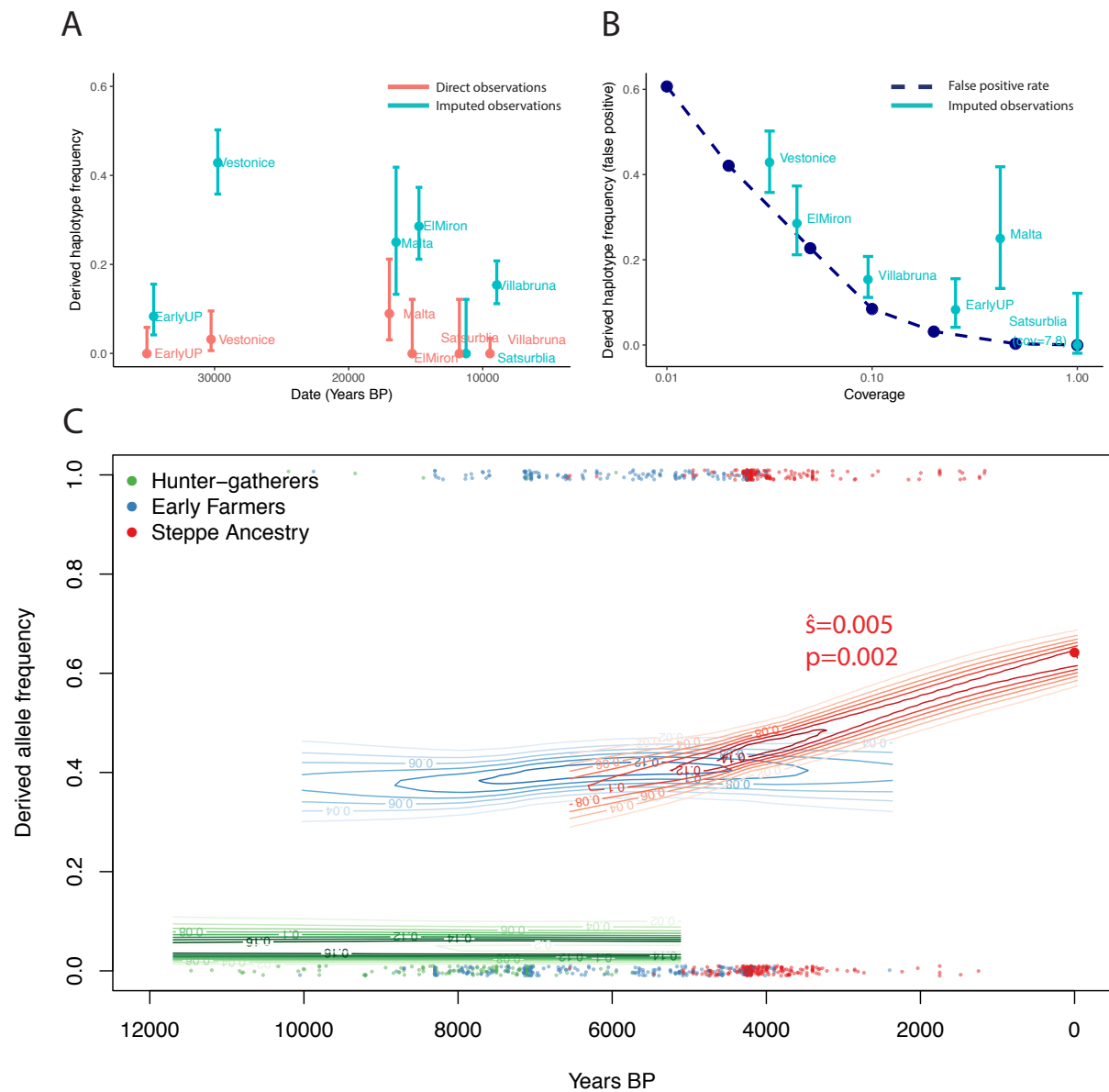
135

### 136 [Low frequency of the derived \*FADS1\* allele in Upper Palaeolithic Eurasia](#)

137

138 We first investigated why the derived haplotype was at such low frequency in pre-agricultural Europeans,  
139 by analyzing data from 46 Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic individuals dated between 45,000 and 8,000  
140 BP (Fu, et al. 2016). We infer the presence of haplotype D based on 6 SNPs that were typed on the  
141 capture array used in the original study (Fu, et al. 2016). We find that the derived haplotype is rare in all  
142 populations (Figure 2A). When we tried to use imputation to increase sample size, the results were  
143 inconsistent. Specifically, imputed data suggested a much higher frequency in most of the ancient  
144 population groupings, for example around 40% frequency in the Vestonice population. This higher  
145 frequency agrees with previous analyses (Ye, et al. 2017). However, imputation is unreliable for these  
146 data because many of the Ice Age samples have extremely low coverage. This leads to a high rate of false  
147 positive inference of the derived allele because it is at relatively high frequency in the present-day  
148 populations used as a reference panel. Older samples tend to have lower coverage and thus higher false  
149 positive rates, leading to a spurious inference of a decline in frequency over time. To show this, we  
150 estimated the false positive rate as a function of coverage by simulating low coverage data from present-  
151 day samples that carry the ancestral allele. Non-zero derived allele frequency estimates in the imputed  
152 data are consistent with the estimated false positive rate (Methods, Figure 2B). Therefore, it seems likely  
153 that the derived allele was already rare in the “out-of-Africa” population that was ancestral to present-day  
154 non-Africans.

155



**Figure 2: Direct ancient DNA evidence for the history of *FADS1*.** **A:** Derived haplotype frequency estimated from direct observation of SNPs on the haplotype (red) and imputed data (blue) in Upper Palaeolithic individuals (45,000-10,000 BP) (Fu, et al. 2016). **B:** Estimated imputation false positive rate as a function of coverage (dashed line). Imputed allele frequencies in Upper Palaeolithic populations plotted for comparison at the median coverage in that population. **C:** Allele frequencies (at rs174546) over the past 12,000 years estimated from 1030 ancient and 99 modern individuals. Each point is an ancient pseudo-haploid individual call, at the bottom of the plot if it is ancestral and the top if it derived. Contours indicate the posterior probability of allele frequencies in the ancient populations and significant selection coefficients are labeled.



