

Corn—Greatest Crop of Iowa

By GERTRUDE E. MURRAY



HIS is
the
State
Where
the Tall
Corn
Grows

CORN—whose praises are sung by many! The crop that has made Iowa famous; the food that has fattened her hogs and her cattle! The food which we could make much of if we, as Iowa's citizens, would realize the possibilities locked up in those little yellow kernels. Let's feed our corn to our people as well as to our pigs.

Long ago in Egypt, Greece and Rome corn was an important food and today it is for the Mexican what rice is for the Chinaman.

The origin of corn is as yet a mystery, but the Indians who gave the first seed to the white men have an interesting little legend which explains it for them.

The story is told of an Indian youth who went into the woods to fast. He built a lodge deep in the woods and prepared to stay there seven days. At the end of the third day, when he was too weak to move about, he lay upon his bed looking up into the sky, wishing that he might find something which would be a comfort and a help to his people. As he lay there a spirit came down, in the form of a young man dressed in green with green plumes upon his head.

The young man told the Indian youth to arise and wrestle with him. The Indian did as he was told and found that he was much stronger than he had supposed, as he was able to throw the green-clad stranger. The spirit returned for three days, and at each time the Indian became filled with an unnatural strength which made him able to conquer the visitor. On the third day the spirit said to him, "Tomorrow will be the last day that I shall wrestle with you, and you will again triumph over me. As soon as you have thrown me, strip off my clothes and bury me in the soft fresh earth and leave me there; but come occasionally to keep away the weeds."

The next day the Indian did as the stranger had told him to do and in a few days saw the green plumes of his friend coming up thru the ground, and in time the mature plant was seen. He invited his parents to see the new plant and they prepared a feast for all their friends. Thus was the beginning of Indian corn.

But, to be more practical, let us consider the food value of corn. Scientifically speaking, corn contains the constituents—protein, carbohydrate and fat. Before cooking, there are in its make-up

some of the much-sought vitamins, but these are largely destroyed thru cooking. Corn also contains a fair amount of calcium, phosphorous and iron, especially when used in connection with milk.

Besides these dietary advantages, corn has an added charm in that it is pleasing to the taste and to the eye. Who does not await with keen anticipation the first roasting ears of summer, or the tempting rich brown corn bread or boston brown bread that is so acceptable on a cold winter night?

All parts of the plant are now used—even the husks. Most of us are familiar with many of the products of corn, canned corn, dried corn, hominy, corn meal, corn syrup and corn starch, but perhaps we did not know that from the husks are made a kind of paper filling for mattresses, packing for fruit, cigarette wrappers and door mats.

But we must hasten to return to the consideration of our product as a food, not as a door mat.

There are two main varieties of canned corn—cream corn and whole kernel corn. The cream corn may be used for scalloping or for baking with tomatoes. The following recipe is for corn baked with tomatoes:

Corn Baked With Tomatoes

1 qt. Cream Corn
4 Whole Tomatoes or 1 1/4 C. Canned Tomatoes
1 C. Cream
1 Onion
1 C. Bread Crumbs
Salt
Pepper

Butter a baking dish; put in a layer of corn, then one of tomatoes and one of bread crumbs; dust with salt and pepper and dot with butter. Proceed in this way until all the materials are used. Add the juice of one onion, and the cream. Bake in a medium oven for thirty minutes.

The whole kernel corn may be satisfactorily used in fritters. The following recipe uses three of the products of corn:

Corn Fritters

1 C. Flour
2 T. Cornstarch
1 tsp. Baking Powder
Salt
Pepper
2 Eggs
1/3 C. Milk
1 T. Corn Oil
1 C. Corn

Sift the dry ingredients. Beat the eggs, add milk, corn oil, and corn, and stir into dry ingredients. Sauté in hot fat or corn oil. Drop spoonful of batter in hot fat, spread out, let brown and turn.

An unusual way of treating corn is to can it on the cob. If there are only two of you and you sometimes feel the desire for roasting ears in winter, obtain your luxury in that way. But as a general rule canned roasting ears are not the most practical things one can buy.

The flavor of dried corn is to many delightful, and dried corn, after softening, may be simply stewed, or may be pre-

pared the same way as fresh corn.

The uses of cornmeal are practically unlimited—cornmeal gruel, corn bread, corn muffins, boston brown bread, hasty pudding. A recipe for corn muffins follows:

Corn Muffins

2 C. Cornmeal 1 T. Sugar
2 C. Flour 1 tsp. Salt
2 tsp. Baking Powder
1 T. Fat 2 Eggs
2 C. Milk

Sift dry ingredients together, add eggs beaten, and milk and mix with as few strokes as possible. Add melted butter and bake in a hot oven.

Cornmeal is particularly good when used, in place of wheat flour, as a dredge for fish.

Corn oil is a product which has just recently come into its own. It is now used in place of other fats in cooking, and in deep fat frying. It has a much higher smoking temperature than lard and hence decomposes less easily. It is the oil most generally used for mayonnaise, a recipe for which follows:

Mayonnaise

1 pt. Corn Oil 1/4 tsp. Paprika
2 Egg Yolks 1 tsp. Salt
1 tsp. Mustard 2 T. Lemon Juice
Pepper 2 T. Vinegar

Have all ingredients and mixing utensils cold. Mix dry ingredients. Add egg yolks and when well mixed 1/4 teaspoon of vinegar. Add oil drop by drop until the mixture begins to thicken, beating slowly. As soon as the mixture thickens, add the remainder of the vinegar a little at a time. Now beat in the remainder of the oil gradually until all is used. The mayonnaise should be thick enough to hold its shape. Put in a glass jar and cover closely.

Delicious, creamy candy may be made by using corn syrup. It is also good for use in making other syrups for hot cakes. The following are some good candy recipes:

Cocoaanut Candy

1/4 C. Cocoaanut 1 T. Butter
1 C. Brown Sugar 1 tsp. Vinegar
1 C. Corn Syrup

Spread the cocoaanut on dishes in a warm place to make soft and pliable. Boil the other ingredients without stirring until brittle in cold water. Stir in the cocoaanut lightly and pour onto tins well buttered.

Chocolate Caramels

4 squares Chocolate 1 C. Brown Sugar
1 C. Milk 1 T. Butter
1 C. Corn Syrup 1 tsp. Vanilla

Cut up the chocolate and add to the milk. When dissolved add the syrup and sugar and cook till it forms a hard ball in cold water. Add the butter when nearly done. Remove and pour into greased pan at once. Chopped nuts may be added.

Let my final word be a plea that we eat more of that crop which is the pride of our state; that we be loyal to our state by using her valuable corn for our own use.