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Corn Stalk with 27 Ears Puzzles Farmers in Mason City



Ilene Mittag, owner of the Wild Horse Western Bar and Grill, looks over some of the 27 ears of corn that have appeared on a corn stalk growing in front of her business on North Federal Avenue in Mason City. (JEFF HEINZ/The Globe Gazette)

MASON CITY, Iowa (AP) — North Iowa farmers are puzzled by a curiously bountiful corn stalk growing in front of a restaurant in Mason City.

The more than 5-foot-tall plant in front of the Wild Horse Western Cafe has 27 ears of corn on it. Usually a single corn stalk has two or three ears.

Osage area farmer Don Ahrens says he has never seen or heard of anything like it. He says a genetic mutation might have caused it, but he's not sure.

Cafe owner Ilene Mittag says she got three plants from a Minnesota farmer in June when they were about a foot tall. Two grew up normally, but she says one went "out of control."

Mittag isn't sure why it grew so many ears, but she said that compost has been applied to the area. She figures that must be it.

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