

## A closer look at the composition of a corn kernel.

---

The **pericarp** is the outer covering that protects the kernel and preserves the nutrient value inside. It resists water and water vapor – and is undesirable to insects and microorganisms.

The **germ** is the only living part of the corn kernel. The germ contains the essential genetic information, enzymes, vitamins and minerals for the kernel to grow into a corn plant. About 25 percent of the germ is corn oil – the most valuable part of the kernel, which is high in polyunsaturated fats and has a mild taste.



The **endosperm** accounts for about 82 percent of the kernel's dry weight and is the source of energy (starch) and protein for the germinating seed. Starch is the most widely used part of the kernel and is used as a starch in foods – or as the key component in fuel, sweeteners, bioplastics and other products.

The **tip cap** is the attachment point of the kernel to the cob, through which water and nutrients flow – and is the only area of the kernel not covered by the pericarp.