



WHOLE GRAINS: WHEAT

What is It?

- When all parts of the grain seed are kept intact, it's called a whole grain. Refined grains are just the endosperm, with the bran and germ removed. Whole wheat is a type of whole grain.
- Washington state ranks fourth in the nation in wheat production.
- About 2.24 million acres of wheat were harvested in Eastern Washington in 2024. One football field is about an acre in size—that's over 2 million football fields of wheat!
- Washington grows four classes of wheat, each with slightly different nutrient makeup and texture: Soft White, Club, Hard Red Spring, and Hard Red Winter.
- In 1844, a black pioneer named George Bush was one of the first people to farm wheat in the Pacific Northwest. Bush was well known for his generosity, sharing wheat from his crops as both food and seed to help neighboring farmers get through difficult times.



Wheat fields in Walla Walla, credit: WSDA





Make It

Recipe: Garden Sloppy Joes
Yield: 6 servings

Ingredients	Directions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 onion, chopped• 1 carrot, chopped or shredded• 1 green bell pepper, chopped• 1 pound lean ground meat (15% fat turkey, chicken, or beef)• 1 8-ounce can tomato sauce• 1 15-ounce can crushed tomatoes• 1/2 pound fresh mushrooms, chopped• 1/4 cup barbecue sauce• 6 whole wheat buns, split in half to make 12	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Sauté onions, carrots, green bell pepper, and ground meat in a 2 to 3 quart saucepan over medium-high heat for five minutes.2. Add tomato sauce, crushed tomatoes, mushrooms, and barbecue sauce.3. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes or until thick, stirring occasionally.4. Toast buns if desired. Spoon sauce over bun halves. Serve open-faced.

Notes

- Add your favorite fresh, canned, or frozen chopped vegetables.
- Try whole wheat English muffins instead of buns.

Recipe adapted from [Oregon Food Hero](#).



Make It

Recipe: Cherry Scones
Yield: 10 servings

Ingredients	Directions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 cup whole wheat flour• 3/4 cup all-purpose flour• 1/3 cup sugar• 1 teaspoon baking powder• 1/2 teaspoon baking soda• 1/4 teaspoon salt• 1 cup dried cherries, or chopped fresh, canned, or frozen and thawed cherries. Drain canned or frozen cherries well.• 1/4 cup margarine or butter, melted• 2/3 cup buttermilk (see notes)• 1 teaspoon vanilla	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.2. Combine the whole wheat flour, all-purpose flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt in a medium bowl. Mix well.3. Add the cherries and mix lightly.4. In a small bowl, combine the melted margarine or butter, buttermilk, and vanilla. Add to the dry ingredients and mix gently.5. Spoon the dough into 10 equal mounds on a greased baking sheet. Bake until well browned, 18 to 20 minutes.6. Serve hot or at room temperature.

Notes

- Try with other dried fruit or fresh blueberries.
- No buttermilk? Place 1 Tablespoon of lemon juice or vinegar in a measuring cup and fill to the 1 cup line with milk. Stir and let set to thicken slightly.

Recipe adapted from [Oregon Food Hero](#).

Eat It

Wheat that still has the entire grain kernel intact is called “whole wheat.” Whole wheat is rich in fiber, which is important for maintaining a healthy heart and digestive system, and regulating blood sugar. It also includes B vitamins, which help cells grow and stay healthy, and a variety of minerals and antioxidants.

When wheat is processed to make white flour, the fibrous bran layer and nutrient-rich germ are removed, leaving just the endosperm, which is made up of carbohydrates. Most of the grain’s nutrients are lost in this process. Since flour is a staple food in many United States households, white flour is enriched with essential nutrients including iron, vitamins B1 (thiamine), B2 (riboflavin), B3 (niacin), and B9 (folic acid), to help ensure people are receiving essential nutrients. However, enrichment doesn’t replace all nutrients affected by processing, including protein, essential fatty acids, various minerals, vitamin E, and antioxidants. It is still recommended that at least half of all grain products consumed each day are whole grains, which are naturally nutrient-dense.

Gluten is found in the endosperm of wheat and contributes to the stretchy texture and fluffy quality of bread by capturing gasses released by yeast or other leavening agents. While some individuals may have Celiac Disease, a wheat allergy, or gluten sensitivity, most people are able to eat gluten without issue.

Read It

- Bread, Bread, Bread, by Ann Morris
- The Wheat We Eat, by Allan Fowler
- Pancakes, Pancakes!, by Eric Carle
- The Little Red Hen, by Paul Galdone
- Everybody Bakes Bread, by Norah Dooley

Find It

Washington whole wheat are available at many grocery stores and can be found in many forms, including flour, cracked, shredded, or whole wheat berries. It can also be enjoyed in many foods like breads, cereals, crackers, and pastas. Check the product label or shelf tag to see where they were grown.

Wheat and wheat products are also commonly found at Washington state’s many farmers markets, farm stands, and other local markets throughout the market season.

Search for local farms and markets that sell Washington-grown (food name) here: [Washington Food & Farm Finder - Eat Local First](#)

Find a farmers market near you here: [Farmers Market in Washington](#). Many farmers markets and vendors accept WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program, WIC Fruit and Vegetable Benefit, and SNAP Market Match.

Play It

Enjoy the coloring activity on the next page from Oregon Food Hero!



Wheat country, credit: WSDA



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Wheat



I like wheat because



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