



Michael Purugganan

Dr. Purugganan turned his attention to studying rice domestication because rice was a large part of the food and culture in the Philippines, where he grew up, and because of his interest in benefiting developing countries.

Michael worked in journalism for a while, even being offered work as a foreign correspondent for the Associated Press. Although he ended up pursuing science, his experiences taught him "the value of a good story", helping shape his data presentation and writing.



The Rice Record

The Purugganan lab works with rice looking at how varieties of rice evolved to become adapted to their specific environments. The study of domestication and evolution can become a large mash-up of studying a wide range of subject- "plant biology...evolutionary biology, genetics, ad even archaeology, anthropology, and history."

Domestication of Dates

The 100 Dates! Project revolves around another important food crop. Dr. Purugganan works to understand how "domestication proceeds in a perennial and the similarities and differences between domestication of trees versus annual cereal grasses"



Dr. Purugganan hopes to help us understand "how crop species are domesticated and how evolution occurs" and, with this research, help crop breeders develop new crops. He also cares about raising a generation of scientists that use science to make a difference.

"[As as scientist] your goal should always be to make a major impact, to always be hungry to make a difference."