**King Corn Notes Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Commodity Crop**

1. At the beginning of the film, Ian and Curtis have their hair tested. What is the source of most of the carbon in their hair?

2. Corn is a monocot, in the same family of plants as grass. Where did it originate from? What is the name of the breed that is currently planted the most?

3. What assistance does the Farm Service Agency (FSA) provide to corn growers?

4. In 1973, Nixon’s agricultural secretary, Earl Butz, oversaw a change in the philosophy of the U.S. farm program. Describe that change.

**The Green Revolution**

**5.** Along with the change in philosophy with the farm program, a series of changes began in the 1960s and 1970s that lead to a huge increase in crop yield. Detail each of the changes documented by the film.

Fertilizer –

Machinery –

Breeding –

Herbicides –

**The Products**

6. Each ear of corn has several strands of silk coming from the top. What is the silk?

7. What are the three main commercial uses of corn, as described by the documentary?

8. As beef cattle are grown, they pass through three separate facilities. Explain what happens at each stage.

9. What are the side-effects with the health of the cattle as a result of the finishing diet? How are these symptoms managed?

10. How is the energy content of grain-fed beef different than traditional grass-fed beef? How do the costs compare?

11. Describe the basic process used by Ian and Curtis to produce their own corn syrup.

12. Why has high fructose corn syrup become so widely used as a sweetener in the United States?

**The Health Effects**

13. What are the two main health problems that are linked to the increased use of high fructose corn syrup?

14. List all of the components of a McDonald’s meal that are linked to corn in some way.

**Discussion**

15. Ian and Curtis would have experienced a net loss on their planted acre of corn, were it not for the FSA subsidies. What would happen to the United States food supply if the farm subsidy program for corn were ended? How is this program beneficial?

16. The statement was made in the film that, “We subsidize the happy meals, but not the healthy meals.” Explain this quote – relate it to the government subsidy program.

17. When Ian and Curtis tried one of their ears of corn, they spit it out because it tasted so terrible. They also commented later that they were not growing an acre of corn, but an “acre of sugar”. How has breeding and genetic modification changed corn over the last few decades?

18. Look at the two food label shown below. List all of the ingredients derived from corn.

