

# Periodic Graphics

A collaboration between C&EN and  
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More  
online

To see more of  
Brunning's work, go to  
compoundchem.com.  
To see all of C&EN's  
Periodic Graphics,  
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## The chemistry of candy corn

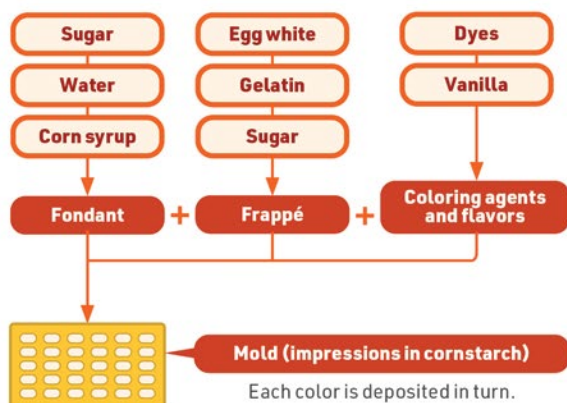


Confectioners produce around 9 billion pieces of candy corn every year, according to the US National Confectioners Association. Here we look at what candy corn is made of and the chemistry behind its vibrant colors.



### How is candy corn made?

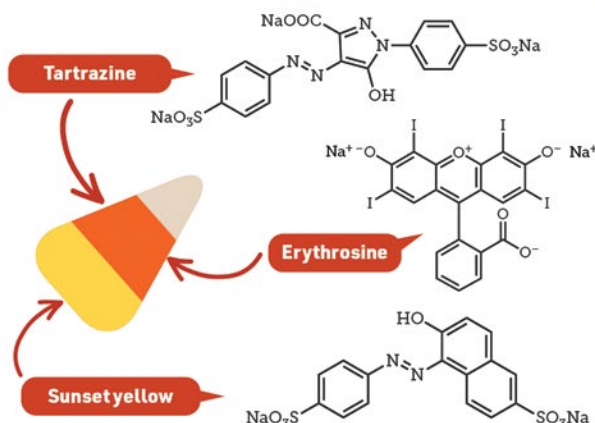
Candy corn is a type of candy called a mallow cream. Manufacturers make candy corn by combining fondant with frappé (a marshmallow-like ingredient), coloring agents, and flavors.



Cornstarch removes moisture from the candies as they dry. Manufacturers then put the dried candy corn into a metal tumbling pan and coat it in shellac wax for a shiny appearance.

### The colors of candy corn

Candy corn's colors come from food dyes. These include the azo dyes tartrazine (yellow no. 5) and sunset yellow (yellow no. 6).



Erythrosine (red no. 3) is another dye that candy corn confectioners often use. Manufacturers have also created alternative candy corn, which is colored with turmeric and  $\beta$ -carotene instead of synthetic dyes.