156 This lack of the derived allele in early non-Africans is surprising because our analysis suggests that  
157 selection within the ancestral population began at least 246,000 years ago, and the derived allele would  
158 therefore be expected to have been at high frequency when African and non-African ancestors diverged.  
159 Further, the derived allele is shared between present-day African populations that were genetically  
160 isolated before the split of present-day African and non-African ancestors (Mallick, et al. 2016;  
161 Schlebusch, et al. 2017). This suggests that there could have been selection for the ancestral allele in the  
162 ancestors of Upper Palaeolithic non-Africans. To test this, we used the same ABC approach we used to  
163 investigate the derived allele to infer selection on the ancestral allele (Methods, Table 1, Supplementary  
164 Table 2). We infer that the ancestral allele was selected from standing variation in the ancestors of  
165 present-day Europeans ( $s=0.2\%$ , 95% CrI=0.1-0.7%), starting around 151,000 BP (95% CrI 58,000-  
166 378,000 BP). We also estimated the timing of selection using an independent approach based on  
167 haplotype decay (Smith, et al. 2017), confirming ancient selection for the derived allele (average posterior  
168 mean 89,000 years with 95% credible intervals ranging from 53,000 to 168,000 years; Supplementary  
169 Table 3). This timescale suggests that as the ancestors of Upper Palaeolithic Eurasians diverged from the  
170 ancestors of present-day African populations, and certainly before the out-of-Africa bottleneck 40,000-  
171 60,000 BP, they experienced differential selection pressures that favored the ancestral rather than the  
172 derived allele at *FADS1*. The fixation of the ancestral allele in present-day native Americans has been  
173 interpreted as evidence for selection in their Siberian or Beringian ancestors (Amorim, et al. 2017; Harris,  
174 et al. 2017; Hlusko, et al. 2018). However, our analysis shows that this may not be the case, because the  
175 derived allele was already rare in Eurasia at the time of the Native American-Eurasian split 20-25,000 BP  
176 (Raghavan, et al. 2015), and was only reintroduced into Eurasian populations at significant frequency  
177 much later.

178

### 179 Selection for the derived *FADS1* allele in Europe was not closely linked to agriculture

180

181 The derived haplotype was almost absent in Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic Europe (before ~10,000  
182 BP), but is today at a frequency of ~60%. Previous analysis of both ancient and modern DNA has inferred  
183 strong selection for the allele over the past 10,000 years (Mathieson, et al. 2015; Field, et al. 2016;  
184 Buckley, et al. 2017; Ye, et al. 2017). This has been interpreted to mean that selection for the derived  
185 allele was driven by the development of agriculture, around 10,000 BP—a reasonable interpretation since  
186 the derived allele is plausibly an adaptation to a diet high in plant fats and low in animal fats. However, our  
187 ABC analysis suggests that selection in Europe might actually be restricted to the past few thousand years  
188 and thus post-date the development of agriculture by many millennia. To test this directly, we analyzed  
189 data from 1003 ancient Europeans who lived between 12,000 and 2,000 BP (Keller, et al. 2012; Fu, et al.

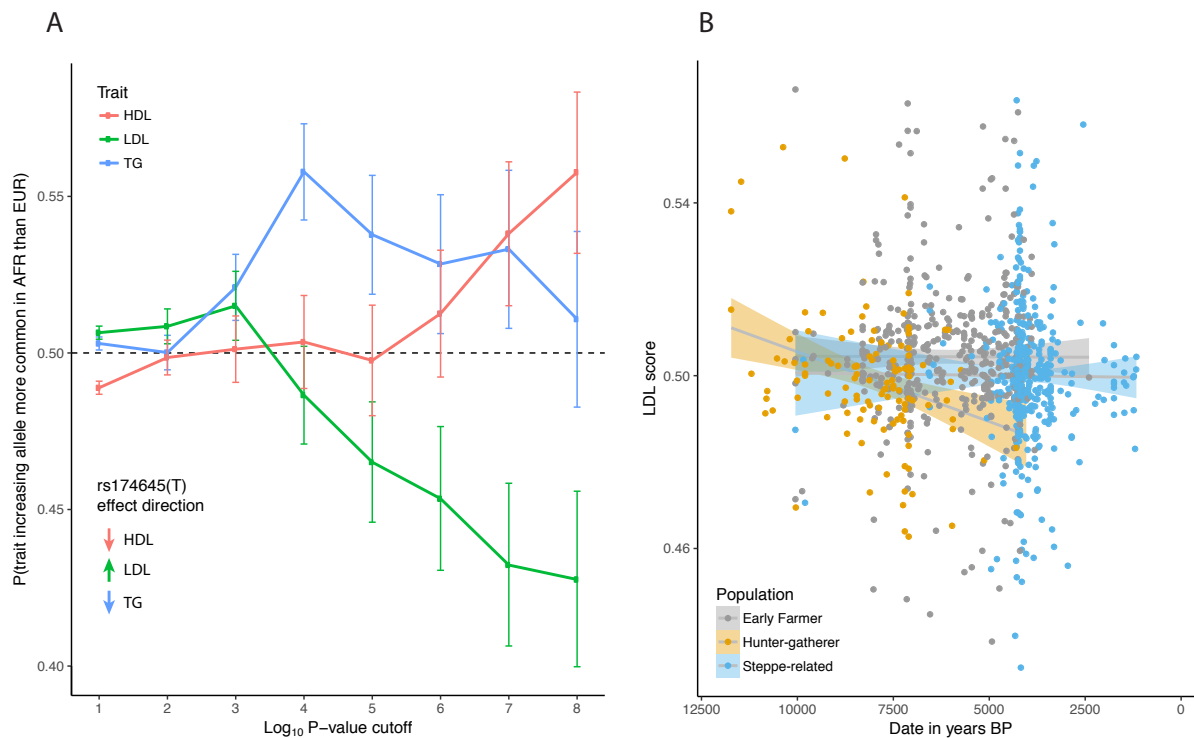
190 2014; Gamba, et al. 2014; Lazaridis, et al. 2014; Olalde, et al. 2014; Raghavan, et al. 2014; Seguin-  
191 Orlando, et al. 2014; Allentoft, et al. 2015; Gunther, et al. 2015; Haak, et al. 2015; Jones, et al. 2015;  
192 Mathieson, et al. 2015; Cassidy, et al. 2016; Hofmanová, et al. 2016; Martiniano, et al. 2016; Schiffels, et  
193 al. 2016; Jones, et al. 2017; Lazaridis, et al. 2017; Lipson, et al. 2017; Mathieson, et al. 2018; Olalde, et  
194 al. 2018). We divided these individuals into three populations, based on their genome-wide ancestry  
195 (Methods). First, individuals with “hunter-gatherer ancestry” were the Mesolithic inhabitants of Europe or  
196 their descendants. Second, “Early farmers” were people from Neolithic Northwest Anatolia or their  
197 descendants, possibly admixed with hunter-gatherers, who migrated throughout Europe. Finally, people  
198 with “Steppe ancestry” had ancestry that was originally derived from Bronze Age steppe populations like  
199 the Yamnaya. (Lazaridis, et al. 2014; Allentoft, et al. 2015; Haak, et al. 2015). Because transitions  
200 between these populations involved dramatic genetic discontinuity, with 75-100% of ancestry replaced  
201 (Allentoft, et al. 2015; Haak, et al. 2015), we analyzed each of them separately. We estimated the  
202 frequency and selection coefficient of the derived allele by fitting a hidden Markov Model to each of the  
203 three time series of observations (Methods, Figure 2C) (Mathieson and McVean 2013). We estimate a  
204 selection coefficient of 0 in both hunter-gatherer and early farmer populations (i.e. the allele was not  
205 under selection), and a selection coefficient of 0.5-0.8% in steppe-ancestry populations, depending on  
206 whether we include modern populations or not. This analysis confirms that selection started relatively  
207 recently—around 2,000-4,000 BP—and shows that, although the derived allele was present in early farming  
208 populations, it was not strongly selected. Plausibly, the derived allele was introduced to the ancestors of  
209 the early farmers through admixture with a population that carried “basal Eurasian” ancestry (Lazaridis, et  
210 al. 2016) not found in Palaeolithic or Mesolithic Europe.

