



DID YOU KNOW?



Husk: the outer protective covering of an ear of corn.



Kernel: the fruits of the corn.



Ear: the part of the corn plant that contains kernels.



Pod: a detachable part of the plant that contains seeds.



Stem: the main body or stalk of a plant or shrub.



Flower: the seed-bearing part of the plant.

CORN

Field corn is different from popcorn and sweet corn, which we consume directly. We are able to use field corn for many other things, livestock feed being just one use. We can make ethanol, ink, carpet, biodegradable plastics, and many more. In stage 1 corn starts out as a seed just like most other plants. Then as it starts growing it goes into stage 2 which is called germination or emergence. This is where the seed starts sprouting and growing roots. Corn is a monocot which means they only have one cotyledon. Stage 3 is when the plant starts growing tassels, which are the spiky things coming out the top of the plant. Stage 4 is the silk stage. The silks look like hair and come out the top of the ear of corn. Stage 5, the last stage, is called maturity when the ear of corn is fully developed. During this stage, the farmer will continually check the moisture percentage of the kernels. In the milk stage, they will have an 80% moisture content and when they are ready to be harvested they will have a 35% moisture content or less.



SOYBEANS



Just like corn, we can use soybeans to make many other things besides just livestock feed. We can make ink, yogurt, oil, plastic, etc. Like corn, soybeans also start out as a seed (stage 1), and as they start growing go into the germination stage (stage 2). Stage 3 is the sprouting stage where their roots start growing and the sprout emerges above the soil. Soybeans are dicots which means they have two cotyledons. Stage 4 is when their leaves start growing and they look like small bushes. Stage 5 is when they start growing buds and flowering so they are able to pollinate. Finally, the last two stages are when the pods are formed. After they are formed and filled (stage 5) they are in their mature stage (stage 6). This stage is when the farmer will watch the plant turn a yellowish-brown color meaning they are ready to harvest.

POLLINATION

Pollination is a very important part of a plant's life cycle. This is how a plant is able to produce seeds for the next generation. Most often when we think of pollination, we think of it being done by birds or insects, but corn and soybeans are what we call self-pollinating plants. This means that they pollinate themselves and rely on the wind to carry the pollen to the stigma. The stigma is where the pollen will germinate and eventually produce the next generation.



FUN FACTS

- 99% of corn grown in Iowa is "Field Corn", not the sweet corn you enjoy on the cob or in a can.
- Iowa is the top producing state for corn, soybeans, hogs, eggs, and ethanol.
- Soybean farmers in Iowa produce roughly 13% of the nation's total bushels of soybeans.
- Iowa's soybean crop value routinely exceeds \$4.5 billion.

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Scott, Benton & Linn County

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JOKE OF THE DAY

What would you get after crossing a robot and a tractor?

A transfarmer!