

Zimbabwean grows UK's first white sweetcorn

Zimbabwean farmer, David Mwanaka, has provided supermarket chain Sainsbury's with the first ever UK white sweetcorn. Usually grown in America, the white sweetcorn is sweeter than its yellow cousin; however this crop has been cultivated in the unlikely setting of rural Enfield, London.

A former journalist, Mwanaka made headlines last year following the successful cultivation of Zimbabwean white maize for specialist shops, restaurants and private buyers. The chewier, floury sweetness of white maize was unlikely to appeal to the mainstream UK market, so following discussions with Barfoots, David has cultivated American-style white sweetcorn. The crop promises to more than match the juicy sweetness of traditional yellow sweetcorn. The first white sweetcorn crop is available later than traditional crops, reaching supermarkets at the end of August and available until October.

"White sweetcorn is at the cutting edge of the produce market," said Nathan Delicott, Farms Director at Barfoots of Botley. "Working with David has been fantastic - he is an incredibly talented grower and shares our vision to excite the UK shopper in choice, taste and quality. White Sweetcorn promises to be a hot topic across the UK."

John Maylam, Sainsbury's senior produce buyer says: "We are very excited to be bringing the first ever white sweetcorn to the UK. It is surprisingly sweeter I am really looking forward to seeing how our customers take to the new white variety. We are also thrilled to be able to work with David as this contract means a great deal to him and his family."

Mwanaka's feat in growing the first commercially available white sweetcorn follows six years of cultivating the white maize variety. From a farming family in Zimbabwe, Mwanaka achieved his dreams of becoming a successful journalist before the country's political changes drove him to pursue a different life in the UK. Missing one of the staple crops of his homeland, Mwanaka attempted to grow white maize in his garden at his Tilbury home. Successfully finding plants suited to the UK climate, he advertised for land in the unlikely publication of the *Loot* - the end result some 10 acres in Enfield that have increased closer to 70 acres, including over 20 acres located in Salisbury.

"I am on a mission to get the UK eating white sweetcorn," said Mwanaka. "It's fantastic to eat - even sweeter than the usual varieties. It's long been a favourite in the states - I can't wait to see the response here."

For more information on Mwanaka's farm, visit: <http://www.mwanakafreshfarmfoods.com/>