211

## 212 [Patterns of population differentiation at other lipid-associated alleles](#)

213

214 SNPs that tag the derived haplotype are among the strongest genome-wide associations with lipid levels  
215 (Teslovich, et al. 2010). To test whether the selective events we observe were consequences of more  
216 general selection on lipid levels, we investigated patterns of African-European population differentiation  
217 between variants associated with three blood lipid traits—triglycerides (TG), high-density cholesterol  
218 (HDL) and low-density cholesterol (LDL) (Teslovich, et al. 2010). We find that, for HDL and TG, trait-  
219 increasing alleles tend to be more common in African than European populations, while for LDL, the trait-  
220 increasing allele is more common in European populations (Figure 3A, Methods). These effects are in the  
221 opposite direction to those of the *FADS1* haplotype. The derived allele, which is more common in African  
222 than European populations, tends to decrease HDL and TG and increase LDL. We conclude that selection  
223 on *FADS1* was not driven by its effect on overall blood lipid levels (which, if anything, moved in the

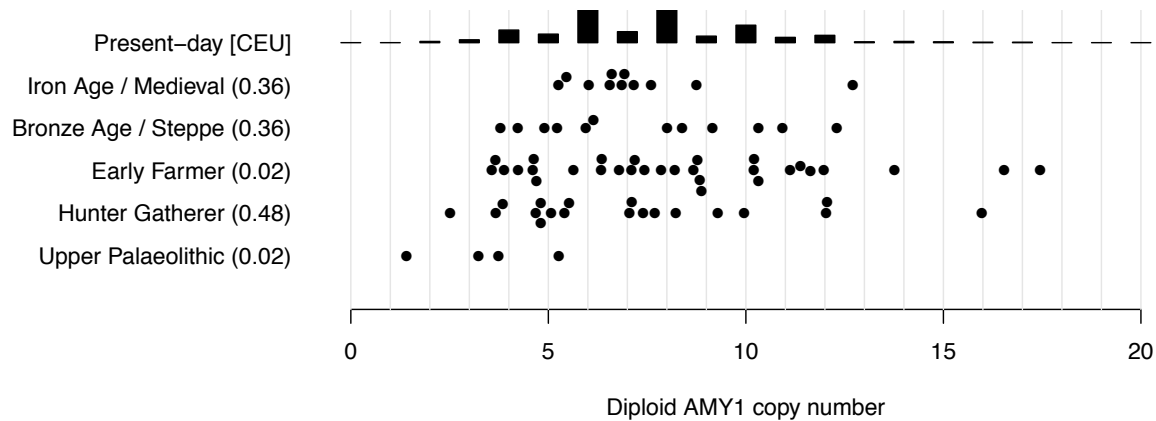


**Figure 3: Trends in lipid-associated allele frequencies** **A:** Probability that the trait-increasing allele is more common in African than European populations in the 1000 Genomes Project data (1000 Genomes Project Consortium 2015) for lipid-related traits. We show results for each trait with different P-value cutoffs. Vertical bars represent 95% confidence intervals. Inset shows the direction of effect for the derived FADS1 haplotype, using rs174546 as the tag SNP. **B:** LDL score for 1003 ancient individuals, classified according to ancestry, as a function of their age. LDL score is the proportion of significant LDL-associated variants at which the ancient individual carries the trait-increasing allele (Methods).

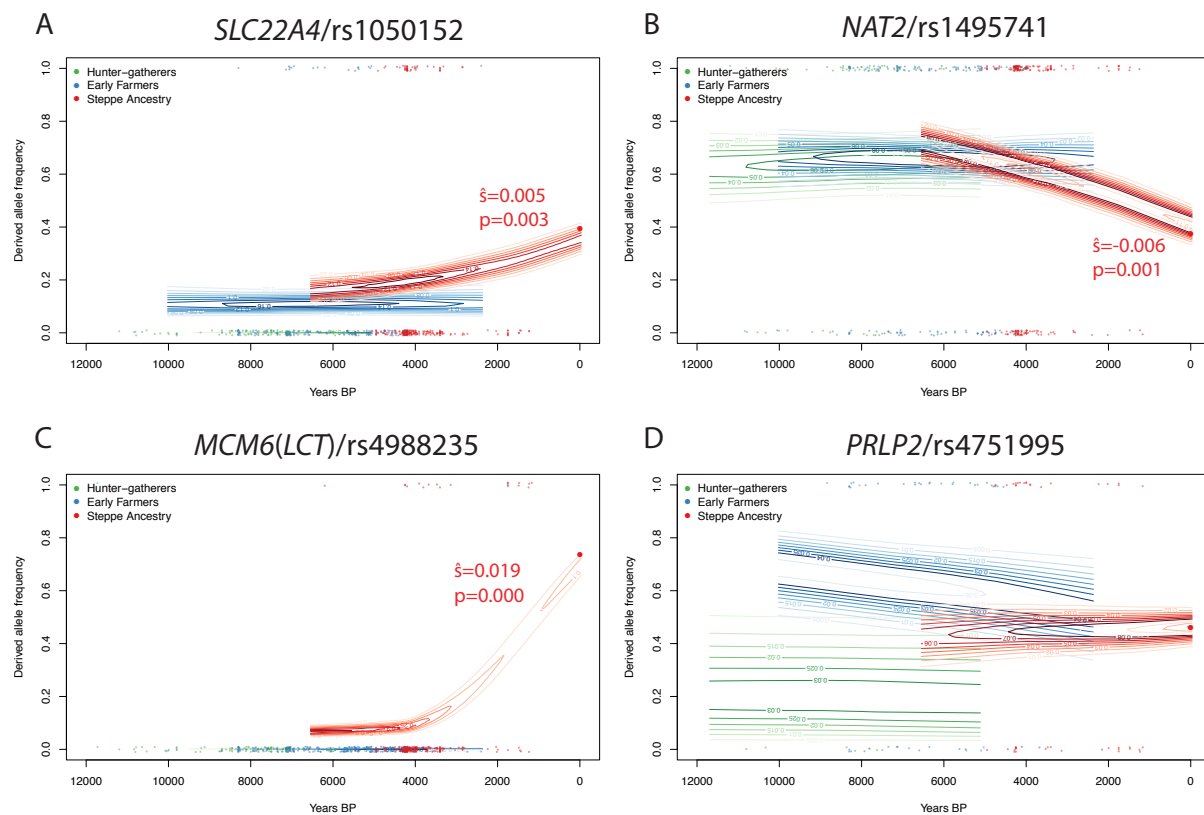
224 opposite direction), but by its specific effect on PUFA synthesis. We further find that there is no  
225 significant difference in the frequency of LDL-increasing alleles when comparing the three ancient  
226 populations (Figure 3B). Since they do differ in the frequency of the *FADS1* allele, this suggests that  
227 recent selection on *FADS1* was also not driven by selection more generally on lipid levels.  
228

