



Food Program Newsletter

Winter Quarter 2009

We hope you and your family are enjoying the beautiful winter season on the Central Coast. We've been busy in the kitchen mixing up your child's favorite Children's Center recipes daily and upholding Cal Poly's "*learn by doing*" philosophy offering hands-on food service experience for our kitchen student staff and nutrition lab students. Our team is rich with nutritional knowledge and as a group, we are here as resources for you! Your questions and suggestions are always welcome. Please read on to learn more about the benefits of whole grains compared to refined grains and how you can make a big difference in your family's health by knowing what to look for at the supermarket. We're making healthy changes to our menu in this regard as well. Look for whole wheat pasta to be used in many of our existing pasta recipes such as our vegetarian lasagna, eggplant parmesan and beef & pasta bake. We continue to offer nutritious grains on our menu such as whole wheat bread, rolls, tortillas and brown rice. It's important that at least half your child's bread and cereal intake comes from whole grains. We strive to keep our menu updated so that we can help you raise healthy eaters. Thank you and enjoy the rest of your quarter.

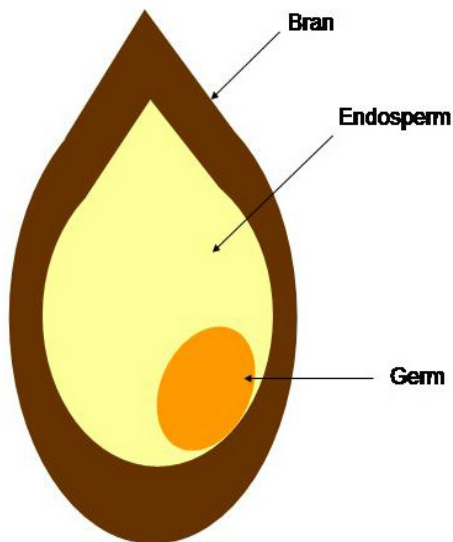
~ Food Program Staff

Whole Grains vs. Refined Grains



WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

A whole grain (pictured below) has not had its bran or germ removed through the milling process therefore making it a better source of **fiber**. Fiber offers many health benefits; it helps the body control blood sugar, facilitates healthy digestion, lowers blood cholesterol levels, and decreases the risk for heart disease. Fiber also aids in weight loss as high fiber foods tend to make a meal feel more filling therefore keeping you satisfied longer. Refined grains,



such as white rice or white flour, have had both the bran and germ removed from the grain. It's important to note that vitamins and minerals *are* added back into the refined grains after the milling process (described by the term *enriched*) however, they do not offer as many nutrients or as much fiber as whole grains do.

HOW CAN I BE SURE THE FOODS I'M BUYING ARE WHOLE GRAIN PRODUCTS?

When it comes to finding whole grain foods at the store, the terms we see on packages can be confusing. Although product claims may sound healthy, how do you know if the food item is really made with whole grains? True whole grain products are easy to spot as long as you know what to look for and where on the package to look.

1. Scan the ingredient list for key terms.

This list is usually located near the nutrition label on the back of the package. Pick foods that have a whole grain near the top of the ingredient list such as “whole oats”, “whole wheat” or “whole grain corn”. The phrase “whole grain” or “whole” before a grain's name in the ingredient list means that it includes all parts of the grain kernel – the bran, endosperm and germ – which make it a whole grain food source.

2. Look for a whole grain stamp or symbol.

The *Whole Grains Council* developed the Whole Grain Stamp

(pictured below) which indicates that the product offers some source of whole grain. The stamps will either specify the grams of whole grain per serving, or it will label the product as a good, excellent or 100% excellent source! Look for the stamp either on the front or back of the package. It's important to note that just because you don't see the stamp, doesn't mean you should dismiss the food item. Many companies have not joined the Whole Grains Council (which can be expensive), but still produce excellent, high quality whole grain food products. The stamp is legitimate; however you're better off reading the item's ingredient list to ensure you don't miss out on delicious unstamped options.



3. Look for health claims.

Some products carry health claims such as *“Diets rich in whole grain foods and plant foods and low in total fat, saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease and some cancers.”*

In order to make a whole grain health claim like this, the food item must meet certain nutritional requirements.

Therefore, if a whole grain health claim is printed on the package, you can be assured that the product is whole grain.

4. Whole grain guidance for common grain products:

- *Cereal*

- Look for “whole grain” on the front of the cereal box.
- “Whole grain” or “whole” should be listed in front of wheat, oats, rice, corn, barley, or other grains as one of the first ingredients in the list.
- Oatmeal is always whole grain, regardless of whether the oats are rolled, instant, fine-cut or coarse-cut.

- *Bread Products*

- Look for “whole wheat” and/or “whole grain” in the product’s name. Beware of phrases like “cracked wheat,” “stone ground” and “multi-grain”. These words don’t necessarily mean the product is whole grain.
- Whole grain flour should be listed first; “wheat flour” is not whole grain.
- If several flours are used, the majority should be whole grain for the bread to be a good source.

- *Rice & Pasta*

- Brown rice is the only whole grain rice.
- Most kinds of pasta are made with semolina flour, which is refined flour. Look for pastas made from whole wheat flour.