

Who was the

**first plant
breeder?**



Mendel Illustration Jos. A. Smith

Gregor Mendel? Not really!

One of the first ones was perhaps an **ancient Sumerian in Mesopotamia** (modern-day Iraq).

Let's look at Sumerians' adventures with **hulled barley**.

This barley thing takes forever to cook. I can't wait for someone to invent frozen dinners.

Barley has a **tough outer husk**.
Not great for a quick dinner.

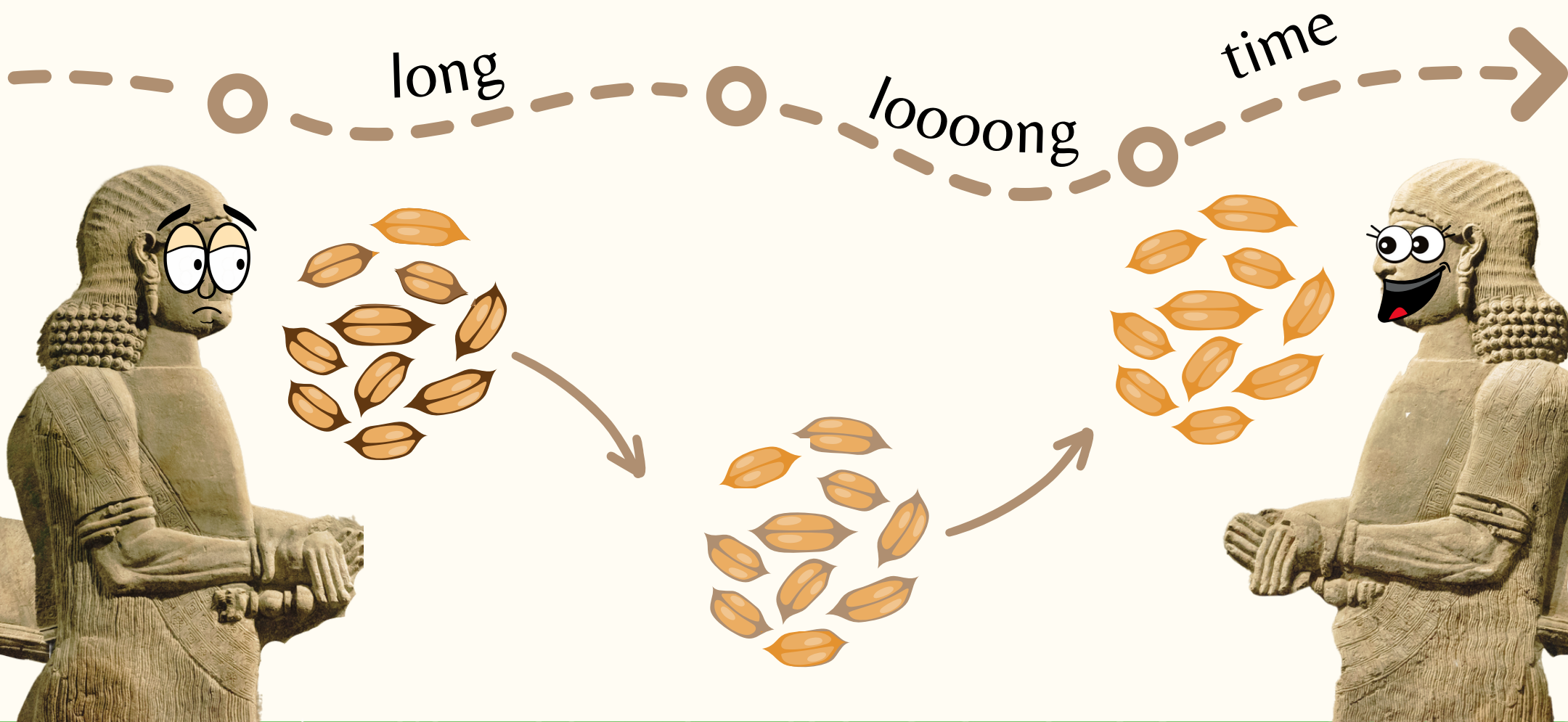
They decided to do something about it!



What did they do?

Selective breeding over generations!

They kept seeds from barley plants with fewer or easily removable hulls, slowly choosing traits that made barley easier to work with.

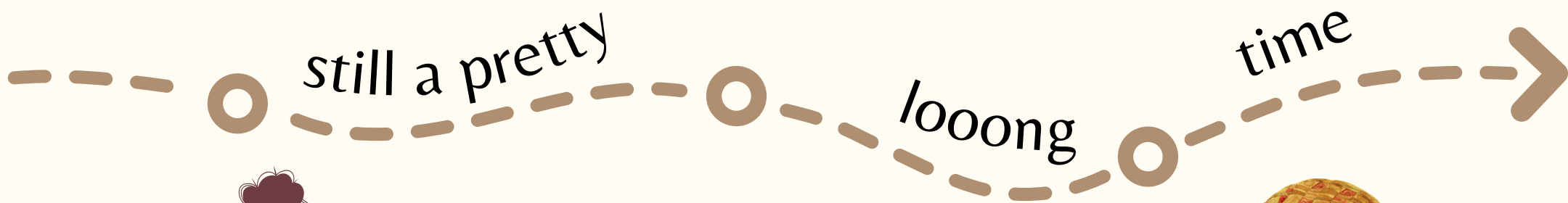


And how long does it take today?

Depending on the crop, it takes

7 to 20 years*

to **develop** a new plant variety with the desired traits.



Aaaand then it takes additional
2-5 years

before the new crop reaches the market and can be
a part of your yummy dinner!

**Can we do something
about it?**



Stay tuned for more

Plantastic Discoveries

🌱 Got questions about plant science & breeding? We've got answers!

Join Plant ETP's educational campaign to feed your curiosity! 🌿

Ask your questions here:



t.ly/gLLGr