

# Can you Eat Ornamental Corn? Yes, Homemade Hominy!

## Ingredients

- 500g. decorative corn kernels (about 4 ears worth, or 3 cups)
- 5 grams of sodium hydroxide (aka lye)

## Steps

1. Remove the kernels from the cob- you can use your hands like I did, or you can use a fairly dull knife to pop the kernels out more quickly. Weigh your resulting corn, and if your weight is more or less see the formula below and adjust.
2. Use protective gloves and long sleeves when handling lye, as it can burn skin. Be extra careful not to get it in your eyes, and work in a space with ventilation. Add the lye to your water in a non-reactive pot (I used enamel). Stir well to dissolve, then add the corn. Bring up to a boil, reduce to a simmer, and simmer for 45 minutes. After 45 minutes, turn off the heat and let the mixture sit and cool for roughly 6 hours.
3. Drain the sludge-like water from the corn wearing your protective gear, and rinse the kernels in a few batches of water to remove any remaining lye. Place in a bowl of cool water and use your hands to rub the kernels, removing the dark tips from the rest. Rinse and repeat a few times.
4. And now you have hominy! You can grind and dry it to make masa harina flour, or dry the kernels whole for future use. I added mine to a pot of bean soup, and slow cooked it for an amazing stew.

Formula: Use 1 gram of lye for every 100 grams of corn (as you can see this measurement is done by weight). I found it also works best to use the same amount of corn as water by *volume*, so since my 500g. of corn was about 3 cups, I used 3 cups of water, but if you have 5 cups of corn you'll use 5 cups of water, so there is enough water to just cover the corn. You don't want to use a lot of water, since it will dilute the lye and make it less functional.

