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Zea mays var. *everta*

[Synonyms : *Zea everta*]

POPCORN is an annual grass.

It is also known as *Bao lie zhong yu mi* (Chinese), *Dhurah fishâr* (Arabic), *Khaaphot khua* (Thai), *Lõhenev mais* (Estonian), *Lopajuščajasja kukuruza* (Russian), *Maïs éclaté* (French), *Maïs fulminant* (French), *Maïs perlé* (French), *Maiz de rosita* (Spanish), *Maiz palomero* (Spanish), *Maiz reventador* (MexicanSpanish), *Maiz reventón* (Spanish), *Pattogatni valo kukorica* (Hungarian), *Perlmais* (German), *Popkorn* (German), *Popkornmajs* (Swedish), Popping corn, Popping maize, *Poppu koon* (Japanese), *Psimeno kalampoki* (Greek), *Puffmais* (German), *Pupkorn* (Arabic, Moroccan), and *Teeras kalooy* (Hebrew).

The grain when exposed to heat will puff up and ‘pop’ giving lightweight, soft white masses.

Mays is a corruption of Cuban and Haitian *mahiz* (maize) meaning ‘our mother’.

This species is said to have been developed as a crop by the ancient Peruvians.

Authorities point out however that it is probably the North American Iroquois tribe in particular to whom we owe thanks for today’s familiar popcorn. They mixed their maize with hot sand then cooked this mixture slowly until the kernels exploded.