

Corn Glossary

Atole: Finely ground and toasted cornmeal stirred into a liquid, usually water or milk, with or without flavorings such as chili, chocolate, and sugar. Used for a drink or desserts. In the Southwest, blue corn atole is common. Pinole is an interchangeable term.

Chicos: Dried sweet corn kernels, usually used in stews. A term common to the Southwest.

Corn Flour: Finely ground cornmeal of any kind. Masa harina is an alkali-processed corn flour.

Cornmeal: Ground kernels of any kind of corn, usually a dent, flint, or flour type. The corn can be ground to any degree of coarseness or fineness. Commercial "wet milling" removes the hull and germ of the corn kernel and fragments the kernel into its components of starch, sugar, and oil. Commercial "dry milling" removes the germ before grinding the rest of the kernel. The best meal is whole-grain with the germ in.

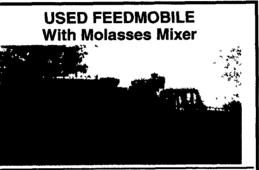
Cornstarch: Industrially processed starch extracted from the starch components of corn.

Grits: Ground cornmeal. coarse or fine, white or yellow, and the mush that is made from that meal. Originally the meal was ground from hominy or whole kernels and processed with alkali to remove the skins. Today hominy is found most frequently canned and packed in a light brine.

Samp: Coarsely cracked corn.

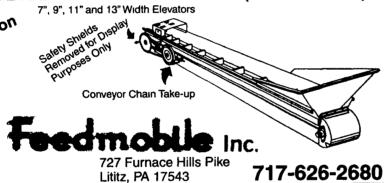


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Huitlacoche: Mexican term for the sweet corn mushroom, or fungus, that Americans call "corn smut."

Maize or Maiz: Historically the proper generic name for the grain native to the Western Hemisphere. Latin name Zeamays. America's use of the word "corn" for maize comes from the British English, where corn means any kind of grain.

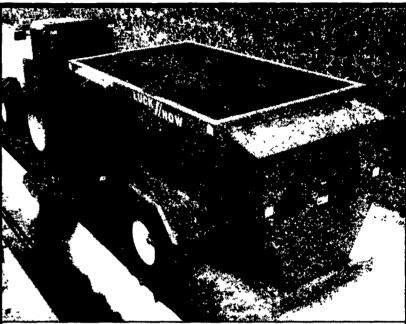
Masa: Mexican term for the dough produced by grinding wet corn kernels processed with alkali.

Masa harina: Mexican term for this same dough, dried and pulverized into fine corn flour. Works like an "instant" flour.

Nixtamal: Mexican term for wet whole kernels freshly processed with alkali.

Polenta: Italian term for cornmeal and for mush or porridge made with that meal.

Posole: Mexican term for dried whole kernels processed with alkali and for the soup/stews made with these kernels.



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