

Seasonal Eating
Whitney Danhof, Extension Agent

Fresh Corn Stars in Summer Dip
July 2025

Corn is one of my favorite vegetables. Especially fresh, sweet corn in the middle of summer. The fresh kernels are delicious in everything from fresh on or off the cob to dips, salsas, salads, side dishes and soups.

Corn comes in many varieties. Some people prefer the popular, traditional yellow corn with its sweet, nutty, “corny” flavor. It works well on the grill or boiled. White corn like the “silver queen” variety has a milder flavor and is creamy and slightly less sweet. It is often used in mid-Atlantic and southern cooking and is used to make hominy and grits. Bi-color corn is a combination of yellow and white kernels in varieties like “peaches and cream”. The newer super-sweet varieties of corn are great for eating fresh but can cause problems when preserving as they can burn/caramelize in the jars while canning.



There are many ways to enjoy corn. One fun newer way to serve corn is corn “ribs”. These are narrow pieces created by quartering the cobs lengthwise, then grilling with a barbecue rub on the outside. You can also make Mexican street corn by slathering the roasted ears with mayonnaise and then sprinkling with chili powder and cotija cheese crumbles and fresh lime juice.

Adding fresh corn kernels to your regular cornbread recipe gives great texture. It amps up the flavor and can be added alone or with a little finely diced jalapeno or green pepper or tomato to further enhance the summer vibes.

Many of the summer vegetables combine well with corn for super refreshing salads. Combine bell peppers, corn and cherry tomatoes with basil and a sweet vinaigrette or more savory Italian dressing for a great barbecue side dish.

The recipe below is really good for summer potlucks, cookouts or gatherings. This flavorful, creamy dip can be made a day ahead and is served cold with corn or tortilla chips. Perfect for a summer celebration.

For more information and recipes check out the Seasonal Eating page at bedford.tennessee.edu.

Fresh Corn Dip

- 4 ears fresh corn
- 1 (4-ounce) can chopped mild green chili, drained
- 1 (4-ounce) jar chopped pimiento, drained
- 1/2 cup finely chopped onion
- 1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and finely chopped
- 12 ounces shredded Cheddar cheese
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder

1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon chili powder
1/4 cup chopped cilantro

Shuck the corn and remove silks. Wrap in waxed paper or paper towels and microwave the corn just until slightly tender but still firm, about 4-8 minutes on HIGH, depending on your microwave. Cool and remove the kernels with a knife. Combine the kernels with the remaining ingredients. Store in the refrigerator. Serve with corn or tortilla chips.