

Pollution from corn farming linked to 4,300 premature deaths annually, study claims

A study published [April 8] in [Nature Sustainability](#) shows how deadly [corn] can be. And eating it isn't the killer; growing it is. Turns out that the air pollution from growing corn is behind an estimated 4,300 premature deaths a year.

Growing corn results in emissions of particulate matter, a dangerous pollutant that is so small it winds up in your lungs when inhaled and can even affect your heart. This forms from the ammonia, sulfur oxides, nitrogen oxides, and volatile organic compounds released during fertilizer and manure application, the use of farm machinery (like tractors), and dust from ploughing and planting. The fertilizer and manure are the real culprits here, though: They account for 71 percent of the researchers' corn-attributed deaths.

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The study is clear that it doesn't paint a full picture, either. The researchers didn't account for the pollution that results from where the corn goes after it grows. Like producing ethanol biofuel or animal feed. And this is a tiny piece of our nation's—and world's—air pollution problem. The [World Health Organization](#) estimates some 7 million people die prematurely around the world every year because [of] bad air.

Read full, original article: [Corn Pollution Kills Thousands of Americans a Year, Study Finds](#)