



Grasses (Reaktion Books - Botanical)

Stephen Harris

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Most people have memories of playing on well-manicured lawns or running across the flat green surface of a local park, but we often don't think of grasses as something we consume. Indeed, grasses include four species—wheat, rice, maize, and sugar—that provide sixty percent of human calorie intake, and we become more and more dependent on these as the world's population increases. In this book, Stephen Harris explains the history of our relationship with these vital plants from the end of the last Ice Age to the present day.

Combining biology, sociology, and cultural history, *Grasses* explores how these staple crops bear the mark of human influence more visibly than any other plant and how we, in turn, are motivated to protect green space such as public parks. Harris describes this symbiotic connection against the background of climate change, contending that humans must find a way to balance their need for grass as food, as living space, and potentially even as fuel. Providing an impressive exploration of the profound impact these plants have on our survival and our pleasure, this well-illustrated book is a must have for gardeners, foodies, and environmentalists.

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