Abnormal Corn Ears

Ear Pinching
Beer Bottle Ears

Symptoms: Kernel row number may be decreased from 16 to 10, with kernel numbers per row. Any reduction in length is usually rare, with multiple ears at a node. Ear length is usually normal.

Causes: Ear length is usually normal. Sometimes associated with multiple ears at a node. Occurrence is usually rare and sporadic within a field. During late growth stages the ears may be restricted to limited parts of the ear. Injury often associated with high growth on adjacent kernels.

Caused by: stem borers, leaf blight, corn earworm, corn ear blight, or corn leaf blight.

Blunt Ear Syndrome
Beer Can Ears

Symptoms: Characterized by rows with markedly reduced ear size and kernel number per row. Blunt kernel row number varies from 10 to 7, with kernel numbers per row reduced. Ear length is usually normal.

Causes: Ear length is usually normal. Sometimes associated with multiple ears at a node. Occurrence is usually rare and sporadic within a field. During late growth stages the ears may be restricted to limited parts of the ear. Injury often associated with high growth on adjacent kernels.

Caused by: stem borers, leaf blight, corn earworm, corn ear blight, or corn leaf blight.

Multiple Ear Syndrome
Bouquet Ears

Symptoms: Characterized by rows with markedly reduced ear size and kernel number per row. Blunt kernel row number varies from 10 to 7, with kernel numbers per row reduced. Ear length is usually normal.

Causes: Ear length is usually normal. Sometimes associated with multiple ears at a node. Occurrence is usually rare and sporadic within a field. During late growth stages the ears may be restricted to limited parts of the ear. Injury often associated with high growth on adjacent kernels.

Caused by: stem borers, leaf blight, corn earworm, corn ear blight, or corn leaf blight.

Drought Damaged Ears
Nubbin Ears

Symptoms: Reduced kernel numbers associated with reduced kernel row and kernels per row. Ear length is usually normal.

Causes: Ear length is usually normal. Sometimes associated with multiple ears at a node. Occurrence is usually rare and sporadic within a field. During late growth stages the ears may be restricted to limited parts of the ear. Injury often associated with high growth on adjacent kernels.

Caused by: stem borers, leaf blight, corn earworm, corn ear blight, or corn leaf blight.

Tassel Ears
Symptoms: Characterized by rows with markedly reduced ear size and kernel number per row. Blunt kernel row number varies from 10 to 7, with kernel numbers per row reduced. Ear length is usually normal.

Causes: Ear length is usually normal. Sometimes associated with multiple ears at a node. Occurrence is usually rare and sporadic within a field. During late growth stages the ears may be restricted to limited parts of the ear. Injury often associated with high growth on adjacent kernels.

Caused by: stem borers, leaf blight, corn earworm, corn ear blight, or corn leaf blight.

Diplodia Ear Rot

Symptoms: Part of the tassel ear is covered by a white mold growing between the kernels. Symptoms generally occur at base of ear and progress to the tip. Late in the season, mold growths turn brown. Brown growths over the husks and kernels. The entire ear may be shriveled, and the infested kernels appear glazed. The kernels are infested with Diplodia. Fungi.

Causes: Ear length is usually normal. Sometimes associated with multiple ears at a node. Occurrence is usually rare and sporadic within a field. During late growth stages the ears may be restricted to limited parts of the ear. Injury often associated with high growth on adjacent kernels.

Caused by: Diplodia ear rot, Diplodia ear blight.

Poor Pollination at Ear Tip
Symptoms: Corn tassel without kernels in the last one or more inches of the ear tip. Ovule not fertilized at ear tip.

Causes: Poor pollinization of ear tip ovules at silking. Same as those for Poor, Incomplete Kernel Set.

Caused by: partial or complete kernel set at ear tip.

Zipper Ears

Symptoms: Lightweight ears with poorly filled, shrunken kernels. Ears contain only a limited number of kernel rows or only filling occurs late in the season (photosynthetic stress) at dough (R4) through early dent (R5) stages, usually associated with poor ear fill.

Causes: Stress conditions during early ear development, including severe drought and high temperatures; nitrogen deficiencies; high plant population; foliar diseases, cloudy weather.

Caused by: Stress conditions during early ear development.

Chaffy Ears

Symptoms: Lightweight ears with poorly filled, shrunken kernels. Ears contain only a limited number of kernel rows or only filling occurs late in the season (photosynthetic stress) at dough (R4) through early dent (R5) stages, usually associated with poor ear fill.

Causes: Stress conditions during early ear development, including severe drought and high temperatures; nitrogen deficiencies; high plant population; foliar diseases, cloudy weather.

Caused by: Stress conditions during early ear development.

Kernel Red Streak

Symptoms: Red streaks form on the ear, often associated with severe potassium deficiency and leaf burn. Injury often associated with severe potassium deficiency and leaf burn.

Causes: Stress conditions during early ear development, including severe drought and high temperatures; nitrogen deficiencies; high plant population; foliar diseases, cloudy weather.

Caused by: Stress conditions during early ear development.

Western Bean Cutworm Ear Injury


Causes: Environmental factors, plant population, foliar diseases, cloudy weather, frost damage, prematurity, stress conditions during early ear development.

Caused by: Environmental factors, plant population, foliar diseases, cloudy weather, frost damage, prematurity, stress conditions during early ear development.

Bird Damage


Causes: Environmental factors, plant population, foliar diseases, cloudy weather, frost damage, prematurity, stress conditions during early ear development.

Caused by: Environmental factors, plant population, foliar diseases, cloudy weather, frost damage, prematurity, stress conditions during early ear development.