



Corn

Corn was domesticated by indigenous peoples in southern Mexico about 10,000 years ago. In Skagit Valley, much of the corn you see in the fields is grown for silage rather than consumption, but many local Skagit farmers grow sweet corn for sale at farmers markets, in CSA produce boxes, and at pop-up road-side stands.

Nutrition

Corn is nutritious, providing vitamin C, B vitamins, magnesium, potassium, and fiber plus phytochemicals that have been associated with heart health and cancer prevention. Sweet corn is low in fat and has no cholesterol.

Selection

Choose large cobs with a tight, bright green husk that is slightly damp. Avoid corn with small brown holes in the husk, or with husks that are dry or browned. When selecting corn, you can choose a good ear of corn by feeling the outside of the ear looking for plump kernels all the way to the top of the cob. Do not peel back husk as this reduces the storage capacity, dries the corn out, and results in corn that is not marketable to other shoppers. , and rinse with water to clean. When ready to cook or preserve, peel back the husks and remove the silks from each ear of corn on the cob, and rinse with water to clean.

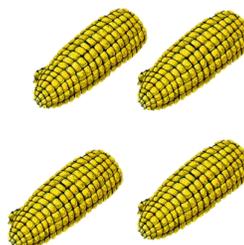
Storage

Corn is not suited for long-term fresh storage. For best results, keep husks on and store cobs in a plastic bag in the refrigerator to maintain moisture. Corn may be stored for 5-7 days in this manner. However, the flavor is best when served within a day of purchase before the natural sugars have turned to starch. You should peel back the husks and remove the silks from each ear of corn on the cob

Measurements



Weight



Volume

Freezing

- Select tender, freshly-gathered corn.
- Husk and trim the ears, remove silks and wash.
- An average of 2 1/2 pounds makes 1 pint of frozen whole kernel corn. •



Corn-on-the-cob. Water blanch small ears (1¼ inches or less in diameter) for 7 minutes; medium ears (1¼ to 1½ inches in diameter) 9 minutes; and large ears (over 1½ inches in diameter) 11 minutes. Cool promptly in ice water an equivalent amount of time. Drain and pack in moisture-vapor proof freezer containers or freezer weight plastic bags, squeezing out as much air as possible. Seal, label and freeze.

Whole Kernel Corn. Water blanch cobs for 4 minutes. Cool promptly in ice water an equivalent amount of time. Drain and cut kernels from cob about 2/3 the depth of the kernels. Pack into moisture-vapor proof freezer containers or freezer weight plastic bags. Label, seal and freeze.

Cream Style Corn. Water blanch for 4 minutes. Cool promptly in ice water an equivalent amount of time. Drain and cut kernel tips and scrape the cobs with the back of a knife to remove the juice and the heart of the kernel. Package, leaving ½-inch headspace. Pack into moisture-vapor proof freezer containers or freezer weight plastic bags. Label, seal and freeze.

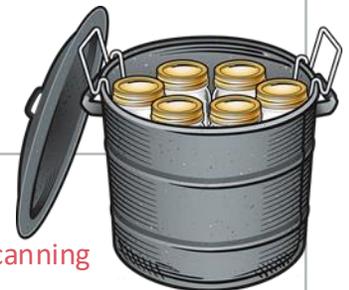
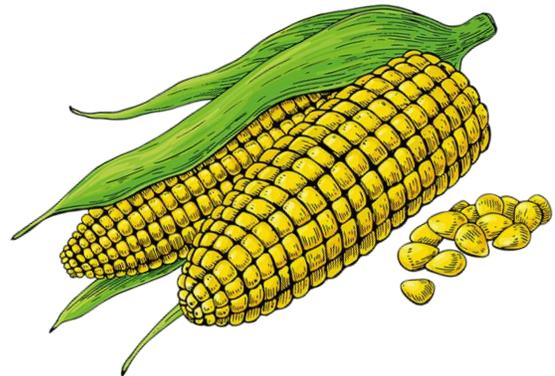
Drying

Preparation: Select tender, sweet corn. Husk.

