

# CORN GROWING GUIDE



One of the hallmarks of summer is barbeques, and these food celebrations wouldn't be complete without corn. The home-grown version, needless to say, offers the freshest, sweetest taste possible. Whether eaten indoors or out, corn is a favorite of home gardeners—grilled, in salads, boiled, baked and even popped.

WHEN TO SOW	SUN / PART SHADE	SEED SPACING	ROW SPACING	PLANTING DEPTH	SPACING AFTER THINNING	DAYS TO GERMINATE	DAYS TO MATURITY
After last frost	Sun	4 inches	36 inches	2 inches	8-12 inches	4-7	60-80

## Our Corn Varieties

There are so many tasty and attractive options for growing this favorite food! Here at Irish Eyes, we offer many varieties of corn, to fit every taste. Many of them are adapted to Northern climates.

Yellow corn choices include tasty early varieties like Golden Bantam and Dakota Ivory, as well as extra-sweet corn such as Sugar Buns and Bodacious, which yields eight-inch ears. Bi-color options include the gorgeous Painted Hills, which is a cross between Painted Mountain ornamental and Luther Hills sweet, as well as productive and reliable Quickie and Trinity. We also have white, exclusive, and heirloom flour varieties, Strawberry Popcorn, and dent corn.

## Soil and Fertilizing

Corn requires a rich, slightly acidic soil with a pH between 6.0 and 6.5, at a minimum soil temperature of 60° F for germination.

It is best to have your soil tested before planting, so you know what nutrients and pH adjustments may be needed. For a thorough soil test, consult your local county extension office.

Corn is a heavy feeder, and in particular needs nitrogen and phosphorous in large amounts. During growing season, it's generally advised to add a side dressing of nitrogen in the form of fish emulsion or manure tea. This can be sprinkled on the sides of the rows, or put in a circle around each individual plant. Pale green leaves indicate a nitrogen deficiency, and purple-tinged leaves mean the plant needs more phosphorous.

## Planting

Our seeds are NOT treated with a fungicide, so keep in mind that the soil must be warm before they can be planted.

Corn pollen is wind-borne, so plant four or more short rows of a single hybrid side-by-side, or plant them in a circle for the best pollination. Do not plant different varieties next to each other, or you'll end up with cross-pollination.

Rotate your crops annually so the soil doesn't get depleted of nutrients or invite diseases. Plant corn in a different area each season.

Plant some early-, mid- and late-season varieties for continuous harvests; and if growing the plants in a circle, plant three seeds in a circle around two feet in diameter. For normal corn, the planting depth is two inches—one inch for sugary enhanced varieties.

During the growing phase, keep the rows free of weeds, either by hilling up the soil or using mulch, as corn has shallow roots and can't abide the competition.

Whatever variety of corn you grow, don't remove the suckers, as that may reduce your yield.

## Watering

Corn plants need consistent moisture, at a rate of at least one inch per week. Water your corn early in the day, and avoid wetting the foliage, as that may cause fungal issues.

## Harvesting / Storage

Sweet corn is ready 20 days after the appearance of the first silk strands. The silks should be dry and brown by this point; the kernels should be smooth and plump, and should pop when pushed with a thumbnail. Note that ears may mature several days apart, even on the same plant.

Cook and eat your sweet corn right away, or store it at a cool temperature; a refrigerator is fine. Don't let it remain at room temperature or get overheated, because heat will cause the sugar to turn to starch, resulting in a bland flavor.