

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Maize Impact

Long before Europeans arrived in the Americas, Native Americans were farming crops that would change the world. One of their most important crops was maize, also known as corn. Native Americans began cultivating maize thousands of years ago, and it became a staple food for many tribes. They grew it alongside other crops like beans and squash in a method called "the Three Sisters," which helped the plants grow better together.



When European explorers arrived, they were amazed by maize. It was easy to grow and provided a reliable food source. Europeans took maize back to their countries, and from there, it spread around the globe. Today, maize is one of the most widely grown crops in the world. It's used for food, animal feed, and even products like fuel and plastic.

Maize influenced the global economy in big ways. It became a key crop in places like Africa and Asia, where farmers could grow it in different climates. This helped increase food supplies and supported larger populations. For example, in Africa, maize became a staple food and helped communities thrive.

However, the spread of maize also had challenges. Farmers often replaced traditional crops with maize, which could lead to less diversity in agriculture. This made some regions more vulnerable to crop failures. Despite this, the benefits of maize have been immense.

Native American agricultural innovations like maize cultivation remind us how important it is to value and share knowledge from different cultures. Without their ingenuity, the world might look very different today.