

understanding agriculture worldwide

www.agribenchmark.org/cash-crop

THÜNEN

Crop Portrait CORN

by **agri benchmark**

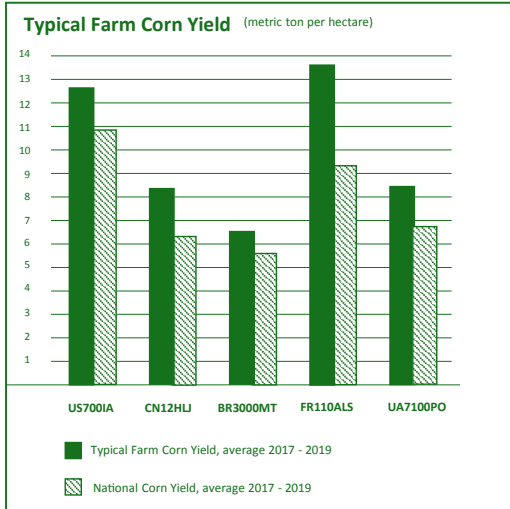
Corn Production Systems

One product – many ways to produce around the world

Top 5 Countries Corn Production (average 2018 – 2020, metric tons)

- USA: 356 Million
- China: 260 Million
- Brazil: 104 Million
- EU: 65 Million
- Argentina: 50 Million

Country	Typical Farm	Specific location	Corn Acreage	Tillage
US	US700IA	North Central Iowa	364 hectares (50% of total acr.)	conservation tillage (mulch-seeding)
CHINA	CN12HLJ	Heilongjiang Province	8 hectares (66% of total acr.)	intensive tillage (plough)
BRAZIL	BR3000MT	Mato Grosso	1.620 hectares (49% of total acr.)	no-tillage (direct seeding)
FRANCE	FR110ALS	Alsace	75 hectares (73% of total acr.)	intensive tillage (plough)
UKRAINE	UA7100PO	Poltava region	2.034 hectares (29% of total acr.)	conservation tillage (mulch seeding)



Corn – Facts and Figures

Corn – physiology and agronomy

Most crops are C3 plants; the first carbon compound produced during photosynthesis contains three carbon atoms.

In environments with higher temperatures and stronger radiation, some plants developed the so-called C4 photosynthesis. Unique leaf anatomy and biochemistry enable C4 plants to produce a four-carbon compound. This feature makes them more efficient in the production of organic matter. C4 plants can't cope with low temperatures and therefore must be planted when soil temperature is above 10°C.

Corn types white vs. yellow corn

Corn is either yellow or white; the difference - besides the color - is minor (beta carotene content). White corn is prevailing in Central America (incl. Mexico) and Africa and is used as a staple food for human consumption. Yellow corn is commonly found in North and Latin America, where it is used as a feedstock for animal feeding, biofuels or isoglucose (liquid sugar).

Genetically modified corn

Many industrial and feedstock varieties of corn are genetically modified organisms (GMOs) engineered for resistance to the herbicide glyphosate or to produce proteins from Bacillus thuringiensis (Bt) to control insect pests.

In addition, some strains have been genetically engineered for greater drought tolerance and to increase their nutritional value. In the US, more than 90% of corn is GMO; in Brazil the share is above 80%.

In Europe, political resistance against GMO products remains high. Only four countries – Spain (130.000 ha), Portugal (7.000 ha), Slovakia (138 ha) and the Czech Republic (75 ha) grow GMO corn.

Corn as an energy crop

In 2020, more than 30% of US corn production went into ethanol. Corn also is a relevant source for ethanol in Brazil, where, in 2020, 8% of total Brazilian ethanol was derived from corn. In Germany, roughly 0.9 million ha (35% of total) corn are grown for biogas plants.

