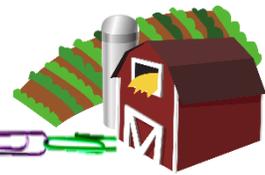




## Links to Agriculture Candy From the Farm...?



### A Brief History of Candy

The origin of candy has been traced back to ancient Egypt where fruits and nuts were combined with honey to make sweet treats. During the 1700s, sugar became widely used around the world as a sweetener. Hard candies, like peppermints and lemon drops, started to become popular in the 1800s. By the mid-1800s, there were over 380 factories in the United States producing candy. The first chocolate candy bars were made by Joseph Fry in 1847 using bittersweet chocolate. Milk chocolate was first introduced in 1875 by Henry Nestle and Daniel Peter.

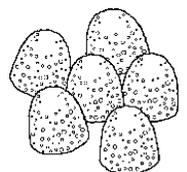
Even though it might sound strange, many candy ingredients start on a farm. Sugar beets, sugar cane, and corn (corn syrup) are three sources of sweeteners for candy which can all be found growing in the United States and across the globe. If your candy has a particular flavor, like strawberry, it may be because strawberry was used as an ingredient or perhaps a natural strawberry flavor was used. Caramels contain milk and butter, which come from dairy cows. Nuts in candies grow on trees, bushes, or, like peanuts, underground on farms. Remember, just because farm products are found in candy doesn't make candy a good meal in place of fruits, vegetables, and proteins like tofu or chicken.

### Now let's take a look at some popular candies.



**Candy Corn** was created in the 1880s and made to look like a kernel of corn. Candy Corn is made from sugar, corn syrup, wax, and artificial coloring. Each piece is approximately three times the size of a whole kernel of corn. Candy Corn pieces were most often made in three colors - a broad yellow end, a tapered orange center, and a pointed white tip. Candy manufacturers are always looking for new ways to market their product, so now Candy Corn is now available for different holidays in different colors.

**Gumdrops** are a tasty, chewy candy made with gelatin and coated with sugar. Gumdrops have been a popular confection for at least two hundred years. Gumdrops can come in fruity flavors like grape, cherry, orange, and lemon or spiced flavors like cinnamon, clove, mint, and anise. The board game Candy Land features both a Gumdrops Pass and a Gumdrops Mountain! Around Christmas time gumdrops are often used to decorate gingerbread houses. February 15<sup>th</sup> has been declared National Gumdrops Day!



**Conversation Hearts** were first made in factories by The NECCO Candy Company in 1901. In the factory, a big machine flattens the dough, and another machine stamps it with sayings. Then a third machine cuts the dough into heart shapes. New sayings come out each year, and old sayings are retired. Some favorite sayings such as "Kiss Me" and "Be Mine" have been around since the hearts were first made. Today you can also find hearts that say, "Text Me", and "Tweet Me."

## What Did You Learn?

1. What ingredients were used to make candy during ancient times?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. When did sugar become widely used around the world?

\_\_\_\_\_

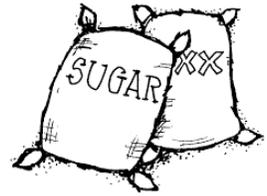
3. What type of chocolate was used to make the first chocolate bars?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. How have conversation hearts changed over time?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

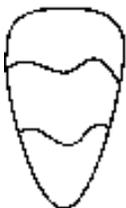


## Think Outside of the Candy Box

*Candy manufacturers are always looking for new ideas.*

How would you color these pieces of candy corn? Color them. What flavors would you use? Write them on the lines.

What sweet messages would you write on these conversation hearts? Write them in.



*Some of the first candy was made in Ancient Egypt by combining fruits and nuts with honey. Follow this recipe to make a similar treat.*

## **Salted Almond Sunflower Energy Bites**

Try this  
at home!

### **Ingredients:**

- 2/3 cup Quaker Oats (Quick or Old Fashioned, uncooked)
- 1 1/3 cups pitted dates
- 2 tablespoons flax seeds
- 3 tablespoons sunflower seeds, roasted and salted
- 1/2 cup almonds, roasted and salted
- 1 tablespoon honey

### **Directions:**

1. Place all ingredients in the bowl of a food processor and mix until a sticky ball forms without over processing.
2. With slightly wet hands, roll a tablespoon of mixture into a tight ball.
3. Shape into 24 (about 1-inch diameter) balls.
4. Refrigerate, covered, until chilled.



Photo from <https://www.quakeroats.com/cooking-and-recipes/salted-almond-sunflower-energy-bites>

## Candy Trivia

- Halloween is the US holiday with the highest candy sales.
- Americans consume about 2.8 billion pounds of chocolate each year.
- Cotton candy was invented by William Morrison in 1897 and known as "Fairy Floss."
- George Smith invented the first lollipop in 1908. It was named after his horse Lolly Pop.
- The **word "candy"** comes from ancient Indian Sanskrit. "Khanda" means "a piece of sugar."



### Did You Know...?

- In 2020, Hershey broke a world record by making a 5,943 pound chocolate bar.
- Candy makers make about 9 billion individual pieces of candy corn each year.
- Brach's Candy holds the world record for the largest gumdrop which weighed more than 10 pounds.
- 100,000 pounds of conversation hearts are made every day.



## Joke Time

1. What candy can you eat on the school playground?
2. What do you call a train loaded with bubble gum?



### Joke Answer:

1. Recess Pieces
2. A chew-chew train



For more agricultural education lessons and resources, visit:  
[www.maefonline.com](http://www.maefonline.com)