

A Corny History

Corn has been grown in North, Central and South America for thousands of years, and it was a staple food for many Native American people groups.

They shared their seed and knowledge with explorers and settlers, and corn is now grown on every continent of the world except Antarctica.



While most of the corn we see is either yellow or white, corn seeds can be many different colors.



Many of us enjoy sweet corn as a vegetable, but corn is technically a grain food. Sweet corn is harvested while the kernels are still very moist inside. You might also be surprised to learn that sweet corn represents just 1% of all the corn grown in the U.S.



Corn is a vegetable, a grain, and an all around fun food!

Popcorn is a unique type of corn. Even though the seeds are hard and dry on the outside, the moisture inside evaporates and turns to steam when heated above boiling. The hot steam cooks the starch, which makes the kernel explode. The amount of moisture inside must be just right for the popcorn to POP.



For cereals, baked goods and snack foods, we can mill the dried kernels of field corn, also known as dent corn, into a meal or flour.



Did you know that a box of corn flakes contains less than 10 cents worth of corn? Most of the cost for processed food comes from energy, labor and marketing.

Corn is also a favorite feed ingredient for livestock diets because it provides energy and it tastes good.



6 Billion Bushels of Corn* are Fed to U.S. Livestock Each Year

*includes corn co-products from milling and distilling



What's a bushel?

A bushel is a measure for crops equal to 8 gallons. 1 bushel of corn weighs 56 pounds.

4,000 Uses & Counting

A corn kernel is mostly starch, which is used in many non-food products because of its unique physical and chemical properties.

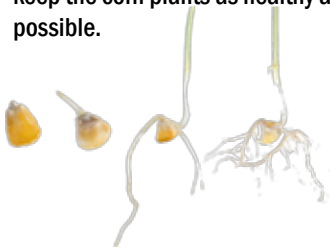


ETHANOL

Corn starch is used to make fuel ethanol because it is abundant and renewable. Ethanol is added to gasoline to improve air quality and reduce oil use.

Oh, How it Grows!

It takes a corn plant between 3 and 4 months to grow and mature. Most field corn is planted in the spring and harvested in the fall. The number and quality of new seeds produced on the plant depends upon the weather, availability of nutrients, pests and disease. Farmers try their best to keep the corn plants as healthy as possible.

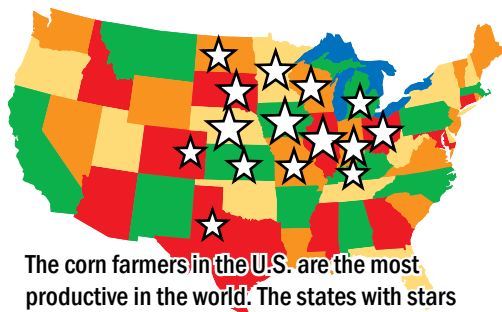


Following harvest, many farmers leave the stalks and cobs on the soil to increase organic matter and improve soil structure.

A combine harvests the corn. Tractors, airplanes, planters, wagons and other large equipment are used to produce and deliver the corn.



A modern corn plant typically produces one ear, which may contain 600 seeds or more.



The corn farmers in the U.S. are the most productive in the world. The states with stars represent where most of the corn is grown.

Where it Goes

Since most of the corn is grown in the Midwest, it may be shipped by truck, train or barge to other states and around the world.



This is an ear of yellow dent corn, also known as field corn. This type of corn is used for livestock feed, food, fuel and many other items we use everyday.

CORN is AMAIZING

We know how to spell "amazing," but MAIZE is another name for CORN

The history, science & use of America's top crop

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This publication was provided by Kentucky's corn farmers. To learn more, visit www.kycorn.org or call 800-326-0906.