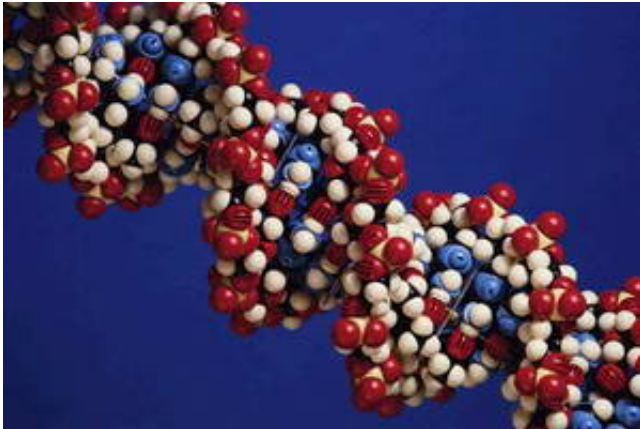


Study: Europeans are of hunter ancestry

November 11 2005



A [DNA](#) study suggests Europeans owe their ancestry mainly to Stone Age hunters, not to later migrants who brought farming to Europe from the Middle East.

Based on DNA analysis of ancient skeletons from Germany, Austria and Hungary, the study changes the debate over the origins of modern Europeans toward hunter-gatherers who colonized Europe some 40,000 years ago, National Geographic News reported Thursday.

The scientists say DNA evidence suggests immigrant farmers who arrived tens of thousands of years later contributed little to the European gene pool and, instead left a cultural legacy by introducing agriculture some 7,500 years ago.

Anthropologist Joachim Burger of Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, in Mainz, Germany, and co-author Peter Forster, an archaeology research fellow at Cambridge University in England, said they were surprised by the results of their research.

"Our paper suggests that there is a good possibility that the contribution of early farmers could be close to zero," said Forster.

The study's findings appear this week in the journal Science.

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