## 229 Patterns of population differentiation at other diet-associated variants

230  
231 We investigated whether other variants that have been suggested to be associated with the adoption of  
232 agriculture showed similar temporal patterns of selection to *FADS1*. The salivary amylase gene *AMY1* is  
233 highly copy-number variable among present-day populations, ranging from a diploid copy number of 2  
234 (the ancestral state) to 17 (Groot, et al. 1991; Perry, et al. 2007; Usher, et al. 2015), with a mean of 6.7  
235 copies in present-day Europeans (Usher, et al. 2015). It has been suggested that increased copy number  
236 improves the digestion of starchy food and is therefore an adaptation to an agricultural diet that is  
237 relatively rich in starch (Perry, et al. 2007). To date, one Early Farmer has been reported to have a  
238 relatively high *AMY1* copy number of 16 (Lazaridis, et al. 2014), while six hunter-gatherers had 6-12  
239 copies (Lazaridis, et al. 2014; Olalde, et al. 2014; Gunther, et al. 2018). To investigate this more  
240 generally, we called *AMY1* copy number in 76 ancient West Eurasian individuals with published shotgun  
241 sequence data (Keller, et al. 2012; Meyer, et al. 2012; Skoglund, et al. 2012; Gamba, et al. 2014;  
242 Lazaridis, et al. 2014; Olalde, et al. 2014; Prufer, et al. 2014; Raghavan, et al. 2014; Skoglund, et al.  
243 2014; Fu, et al. 2015; Gunther, et al. 2015; Cassidy, et al. 2016; Kilinc, et al. 2016; Omrak, et al. 2016;  
244 Schiffels, et al. 2016; Prufer, et al. 2017; Saag, et al. 2017; Gunther, et al. 2018). We counted the number  
245 of reads that mapped to regions around each of the three *AMY1* copies in the human reference genome  
246 (Usher, et al. 2015), and compared to bootstrap estimates of mean read depth with a linear correction for  
247 GC content (Methods, Figure 4, Supplementary Table 4). We find no significant difference between  
248 *AMY1* copy number in present day Europeans and ancient Europeans from the Iron Age/Medieval,  
249 Bronze Age, Neolithic, or Mesolithic periods. In particular, Mesolithic pre-agricultural hunter-gatherers  
250 have a mean copy number of 7.2 – not statistically different from present-day Europeans. Neolithic Early  
251 Farmers have a mean copy number of 8.4 – slightly higher, but not significantly different (after multiple  
252 testing correction) from present-day populations ( $p=0.02$ ). We do find that four Upper Palaeolithic  
253 individuals dating between ~45,000-20,000 BP have lower *AMY1* copy number than present-day  
254 Europeans although, with a small sample size, this is also not statistically significant (mean 3.4,  $p=0.02$ ).  
255 These results therefore suggest an expansion in copy number, sometime earlier than ~10,000 BP, but that  
256 this expansion predates the development of agriculture.  
257



**Figure 4: *AMY1* copy number.** Inferred in ancient samples, arranged by time and subsistence strategy, compared with the distribution in a present-day population (CEU) with Northern European ancestry (Usher, et al. 2015). Parentheses: t-test P-values for difference between CEU and ancient populations.



**Figure 5: Allele frequency trajectories for other putative agricultural adaptation variants.** As in Figure 2C, estimated allele frequency trajectories and selection coefficients in different ancient European populations. Significant selection coefficients are labelled.

258 Finally, we also investigated the history of other mutations that have been suggested to be involved in  
259 adaptation to agricultural subsistence. It has been proposed, based on both ancient and modern DNA, that  
260 the ergothioneine transporter gene *SLC22A4*—and in particular the nonsynonymous variant 503F  
261 (rs1050152)—was targeted by selection in Early Neolithic farming populations (Huff, et al. 2012;  
262 Mathieson, et al. 2015). However, analysis of our larger ancient DNA dataset reveals a more complicated  
263 story, with an allele frequency trajectory similar to that of the *FADS1* derived allele (Figure 5A).  
264 Specifically, the derived allele of rs1050152 is absent in hunter-gatherers, and present at low frequency in  
265 Early Farmers and Bronze Age populations. But, similar to the derived *FADS1* allele, it does not increase  
266 in frequency—and therefore does not appear to be under selection—in Early Farming populations. Strong  
267 selection on this allele can therefore only have operated in the past 2000-4000 years. We find no evidence  
268 of selection in early Neolithic farmers, and hypothesize that the allele was introduced, like the derived  
269 *FADS1* allele, by basal Eurasian admixture (Lazaridis, et al. 2016) into their ancestors. Similarly, the  
270 “slow acetylator” variant of the *NAT2* gene has been suggested to be advantageous in agricultural  
271 populations (Luca, et al. 2008; Magalon, et al. 2008; Sabbagh, et al. 2011). We find that a SNP  
272 (rs1495741) that tags the “fast acetylator” phenotype (Garcia-Closas, et al. 2011) did not change in  
273 frequency between hunter-gatherer and early farmer populations, but did decrease in frequency between  
274 the Bronze Age and the present day, i.e. over approximately the past 2000-4000 years (Figure 5B). This  
275 timescale is similar to the timescale over which the European lactase persistence variant (Enattah, et al.  
276 2002) became common in Europe (Figure 5C) (Burger, et al. 2007; Allentoft, et al. 2015; Mathieson, et  
277 al. 2015). Finally, we find that a variant (rs4751995) in the gene *PLRP2* that is relatively common in  
278 present-day populations with a cereal-based diet (Hancock, et al. 2010) is also more common in Early  
279 Farmers than hunter-gatherers, although it shows no evidence of selection in any of these populations  
280 (Figure 5D).

