

2017

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### Recommended Citation

Hewett, Eleanor (2017) "Questions I Have About Baby Corn (Yes, the Prematurely Plucked Vegetable)," *The Echo*: Vol. 2017 , Article 5.

Available at: <http://scholarexchange.furman.edu/echo/vol2017/iss2017/5>

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# QUESTIONS I HAVE ABOUT BABY CORN (YES, THE PREMATURELY PLUCKED VEGETABLE)

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ELEANOR HEWETT

I have so many questions for you, my tiny kernelled friends. Do you feel lonely in your narrow subcategory of existence, nonchalantly watching the events of the world through a haze of vinegar abyss? Is it difficult to follow Trump's latest tweet storm or the ever-abhorrent Food Network, who refuses to take your requests for more airtime seriously? I wish to understand these questions with you, dear Cornlettes. I also hope my use of Cornlettes does not offend. If so, what would you prefer? Baby corn has a condescending ring to it, and Cornlettes seems the equivalent of adult corn with lesser moral fiber. Am I wrong?

With whom can you commiserate about the oppression of miniature vegetables? After all, it has been revealed that baby carrots are merely whittled down imposters and cherry tomatoes are known for their poor company. They're too popular to ever understand the pain of having one's greatest aspirations limited to the realm of vegan, hipster cuisine.

Tiny dill pickles, too, are darlings of the food industry who will never understand. Miniature gherkins are essential for any successful cocktail soiree. They float around an elegant party atop the pedestal of the waiter's perfectly platformed hand, mingling with the elites of modern society. "That mink stole is simply marvelous, Kate!" Her Royal Highness Queen Elizabeth II beams to the Duchess of Cambridge as the wee cucumbers adorn their gloved hands. Their shriveled, toothpick-skewered bodies gleam like emeralds in the light from the seventeenth-century chandelier. Even Camilla, sulking in the corner, nibbles a sour green lump. It's unlikely you'll ever be circulated amongst the celebrated minds and leaders of our time. Perhaps Weird Putin has the habit of requesting your late night

company. Maybe he slinks through his palatial ice home to his giant jug of Baby Corn, and you are forced to bear his insufferable dribble. Mini Gherkins would never have to deal with that sort of nonsense despite their baby status. I suppose Cucumberlette lacks the same ring.

I believe the reason for your immortally pickled state is that you have been deemed a fragile vegetable. I previously mentioned your moral fiber, but, in seriousness, what's the deal with your inner core from a physical standpoint? Adult corn is blessed with strong stocks to support their rows of matured kernels, but when you're eaten you go right down the hatch, kernel, core, and all. Your inner support system has yet to fully form. Can you blame the world for commenting on your inner moral fragility?

Do you have a support group to discuss your exclusion from fun experiences like black bean and adult corn salsa? Although the thought is morbid in many ways, I can't help but wonder if you secretly wish to be slathered in butter, stabbed between two corncob skewers, and presented as a sacrifice to the vicious and snarling human mouth. I would assume that your kernels are too tiny to be caught adorning the canyons and crevices of teeth and gums. I've never heard someone utter the words, "You've got some baby corn kernels stuck in your teeth," after a traditional summer barbeque.

On an encouraging note, I wish to remind you of the great number of supporters who admire your miniature vegetable status. Take note of the baby corn costume sales figures. When doing so, you must realize the astounding number of mothers in the nation who consistently choose to dress their baby humans in corn costumes that seek to emulate your existence. Every year, millions of Americans open their doors on blustery Halloween nights to the pleasant sight of sweet human mothers holding human babies decorated in yellow kernelled costumes. What's more endearing than a small human wearing a small corn costume? Although babies in pea pod outfits are sweet, too.

Where do you fit into the realm of vegetable popular culture? Stephen King makes no mention of you in *Children of the Corn*, a story whose title describes your very existence, for heaven's sake! You don't see Vicky and Burt enjoying a lively conversation about the joys of prematurely plucked vegetables or an evil deity hiding amongst fields of baby corn.

You're even excluded from the world's fascination with tiny food videos. The camera zooms in on a hand lighting the flame beneath a miniature stove. Five grains of rice are added to a pot and brought to a boil in a thimble's worth of water. When softened, the rice is added to an elf's portion of tofu, which has been sliced by the world's smallest and most adorable knife that can only be held by one's pointer finger and thumb. But where is the baby corn? Where is your tiny food video debut? Alas, are you too small for the rest of the world but too large for a video in which robin's eggs are the largest form of protein?

How did you take your rejection from Oprah's Maui farm? At the very least, she should have included you in her recipe for Grandma Dorthea's corn salad. It's been a difficult year and, really, existence for you, dear Cornlettes, but maybe one day you'll be featured on the cover of *O Magazine's* gardening issue. Perhaps you'll be the avocado of 2018. We must hope for a brighter future.

With best wishes,

Eleanor Hewett