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A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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CORN AND TEMPERATURE

Sweet corn grown in the north has the reputation of being of better quality than that raised and canned in the southern states. Investigation has shown that the southern corn when picked contains just as high a percentage of sugar as the northern corn, but that the higher temperature of the south causes it to deteriorate more rapidly. From tests it appears that at a temperature of 68 degrees corn loses from one-quarter to one-third of its total sugar within 24 hours after picking, or twice what the loss would be at a temperature of 50 degrees. With a temperature of about 85 more than half the sugar is lost during the first day. In Maryland, August is the corn picking season, when the average daily temperature at Baltimore is 75 degrees. In Maine, on the other hand, corn is usually canned in September, when the average daily temperature of 60 degrees is typical. If you would enjoy sweet corn, raise it yourself, if possible, and let there be no stopover in the journey from the stalk to the pot.

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