

## White Corn Trials Help Boost Interest In Ohio

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Impressive white corn hybrid performance in the face of environmental stresses is helping to boost grower interest in the specialty crop as an alternative to the more common yellow dent corn.

Ohio State University Extension white corn performance trials, as part of a multi-state testing program, found that white corn hybrids tested in 2002 yielded well enough to rival yellow corn, despite a wet spring and a hot, dry summer.

"What impressed us with the results was that some of these hybrids were yielding very well despite the growing conditions," said Peter Thomison, an extension agronomist. "It emphasizes that we do have white corn varieties available that are appropriate for growers to consider in Ohio."

Twenty-five corn varieties were tested in northwest Ohio and evaluated for a variety of characteristics, including food quality and agronomic traits. Results of the trials can be found online at <http://corn.osu.edu/library/articles/2002%20White%20Corn.pdf>.

Thomison said white corn production in Ohio is showing some spark with the premiums contracted growers receive for their crop and available end-user outlets. White corn is mainly used in the food industry to make such items as corn chips and taco shells. Unlike yellow corn, white corn lacks beta-carotene, a Vitamin A precursor.

"Before 1920, about half the corn acreage in the United States was white corn. Then the benefits of Vitamin A was discovered and growers started growing yellow corn, because they didn't have to supplement rations of Vitamin A," said Thomison. "Today, there's probably less than a million acres of white corn grown in the U.S."

Despite the limited white corn acreage, Ohio State researchers are in their sixth year of white corn performance trials to help growers interested in white corn production make wise management decisions.

"We provide a data base for growers who are interested in growing white corn to see what hybrids are likely to yield well," said Thomison.

For more information on specialty corns, including white corn, check out the Ohio State Website, "Specialty Corns for Value-Added Grain Production" at <http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/hocorn/>. To receive a copy of "White Food Corn - 2002 Performance Tests, Spec. Rep. 547," contact Thomison at (614) 292-2373 or [thomison.1@osu.edu](mailto:thomison.1@osu.edu), or Allen Geyer at (614) 292-1393 or [geyer.9@osu.edu](mailto:geyer.9@osu.edu).



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