



Kernels

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**Enriched Grains
& Folic Acid**
A Major Health Success Story

**Couscous, Bulgur and
Wheat Berries –**
Uncommon Wheat Grains
Become Part of Everyday Meals

PLUS:

MEMBER PROFILE:

**Scott Yates, Voice of
Washington Grain Commission's
"Wheat All About It" Podcast**





Message from the President

In this issue of Kernels you will find important nutrition information, inspiring recipes, a WFC member profile and a fun pasta quiz; I didn't know there is pasta called "bridegrooms" did you?

As always, we invite you to use and share this information and all of our other resources you can find at www.wheatfoods.org or <http://www.centerfornutritionandathletics.org>

Tim O'Connor
President, Wheat Foods Council




Enriched Grains & Folic Acid A Major Health Success Story

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), about one in every 33 babies is born with a birth defect. The good news is that there are things women can do to help prevent this, and eating enriched grain products such as white bread, tortillas, pasta, or fortified cereals is one of them.

Since 1998, when the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) mandated that enriched grains be fortified with folic acid, the incidence of neural tube defects (NTDs) in the US has dropped 36 percent among both white and Hispanic women. "As a result of enrichment, lives have been saved," stresses Cindy Brownstein, president and CEO of the Spina Bifida Association (SBA). "Folic acid fortification of foods keeps future babies safe from a lifelong set of disabilities as a result of a Spina Bifida birth defect."





Enriched grains contain two times as much folic acid as whole grains since whole grain products, with the exception of some breakfast cereals, are not fortified with folic acid. Furthermore, enriched, fortified grain foods are a primary source of folic acid in American's diets. This is particularly important for women of child-bearing age, the majority of which do not take folic acid supplements.

The most common permanent disabling birth defect in the US is Spina Bifida (SB). According to Brownstein, there are more than 166,000 people in US with Spina Bifida, or seven out of every 10,000 births. In fact, she adds, all women of childbearing age are at risk for a Spina Bifida pregnancy. While researchers are still delving into the various factors that cause this crippling birth defect, Brownstein says one critical factor appears to be a woman's ability to metabolize folic acid. The issue is even more critical for Latinos since Hispanic mothers are one-and-a-half to two times more likely to give birth to a child with SB than non-Hispanics.

Registered dietitian and expert communicator Sylvia Melendez-Klinger, founder of Hispanic Food Communications Inc., offers her insight into this problem. "Many Hispanic women don't make the connection between the benefits of folic acid and the foods that contain them," she observed. "Young women and moms are particularly concerned about weight gain, especially before conceiving, and are often eliminating foods such as grains and carbohydrates which are the primary source of folic acid in our diets. It's therefore very important to be educating them about which foods they need to eat."



The best ways to reach Hispanic women of childbearing age, according to Melendez-Klinger, are through television and social media. "People don't have time anymore to do a lot of reading so when it comes to health and nutrition messages, you need to keep it short," she advises. Another important way to reach Hispanic women is through faith-based organizations. "Go where they congregate," she says. "Churches can be an effective way of communicating important health and nutrition messages because they are such a trusted source."

"For any woman of child-bearing age, you simply need to think folic acid at every meal," Melendez-Klinger emphasizes. Another important point is that women need 400 mcg every day before they get pregnant. The neural tube forms in the first 3 weeks of pregnancy – often before a woman knows she is pregnant. Good sources are enriched grains, beans, orange juice and leafy greens.



While nutrition is critical to helping women give birth to healthy babies, it is also a lifelong issue for those born with NTDs such as Spina Bifida. According to SBA's Brownstein, Spina Bifida patients grapple with a number of issues including vitamin B deficiency as well as health conditions that impact the population as a whole such as diabetes, stroke, and obesity.

"We're looking for answers as part of our overall efforts to identify ways to improve the health of those with Spina Bifida," Brownstein said, "but it is difficult since SB is an extremely complex condition involving a host of medical, orthopedic and psycho-social issues." Dietitians can play an important role in the future health of the SB population, she added, by sharing their perspectives as part of the SB medical team.



