

Wisconsin Corn: Food, Fiber & Fuel

ELEMENTARY | GRADES 2–5 | ONE-PAGE FACT SHEET

Corn is Wisconsin's biggest crop by acres. Almost all of it is field corn — a tough, starchy corn that feeds animals and gets made into fuel and hundreds of products. Only a small slice is the sweet corn we eat off the cob.

WISCONSIN CORN BY THE NUMBERS (2025 CROP YEAR)

Corn planted in Wisconsin	4.15 million acres
Corn harvested for grain	605 million bushels
Average yield — a state record	188 bushels per acre
Corn chopped for silage (cattle feed)	19.5 million tons
Wisconsin's national rank for corn silage	#1 in the country
Weight of one bushel of corn	56 pounds

ONE BUSHEL OF CORN CAN MAKE

- About 2.8 gallons of ethanol fuel
- About 17 pounds of livestock feed (called distillers grains)
- Corn oil, cornstarch, corn syrup, and cornmeal

FOOD, FIBER & FUEL FROM WISCONSIN FARMS

FOOD	FIBER	FUEL
Corn feeds dairy cows, and Wisconsin cows make the milk for our cheese. Wisconsin also grows cranberries (#1 in the U.S.), snap beans (#1), and potatoes (top 3).	Corn cobs, stalks, and starch go into paper glue, cardboard, cleaning products, and plant-based plastics. Wisconsin sheep and alpacas also produce wool fiber.	Corn becomes ethanol, a fuel blended into gasoline. Look for E10, E15, or Unleaded 88 on the pump — that's Wisconsin corn in the tank.

DID YOU KNOW?

Wisconsin is called America's Dairyland — we make more cheese than any other state.

Corn is a member of the grass family. So is wheat, rice, and the lawn outside your school.

Every kernel on an ear of corn is connected to one strand of silk. 800 kernels means 800 strands of silk.

Corn ingredients show up in more than 4,000 everyday products.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY — CORN DETECTIVES

Bring in labels from home: cereal, chips, soda, salad dressing, toothpaste. Look for cornstarch, corn syrup, dextrose, maltodextrin, xanthan gum, or citric acid. Tally how many products in the pile started in a corn field.