

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 percent 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 (for the year 2008) will give you a sense of the size of these two vastly different industries.



Field Corn

- 86 million planted acres
- 12.1 billion bushels produced
- Crop Value: \$49.6 billion



Sweet Corn

- 617,350 planted acres
- 240 million bushel equivalents
- Crop Value: \$1.1 billion



What do some of these words mean? A bushel of corn is 56 pounds, about the weight of a large bag of dog food. An acre is about the area of a football field. A ton is 2,000 pounds, about the weight of a small car.

How Field Corn is Used

In 2008, corn growers produced 12.1 billion bushels of field corn. The total corn supply, including the corn carried over from 2007, is 13.7 billion bushels.

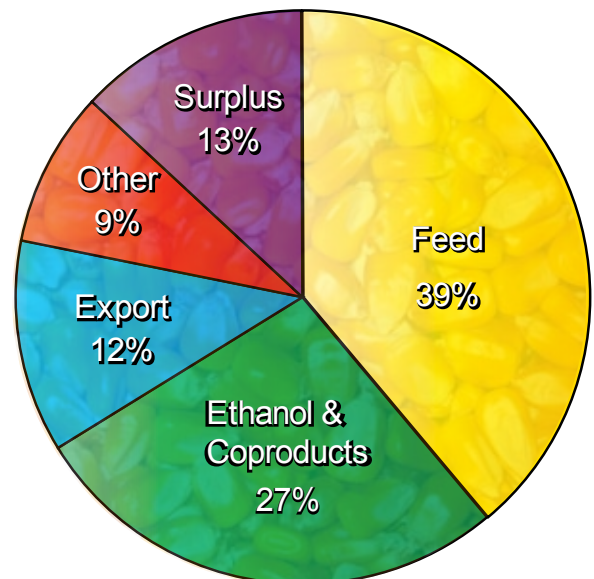
39% of the 2008 field corn supply in the United States (5.3 billion bushels) is used as feed for livestock such as beef, pork or poultry.

27% (3.7 billion bushels) is used for ethanol production. Besides the ethanol this produces, this corn also will result in approximately 1 billion bushels of distillers grains to be used as livestock feed.

12% (1.7 billion bushels) is exported to other countries. The top five countries to which the United States exports corn are Japan, Mexico, South Korea, Taiwan and Egypt.

9% of the corn (1.3 billion bushels) goes to other food, seed and industrial uses. Field corn is a source of corn cereal, corn starch, corn oil and corn syrup. Hundreds of other products are also derived from corn, such as certain plastic packaging and even fabrics

13% of the total corn supply (currently 1.74 billion bushels) is carried over as a surplus for the next year.



Source for all figures: U.S. Department of Agriculture, March 2009