Couscous, Bulgur and Wheat Berries – Uncommon Wheat Grains Become Part of Everyday Meals

More and more people are heeding the advice of nutrition experts and embracing grain foods as a heart healthy source of fiber and essential vitamins. Chefs, food and health magazines, cooking show hosts, and others in the food industry have helped introduce family cooks to some unfamiliar wheat grains like couscous, bulgur and wheat berries. They have de-mystified these grains by demonstrating easy preparation, versatility, and the art of adding the right ingredients to complement their nutty flavors and chewy textures.

A staple of North Africa, couscous is made with durum wheat, precooked and dried. These tiny pellets of pasta make a great substitute for rice or noodles. Because it is precooked, couscous can be boiled in water or broth in only 10 minutes, fluffed, and served with sauces, stews, stir-fries or salads. One half cup of cooked couscous is only 88 calories, containing a healthy 3 grams of protein and zero fat. Both whole grain and enriched couscous can be found in grocery stores.

A form of precooked wheat, bulgur is white or red, hard or soft wheat kernels that have been par-cooked after 5% of the bran is removed. They are hulled and cracked into tiny bits. Many early civilizations, including the Romans, Arabs, Egyptians and Israelis, have eaten some form of cracked wheat since 1000 B.C.

Primarily used for tabbouleh, bulgur makes a nutty, flavorful pilaf and adds depth to breads, soups, meatloaves, and chilies. Let it soak in hot water for 45 minutes or simmer for 10 minutes then leave covered to steam. One half cup of cooked bulgur is only 71 calories, 3 grams of protein and zero fat with a whopping 4 grams of fiber.

Bulgur and couscous are quick-cooking wheat grains. Both can be served hot or cold for breakfast with fruit or scrambled with eggs. Combined with vegetables or a protein, they can serve as the main dish. These grains are delicious tossed in a salad or served with fruit and honey as a healthy dessert. Bulgur and couscous store in airtight containers in cool, dry places, and bulgur freezes indefinitely.

Wheat berries, tan to reddish brown in color, consist of the entire wheat kernel. They can be ground into flour or successfully substituted for rice. A slower cooking grain, they are easily boiled for 30-70 minutes. Soaking reduces the cooking time, but it's not necessary. After draining, they can be stored in the refrigerator or frozen and easily heated in the microwave.

Wheat berries are the primary ingredient in an Eastern European Christmas porridge called kutya, and the French eat wheat berries as a side dish instead of rice or corn. Like bulgur and couscous, wheat berries can be served at all meals. Wheat berry salads and pilafs appear more and more often on menus at many restaurants, as well as on the family table. Whether prepared as a hot breakfast cereal with honey and cinnamon, or added to baked goods for a crunchy texture, wheat berries are a healthful source of dietary fiber, folate, iron, potassium and protein.

Once limited to specialty food stores and markets, packaged bulgur, couscous and wheat berries are now widely available in supermarkets. Home cooks are finding these tasty wheat grains simple to prepare with satisfying results for their everyday meals.

**The Wheat Foods Council
has long featured these grains
in many delicious recipes,
so expand your whole wheat food
horizons and try these hearty dishes:**



**Moroccan
Couscous
Bowls**



**Southwest
Bulgur Stuffed
Poblanos**



**Wheat Berry &
Wild Mushroom Soup with Whole-
Wheat Pasta**

MEMBER PROFILE



Scott Yates, voice of the Washington Grain Commission's "Wheat All About It!" Podcast Series

Almost 12 years ago, Scott Yates transitioned from his longtime career as an agriculture reporter to become the Washington Grain Commission's (WGC) Director of Communications & Producer Relations. One of the WGC's most innovative communication projects has been the creation of the "Wheat All About It!" podcast series, which was launched as part of its social media outreach. Scott coordinates and hosts the "Wheat All About It!" podcasts, interviewing members of the Washington wheat industry about various topics. We caught up with Scott to discuss the podcast series, his career, other WGC programs and the state of the wheat industry



Please tell us a little about your transition from reporting to directing communications for the WGC. What is the biggest difference between these two roles?