Pretreatment: Steam on the cob for 5-10 minutes, or until milk is set. Cut from cob. Drain well.

Drying Procedure:

- Arrange in single layers on drying trays.
- Dry at 140°F for 6-10 hours until crisp and brittle.
- Cool thoroughly. Package dried corn in moisture/vapor proof containers. Label.
- Store in a cool, dark, dry place.



Boiling Water Canning



Safety Alert: Corn is a low-acid food. Pressure canning is necessary when canning corn to prevent the growth of botulinum bacteria.

Corn can be pressured canned as either whole kernel corn or creamed corn. Whole kernel corn can be processed in pint or quart sized jars. Cream style corn must be processed in half-pint or pint jars only.

Refer to National Center for Home Food Preservation for Pressure Canning instructions https://nchfp.uga.edu/how/can_04/corn_kernel.html



Tip. Select ears containing slightly immature kernels or of ideal quality for eating fresh. Canning of some sweeter varieties or too immature kernels may cause browning. Can a small amount, check color and flavor before canning large quantities.

Boiling Water Canning



Pickling

Pickled corn products may be safely preserved using the boiling water canning method. Because corn is a low-acid food, the proportion of vinegar to water in a pickling recipe is critical. Use only tested, approved pickling recipes and follow instructions for preparation of corn.



Tip: Corn Relish is delicious as a condiment on hamburgers, hot dogs, sandwiches, and fish. Try serving it with tacos or mix into a pasta salad. For a quick and simple dip, combine a jar with black beans, tomatoes, red bell pepper, black eyed peas, onion, and cilantro for “Cowboy Caviar.”

Pickled Corn Relish

Yield: About 9 pints

Ingredients

10 cups fresh whole kernel corn (16 to 20 medium-size ears), or six 10-ounce packages of frozen corn
2-1/2 cups diced sweet red peppers
2-1/2 cups diced sweet green peppers
2-1/2 cups chopped celery
1-1/4 cups diced onions
1-3/4 cups sugar
5 cups vinegar (5% acidity)
2-1/2 tbsp canning or pickling salt
2-1/2 tsp celery seed
2-1/2 tbsp dry mustard
1-1/4 tsp turmeric

Directions. Boil ears of corn for 5 minutes. Dip in cold water. Cut whole kernels from cob or use six 10-ounce frozen packages of corn. Combine peppers, celery, onions, sugar, vinegar, salt, and celery seed in a saucepan. Bring to boil and simmer for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Separate out a 1/2 cup of hot mixture and

add in mustard and turmeric to combine. Add this mixture and corn back into the cooking pot. Stir to combine. Simmer for another 5 minutes.

Fill hot jars with hot mixture, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles and adjust headspace if needed. Wipe rims with a clean damp paper towel. Adjust two-pieces canning lids. Process in boiling water canner as described below.

At the completion of processing, turn off heat and wait 5 minutes before removing jars. Let cool, undisturbed at room temperature, for 12 to 24 hours and check seals. Wipe jars, remove rings, label, and store in a cool, dry place.

Processing Directions:

| Style of pack | Jar Size | 0-1,000 ft | 1,001-6,000 ft |
|---------------|--------------------|------------|----------------|
| Hot | Half pint or Pints | 15 minutes | 20 minutes |

Preserve Skagit Crop Sheets describe three food preservation techniques—freezing, drying, and boiling water canning—consistent with USDA Food Preservation and Food Safety recommendations. Pressure canning for low acid foods such as meats and vegetables is not included.

Additional resources and recipes, as well as information on Pressure Canning, can be found on the WSU Skagit Food Preservation Website <https://extension.wsu.edu/skagit/fam/food-preservation/> or the National Center for Home Food Preservation <https://nchfp.uga.edu/index.html>.

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