281

## 282 Discussion

283

284 The combination of high-quality genome sequence data from present-day people, and large ancient DNA  
285 datasets, provides new opportunities to investigate and dissect the process of human adaptation. In  
286 particular, the temporal aspect of ancient DNA data adds another dimension to our analysis, allowing us  
287 to make precise inference of the timing of selection. Despite strong ancient selection for the derived  
288 *FADS1* allele in Africa, we showed that it was subsequently selected against in the ancestors of Upper  
289 Paleolithic West Eurasians, probably before the out-of-Africa bottleneck, to the point that the derived  
290 allele was very rare or absent in all European populations, until it was introduced around 8500 BP by  
291 migration from early farmers carrying basal Eurasian ancestry. Although the derived allele is plausibly

292 advantageous in populations that consume a plant-based diet, we find no evidence that it was actually  
293 selected in early European Farmers. Conversely, although the low frequency of the derived allele in  
294 Upper Palaeolithic Europe is consistent with isotopic evidence that protein intake was dominated by  
295 animal protein at this time (Richards 2009), the inferred divergence between the allele frequency in the  
296 ancestors of Upper Palaeolithic Europeans and the ancestors of present-day Africans does not appear to  
297 correspond to any known dietary transition. Finally, it is not known whether the Neanderthal allele would  
298 have had the same function as the derived modern human allele. But if it did, it would not support the  
299 claim that the derived allele is associated with a plant-based diet since Neanderthals, like Upper  
300 Palaeolithic modern humans, are thought to have consumed a largely meat-based diet (Bocherens 2009).  
301 Therefore, the derived/ancestral state at the major *FADS* haplotype does not appear to be a simple marker  
302 of plant- vs. meat-based diet or more recent hunter-gatherer vs. farmer subsistence, but likely reflects a  
303 more complex pattern of interaction based on unknown dietary and genetic factors.

304  
305 Due to limited ancient DNA data, we were not able to resolve the history of the *FADS1* allele in East  
306 Asia. ABC analysis was very sensitive to the exact demography that we assumed. When we capped recent  
307  $N_e$  at 45,000, we found that the ancestral allele was selected in the ancestors of present-day East Asians,  
308 although with a large credible interval (7,000-283,000 BP). The 39,000-year-old Tianyuan individual did  
309 not carry the derived haplotype, further suggesting that it was absent in the Upper Paleolithic ancestors of  
310 East Asians as well as Europeans. We estimated that the derived allele was selected recently, although not  
311 as recently as in Europe (i.e. ~16,000 BP in East Asia, with posterior mean estimates ranging from 10,000  
312 to 23,000 BP). The most common East Asian derived haplotype is also an outgroup to the common  
313 European and African haplotypes (Figure 1B&C, Supplementary Figure 2), so it may derive from a  
314 separate, older, event. More ancient DNA from East Asia will help resolve this question, although we  
315 note that agriculture developed later in East Asia than in Western Eurasia, so it is likely that selection on  
316 the derived *FADS1* allele was also unassociated with agriculture there as well.

317  
318 In the case of *FADS1* and all the other examples we investigated, the proposed agricultural adaption was  
319 either not temporally linked with agriculture or showed no evidence of selection in agricultural  
320 populations. Instead, most of the variants with any evidence of selection were only strongly selected at  
321 some point between the Bronze Age and the present day, that is, in a period starting 2000-4000 BP and  
322 continuing until the present. This time period is one in which there is relatively limited ancient DNA data,  
323 and so we are unable to determine the timing of selection any more accurately. Future research should  
324 address the question of why this recent time period saw the most rapid changes in apparently diet-  
325 associated genes. One plausible hypothesis is that the change in environment at this time was actually

326 more dramatic than the earlier change associated with agriculture. Another is that effective population  
327 sizes were so small before this time that selection did not operate efficiently on variants with small  
328 selection coefficients. For example, analysis of present-day genomes from the United Kingdom suggests  
329 that effective population size increased by a factor of 100-1000 in the past 4500 years (Browning and  
330 Browning 2015). Ancient effective population sizes less than  $10^4$  would suggest that those populations  
331 would not be able to efficiently select for variants with selection coefficients on the order of  $10^{-4}$  or  
332 smaller. Larger ancient DNA datasets from the past 4,000 years will likely resolve this question.



## 333 Methods

334

### 335 Identifying and analyzing *FADS1* haplotypes

336

337 We defined derived haplotypes using the following procedure. Within the region  $\pm 50\text{kb}$  from rs174546  
338 (hg19 chr11:61519830-61619830) there are 140 common ( $\text{MAF} > 0.05$ ) SNPs when considering the  
339 SGDP (600 haplotypes) and archaic (6 haplotypes) samples, and restricting to sites where the ancestral  
340 allele can be determined based on the chimpanzee genome. For each pair of SNPs within these 140, we  
341 compute the number of “mismatches” between ancestral and derived states. For example, if SNP 1 at  
342 haplotype  $H$  is in the ancestral state, but SNP 2 at  $H$  is in the derived state, then this counts as one  
343 mismatch. 1000 Genomes data was used to set the ancestral/derived state for each SNP (we used the  
344 chimpanzee allele if the allele was not present in 1000 Genomes). Counting up these mismatches for all  
345 pairs of SNPs, we obtain a  $140 \times 140$  symmetric “mismatch” matrix  $M$ . We transform this matrix into an  
346 “adjacency” matrix  $A$  by setting each entry to 1 if the number of mismatches is below some threshold  $t$ ,  
347 and 0 otherwise. In other words, if  $M[i,j] \leq t$ ,  $A[i,j] = 1$ , otherwise  $A[i,j] = 0$ . This adjacency matrix can  
348 then be interpreted as a graph, with SNPs as the nodes and edges between SNPs if they are connected (i.e.  
349 have a low number of mismatches).