As a reporter, I always tried to advocate for the small grains farming community, while transmitting relevant, factual information to my audience. In my current position, I operate similarly, making sure growers know what's going on within their industry. It's my job to advocate on behalf of the more than 13,000 farmers and landlords who fund the WGC, and make sure our efforts are focused on programs that enhance markets, promote wheat research and educate the industry and consumers. Transparency is very important to me, both as a reporter and now as director of communications for the WGC. Farmers face so many challenges, it's easy to get bogged down when trying to survive. I

believe it's important to find positive messages and communicate them to our farmers, reminding them to feel good about what they do –they feed the world!

You've recorded over 170 episodes of your "Wheat All About It" podcast. How did it evolve, and how has it impacted the WGC's constituency?

Before the inception of our podcast series, I wrote articles about topics addressing constituent concerns that were published in our trade magazine, "Wheat Life," but found in the process that many farmers 'don't have time to read magazines.' Podcasts are highly popular with today's culture, and they also attract a younger audience which is vital to an otherwise old-world industry that's been around 10,000 to 15,000 years. Since Jan. 2, 2017, I have never missed a week. As one of the few wheat-centric podcasts available to date, I believe the podcast offers the WGC 'a bit of panache.'

What are a couple of your favorite or most compelling interviews to date?

Truly one of the most compelling interviews was one that I did with a farmer who had fallen off his tractor, broken his neck and was paralyzed. I spoke to this man from his hospital bed, and he shared that he fell trying to adjust the antennae on his tractor - something he had done many times before. This interview had tremendous impact on farm safety, as I received feedback from farmers who said they would keep a ladder in their trucks to ensure this kind of accident didn't happen to them.

A more recent interview with Corrie Whisner, an assistant professor of nutrition at Arizona State University, addressed the issue of grains and gut health. Ms. Whisner described the benefits that derive from having a healthy gut microbiome and the findings that bread and other wheat-based products are among the perfect foods to feed the microorganisms that exist there. Getting this information to consumers, and letting them know that grains are not just food, but medicine too, is a huge opportunity for the wheat industry.

What's happening currently with Washington wheat? Are there any new or current programs that the WGC is implementing to enhance markets, promote wheat research and educate the industry and consumers?

One of the WGC's truly innovative education initiatives is our "Wheat Week" program. We provide the funds for teachers to go into 5th grade classrooms statewide and educate students about wheat, wheat farming, and wheat foods using a state science standard curriculum.

We are also monitoring a high priority issue concerning the removal of four dams on the Pacific Northwest's Lower Snake River. The dams are important to the entire region's wheat growers who need to transport wheat to Portland and other coast locations so it can be shipped across the ocean.

Washington wheat has achieved success as an export commodity. To what do you attribute this success overall, and how does the Commission support exports?

Ninety percent of Washington's wheat is exported. The climate in Eastern Washington is well-suited for growing soft white wheat, which is not a bread wheat, but is used to make cakes, cookies and crackers. We believe that quality is the key to compete with those wheat-producing countries that offer an abundance of lower quality grain. The WGC works closely with the Washington Association of Wheat Growers (WAWG) and U.S. Wheat Associates to continue to develop trade relations helping to build new markets abroad and foster those relationships with current customers.



BAKING IS FUN!

HERE ARE 5 BAKING TIPS TO GET YOU STARTED:

1. Before icing your cake, wait for it to cool. Icing a cake before it is completely cooled is a sure way to incorporate a lot of crumbs into the frosting.
2. Whisks are the best tools for incorporating air into batter because they whip up the batter, creating small air pockets. This then makes for a fluffier baked good.
3. Generally, you should use glass measuring cups for liquid ingredients like milk and oil. Metal measuring cups are best for dry ingredients, like flour.
4. Brown sugar is known for drying out during storage. This is a common irritation for home and professional bakers alike. For an easy fix, store your brown sugar with a slice of bread. This will keep the brown sugar moist - and the bread won't mold!
5. Salt is usually included in recipes for desserts because it helps to enhance the flavor of the other ingredients. The purpose is not to make the food salty.



