

Farmpark's Crazy Maze of Corn

BY: CHRISTINA BELLAS, EDUCATION SPECIALIST

If you enjoy a challenge, try navigating through Lake Metroparks Farmpark's corn maze. You won't need a compass or a GPS, just a little time and some friends. In late summer and early fall, daily programs and special events offer the opportunity to visit Farmpark's popular corn maze.

Corn and garden mazes have been popular for centuries. Walking through garden hedges grown in maze designs was a wonderful recreational activity for the wealthy, especially in Europe. Today, folks of all ages can visit corn and garden mazes.

While in the corn maze, visitors often are challenged to uncover and explore themes, products and cultures relating to agriculture. Some mazes are so vast that they have people in towers who help give clues to folks in the maze. These mazes often have maps, direction guides or even mailboxes with clues inside to help explorers find their way. Many farms also develop family centered activities to complement the maze experience.

Farmpark's corn maze is three acres, with paths that let you wind through from start to finish. It is easily manageable for all



ages. The trails steer you to intersections with a question that must be answered correctly to determine the right way to go. A wrong choice will lead to a dead-end, but it won't be hard to find the way back. Plus, you will have learned something new in the process!

As you travel through our maze you may wonder how it is grown. The corn maze is planted by Equine Specialist Rick LeMaster in late spring. He creates the maze by pulling the plants when they are small—a foot or less in height. As the corn is plucked, the design comes to life. The corn we plant is a special variety meant for silage or animal feed, but because it grows so tall and has a thick stalk, it makes for the perfect maze structure. This variety of corn can grow six feet or taller. At some points the corn creates what feels like a tunnel.

Visit the corn maze from mid-August through the end of September. It is open from mid-morning to late afternoon. If exploring the corn maze during the day is not challenging enough, we offer special programs like the full moon corn maze walk. Check Parks Plus! for the dates of these special corn maze programs.