



A Tale of Two Corns



When you're driving down a highway in the Corn Belt and see acre after acre after acre of corn, don't jump out and grab an ear for some impromptu corn on the cob. Chances are, it's the wrong sort of corn.

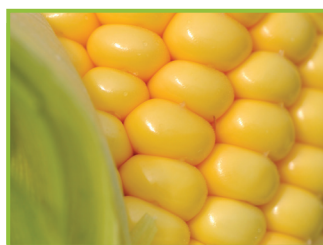
There are two corns in the United States, and field corn is by far the most common, grown on more than 99% of all corn acres. While a small portion is processed for use as corn cereal, corn starch, corn oil and corn syrup for human consumption, it is primarily used for livestock feed, ethanol production and other manufactured goods. It's considered a grain. Sweet corn is what people purchase fresh, frozen or canned for eating. It's consumed as a vegetable. Unlike field corn, which is harvested when the kernels are dry and fully mature, sweet corn is picked when immature.

The following statistics from the U.S. Department of Agriculture will give you a sense of the size of these two vastly different industries.



Field Corn

- **88.6 million planted acres**
- **13.7 billion bushels produced**
- **Crop Value: \$91.7 billion**



Sweet Corn



- **355,100 planted acres**
- **81.7 million bushels**
- **Crop Value: \$808.8 million**

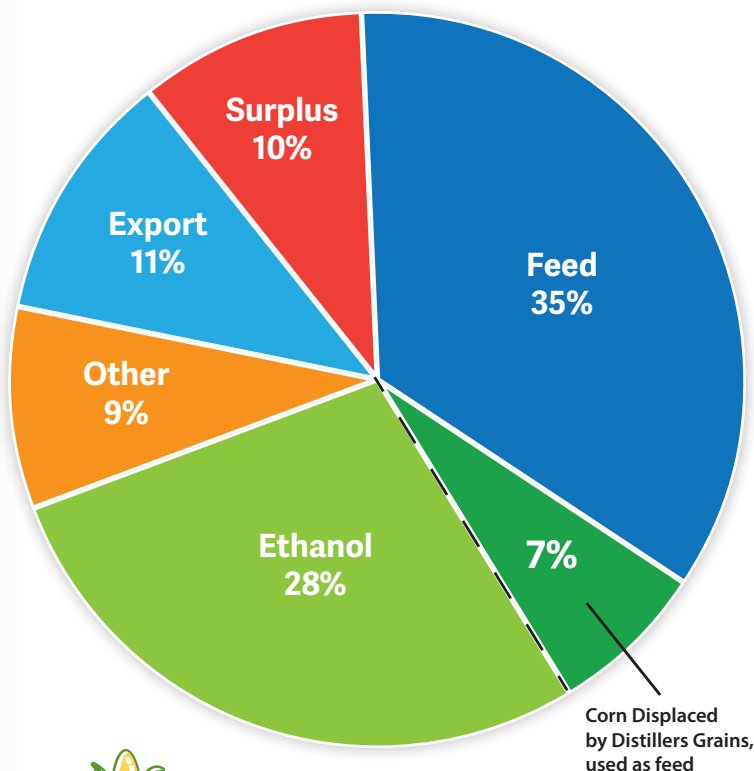


What do some of these words mean?

- A **bushel** of field corn is 56 pounds, about the weight of a large bag of dog food.
- An **acre** is about the area of a football field.



How Field Corn is Used



In 2022, corn farmers grew 13.7 billion bushels of field corn. The total corn supply, including the corn carried over from 2021, was 15.1 billion bushels.

34.9% of the field corn supply in the United States (5.3 billion bushels) is used as feed for livestock such as beef, pork or poultry.

28.2% (4.3 billion bushels) is used directly for ethanol production. This excludes the corn that goes into ethanol plants and becomes distillers grains, the equivalent of 1 billion bushels of corn for livestock feed, **6.5%** of the total corn supply.

9.5% of the corn (1.4 billion bushels) goes to other food, seed and industrial uses. Field corn is a source of high fructose corn syrup, corn cereal, corn starch, corn oil and corn syrup. Hundreds of other products are also derived from corn, such as some fabrics and packaging.

11.4% (1.7 billion bushels) is exported to other countries. The top five countries to which the United States exports corn are China, Mexico, Japan, Canada and Colombia.