350

351 From this graph, we find the largest clique (connected component where every pair of nodes is  
352 connected). This procedure can be interpreted as a way to find a subset of SNPs that are all in high LD  
353 with each other. The problem of finding the largest clique in a graph is NP-hard, but we use the Bron-  
354 Kerbosch algorithm which is more efficient in practice than brute force (Bron and Kerbosch 1973).

355

356 We use the procedure above to define 3 nested haplotypes: one considering all modern non-African  
357 populations (haplotype D), one considering all modern human populations (haplotype C) and one  
358 considering all modern and Neanderthal samples (haplotype B). For the mismatch thresholds, we use 12,  
359 12, and 3 respectively (this last lower threshold accommodates the small sample size of archaic  
360 populations). Haplotype D contains 25 SNPs, haplotype C contains 11 SNPs, and haplotype B 4 SNPs.

361 When there is more than one maximal clique of SNPs to choose from, we select one that is a subset of a  
362 larger core. This means that haplotype B is a subset of haplotype C and haplotype C is a subset of  
363 haplotype D. Note that our haplotype D differs slightly from the derived haplotype defined by Aneur, et  
364 al. (2012) which was 28 SNPs long.

365

366 We constructed a haplotype network for the haplotype B region from 1000 Genomes European, East  
367 Asian and African haplotypes, using the R package “pegas” (Paradis 2010). We inferred the phylogenetic  
368 relationship between the haplotypes by picking a single individual from the SGDP that was homozygous  
369 for each of the representative haplotypes and inferring the tree relating the haplotypes using BEAST2  
370 (Bouckaert, et al. 2014). We rooted the tree with chimpanzee and used a uniform [7.5-9.5] million year  
371 prior for human-chimp divergence. This corresponds to a mutation rate of  $\sim 4\text{-}5 \times 10^{-10}$  per-base per-  
372 generation. Human-chimp divergence in the region is around 90% of the genome-wide average, so there  
373 does not appear to be a large difference in mutation rate in the region that would bias these estimates.

374

### 375 [ABC and startmrca analysis](#)

376

377 To quantify the strength and timing of selection in different populations, we ran a simulation study using  
378 approximate Bayesian computation (ABC), specifically using *ABCtoolbox* (Wegmann, et al. 2010). We  
379 use the pipeline implemented by Peter, et al. (2012), which uses a model selection method to distinguish  
380 selection on a *de novo* mutation (SDN) from selection on standing variation (SSV). In addition to model  
381 selection, we estimated two continuous parameters: the selection-onset time and the selection coefficient.  
382 To perform the simulations for ABC we used *mbs* (Teshima and Innan 2009), which creates a selected  
383 allele frequency trajectory backward in time from a specified present-day frequency. This implicitly  
384 creates a range of selection-onset times in the past, which we used as a prior. For the selection strength,  
385 we used a uniform prior of [-4,-1] on the log of the selection coefficient.

386

387 We chose the derived allele (C) of rs174546 as the putatively selected allele, and analyzed 50kb on either  
388 side for a total region length of  $L=100\text{kb}$ . We fixed the mutation rate at  $1.25 \times 10^{-8}$  per base per generation,  
389 the recombination rate at  $1.1785 \times 10^{-8}$  per base per generation [the average rate in this region  
390 (International HapMap Consortium 2007)], the current effective population size  $N_e$  at 10,000, and the  
391 heterozygote advantage at 0.5. For each region (AFR, EAS, and EUR) and each model (SDN and SSV),  
392 we simulated 1 million datasets. Each dataset had a sample size of  $n=170$  haplotypes and a length of  
393  $L=100\text{kb}$  to match the 1000 Genomes data. Within each region we chose four representative populations  
394 for further analysis: ESN, GWD, LWK, and YRI for AFR; CDX, CHB, CHS, and JPT for EAS; and  
395 CEU, FIN, GBR, and TSI for EUR. For the current frequency of the selected allele, we computed a 95%  
396 confidence interval using the four subpopulations within each region and used this as a prior. This  
397 resulted in [0.984, 0.992] for AFR, [0.304, 0.670] for EAS, and [0.575, 0.699] for EUR. We also used  
398 population-specific demographies from PSMC, based on Yoruba, Han and French individuals from the  
399 SGDP (Mallick, et al. 2016).

400

401 For each simulated dataset we computed 27 summary statistics (as described in Peter, et al. (2012)).  
402 During the ABC estimation phase, we retained the top 500 simulated datasets with statistics closest to  
403 each real dataset (12 in total, one for each subpopulation), and computed posterior distributions for the  
404 selection-onset time and selection coefficient (Supplementary Table 2). Finally, we combined estimates  
405 (Table 1) by assuming a lognormal distribution for the posterior times and computing the distribution of  
406 the weighted mean of the eight estimates (four populations each with new/standing variation estimates).

407

408 For EAS and EUR, we also wanted to test for ancient selection on the ancestral allele (T) of rs174546. To  
409 this end, we merged the subpopulations for both EAS and EUR, and selected 200 haplotypes with the  
410 ancestral allele for each. Then we ran our ABC procedure in the same way as before, except with a  
411 “current” allele frequency of 0.999999 (*mbs* does not allow 1 for technical reasons). The EAS results  
412 were very sensitive to demography—particularly to the value of present-day  $N_e$ —so we restricted maximum  
413  $N_e$  to the value of 45,000 used by Gravel, et al. (2011).

414

415 *Startmrca* (Smith, et al. 2017) is a method for estimating the selection-onset time of a beneficial allele. It  
416 uses an HMM (in the “copying” style of Li and Stephens (2003)) to model present-day haplotypes as  
417 imperfect mosaics of the selected haplotype and a reference panel of non-selected haplotypes. We used  
418 this method to estimate the selection-onset time for the ancestral allele of rs174546 in the EAS and EUR  
419 superpopulations described above. We used YRI individuals that are homozygous for the derived allele as  
420 the reference panel. Following Smith, et al. (2017), we used a 1Mb region surrounding rs174546, the  
421 HapMap combined recombination map in this region (International HapMap Consortium 2007), 100  
422 haplotypes in the selected population, and 20 haplotypes in the reference population. To obtain selection-  
423 onset time estimates for each population, we ran 5 independent MCMC chains, each with 10,000  
424 iterations. We post-processed the results by discarding the first 6000 iterations (burn-in), and retaining the  
425 remaining successful iterations over all 5 chains. To obtain credible intervals, we took the 2.5 and 97.5  
426 quantiles of each resulting distribution (Supplementary Table 3.2).

