

Presentation

ALTHOUGH our ancestors fed on wild grains for thousands of years, it was only between 11500 and 6200 bC that rice was domesticated in China. From 9500 bC the systematic planting of so-called Neolithic founding crops —farm, spelled wheat, barley, peas, lentils, yerus, chickpeas and flax— began in the eastern Mediterranean, while sugarcane and some root vegetables were domesticated in New Guinea around 7000 bC.

6 However, as in all human activity, it is the scale of their intervention that ends up affecting the environment where we develop our life activity. In this way, the almost exponential growth of the world population has led to a strong incidence of agriculture in the transformation of the surface of the planet. That is why the studies on agroecology take on a huge importance and relevance in the search for a sustainable and friendly relationship between society and nature.

In the pages of this issue the reader will find remarkable contributions for the establishment of this serene marriage between nature and society that we intend to develop. The editorial essay, by our guest editor, Dr. Lev Jardón, offers an overview of the state of the art of this interdisciplinary research area. The rest of the contributions move from the evolutionary perspectives of agroecology, its historical aspects, its influence on climate change, to long-term proposals that aim to make agricultural intervention friendly to our planet.

We also publish a very wise interview with Dr. John Vandermeer, professor of ecology and evolutionary biology at the University of Michigan, who recently focused on coffee agroecosystems in southern Mexico.

So it is to say, that our magazine offers today a very balanced panorama of the different lines of exploration in this area of interdisciplinary research. ■

Ricardo Mansilla
Editor