

LEARN



White Corn

facts

- Spanish translation: *El elote* • Hmong translation: *Pob kws*
- Sweet corn is the type of corn people grow in their vegetable gardens. Corn-on-the-cob, canned, and frozen corn is also sweet corn.
- Bear Island Flint corn (right) is an indigenous variety of corn grown in Menominee Nation. Traditionally, flint corn is ground and used as flour or in soup. When it is picked in the green stage it is sweet and delicious to eat on the cob.
— Photo credit: CMN: Sustainable Development Institute
- In Aztec, Incan, Mayan, and Native American cultures, corn was grown in companionship with squash and beans. Corn, squash, and beans make up the traditional "Three Sisters."
- Wisconsin is a major corn-growing state, but not all corn is grown for food. Corn can also be used for livestock feed, ethanol production for fuel, corn sweeteners for soft drinks, and in many other products like chewing gum, paint, plastics and fabrics!

Bear Island Flint Corn



EAT



nutrition & seasonality

- **Key nutrients:**
 - Folate - Helps prevent birth defects, is needed to make DNA, and helps your cells divide, including red blood cells.
 - Fiber - Keeps digestion running smoothly.
 - Vitamin C - Helps wounds heal, is important for the immune system, and is an antioxidant, which protects our cells from damage.
- Fresh sweet corn is available in Wisconsin from July through September.

TASTE



Nutritious,
Delicious,
Wisconsin!

taste testing

Try a few different flavors of homemade popcorn.
Pop plain popcorn and add herb/spices. Examples:

Taco Flavor - 1 Tbsp chili powder, 1 tsp onion powder, 1 Tbsp cumin, 1 tsp salt, and ½ tsp pepper.

Ranch Flavor - 1 tsp dill, 2 tsp dried chives, 1 tsp garlic powder, 1 tsp onion powder, ½ tsp salt, and ½ tsp pepper.

Taki Flavor* - 1 Tbsp hot chili powder, 1 Tbsp onion powder, 2 tsp cayenne powder and 2 tsp salt. *spicy

Dorito Flavor - 2 Tbsp nutritional yeast, ¼ tsp garlic powder, ¼ tsp onion powder, ¼ tsp cumin, ¼ tsp paprika, ¼ tsp chili powder, and ¼ tsp salt.



— Credit: Amy Macemon, FoodWise Nutrition Educator and Healthy Communities Coordinator

ACTIVITY GUIDE ■ CORN

FUN



activity: Seed Sprouting

Objective: Kids will learn how seeds grow.

Supplies: Seeds (corn, radish, melon, pumpkin, beans or peas), a paper towel, tape, and a plastic bag.

Procedure:

1. Soak seeds in water overnight. This will prepare them to germinate.
2. Dampen the paper towel with water, fold it, and place it in a plastic bag.
3. Place the seeds inside the bag, on one side of the bag, pressing them against the paper towel.
4. Seal the bag and hang in a window using tape.
5. Wait 24 hours. You should be able to see the seeds sprout after this time. Within 3 days to one week you will have fully sprouted seeds.
6. Encourage kids to make observations and draw and measure the seeds every day. Discuss what seeds need in order to grow. *Answer: water, the right temperature, and the right amount of light.*
7. In a few more days watch for the first leaves to emerge. At this point you can move the seeds to soil and watch them continue to grow.

— Credit: Amy Macemon, FoodWise Nutrition Educator and Healthy Communities Coordinator

This activity can be done in multiple settings: classroom, outdoors, garden, or virtual.

Tips for adapting to virtual learning: An educator can start seeds and share the process with kids over a virtual learning platform. You can also share a link to a video: <https://youtu.be/tkFPyue5X3Q>.

Share pictures and engage with the Wisconsin Harvest of the Month community by using #WIHarvestoftheMonth on social media.



Photo credit – CMN: Sustainable Development Institute

READ



books

- *Carlos and the Cornfield / Carlos y la milpa de maiz* by Jan Romero Stevens
- *Corn is Maize: The Gift of the Indians* by Alike
- *Four Seasons of Corn: A Winnebago Tradition* by Sally Hunter
- *Corn* by Gail Gibbons

GARDEN CONNECTION

planting

Sweet corn needs warm weather to grow. Plant the corn kernels (seeds) ½ inch deep in cool, moist soil or 1-1½ inches deep in warm, dry soil. Space kernels 9-12 inches apart. Plant 2 or more rows of the same variety so that the corn is pollinated. Space rows 30-36 inches apart.

harvesting

Each cornstalk should produce at least one large ear of corn. Under good growing conditions, it may also produce a second ear. Pick sweet corn during the “milk stage” when the kernels are formed, but not fully mature. The kernels are smooth, plump, and the juice in the kernel appears milky when punctured with a thumbnail. To harvest, snap off the ear by hand with a quick, firm, downward push, followed by a twist and pull. The corn should be eaten as soon as possible.