



## Corn Definitions and Facts

(Alton Brown, *Good Eats- The Early Years*, p.136-139)



**Flint Corn-** This is a very hard corn, which is named after a rock. The colored “Indian Corn” we hang on our doors at Thanksgiving is flint corn. These days it’s used for animal feed and by industry.



**Popcorn-** A specialized version of flint corn that has just enough moisture inside to explode or “pop” when cooked.



**Field/Dent Corn-** Waxy starch and thick protein coat corn which is named after the dent that forms in each kernel. Used mostly as animal fodder but it is also used in processed foods. Dent corn is used in the production of corn syrup, ethanol, adhesives, dyes, batteries, book bindings, fireworks, surgical dressings, mustard, aspirin, lipstick, body lotion, soda, ketchup, jam, jelly, and a wide variety on insecticides.



**Flour Corn-** Has a soft, starchy kernel, which grinds easily. Native Americans used this variety extensively and still do.



**Pod Corn-** Each kernel has its own husk, so it’s pretty useless for everything but scientific research.



**Sweet Corn-** Contains far more natural sugar than other types of corn. Although it’s the corn we think of when we think of corn, it accounts for a relatively small percentage of the US crop.



**Maize-** Also known as “Indian Corn, ” this is the type of corn mostly seen in the United States and Canada.

**Nixtamalization-** Typically refers to a process for the preparation of maize (corn), or other grain, in which the grain is soaked and cooked in an alkaline solution, usually limewater (calcium hydroxide aka cal), and hulled. The Nixtamalization process converts some of the niacin (and possibly other B vitamins) into a form more absorbable by the body, improves the availability of the amino acids, and (at least in the lime-treated variant) supplements the calcium content, balancing maize's comparative excess of phosphorus (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nixtamalization>).



**Hominy-** Also known as Nixtamal, is typically a white corn that is prepared by Nixtamalization. The outside corn skin is removed through this process, and the corn is allowed to expand or “flower” into a larger corn as it cooks. Hominy is used in Mexican dishes like posole and menudo and, if ground fine, can be used as masa for making corn tortillas and tamales. Hominy is also ground and dried to form grits.