

1000 B.C.

Egyptian Pharaohs and wealthy nobility use starch derived from various grains (corn has not yet been discovered) in cosmetics and as an adhesive to hold papyrus pages together.



500 B.C.

Upper class Romans use starch to give their togas a crisp, neat look.

1841

In America, Orlando Jones is awarded U.S. patent #2000 for a process that uses alkali to speed up starch making. The process is soon applied to corn.

1842

Naturalized Britisher Thomas Kingsford is the first to isolate starch from kernels of corn using technology he learned from a wheat starch plant in Jersey City, NJ. He successfully perfected the process, making a pure laundry starch from corn.



1846

In 1846, the firm of "T. Kingsford and Son" was established in Bergen, NJ. Fast growing demand quickly forced the company to expand, and in 1848, the company built The Oswego Starch Factory in Oswego, New York "where pure water, excellent shipping facilities and water power existed". Other corn starch factories sprang up across the U.S. from western New York and throughout the Midwest.

1846 to 1890

Starch becomes hugely successful, producing large, heavy cubes of starch for use by commercial laundries. The commercial starch manufacturing process leaves small lumps of starch that requires re-processing or disposal. A clever employee proposes recovering the small lumps of starch and marketing 1-pound pieces to the home launderer.





1891

A corn milling plant, later called Argo Manufacturing, incorporates in Nebraska.

1892

Argo corn starch is launched. The name, Argo, continues to be a source of much conjecture even to the present. It may have derived from the fact that customer price lists were printed in alphabetical order, and the name Argo would then-competitor Kingsford's.

1899

Argo, Kingsford's and two other starch companies merge to form the United Starch Company, a forerunner of The Corn Products Refining Co.

1940s

A 1940s Argo Corn Starch label features a recipe for corn-starch based Creative Clay, a homemade moldable material that children can use to fashion ornaments and gifts.



1964

A new corn maiden appears on the Argo corn starch package.



1992

Argo Corn Starch celebrates its 100th anniversary with a significant package redesign. It incorporates a 100th Anniversary seal and a slimmer corn maiden on the face panel. The back and side panels feature nine distinctive recipe collections accompanied by appetizing photography.

1993

It's easy to make Argo Play Clay at home, and fun to play with. Consumer interest prompts the makers of Argo corn starch to produce new leaflets with ideas and projects for children and adults to make.



2008

Argo and Kingsford's introduces three new packages, bringing the first packaging innovation to the brands since inception: new re-sealable containers. The new Argo and Kingsford's corn starch containers hit store shelves as well as a new baking powder product. All three products were designed using consumer feedback to significantly improve product usability.