

Sweet Corn

Sweet Corn, commonly known as Maize in most parts of the world, is a cereal/grain plant that is a member of the grass family. Each cob of corn is made up of approximately 800 kernels, which are the “seeds” of the plant. Corn was developed by indigenous peoples living in Central America and southern Mexico almost 10,000 years ago. Corn is grown on every continent except Antarctica, and is the largest food crop grown in the United States.

CULINARY TIPS

As soon as corn is picked, the sugars in the kernels start to convert to starch. For optimum flavor, eat your fresh sweet corn within a day or two of picking.

Just picked corn is delicious raw, but is equally yummy grilled, steamed, boiled, roasted, or pickled!

Corn freezes well. Simply blanch the whole ear for 2-3 minutes, cut kernels off when cool, then place in plastic freezer bags. Extract as much air as possible from the bag. Frozen corn can be added to salads, salsas, soup, tacos, etc.

HOW TO STORE CORN

If you can't eat it the day it's picked, store corn with the husk on in the refrigerator for 3-5 days.

3 WAYS TO PREPARE CORN

- Boil it! Drop freshly shucked corn into unsalted, boiling water. Cook for 2-3 minutes after water comes back to a boil.
- Grill it! Shuck corn, rub the ears lightly with oil, place on a med-hot grill, rotate when areas begin to char. Cooks in 10-12 minutes.
- Make a lacto-fermented relish! It's just like pickling, but there is no vinegar or “canning” involved (see the recipe on reverse).

LACTO-FERMENTED CORN RELISH

Ingredients:

Kernels from 4-5 fresh ears of corn
1 small onion—chopped
1–2 hot peppers—chopped (remove seeds if you don't want your relish too hot)
1 bell pepper—chopped
1 peach or pear—chopped (optional)
2–3 tsp. sea salt

Instructions:

Combine all ingredients into a large bowl. Slightly mash veggies with your hand* or potato masher until liquid starts to extrude from them. Tightly pack all veggies into a 1-quart wide-mouth canning jar. Cover with filtered water until veggies are submerged. Use a weight if desired to keep vegetables submerged.

Seal the jar loosely with a lid, fermenting lid, or a coffee filter held tight with a rubber band. Then set aside in a cool, dark, spot for 2-3 days to ferment.

To store, cover jar with tight lid, and refrigerate.

*if you included hot peppers in this recipe, make sure to wear gloves to keep your hands from burning!