



# Sweet Corn

**Sweet corn** is a plant that is commonly grown in Illinois. It is a type of grass and is a variety of maize or corn (*Zea mays*), a cereal plant. The leaves are long and have parallel veins. Large “ears” containing the fruit, or kernels, develop at the base of the leaves. The “ear” is a collection of kernels on a cob. Each ear is covered by leaves to form a husk. “Silk” is the name given to the parts of the female flowers that extend from the husk. The male flowers form at the top of the plant and drop pollen onto the silk. **Sweet corn** kernels have higher sugar content in them than those of maize.

**Sweet corn** is harvested when its kernels are immature and the sugar content in them is at its peak. It is cooked and eaten as a vegetable. There are hundreds of types of **sweet corn** available for planting. This vegetable is a good source of vitamin A, magnesium and potassium. Besides being eaten fresh, **sweet corn** can also be processed into sweeteners.

**Sweet Corn** was named the State Vegetable of Illinois in 2015.

