




First Peoples
Contact & Conflict
Treaties & Change
The Metis & Rebellion
Production Credits

[First Peoples Menu](#)
[The Canada Site .com](#)
[Boer War Museum](#)
[Coming Back Alive](#)
[Goldi Productions Ltd](#)
[The Store](#)
[Email Us](#)

Eastern Woodland Farmers

**Groups in
this Region**

**Environment /
Housing**

**Transportation /
Migration**

**Religion / Ceremonies /
Art / Clothing**

**Family / Social
Structure / Leadership**

**Tribal
Relations / War**

The Eastern Woodland Farmers inhabited the shores of the Great Lakes to the St. Lawrence River, and up towards Georgian Bay, in Southwestern and South-Central Ontario.

Food

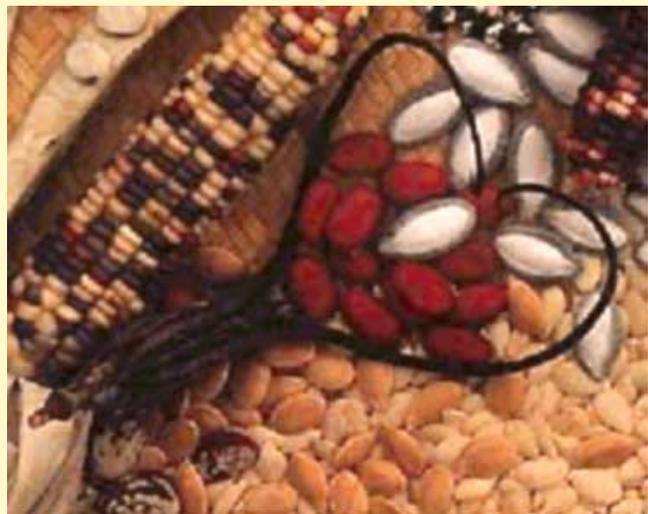
- Agriculture of the nations came originally from other cultures.
 - 2500 years ago- Mayans in Mexico planted corn, beans, squash, pumpkins and melons .
 - 1000 years ago- Process moved north, tribes localized their crop.
 - 1000 years ago- the Iroquois-language nations adapted the process of agriculture.
- Eastern Woodland Farmers grew the three sisters: Corn, Bean and Squash.
- Crop fields were cleared by slashing and burning the trees.
- The crop grew in circular fields, up to 12,000 acres in area, a few hundred feet away from the village.
- Women managed the fields; as symbols of fertility they brought good luck to the harvest.
- Their crops of corn attracted lots of birds and animals, so women would have to stand on platforms in the fields and act as live scare crows to beat pots to "scare the crows."
- In July, corn was hilled; soil was hoed up around bases, to protect the lanky plant from uprooting in bad weather.
- The 'Green Corn Ceremony,' much like Thanksgiving, was a feast in August when the green corn crop was harvested and eaten.
- The majority of corn was harvested in fall; up to 150,000 bushels per season.
- Husks were folded back, braided into rope, and corn was hung from longhouse rafters, along with squash slices.
- Dirt pits outside the longhouse stored and insulated extra food.
- Cornmeal was made using mortar and pestels or grinding stones.
- Because they didn't move their villages very often, they were able to use large grinding stones to grind corn into meal. Today you can still see worn spots made hundreds of years ago, on grinding stones that can be found in farmer's fields or woods. These are a sure sign that Eastern Woodland Farming people once planted corn nearby and had a village there long ago.
- Also eaten were berries, wild tubers, barks and herbs, and sunflowers. Tobacco was also harvested, but for smoking.
- Maple syrup was tapped from trees in March and April.
- Trail food was created from maple syrup, grease and cornmeal.

Check This Out!

The Three Sisters were more than just crops; they had characteristic based to the way they grew!

According to Iroquois myth, the Corn, standing straight and tall, was righteous. The Bean in contrast clung to the Corn's legs and was shy. The Squash, which spread about the ground, was the wild troublemaker.

However they all worked together; the Cornstalks provided a place for bean vines to grow, beans replenished the soil with nitrogen, and the broad leaves of the squash shaded the ground, retained moisture, and prevented weeds from growing.



Corn and Beans

- Fish, waterfowl, deer and other wood animals were hunted and eaten.
- Men were away during the winters, hunting and trapping.
- Food was always available, stored in a pot in the longhouse-anyone could help themselves.

Tools

Tools used by the Eastern Woodland Farmers for hunting and farming

Stone Axes

- They were used for stripping bark, clearing fields and removing fat from hides.
- A stone was found, then chipped into shape using a harder hammerstone, ground and polished using a sandstone slab and then fitted with a handle.
- Process took many hours, so axes were highly valued and not lent to others.



Two Stone Axe Heads

Arrowheads

- Made from chert, or flint, from sedimentary rock.
- When the rock broke, it left sharp edges.
- Arrowheads were used for hunting and were shaped like isosceles triangles.
- The smallest ones were for hunting birds, the bigger ones to spear bears or deer.



Arrowheads and Knives

Knives

- Flint knives were often oval or teardrop shaped.
- Were pointed at both ends, so they could be fitted with a handle.

[Groups in this Region](#)

[Environment / Housing](#)

[Transportation / Migration](#)

[Religion / Ceremonies / Art / Clothing](#)

[Family / Social Structure / Leadership](#)

[Tribal Relations / War](#)

[Back to the top](#)

[Back to Canada's First Peoples Menu](#)

© Goldi Productions Ltd. 2007