427

428 We also analyzed selection for the derived allele of rs174546 in the EAS and EUR superpopulations. In  
429 this case, there were not enough AFR individuals homozygous for the ancestral allele to use as a reference  
430 population. So instead we used a “local” reference population, i.e. EAS and EUR individuals homozygous  
431 for the ancestral allele. We also use a lower prior for the derived allele ([0-4,000] generations vs. [0-  
432 20,000] for the ancestral). We did not analyze AFR because the selection is likely too old for the method,  
433 and there is no suitable reference population. We note that *startmrca* tends to underestimate the time of

434 very ancient selective events (the “star” genealogy assumption becomes less appropriate) and does not  
435 account for selection on standing variation, which would likely lead to overestimation, so the quantitative  
436 results may be unreliable.

437

### 438 Ancient DNA analysis

439

440 We first analyzed 46 Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic samples (Fu, et al. 2016) for the presence of the  
441 derived *FADSI* allele. These samples were typed on a capture array (“1240k capture”) that contains 6 of  
442 the 25 SNPs that define haplotype D. We divided the samples into broad population groups as defined in  
443 the original publication (Fu, et al. 2016) and inferred the allele frequency in each of these populations by  
444 maximizing the following likelihood function:

$$445 \sum_{i=1}^N \log \left( p^2 \prod_{j=1}^6 B(r_{ij}, r_{ij} + a_{ij}, \varepsilon) + 2p(1-p) \prod_{j=1}^6 B(r_{ij}, r_{ij} + a_{ij}, 0.5 + \delta) + (1-p)^2 \prod_{j=1}^6 B(r_{ij}, r_{ij} + a_{ij}, 1 - \gamma) \right)$$

446 where  $r_{ij}$  and  $a_{ij}$  are the number of reference and alternative reads from individual  $i$  at SNP  $j$ ,  $N$  is the  
447 number of individuals in the population.  $B(x, n, p)$  is the binomial probability of seeing  $x$  successes out of  $n$   
448 trials with probability  $p$ , and  $\varepsilon, \delta, \gamma$  are small error probabilities, which we set to 0.1, 0, 0.1 for  
449 transversions, 0.15, 0.05, 0 for C>T or G>A transitions, and 0, 0.05, 0.15 for T>C or A>G transitions.

450 This implies a conservative 10% rate of contamination or error, and a 5% deamination rate. We computed  
451 binomial confidence intervals assuming an effective sample size of  $2 - \left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^{\sum_{i,j=1,1}^{N,6} (r_{ij} + a_{ij}) - 1}$ .

452

453 To impute the *FADSI* haplotype in the Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic samples, we computed  
454 genotype likelihoods at each SNP in the 5Mb region around the derived haplotype, for each individual,  
455 assuming a binomial distribution of reference and alternative allele counts and a 5% deamination rate. We  
456 then imputed using *BEAGLE 4.1* (Browning and Browning 2016), and the 1000 Genomes reference panel  
457 downloaded from [bochet.gcc.biostat.washington.edu/beagle/1000\\_Genomes\\_phase3\\_v5a](http://bochet.gcc.biostat.washington.edu/beagle/1000_Genomes_phase3_v5a). We filtered out  
458 imputed SNPs with a genotype probability of less than 0.8 and used the remaining SNPs to determine the  
459 presence of the allele. In order to estimate the false positive rate we simulated read data at different  
460 coverages for 50 individuals from the 1000 Genomes EAS (East Asian) super-population who are  
461 homozygous for the ancestral allele. We computed genotype likelihoods and imputed as for the ancient  
462 data, having first removed the 50 test individuals from the reference panel. We performed 10 simulations  
463 for each coverage level and used the frequency at which the derived allele was imputed as an estimate of  
464 the false positive rate.

465

466 To analyze the Holocene history of *FADS1* and other alleles, we assembled a dataset of 1003 published  
467 ancient samples, most of which were typed on the “1240k” capture array which targets ~1.24 million  
468 SNPs. We used the pseudo-haploid version of these data, where each individual has a single allele at each  
469 SNP, from a randomly selected read. We classified these individuals into “hunter-gatherer”, “Early  
470 Farmer” and “Steppe ancestry” populations as follows. First, we ran supervised ADMIXTURE  
471 (Alexander, et al. 2009) with  $K=4$ , and the four populations: WHG, EHG, Anatolia\_Neolithic and  
472 Yamnaya\_Samara fixed to have cluster membership 1, as previously reported (Mathieson, et al. 2018).  
473 We then classified individuals based on their inferred ancestry. If they had more than 25% ancestry from  
474 the Yamnaya\_Samara cluster and dated later than 7500 BP, we classified them as “Steppe ancestry”. If  
475 they had less than 25% ancestry from the Yamnaya\_Samara cluster and more than 50% from the  
476 Anatolia\_Neolithic cluster, we classified them as “Early Farmer”. Finally, if they had less than 25%  
477 ancestry from the Yamnaya\_Samara cluster and less than 50% ancestry from the Anatolia\_Neolithic  
478 cluster and were dated earlier than 5100 BP, we classified them as “hunter-gatherer”. These  
479 classifications are informed by previous analysis that combined genetic, chronological and archaeological  
480 information, and largely correspond to classifications that would be derived from archaeological context  
481 alone. We estimated allele frequency trajectories and selection coefficients separately for each population  
482 using a method that fits a hidden Markov model to the observed frequencies (Mathieson and McVean  
483 2013).

484  
485 To call *AMY1* copy number we assembled a set of 76 ancient genomes with shotgun sequence data that  
486 had nonzero mapped coverage at the locus. The majority of published ancient shotgun genomes have zero  
487 coverage, presumably because the copy number variable region was masked during alignment. We  
488 counted the number of reads that mapped to any of the three *AMY1* duplicate regions in the human  
489 reference genome (Usher, et al. 2015) and compared the total to the average read depth in 1000 random  
490 regions of chromosome 1, of the same size as the *AMY1* duplicate regions. We fitted a linear model of  
491 coverage as a function of GC content to these 1000 regions, for each individual, and used this to correct  
492 our estimates for GC bias.

493

#### 494 Analysis of lipid GWAS hits

495  
496 We tested the directionality of lipid-associated alleles using genome-wide association meta-analysis  
497 results for LDL, HDL and TG (Teslovich, et al. 2010). Specifically, we constructed a list of SNPs with P-  
498 values below a given cutoff by iteratively selecting the SNP with the lowest P-value and then removing  
499 all SNPs within 500kb. For each of these SNPs we extracted allele frequencies in the EUR and AFR

500 super-populations and then tested whether trait increasing alleles were more common in AFR than EUR  
501 (Figure 3A).

