

HOW TO GROW CORN !

When to Plant

Sow the seeds directly into the garden when soil is thoroughly warm and all danger of frost has passed. If planting early be prepared to cover if there is a risk of frost.

Note: If seeding earlier in the season or soil is cooler or if seeding a super sweet variety it is beneficial to double seeding rate for a better outcome.

Location/Soil

All varieties of corn require soil that is highly fertile with good drainage. Prior to sowing it is beneficial to work a generous amount of compost or well-rotted manure into the soil. Note that corn is a tall growing vegetable and can shade other crops so is usually best suited to a garden site on the north or east side. Ideally it is best to choose a location where corn was not planted the year before. A great location is where beans or peas were planted the previous season so the corn can benefit from the nitrogen-enriched soil the beans and peas have provided.

Planting & Growing Information

Plant in double rows to make sure that cross pollination occurs. Sow seeds 5 cm (2") deep. Super Sweet seed can be planted at a shallower level 2.5 cm (1"). Seeds can be planted 3 per hill or 10 cm (4") apart in rows. Row spacing 60 cm (24"). Thin plants to approximately 30 cm (12") apart in a row.

Seeds germinate in approximately 7-14 days.

If you are planting more than one variety of corn make sure to isolate them from each other in the garden to prevent cross-pollination. Best when different varieties are separated approximately 7.5 m (25') to avoid the starchy, tough kernels that result from cross pollination of 2 different varieties.

Days to Maturity

60-100 days from date directly sown in garden. Note: Corn crops can vary in days to maturity depending on weather conditions and individual garden locations.

Other Information

Adequate moisture is essential during ear formation which means from the time the tassels appear until the ears are ready for harvest.

Cobs with missing kernels can be caused by improper pollination which can occur if corn is planted in single rows or if there is a very heavy rain at the time of pollination.

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Harvesting & Storage

For maximum flavor, corn is best eaten soon after it has been picked. Cool temperatures help to slow down the conversion of the corn's natural sugar to starch.

When storing corn for a short period of time prior to eating, it is better to leave husks on the corn and refrigerate but if husks have been removed, store cobs in a plastic bag and refrigerate.

If you want to enjoy some of that wonderful home grown corn throughout the cooler months it is a very easy to make freezer corn. Following the easy instructions below as well as using the McFayden Corn Cutter (#3194) will have you preparing frozen corn in no time at all that everyone will enjoy!

Companion Planting

Likes: Bean, cucumber, melon, pea, pumpkin, potato, radish

Freezing corn:

1. Remove corn from husks.
2. Bring a large pot approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ full of water to boil.
3. Have a large bowl or sink full of ice water.
4. Blanch the corn – this requires adding the cobs to the boiling water for approximately 5-10 minutes depending on the size of the cobs (the larger the cobs the longer the blanching period) This process is done to preserve flavor and sweetness.
5. Once cobs are removed from the boiling water immediately place in the ice water to cool them. Leave them in the ice water for the same amount of time they were in the boiling water.
6. You will need to keep adding hot water to the boiling water on the stove to keep the pot $\frac{3}{4}$ full. It is key to have this boiling prior to placing the cobs into the pot for blanching and water should return to boil after cobs have been placed in the pot within 1-2 minutes of placing cobs in the boiling water – if not add less cobs or get a larger pot. Large pots for canning work amazing for this.
7. You will also need to keep adding ice and cold water to the cooling bowl or sink during the process. It is essential that the cobs cool quickly to stop the cooking process.
8. Once cobs are cooled the kernels can be removed from the cob by using a wonderful and handy tool called a corn cutter. It is the fastest and easiest way to remove corn from the cob. It cuts whole kernels or scrapes the cob for a cream style corn.
9. Corn will come off in strips which will easily separate into kernels when placed in freezer bags.
10. Place the desired amount for freezing in freezer bags and remove air from bags prior to freezing. The removal of air prevents drying and freezer burn. Removing the air from the bag is as simple as using the straw to suck out excess air before sealing shut.

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11. Label the bags and place in the freezer and you're done!

Understanding Corn and abbreviations:

Standard Sweet Corn (SU) – The SU types of sweet corn are often quicker to mature than other types of sweet corn. Conversion of the kernel sugars into starch occurs rapidly after harvest and the post-harvest lifespan of SU cultivars is therefore limited. Can tolerate somewhat cooler planting conditions than the sh2 corn varieties.

Sugar Enhanced (SE) Sweet Corn – Sugar enhanced sweet corn kernels have higher sugar content than standard sweet (SU) types and the rate of conversion of these sugars to starch after harvest is slower. These two factors improve the post-harvest quality of the SE types relative to the SU types. Kernels of SE types of sweet corn are more tender, with a higher moisture content than supersweet sh2 types. Can tolerate somewhat cooler planting conditions than the sh2 corn varieties.

Super Sweet (SH2) Corn Hybrid – Contain the shrunken (sh2) gene and get their name from the appearance of the dried kernel. They have an exceptionally high kernel sugar content and very slow conversion of these sugars to starch after harvest. Consequently, Super Sweet types of corn hold their quality for extended periods after harvest. The sh2 types of corn are typically planted later than SU and SE types as the small Super Sweet sh2 seed is sensitive to cool wet soil conditions

Source:

McKenzie Seeds (www.mckenzieseeds.com), a longtime supporter of Plant • Grow • Share a Row

Links:

Seeds:

<https://mckenzieseeds.com/collections/corn>

Other:

<https://www.harrowsmithmag.com/385/charred-corn-salsa-peach-vinaigrette>

As part of your garden this year, plant and grow an extra row of your favourite veggies and donate the harvest to your local food bank. Help us help all those in need.