

Incredible, Edible Corn

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We all eat corn — as a vegetable, popped, on the cob, in soup, or in fritters.

We fry in corn oil, sweeten with corn syrup, and corn starch is used to thicken puddings. Read the labels of various food items in the grocery store and you will find that most contain corn.

Other somewhat unexpected uses for corn are fireworks, crayons, aspirin, chewing gum, candles, ceramics, inks, soaps, and for theatrical make-up. These are only a few of the several hundred listed by the Illinois Corn Marketing Board.

There are other uses for corn still in the developing stages.

According to the Illinois Corn Marketing Board, a new material in which to pack materials that might break in the mail or with rough handling is called "eco-foam." This is a combination of more than 95 percent corn starch and a small amount of synthetic additive.

Eco-foam will not harm the environment. You can reuse it, put it on a compost pile, or flush down the toilet.

Or how about a fun word to say — "SuperSlurper," sometimes called "Hydosorb."

SuperSlurper is used in the blue plastic reusable ice packs most people keep in their freezers for a picnic or to place on a bruised muscle.

This unusual corn product can actually absorb up to 2,000 times its weight in water and is used to keep underground storage tanks dry.

SuperSlurper can keep the wounds of burn victims dry so they can heal faster.

Even baby diapers can include corn-based SuperSlurper.

"Salting" the roads on an icy winter night is usually done with chloride salt. An environmentally safer alternative is calcium-magnesium acetate, which is now made from petroleum. However, scientists are looking into making this product from corn, which reduces the price by about \$250 per ton.

And still, more research is being done on making butanol from corn which should be produced at 34 percent less than the present oil based butanol.

Butanol is used in plasticisers, resins, lacquers, food extraction, and brake fluids.

Corn Cobs

Those are unusual uses for corn, but there are also strange uses for corn cobs.

Ground up corn cobs are used to heat muscles in order for physical therapy to be more effective.

Inside a machine, minute particles of corn cob are heated and swirled about the injured body part. "It is much more effective than using any other

type of heat," said Joe Petlock, an occupational therapist at the Altoona Hospital.

The same product and almost the same process is also used by jewelers to clean and shine jewelry.

Other uses for corn cobs include kitty litter and as an anti-skid material.

Is it any wonder there is concern over the disappearing farm lands?

NCGA Announces Contest Winners

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — The National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) has announced corn farmers from 13 states took top honors in the 1997 National Corn Yield Contest (NCYC).

To corn farmers, the CYC is the annual equivalent to participating in the World Series, the Super Bowl, or the Stanley Cup. The corn yield entries tabulated from the farmers who took first, second and third place in the popular contest ranged from an impressive 215 bushels per acre to a whopping 334 bushels per acre.

"These are some truly amazing yields," said NCGA President Ryland Utlaut, a corn grower from Grand Pass, Mo. "Farming is an occupation that really demands a lot of skill and timeliness of operation, and

Larry Breech, newly elected vice president of the Pennsylvania Farmer's Union, said, "Corn is very important and we need to be doing more research on developing heartier strains."

As Mary Eubanks wrote in a recent article in "Discover" magazine in which she traces the roots of corn, "Corn is an incredible puzzle, and the story is just unfolding.

Studying the history of corn

could help us keep up with the demand the future is sure to bring.

At present, each kernel of corn has the potential to grow an ear containing nearly 800 kernels, and a single acre of land can produce more than 13 million kernels of corn. With the increasing productive capability of our nation's farmers, the number of new uses for corn is only limited by imagination.

the people who have obtained these yields certainly demonstrate those characteristics."

Utlaut noted that the range of yields reflects the variation in yields experienced by farmers throughout the nation. "Rains were quite spotty everywhere, and that showed up in our yields," he said.

Winners of this year's contest will be recognized at the annual Commodity Classic, the combined convention and trade show of the NCGA and American Soybean Association, Feb. 22-24, in Long Beach, Calif. Along with national recognition, winners receive significant prizes from participating seed and crop protection companies.

Contest participants also improve their operations by getting a unique opportunity to compare their own proven corn production capabilities with other farmers in their state and across the country. The NCYC's goal is to educate farmers on improving

their methods of production to increase profitability while addressing environmental concerns.

More than 3,200 farmers participated in this year's contest.

Following are class descriptions;

Class AA States: This class combines corn growers from Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio and Wisconsin. **Class A States:** The 41 continental U.S. states not included in the list of AA states.

The winners according to the contest class and agronomic practices are:

A Non-Irrigated Class

1. JM Souza Farms Inc., Lodi, CA—271.4 bu/acre - Pioneer 33R87

2. Wittler Farms Inc., Talmage, NE—261.0 bu/acre - Pioneer 3237

3. J.M. Souza Farms Inc., Lodi, CA—260.8 bu/acre - Pioneer 3162

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NC GA In Commodity Roundtable Meeting

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The NCGA was among 10 commodity organizations meeting in Washington Dec. 2-3 to discuss major issues which will be addressed in the upcoming session of Congress.

NCGA representatives included President Ryland Utlaut; executive vice president, CEO Chris Wehrman, and vice president, public policy, Bruce Knight.

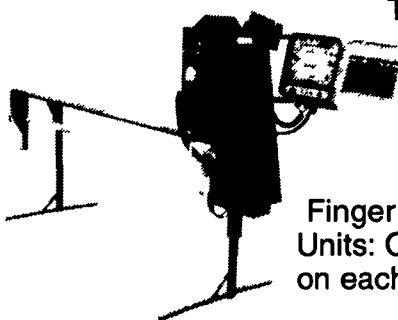
"NCGA's participation in this meeting helped reinforce the Corn Growers' viewpoint on these and other important issues," said Wehrman. "The most critical issues addressed are the need for Presidential Fast Track authority to allow corn to continue to move into world markets, as well as Congressional support of research and energy issues with a particular focus on ethanol."

She added that teamwork among commodity organizations is critical to cooperate on major agricultural issues and to gain perspective with one another on these issues of mutual interest."

An added benefit, she concluded, "was the opportunity to meet with key staff within the

Administration and Congress and get a look ahead to what the next session will hold."

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