

The Corn Quest

written by Hazrul | 29/05/2024

THE CORN QUEST



10,000 years ago

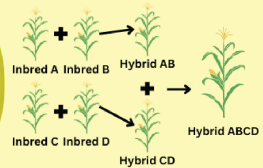
Native Americans domesticated Teosinte, an ancestral grass to corn



First evidence of modern-day maize in existence

4,500 years ago

Two hybrid offspring of two pairs of inbred parents were crossed to make Double-cross Inbred-Hybrid corn.



1920s

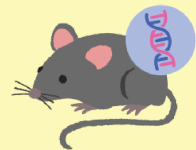
Barbara McClintock earned the Nobel Prize Award for discovering the existence of jumping genes, or transposons, responsible for multiple colored kernels in one corn.



Courtesy of the Barbara McClintock Papers, American Philosophical Society.

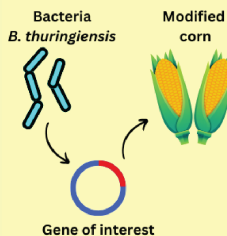
1940s & 1950s

Birth of recombinant DNA, and genetically modified organisms.



1980s

Insecticide gene from *Bacillus thuringiensis* was inserted into maize to make Bt-corn. This was the first GMO corn in the market in USA.



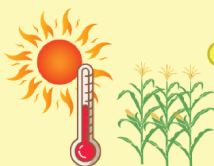
1996

Genetically modified herbicide resistant corn was introduced, influencing greater use of herbicides in later years.



1998

Gene from *Bacillus subtilis* genetically inserted to make drought tolerant hybrid corn.



2012

Bayer genetically engineered corn with shorter and thicker stalks to withstand strong winds.



2023

Genetic engineering has improved food survival in a very short time. But remember, no matter the technology, it should be used responsibly.

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Around 10,000 years ago, corn started as a wild grass called [teosinte](#) in Mexico. It looked very different from the corn we know today, with tiny, hard kernels. Ancient farmers noticed some plants had more desirable traits and began selecting and planting these seeds. Over thousands

of years, this selective breeding transformed teosinte into larger, softer corn. Today, thanks to modern farming techniques and genetic research, corn is a major food source worldwide, used in everything from food to fuel. The journey of corn shows how human innovation can shape the plants we rely on.