

# Corn Growth and Development: Origin

Maize belongs to the tribe *Maydeae* of the grass family *Graminae*. *Maydeae* includes two genera namely, *Zea mays* (Maize) and *Zea mexicana* (Teosinte) and *Tripsacum spp.* (Gamma grass). *Zea mays* is the only cultivated species across the world.

Maize originated in Mexico. It was introduced to Asia India by the Portuguese in the beginning of the 16th century.

Maize can be grown over a diverse environmental and geographical range in comparison to any other cereal crop. This crop can be cultivated from latitude 58°N to 40°S. Maize grows well at sea level to an altitude as high as 3900 meters above sea level. It is a C4 (carbon fixation level) plant with better physiological efficiency and a productivity as high as 3300kg per hectare as compared to 2200-2500kg per hectare of wheat-rice respectively.

The natural habitat of Maize is in the tropics, however the crop is grown in warmer parts of temperate, humid subtropical highlands and the tropics. The productivity is estimated to be higher in frost free areas having a temperature range of 21-27°C. The crop has a lower temperature limit (i.e., the crop can be grown in temperatures lower than 10°C) provided the season is frost free. In colder regions, the growing season normally begins when soil temperature stabilizes at 10°C and is terminated by either lower temperature or frost. Fifty to seventy-five centimeters of well distributed rainfall is conducive to proper growth of Maize.



## Source and Links

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