

# Maya Food



# Maya Food Anagrams



Work out the anagrams for the Maya foods.

Think about how and why these foods could have been eaten.

eynoh

qshaus

senab

kutrye

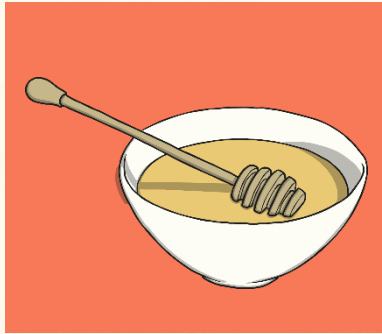
ocaca

hilicl  
rppeeps

rnco or  
ezami

erde

# Food Anagrams Answers



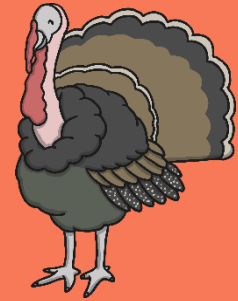
**honey**



**squash**



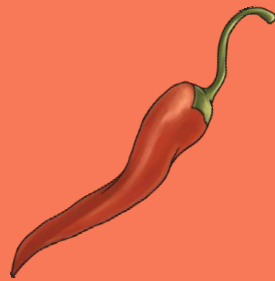
**beans**



**turkey**



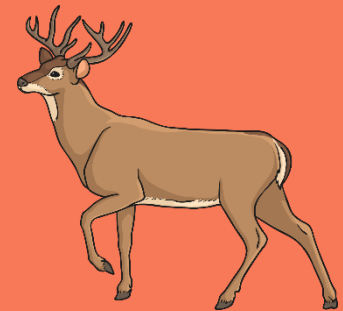
**cacao**



**chilli peppers**



**corn or maize**



**deer**

# Other Maya Foods

Maize or corn was the main food of the Maya people and made up to 80% of their diet. Examples of other foods eaten include:



avocado



cassava



chilli peppers



cacao



honey



jicama



maize



papaya



pumpkins



squash



sweet potato



tomatoes

## Fact

They would plant beans next to the maize so that the vines would wrap around the growing maize stalks.

## Fact

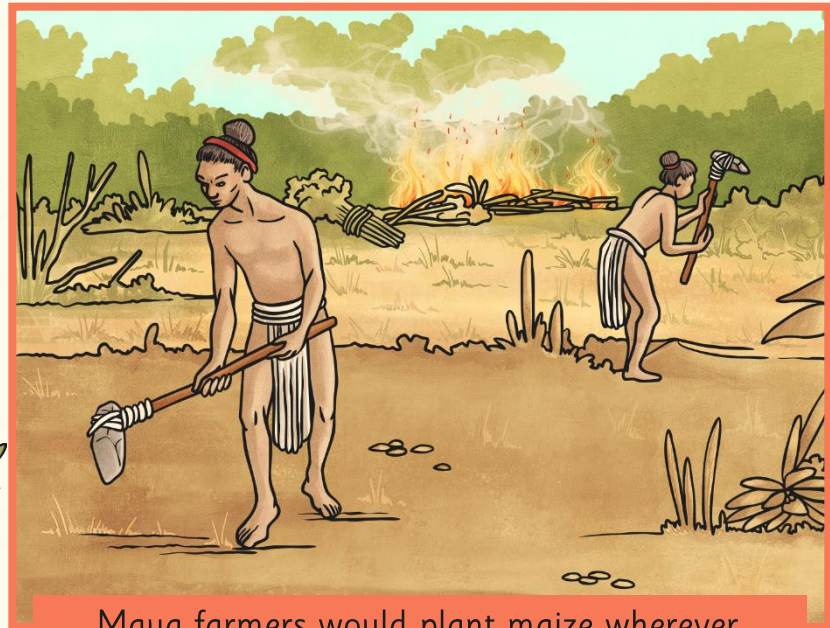
The Maya people ate out of bowls made of pottery.

# Maize

Maize was a very important crop, and formed up to 80% of their diet.

To plant the maize, holes would be made in the soil with a sharp bladed, wooden digging stick called a dibble. The soil was very dry and if the May rains didn't come, a whole year's crop would be lost.

For thousands of years, the Maya worshipped the maize god. They believed that the first humans were made by the gods from maize dough! Because of this, when suffering from severe illness, they would eat nothing but corn.



Maya farmers would plant maize wherever they could. Maize is more commonly known as corn.

# Marvellous Maize!



**Discuss the following questions**

1. How was maize grown?
2. Why do you think maize was so important to the Maya people?

# Chocaholics!

Cacao trees sprout cacao pods directly from their trunks. The pods are then opened to reveal the cacao beans inside. The Maya were using these beans to make a chocolatey drink from as far back as the fourth century AD. However, it was not the sweet, chocolately flavour we crave today, but a more bitter tasting version, often laced with chilli or vanilla and other spices.



The drink was enjoyed by the rich and noble members of society, and the cacao beans were highly valued. They were even used as a form of currency later on in Maya history.

The Maya word for chocolate is Kakaw.



The Maya used chocolate in religious ceremonies, and they also mixed them with herbs to make medicines.

# Cool Cacao



**Discuss the following questions**  
How do cacao beans grow?

1. Why do you think cacao was so important to the Maya people?

# Corn Vs Chocolate



Chocolate and corn were both very significant and precious foods in ancient Maya, but which do you think was the most important?

Your challenge is to research both foods in more detail and decide which you think is most important.

**Corn Vs Chocolate**

| Corn | Chocolate |
|------|-----------|
|      |           |

I think \_\_\_\_\_ was the most important food to the ancient Maya people because

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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**Corn Vs Chocolate**

Can you use book/the internet to research the importance of corn and chocolate to the Ancient Maya people? Find 3 reasons why corn was significant and 3 reasons why chocolate was significant. Record them in the table below. Then use the information you have found to decide which food you think was the most important. Describe your choice in as much detail as you can and be ready to debate the issue in the whole class discussion at the end of the lesson.

| Corn | Chocolate |
|------|-----------|
|      |           |

I think \_\_\_\_\_ was the most important food to the ancient Maya people because

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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**Corn Vs Chocolate**

Work with a partner to research the significance of corn and chocolate. Then choose one food each and prepare a speech to describe why you think it is the most important. Describe your choice in as much detail as you can and be ready to debate the issue in the whole class discussion at the end of the lesson.

Think about the following when you are researching and preparing your argument:

- The religious significance of the food.
- Myths or stories relating to the food.
- The role of food in society.
- The nutritional and/or medicinal benefits of the food.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_ are describing corn or chocolate and put \_\_\_\_\_


decide which food you think was the most important as you can and be ready to debate the issue in \_\_\_\_\_

the Maya people believed that this plant was found in a mountain by the gods.

the silky strands of this plant were used to make a tonic to help keep the bladder and kidneys healthy.

this food was the main part of the Maya diet.

the rich and noble members of society enjoyed this food made into a hot drink.



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