

CARING FOR GROWING CORN

Healthy Plants • Bigger Ears • Better Harvest

★ Growing corn is not complicated once the plants are established, but a few care practices make a significant difference in yield and quality.

1 WATER

Water is critical for growing corn, especially at three key stages.



1. GERMINATION



Keep soil consistently moist after planting until seedlings emerge.

2. TASSELING & SILKING



This is when the ears are forming and pollination is occurring.

Water stress during pollination is the most common cause of poorly filled ears with missing kernels.

3. GRAIN FILL



Once the silks have been pollinated, kernels develop rapidly and need consistent moisture to fill out fully.



Give corn about 1 inch of water per week. Deep, even watering is best.

2 FERTILIZE

Corn is a heavy nitrogen feeder.



FIRST APPLICATION



Side-dress with a nitrogen-rich fertilizer or a shovelful of compost when plants are knee-high — about 12 to 18 inches tall.

SECOND APPLICATION



Apply a second feeding when tassels appear to give the crop the nutrients it needs for full ear development.



Organic option: Compost tea or fish emulsion can also be used as a side-dress.

3 WEEDING

Weeds compete with young corn for water and nutrients.



EARLY WEEKS



Weed regularly while plants are small. Cultivate shallowly around the plants — corn has surface roots that are easily damaged by deep cultivation.

AFTER KNEE-HIGH



Once the corn is knee-high, it shades out most weeds on its own.



Mulching between rows helps reduce weeds and keeps soil moist.

4 PEST CONTROL

Corn earworm is the most common pest.



THE PROBLEM

The worm enters through the silk end of the ear and feeds on the developing kernels.



ORGANIC SOLUTIONS

MINERAL OIL



Apply a drop of mineral oil to each silk cluster 3–5 days after silks appear.

BT SPRAY



Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) spray applied to silks at the same timing also works well.



Check your corn weekly during silking. Early control prevents damage.

Good care today = A better harvest tomorrow!

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