"Corny" Facts and Fun Tidbits

Rod Bain: [00:00:00] Usually a visit to the Veg-U-cation booth at the USDA Farmer's Market in Washington D.C. leads to interesting tidbits for Veg-U-cators like Laura Popielski. But on this particular day and visit no Corny facts.

Rod Bain: [00:00:12] Oh no corny facts, I promise you may be corny jokes though.

Laura Popielski: [00:00:15] Such as. Why don't you tell secrets in a cornfield? Too many ears.

Rod Bain: [00:00:20] Alright. You have any more?

Laura Popielski: [00:00:22] What do you call a mythological vegetable? A uni"corn".

Rod Bain: [00:00:26] I must admit. Those are some very a"maize"ing jokes.

Laura Popielski: [00:00:32] That's just bad.

Rod Bain: [00:00:33] Well I guess aww shucks would be an inappropriate comeback at this point huh? Well then let's progress to interesting tidbits.

Rod Bain: [00:00:40] Corny are not about one of our favorite vegetables like this little fact.

Laura Popielski: [00:00:44] It's wind pollinated, so farmers will have to grow it in blocks instead of rows. So the corn will then use the winter to pollinate amongst all the corn stocks.

Rod Bain: [00:00:53] We usually associate corn with summer. Although some late season varieties are still available but as Laura Popielski points out with sweet corn you need to eat it soon after harvest as it starts to lose its sweetness. Also?

Laura Popielski: [00:01:06] Corn is best left in its original packaging until you're about to use it. And it will last in your fridge if you put it in a plastic bag for only about two or three days. Corn does not have a very long shelf life. So if you want corn for dinner you should go shopping that morning.

Rod Bain: [00:01:21] Now you can freeze sweet corn. But again that must happen immediately after picking. The best way to do that is cut the ears cut the kernels off after cooking and place in freezer bags when it comes time to husk the ears of corn. Popielski offers this advice.

Laura Popielski: [00:01:35] One simple way to do it is to cut the bottom end. So it has like a flat end to it and put it in the microwave for about two or three minutes and then you'll need to use potholders because the kernel will be hot but it will slide right out of that husk with the silk as well. And so that's really easy way if you have a microwave to husk the corn. You can also just do it by hand when the corn is raw by separating the silks and the husk and pulling down on one side and pulling down the other side.

Laura Popielski: [00:02:01] You can get rid of a lot of those silks with either a wet paper towel or run in under water and then you're ready to go.

Laura Popielski: [00:02:08] Grilling and boiling are among the preferred ways to prepare corn on the cob for eating but Popielski says there are a couple of stumbling blocks for people who boil corn. One they like to put salt in the water and two they boil it for too long.
Laura Popielski: [00:02:20] She says adding salt when boiling corn will dry out the kernels making them tough while the corn too long also has that same effect. So Popielski says corn should be boiled for no more than four to five minutes to keep the kernels tender.

Rod Bain: [00:02:33] So now that we are in perfect "hominy" about corn facts and fun bits.

Laura Popielski: [00:02:38] Now that's just bad.

Rod Bain: [00:02:40] Oookay, I'm Rod Bain reporting for the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Washington D.C.