

My Family's Corn Farm

Grade Level(s)

PreK and KG

Estimated Time

30 minutes

Purpose

Students will learn about the growth and development stages of corn, look at different ways corn is used, and create a picture book demonstrating the lifecycle of corn.

Materials

- Links: www.linncog.com -2020/21 virtual learning drop down tab- November
 - Instructional video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eH_feC1IWgo
 - My Family's Corn Farm Book: <https://youtu.be/6UjMPruTIac?list=PL6fqYHxqQAn2WEXg3TElq3YSXqsQg2Woa>
 - Optional book: Corn by Gail Gibbons
- Worksheets:
 - My Adventures with Corn activity book available in kit or on website.
 - Corn variety samples available in kit or on website.
- Other:
 - Corn kernels
 - Glue
 - Crayons
 - Field corn samples

Vocabulary

Corn: a tall cereal plant also known as Maize.

Kernels: the seed of corn.

Stalk: the main stem of a corn plant.

Tassel: the top of the corn plant that produces pollen to pollinate the silk on the ear of corn.

Silk: the threadlike part of the ear of corn that produces each individual kernel when pollinated.

Harvest: the process of removing the ear of corn from the plant.

Interest Approach – Engagement

Hold up the field corn sample and ask the students to first identify the sample and then brainstorm what they know about corn. Don't tell them yet that the sample is field corn.

Background - Agricultural Connections

Corn is a monocot plant that has many purposes. Much of it becomes livestock feed and ethanol fuel or is exported as a value-added product. Corn is used in over 4000 edible and nonedible products. Corn is used to make shampoo, gum, marshmallows, plastic, toothbrushes, and much more. Iowa is the number one producer of corn in the nation. In 2015 Iowa produced 2.5 billion bushels of corn. The corn being produced primarily in Iowa is called Dent or field corn. 99% of the corn grown in Iowa is field corn and less than 1% is sweet corn. The corn lifecycle is a process that begins in early spring and continues into summer and fall. Farmers begin harvest once the plant has reached maturity.

Procedures

1. Read or listen to the story “My Family’s Corn Farm” or “Corn”
 - Ask the students to pay close attention to the parts of the corn plant.
 - What happened in each season?
2. Show corn varieties to students.
 - Sweet corn:* consumed fresh off the cob, in a can or frozen
 - Field corn:* fed to animals, made into fuel and used in over 4000 products
 - Decorative corn:* first corn grown and was served at the very first Thanksgiving. Today is used primarily for decoration.
 - Popcorn:* consumed popped.
3. Watch the introduction video (only for those who have opt out of the zoom option)
 - Dress up like a corn plant** demonstration will be in the intro video or in a zoom presentation to help students understand the lifecycle of a corn plant.
4. Distribute “My Adventures with Corn” activity book.
 - Ask the students to write their name on the front
 - As a class label the lifecycle in sequence order 1-4.
 - Ask the students to practice tracing the letter.
5. Corn mosaic:
 - Instruct the students to color the husk brown (harvest color) and glue field corn kernels to the cob- creating a corn mosaic craft.
6. Review:
 - What is the season when we plant corn?
 - What is the season when we harvest corn?
 - What do plants need to grow?
 - Are there different kinds of corn?

Organization Affiliation

Lesson created and adapted by Morgan Hibbs with Linn County Farm Bureau.

Dress up like a corn plant lesson: Iowa Ag Literacy Foundation

Agriculture Literacy Outcomes

Agriculture and the Environment Outcome:

- o T1.k-2.b Describe the importance of soil and water in raising crops and livestock.

- T1.3-5.b: Explain how the interaction of the sun, soil, water, and weather in plant and animal growth impacts agricultural production

Plants and Animals for Food, Fiber, and Energy Outcome:

- T2.k-2.e: Identify the importance of natural resources in farming.
- T2.k-2.c: Identify examples of feed/food products eaten by animals and people.
- T2.3-5.e: Understand the concept of stewardship and identify ways farmers/ranchers care for soil, water, plants and animals

Iowa/ Common Core Standards

K-LS1-1: Use observations to describe patterns of what plants and animals need to survive.

K-ESS3-3: Use a model to represent the relationship between the needs of different plants or animals and the places they live.