

# Corn

## A VERY BRIEF HISTORY OF CORN

Corn is a staple food and **cereal grain** grown in many parts of the world because of its ability to adapt to different climates and environments. Researchers believe it was first domesticated in **Mexico** 7,000 years ago. The strongest type of corn to make its way to Manitoba was **Northern Flint**, known for its high yields and resistance to insects and frosts.

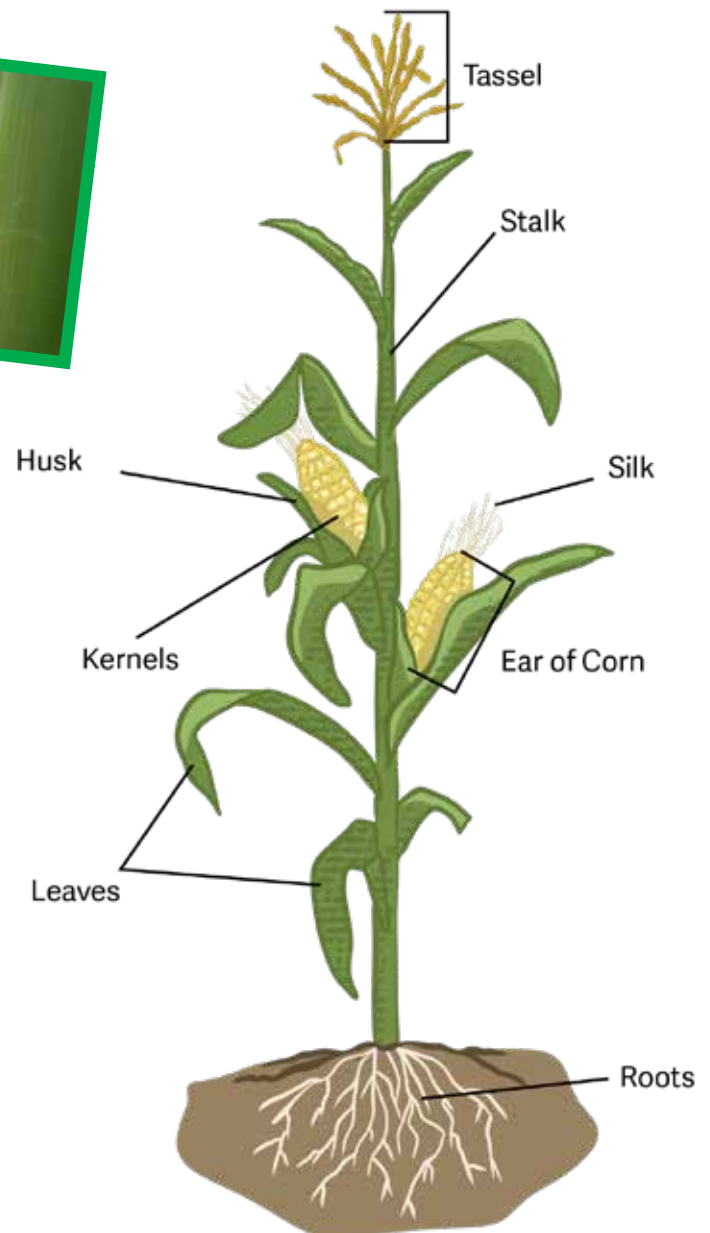
*You know corn is flowering when it produces silks out of its ears. Corn grains are called kernels.*



Photos: Manitoba Crop Alliance

## ONE OF THE THREE SISTERS

Corn is one of the Three Sisters crops – a triad made up of corn, squash and beans. Indigenous peoples used these crops to support an **efficient production system**: all three were planted in the same area, so corn could support the bean plants and the squash could cover the ground to prevent weed growth.





## SWEET CORN VS GRAIN CORN

There are many kinds of corn, each with its own uses and nutritional makeup. The **sweet corn** we eat is higher in sugar than the **grain corn** we feed animals or use for distilling, which is a great source of the fibre, protein, and various vitamins and minerals livestock need.

## WHAT IS SILAGE?

Corn is a popular crop for **silage** (fermented foliage), which is used to feed animals. Silage is also nutritious and has a taste that appeals to animals. To make silage, the farmer cuts down the entire corn plant and chips it into small pieces, then gathers it in a large pile. Then tractors drive up and down the pile, squeezing all the air out so the silage can ferment with no oxygen.



## PLANTED WITH PRECISION

Corn is a **row crop**, which means it needs to be planted with care to make sure each kernel reaches its full potential. **Precision planting** requires careful calibration and maintenance of planting machines.



Manitoba has a corn ethanol facility in Minnedosa that uses 300,000 metric tonnes of corn every year!

