Sweet Corn Price Tag

Sweet corn sells for around $1.99-$4.99/dozen fresh, $1.39-$2.69/pound frozen, and $.89 for 11-15 ounces canned. What are the hidden costs?

Sweet Corn Cost Tag

Out of season, sweet corn is likely from California, Florida or Mexico. Canned sweet corn takes less energy than frozen to get to your table.

Genetic Diversity

The genetic diversity of corn is legendary in Mexico. But commercial demand for a select few varieties potentially endangers this important resource. In the past 100 years, we’ve lost 96% of the genetic diversity in sweet corn and 91% of this diversity in field corn.

Environmental Impact

Many sweet corn growers reduce pesticide use through integrated pest management (IPM) and organic farming. Farmers practicing IPM and organic farming scout and manage their fields in ways that decrease or eliminate pesticide use. This helps keep pesticides out of our food, lakes, streams, and groundwater. A 2000 study found that IPM in Pennsylvania sweet corn produced economic benefits of about $6.7 million and environmental benefits valued at about $6.8 million in one growing season.

What Can You Do?

Buy locally grown sweet corn from farmers who use minimal synthetic controls. Or try growing your own. Enjoy corn on the cob as a seasonal delicacy. Fresh, local corn in season is sweeter, and possibly more nutritious, than fresh corn shipped from a distant state. Urge your produce manager to label the origin of the sweet corn sold at your grocery store. Urge your state and federal representatives to support sustainable agriculture legislation.

Change the world and your foodshed with a fork, wallet and brain