Exciting and Enticing Entrée's from the Wheat Foods Council!



Trout & Leek Pot Pies

Ingredients:

2 7oz. trout fillets
2 tbsp. of white wine (optional)
1 ¾ cups Whole milk
1 ¼ cups Chicken stock
1 heaping tbsp of Crème Fraîche
(or sour cream)
2.5 tbsp. of All-Purpose Flour
Tabasco
English mustard or mustard powder
2 tbsp. butter

1 12 oz. package of Frozen peas
1 leek, cleaned & sliced into rings
1 Cup baby potatoes,
halved or quartered (the pieces
should be no bigger than the size
of
a grape)
Fresh parsley
1 Package of Puff Pastry sheets
1 egg, beaten, for brushing
Salt & black pepper

Directions:

Preheat your oven to 425F.

Melt the butter in a saucepan over a medium heat and add the leeks and the baby potatoes. Once slightly golden, add the flour and stir well. Add a small pinch of salt & black pepper and the English mustard or mustard powder. Add the wine, if using, and allow to simmer. Add the milk, whisking it in well with each pour to allow it to fully incorporate into the flour mixture. Add the Crème Fraiche or sour cream and a generous dash of Tabasco.

Whisk lightly until smooth, cook for five minutes over a medium heat. When smooth, start stirring in the stock. This method should create a rich, glossy sauce. If sauce is thin, add another scant tablespoon of flour and continue to cook for a few minutes, stirring constantly. If too thick, stir in some more stock or milk. Taste it to check for seasoning.

Cut the skin off the trout fillets using a sharp knife and discard. Chop the fillets into cubes and divide between four small ovenproof dishes or one large dish. Sprinkle with parsley and some black pepper. Spoon over the sauce and stir the ingredients in the dishes gently to incorporate the sauce reasonably evenly; the dishes should be almost completely full.

Top the dishes with a piece of puff pastry, so that it runs all the way out to the furthest edges on each side. Trim off any overhang with a sharp knife. Two sheets of pastry should adequately cover both pot pies. Cut a few darts into the top of each pie to allow steam to escape. Push the pastry down slightly so that it's just touching the sauce mixture.

Brush the pastry liberally with the beaten egg, then bake for around 25-30 minutes, or until the pies are deeply golden and well risen. Serve with braised cabbage or mashed or boiled potatoes if desired.

Nutrition:

Servings: 4 | **Amount per serving:** 1 | **Calories:** 371

Total Fat 21.1g 27%, Saturated Fat 10.8g 54%, Cholesterol 96mg 32%, Sodium 458mg 20%, Total Carbohydrate 27.5g 10%, Dietary Fiber 2.6g 9%, Total Sugars 8.7g , Protein 17.4g , Vitamin D 51mcg 253%, Calcium 191mg 15%, Iron 3mg 15%, Potassium 477mg 10%

Orecchiette with Gardein™ Beefless Ground, Walnuts, Orange, and Chilis



Ingredients:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 13.7 oz. Package of Gardein Beefless Ground | 2 tbsp. seeded and chopped Thai or another red chili |
| 4 oz. Walnuts | 1 tbsp. Red Crushed Pepper |
| ¼ cup Extra-virgin olive oil | Salt |
| 2 large garlic cloves, minced | ¼ cup chopped flat-leaf parsley |
| 1 Large orange, zested with micro plane | 1 12 oz package Orecchiette |

Directions:

Preheat toaster oven or regular oven to 350°. Spread the walnuts in a pie plate and toast for about 3 minutes, until fragrant. Be very careful as they burn easily if not watched. Let cool, then chop.

In a non-stick skillet, over medium heat, sauté Gardein Beefless Ground over medium heat until browned and heated through, about 4 to 5 minutes. Set aside.

