

# North American Cornucopia: Exploring the Top 100 Indigenous Food Plants

North America is a vast continent with a rich culinary heritage that spans thousands of years. Its indigenous peoples have cultivated and utilized an incredible diversity of plants for sustenance, nourishment, and healing. This article showcases the top 100 indigenous food plants of North America, providing insights into their cultural significance, nutritional value, and traditional uses.



## North American Cornucopia: Top 100 Indigenous Food Plants by Ernest Small

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

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## Grains

- **Corn (Zea mays)** - A staple crop of indigenous diets across North America, corn was used to make flour, bread, soups, and stews.



Corn has been a staple crop of indigenous diets in North America for centuries.

- **Ricegrass (*Leersia oryzoides*)** - A wild rice native to wetlands, ricegrass was harvested by indigenous peoples and used to make flour and porridge.



Ricegrass is a wild rice that was harvested by indigenous peoples for its edible grains.

- **Wild oats (*Avena sativa*)** - Wild oats were harvested for their grains, which were ground into flour and used to make bread and porridge.



Wild oats were harvested by indigenous peoples for their edible grains.

- **Amaranth (Amaranthus spp.)** - Amaranth is a grain-like seed that was cultivated by indigenous peoples for its nutritional value. It was used to make flour, bread, and porridge.



Amaranth is a grain-like seed that was cultivated by indigenous peoples for its nutritional value.

- **Quinoa (*Chenopodium quinoa*)** - Quinoa is a grain-like seed that was cultivated by indigenous peoples of South America and introduced to North America after European contact. It is a nutritious and versatile grain that is used in a variety of dishes.

## Tubers

- **Potato (*Solanum tuberosum*)** - The potato was first domesticated in South America and introduced to North America after European contact. It quickly became a staple crop for indigenous peoples and is now grown throughout the continent.





The potato was introduced to North America after European contact and quickly became a staple crop.

- **Sweet potato (*Ipomoea batatas*)** - The sweet potato was domesticated in Central America and introduced to North America after European contact. It is a sweet and nutritious vegetable that is used in a variety of dishes.



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