



# Best Red Carpet Fashion



Exercise 1

## Vocabulary

### crop

NOUN

**a plant grown for food, fuel, or other purposes**

When the summer **crop** is ripening, the autumn **crop** has to be sowed.

### wrap

VERB

**to cover or encase something, typically with cloth or paper**

She **wrapped** the present and tied it with ribbon

### phenomena

VERB

**events that are observable and can be perceived by the senses**

He couldn't relate the **phenomena** with any theory he knew.

### occurrence

VERB

**events that take place, regardless of whether they are observable or not**

The **occurrence** of a pandemic has changed the way we live our lives.

The doctor noted the **occurrence** of a new symptom in the patient.



## Exercise 2

# Article

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The team starts their workday early in the morning and goes to the field to perform the necessary tasks for the **crop**, whether it be planting, caring for, or harvesting. The final product is the corn leaf with the ideal size for **wrapping** a tamale. Thus, the field and the effort of many farmers are what lies behind the possibility of enjoying traditional tamales made with corn leaves. "It takes 140 to 150 days to prepare the corn leaves for tamales, from the time the seed is planted until the leaf is dried," says Luis Perez, a farmer and owner of the company Hoja de Maíz (literal meaning, corn leaves). Located in the Totonacapan region north of Veracruz, surrounding the pre-Columbian city of El Tajin, Perez says that producing the corn leaf is a process that faces various risks due to weather **phenomena**, while the industry also faces the challenge of better organizing itself for bulk sales.

Every year, strong winds are almost a common **occurrence**, says Perez. From August to October, they almost pray to the saints for a strong wind or hurricane not to come, as the corn plant is very susceptible. If a wind of over 100 km/h comes, more than half of the harvest can be lost, which is catastrophic for them. In the case of droughts, the agronomic engineer explained that these can occur in their region every 2 or 3 years, in which case their production decreases by 20% to 30%. Regarding the opportunities to organize better, Perez says that in the Totonacapan region, they lack some structure to better attend to the high demand for corn leaves and sell in larger volumes to distributors. The leaves they harvest at the Hoja de Maíz company, to wrap tamales, correspond to leaves of a grain class that is not commercial or genetically modified, according to producer Luis Perez. The crop requires pest control, so that the final product is a large, physically undamaged leaf, which farmers call a "quality leaf."

Hoja de Maíz sells locally the grain it harvests, as well as the husks. The corn leaves are sold to collectors or distributors for national and even international supply. The tamale leaf is a product that is in demand all year round, but it increases during the festivities of La Candelaria and the Day of the Dead. "For us, it is a satisfaction to dedicate ourselves to a crop that generates jobs and that also does not harm the environment," says Perez. We provide employment not only to men in the field, but to women in the arrangement of the leaves, and to elderly people, the entrepreneur describes. In addition, there is no waste generated, as small leaves are used as food for animals or for crafts, he boasts. The Totonacapan region has been producing corn leaves for about 30 years and in the last 10 years of this trajectory, the Hoja de Maíz company has been present.

## Exercise 3

# Question

1. What is the process involved in preparing corn leaves for tamales?



2. What challenges does the corn leaf industry face in the Totonacapan region of Veracruz, Mexico?
3. What is the purpose of the maize leaves harvested at the Hoja de Maíz company?
4. What is the purpose of the Hoja de Maíz company in the Totonacapan region?

Exercise 4

## Discussion

1. How does the weather affect the process of producing corn leaves for tamales?
2. What is the role of the farmer in the process of producing corn leaves of tamales?
3. Is the corn crop at the Hoja de Maíz company genetically modified?
4. Does the company provide employment to women and elderly people?

Exercise 5

## Further Discussion

1. What is the most popular traditional dish in your country? How do you prepare it?
2. Why is this dish important to your culture? Expand your answer.
3. When is this dish usually served? For whom?