In a large skillet, heat the oil. Add the garlic, orange zest, chilis and toasted walnuts and cook over low heat until fragrant, 2 minutes. Add cooked Gardein™ Beefless Ground. Season with salt and stir in the parsley. Add the Red Crushed pepper, tasting as you go along. Set aside.

In a pot of boiling salted water, cook the orecchiette per package instructions. Reserve 1/2 cup of the cooking water and drain the pasta. Add the orecchiette and reserved water to the first skillet and simmer until the liquid is just absorbed, 2 minutes. Toss the pasta. Transfer it to individual bowls and sprinkle with the cheese. Serve.

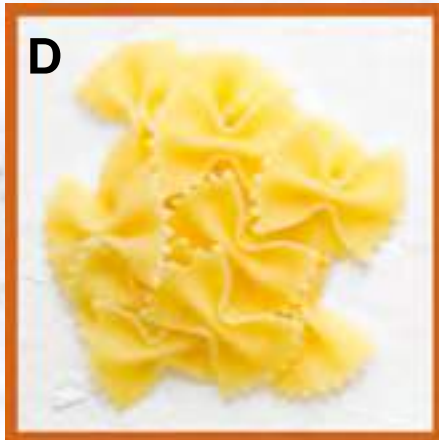
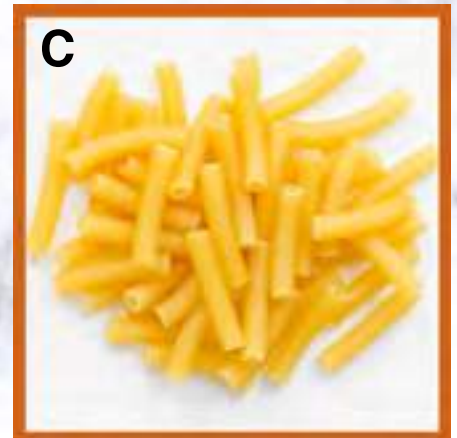
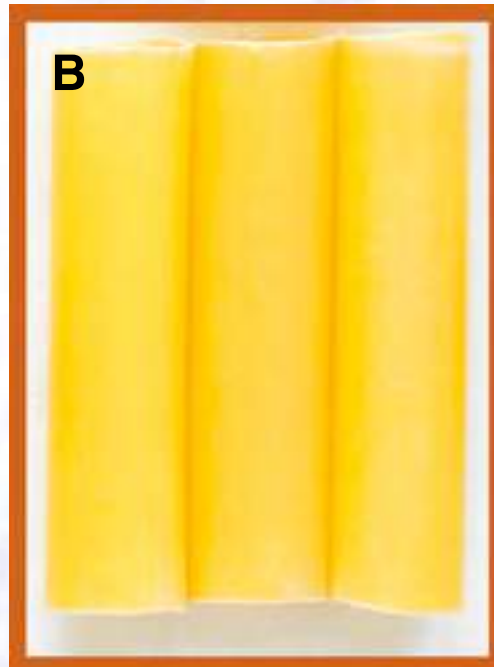
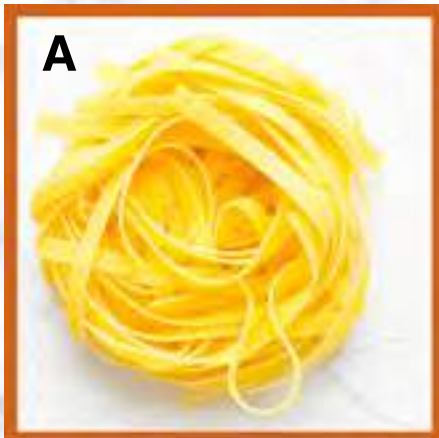
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DO YOU KNOW YOUR PASTA?

MATCH THE PASTA PICTURE TO ITS NICKNAME.



1. Butterflies
2. Little Ribbons
3. Bridegrooms
4. Little Sleeves

5. Seashells
6. Little Thimbles
7. Little Twists
8. Little Pies

KEY: 1=D, 2=A, 3=C, 4=B, 5=G, 6=E, 7=H, 8=F