502

503 To analyze the LDL hits in ancient samples, we first identified all SNPs with an association P-value less  
504 than  $10^{-6}$  that were on the capture array used to genotype the majority of the ancient samples. We  
505 iteratively removed SNPs within 250kb of the most-associated SNPs to produce an independent set of  
506 associated SNPs. For each (pseudo-haploid) individual, we constructed the “LDL score” by counting the  
507 proportion of these SNPs at which that individual carried the trait-increasing allele (Figure 3B). We found  
508 no significant differences with respect to ancestry when we fitted a binomial generalized linear model  
509 with ancestry as a covariate. We also fitted a model including date as a covariate to test for significant  
510 differences over time, also with a nonsignificant result.

511

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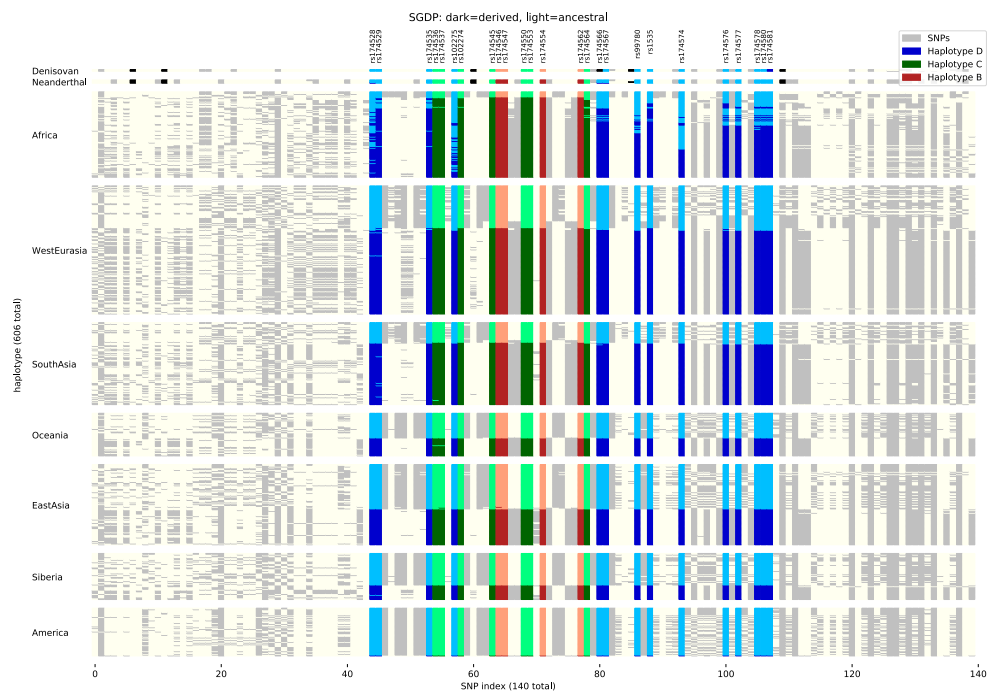
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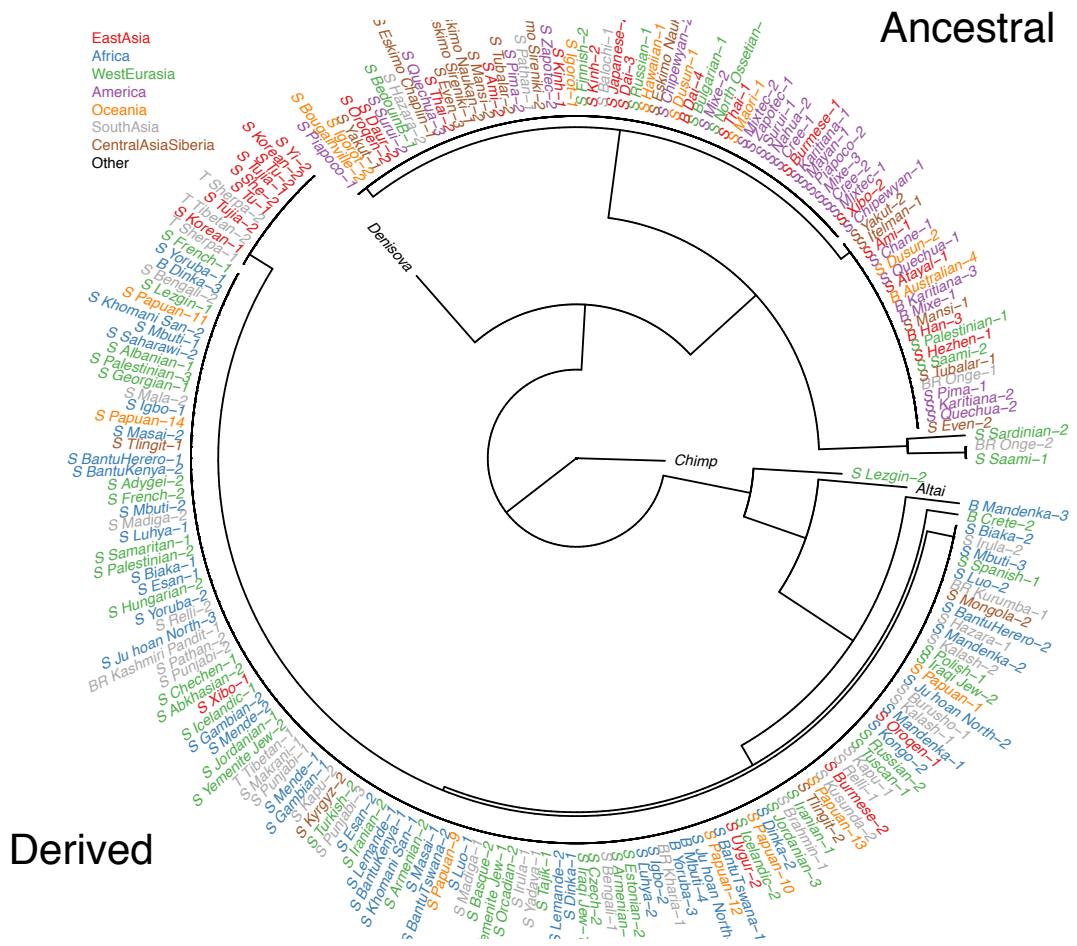
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**Supplementary Figure 1:** As Figure 1A, including all 300 SGDP individuals.



Supplementary Figure 2: UPGMA tree of haplotype B region including all 300 SGDP individuals