

University of Missouri Extension

GH1119, Reviewed October 1993

Using and Storing Cornmeal

Karla Vollmar Hughes and Barbara J. Willenberg
Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition

Cornmeal comes in 5-, 10-, 25- and 50-pound bags. One pound of cornmeal is about 3 cups dry mix. Because cornmeal swells during cooking, 1 cup dry cornmeal makes about 4 cups cooked cornmeal.

Using cornmeal

Cornmeal may be cooked and served as a hot cereal. It also can be used as a coating for fried foods or as a meat extender. It is the main ingredient in cornbread and spoonbread and can be used in pancakes, muffins, cookies or desserts.

Storing cornmeal

Cornmeal must be kept dry and cool. Warm, damp conditions will cause mold to grow and a bad flavor and odor to develop. Warm temperatures can also cause insects to hatch in the cornmeal. If stored under good conditions, cornmeal will keep about one year.

If you have a large bag of cornmeal, use these storage ideas:

- Pour the bag inside a large container with a tight-fitting lid, such as a clean trash can.
- Do not empty the cornmeal directly into a trash can because it may not be made to hold foods and could contaminate the cornmeal with dangerous chemicals.
- Store the container in a cool, dry and dark place. Keep it off the floor, if possible.
- Squeeze air out of the bag and tightly roll it up after each time the bag is opened.
- When removing cornmeal, take out enough for several weeks so the container will not have to be opened too many times. Store this supply in an airtight container in a cool, dark place in the kitchen.
- Cornmeal can be repackaged in airtight, moisture-proof containers to be labeled and placed in the freezer at 0 degrees Fahrenheit. If cornmeal is stored like this, it will keep well for several years.

Cornmeal is good for you

Cornmeal is usually yellow. Most of it has been enriched with iron and three B vitamins and processed to remove the germ. Cornmeal provides energy to the body. Iron helps build healthy blood; the B vitamins help the body grow at a normal rate. The package label will note if the cornmeal has been enriched with calcium and vitamin D.

Cooked cornmeal mush

- 1 cup cornmeal
- 1 cup cold water
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3 cups boiling water

Mix cornmeal, cold water and salt. Slowly stir cornmeal mixture into the boiling water in a saucepan. Cook and stir until thick. Lower heat. Cover and cook 15 minutes stirring as needed to keep from sticking.

Makes 6 servings, 1/2 cup each.

Fried cornmeal mush

Put hot cornmeal mush in a loaf pan. Cool until firm. Remove mush from pan and cut into slices. Put slices of mush in heated greased fry pan and brown on both sides.

Spoonbread

- 3 cups fluid milk
- 1 cup cornmeal
- 1-1/2 teaspoons salt
- 2 tablespoons fat or oil
- 3 eggs

Mix milk, cornmeal, salt and fat or oil in a saucepan. Cook and stir over medium heat until thickened. Beat eggs in large bowl. Slowly pour and stir cornmeal mixture into eggs. Pour batter in a greased 9- by 9- by 2-inch baking pan. Bake at 400 degrees Fahrenheit (hot oven) 35 to 40 minutes until top of spoonbread is firm. Serve at once.

Makes 6 servings, 2/3 cup each.

Cornbread

- 1 cup cornmeal
- 1 cup flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 to 4 tablespoons sugar (optional)
- 1 egg
- 1 cup fluid milk
- 1/4 cup melted fat or oil

Mix cornmeal, flour, baking powder, salt and sugar (if used). Set aside. Beat egg. Add milk. Add fat or oil. Add to cornmeal mixture and stir just enough to mix. Fill a greased 9- by 9- by 2-inch pan half full. Bake at 425 degrees Fahrenheit (hot oven) 20 to 25 minutes until lightly browned.

Makes 6 servings.

Cornmeal muffins

Use recipe for cornbread. Fill greased muffin pans half-full of cornmeal mixture. Bake at 425 degrees Fahrenheit (hot oven) 15 to 20 minutes.

Makes 12 muffins.

Cheese cornbread

Use 2 eggs in the recipe for cornbread. Stir 1-1/2 cups grated cheese into the batter before putting in baking pan.

Cornmeal gingerbread

- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup cornmeal
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 teaspoons ginger
- 1/2 cup margarine butter or shortening
- 1/2 cup brown sugar packed
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup molasses
- 3/4 cup hot water

Mix flour, cornmeal, salt, baking soda and ginger. Set aside. Mix fat, sugar and egg. Beat well. Stir in molasses. Mix in half the flour mixture until smooth. Stir in half the hot water. Mix in rest of flour mixture until smooth. Stir in rest of hot water. Fill greased 9- by 9- by 2-inch baking pan half full. Bake at 350 degrees Fahrenheit (moderate oven) about 45 minutes until gingerbread springs back when touched near center.

Cornmeal pancakes

- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup cornmeal
- 4 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1-1/2 cups fluid milk
- 1/3 cup melted fat or oil

Mix flour, cornmeal, baking powder, salt and sugar. Set aside. Beat eggs in a large bowl. Add milk. Add fat or oil. Add the flour mixture and stir just enough to mix. Cook pancakes on a heated greased fry pan until covered with bubbles. Turn pancakes and brown other side.

Makes 24 small pancakes.

Mexican meat loaf

- 1 medium onion
- 1/4 green pepper
- 1-1/2 pounds ground beef
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup cornmeal
- 2 cups cooked or canned tomatoes
- 1-1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon chili powder

Chop onion and green pepper. Mix all ingredients well. Shape into a loaf in a baking pan. Bake at 350 degrees Fahrenheit (moderate oven) about 1 hour until browned.

Makes 6 servings.

Order publications online at <http://extension.missouri.edu/explore/shop/> or call toll-free 800-292-0969.



■ Issued in furtherance of the Cooperative Extension Work Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture. Director, Cooperative Extension, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO 65211
■ an equal opportunity/ADA institution ■ 573-882-7216 ■ extension.missouri.edu