

## Alternative uses of maize

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### Food Purpose:

Maize and cornmeal (ground dried maize) constitutes a staple food in many regions of the world. Maize meal is made into a thick porridge in many cultures. From the polenta of Italy, the angu of Brazil, the mamaliga of Romania, to mush in the U.S. or the food called sadza, nshima, ugali, and mealie pap in Africa. Maize meal is also used as a replacement for wheat flour, to make cornbread and other baked products. Masa (cornmeal treated with lime water) is the main ingredient for tortillas, atole and many other dishes of Mexican food.

Popcorn is kernels of certain varieties of maize which explode when heated, forming fluffy pieces that are eaten as a snack. Roasted dried maize cobs with semi-hardened kernels, coated with a seasoning mixture of fried chopped spring onions with salt added to the oil, is a popular snack food in Vietnam.

Chicha and "chicha morada" (purple chicha) are drinks made usually from particular types of maize. The first one is fermented and alcoholic, the second is a soft drink commonly drunk in Peru.

Corn flakes are a common breakfast cereal in North America and the United Kingdom, and found in many other countries all over the world.

Maize can also be prepared as hominy, in which the kernels are soaked with lye in a process called nixtamalization; or grits, which are coarsely ground hominy. These are commonly eaten in the South eastern United States, foods handed down from native Americans, who called the dish sagamite.

The Brazilian dessert canjica is made by boiling maize kernels in sweetened milk

Maize can also be harvested and consumed in the unripe state, when the kernels are fully grown but still soft. Unripe maize must be cooked to become palatable; this may be done by simply boiling and eating the kernels right off the cob. Such corn on the cob is a

common dish in the United States, United Kingdom and some parts of South America, but virtually unheard in some European countries. The cooked unripe kernels may also be shaved off the raw unripe kernels may also be grated off the cobs and processed into a variety of cooked dishes, such as maize paine putee, tamales, pamongas, cutau, cakes, ice creams, etc. Sweetcorn, a genetic variety that is high in sugars and low in starch, is usually consumed in the unripe state.

Corn the cob, as it is usually called in the United States, was hawked on the streets of early 19th-century New York City by poor, barefoot "Hot Corn Girls" who were thus the precursors hot-dog carts, churro wagons, and fruit stands seen on the streets of big cities today.

Maize is a major source of starch. Cornstarch (maize flour) is a major ingredient in home cooking and in many industrialized food products. Maize is also a major source of cooking oil (corn oil) and of maize gluten. Maize starch can be hydrolyzed and enzymatically treated to produce syrups, particularly high fructose corn syrup, a sweetener; and also fermented and distilled to produce grain alcohol. Grain alcohol from maize is traditionally the source of bourbon whiskey. Maize is sometimes used as the starch source for beer.

In the United States and Canada maize is also widely grown to feed for livestock, as forage, silage (made by fermentation of chopped green cornstalks), or grain. Maize meal is also a significant ingredient of some commercial animal food products, such as dog food.

Maize is also used as fish bait, called "dough balls." It is particularly popular in Europe for coarse fishing.

### Chemicals and medicines :

Starch from maize can also be made into plastics, fabrics, adhesives, and many other

### Key words :

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