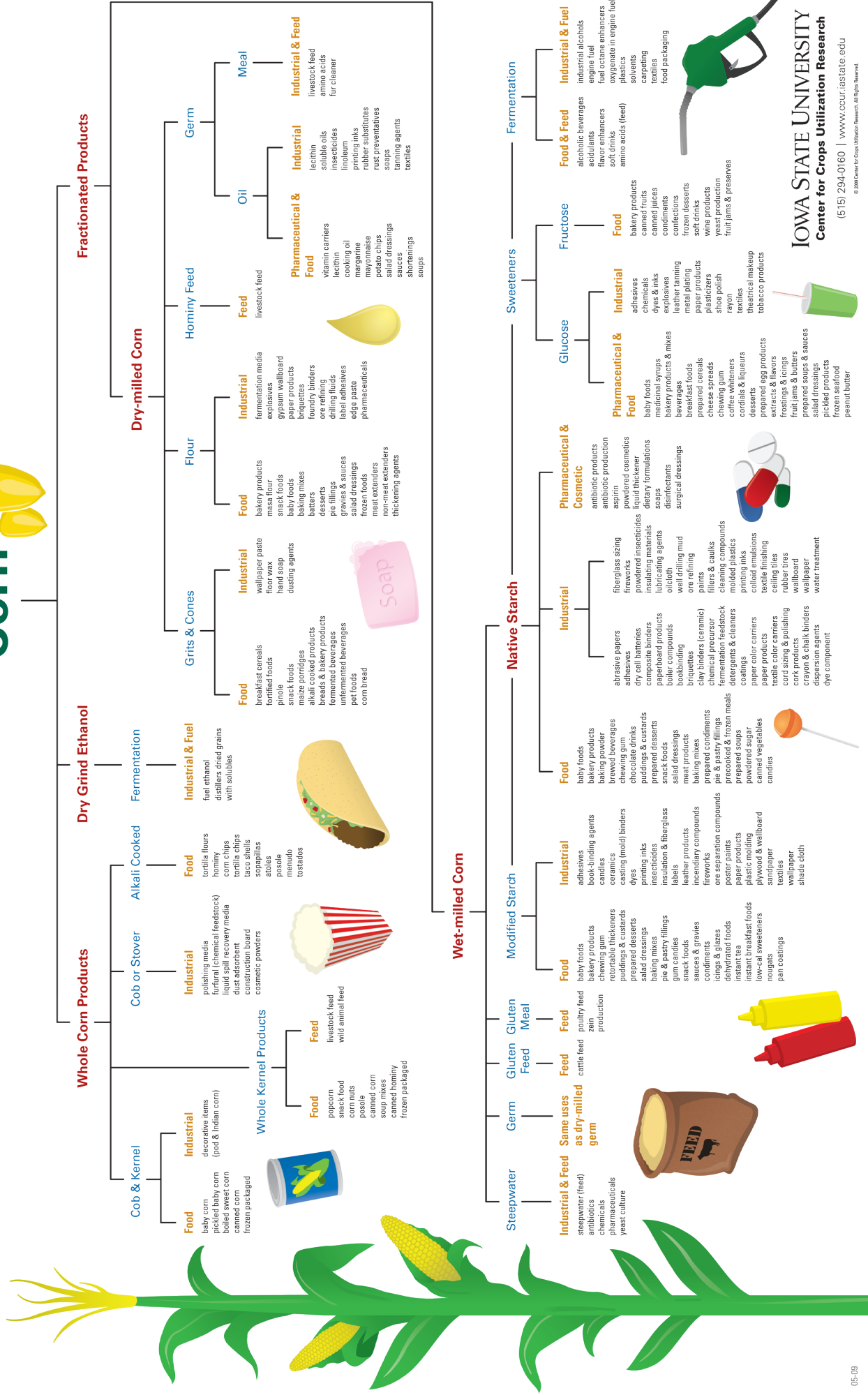
In addition, about **9.6%** of the total corn supply (currently 1.5 billion bushels) is projected to be carried over as a surplus for the next year.



Source for field corn figures: U.S. Department of Agriculture, as of June 2023; Sweet corn statistics from USDA Quick Stats for 2022 year

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Corn



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