

History of Popcorn in Sac County

Popcorn has been an influential industry in Sac County for over 100 years. It was first introduced by George Colton in 1885. The growing conditions for popcorn were ideal in Sac County, thus the county could produce the crop quickly and gained the reputation as the “Popcorn Capital of the World.”

The first popcorn company to operate in Sac County was the American Popcorn Company of Sioux City who bought land near Schaller in 1918. The label they adopted was called Jolly Time and has been used throughout the years. This company was sold to the Iowa Popcorn Company three years later. Iowa Popcorn Company only lasted five years more, until 1926, and the American Popcorn Company regained control of the business. The plant in Schaller is now used for storage for Jolly Time popcorn.

Odebolt also has a history in the popcorn industry. The Cracker Jack Company was using so much popcorn that they were influencing the popcorn market price, so they purchased a popcorn plant in Odebolt from August Petersmeyer. Cracker Jack was sold to Iowa Popcorn Company in 1993, and was later sold to Poppin’ Time of Lake View. Poppin’ Time was sold to Vogel Popcorn, then to Con Agra Snacks.

Lake View is also home to Pudenz Popcorn and Stock Popcorn.

Wall Lake boasts Wall Lake Popcorn Company. As a novelty they dye their popcorn which is shipped throughout the nation, to Canada and various locations overseas.

Noble Popcorn Farms has been in business in Sac City since the mid-1940’s. The Noble label has been used for gourmet popcorn used in promotional packaging and gift items. Since the 1970’s Noble Popcorn has been promoting its gourmet popcorn to fund-raisers who sell the popcorn to raise money for their various projects. They also package under the Cedar Creek label which can be found in many grocery and convenience stores.

Up to four million eight hundred thousand pounds of popcorn are produced in Sac County each year. This popcorn is packaged and sold in many different ways. Some are sold as raw popcorn that will be popped in a popper, microwave popcorn, flavored popcorn, microwave popcorn on the ear, and many more.

In 1995, Sac County volunteers built the World’s Largest Popcorn Ball featured in the Guinness Book of World Records. The ball weighed 2,225 pounds and drew national and international attention to the popcorn industry in Sac County. Their record was beaten so in 2004, they made another Popcorn Ball that weighed 3,100 pounds. That record has also been beaten, so in 2009 they set their goal at 5,000 pounds.