



Plate from "Dictionnaire Pittoresque Histoire Naturelle" Felix Edward Guerin Menevilles - 1839; Courtesy of Robert W. Freckmann Herbarium, UW-Stevens Point

Presented by the Town of Middleton



Corn is one of the most widely grown crops in the U.S., with about 70 million acres planted each year. Most corn is dent corn (feed corn) which is fed to livestock. But corn is increasingly used for a variety of other purposes including dietary sweeteners, biodegradable plastics, road-deicers, and ethanol fuel.

Corn (*Zea mays*)

Corn has existed for thousands of years and is one of the few agricultural crops that originated in the western hemisphere. Pre-Columbian peoples were responsible for most of the major improvements, including the development of red corn, blue corn, yellow corn, sweet corn, popcorn, and dent corn. Ancient agriculturalists recognized the potential of the ancestral corn species, which originated in Mexico and Central America. Starting more than 7,000 years ago, they began selecting plants that eventually were developed into the distinct varieties that grow successfully in a wide array of climates and soil types throughout the world.

Narrative credit: James Coors, Professor UW-Madison