



Kernels

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Message from the President

COVID-19 has impacted everyone.

We all saw empty grocery store shelves early in the stay-at-home self-isolation period as consumers purchased staples at record levels, including flour. Renewed interest in home baking and social media posting of baking recipes and photos has surged.

In this issue, we present an inside look at the situation from the perspective of WFC member King Arthur Flour, Nielsen Retail Measurement Services data, and the International Dairy Deli Bakery Association. We have created some great new video content; we hope you will find it useful. Links to the videos are included in this issue. Please use and share them often. And, as always, we feature some great recipes in this issue of Kernels.

Stay safe!

Tim O'Connor
President, Wheat Foods Council



Pandemic Produces Baking Phenomenon

Home baking has skyrocketed since the stay-at-home orders were imposed to help curb the pandemic. Baking is not only fun for all ages, but also a great way to cope with the stress and anxiety of what we are dealing with today.

- People feel uncertain and not in control of their lives right now. Baking allows a person to be in control, at least in the kitchen. It is a process that requires some concentration which can provide a necessary break from worries and stress.
- Baking is a great way to bash boredom, and home bakers are being really creative these days. Adding proteins, like meats, cheeses, and nuts, can make bread a meal in itself. Baking in a crockpot and using Insta Pots are also a thing now.
- Social media posts of home baked creations are going viral, and it could potentially impact bread products at the commercial level.
- Will the home baking surge continue after we all get back to normal? Hard to say. If the normal pace of life resumes, people will have less free time for food preparation. But they may also continue baking, because they have found they simply enjoy doing it, alone or with family.
- Trends for locally sourced, clean label and functional ingredients may encourage some to continue baking their own bread and baked goods at home. It ensures cleaner eating, quality ingredients, and freshness with no preservatives.



#STRESSBAKING

#QUARANTINEBAKING

New Videos Share “Kernels” of Information about Wheat Foods, Nutrition and the Wheat Industry

The Covid-19 pandemic required the cancellation of many wheat industry events due to imposed stay-at-home orders. The Wheat Foods Council (WFC) got busy and launched an informational video series featuring interesting facts about wheat foods, the importance of eating grains for nutrition and fitness, easy-to-make recipes, and up-to-date information and advice from WFC members of the farming, milling and baking industries, as well as experts in the field of sports nutrition.

The videos cover topics ranging from the six classes of wheat and 10,000 years of sustainability to fad diets and a guide to pasta shapes . All videos are available free of charge at WheatFoods.org and FoodFit.org and via the WFC social media channels.

“We are here to help, and our team continues to create these videos weekly as a way to bring fresh, useful content to you virtually, so you may share it with your colleagues and clients who may still be isolating at home,” said Tim O’Connor, President, Wheat Foods Council.



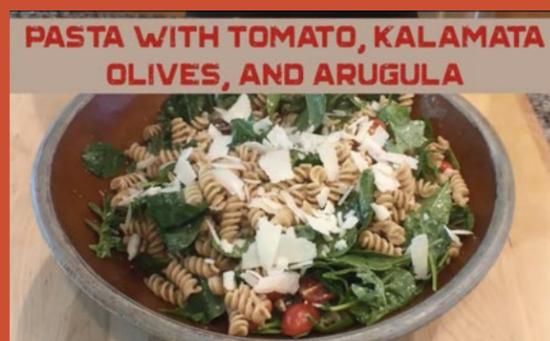
[The Sandwich: one simple meal defined in many ways](#)



[A healthy way of life](#)



[How to cook the perfect pasta](#)



[Pasta with tomato, kalamata olives and arugula](#)

Who’s got bread? You got bread?

**Consumers Empty Bread
and Bakery Aisles
to Stock Pantries During
Covid-19 Stay-at-Home Orders**



Do you know who stopped eating bread and baked foods? Yeah, we don't either. Certainly not the millions of Americans who emptied grocery shelves of every kind of bread and baked item available, including sandwich bread, tortillas, bagels, pizza and pie crusts. Panic-induced shopping drove consumers to the center aisles of the grocery store when Covid-19 showed up.

And they are still in high demand and in short supply at local grocery stores. Bread and baked goods storewide were a key contributor to stockpiling during March, according to Nielsen Retail Measurement Services data for March. Sandwich bread was the top selling category during the month of March with 37 percent growth versus March of last year. Crackers, cookies, and soft tortillas were also in high demand during this period of the pandemic, and consumers are buying other shelf stable grain products, like cereal and pasta.

Even baking mixes were bought up in the flurry of shopping. The Nielsen data shows big increases in products for scratch baking, as well as baking with packaged mixes. It is a fun way for the family to make good use of their time at home and serve the family a treat, noted Todd Hale, a retail insights thought leader and Principal at Todd Hale, L.L.C.



Bread has had a bad rap but, even before Covid, the tide was beginning to turn for bread. "The pandemic has exposed that there are a lot of healthy bread choices, and it's inspired some to try new breads and get creative," said Eric Richard, Education Coordinator at International Dairy Deli Bakery Association.

Will this renewed interest in bread continue? Food safety and where food comes from will be uppermost on people's minds. Consumer choices will likely be driven by concerns about staying healthy and economic worries. "Quality, freshness, and functional ingredients will impact demand for bread," says Richard. "Also, it is uncertain when people will feel secure again, and they may continue to seek bread and baked foods, which convey comfort and nostalgia."

Consumers have been reminded of the benefits of bread and the time and effort that goes into baking bread at home. They may better appreciate simple, fresh, great tasting foods, like bread, as they get back into their routines. 'Bread is the staff of life' after all.



BUTTERMILK WAFFLES

Ingredients

3 cups all-purpose flour	2/3 cup canola oil
1 tablespoon baking powder	2 1/2 cups buttermilk
1 teaspoon baking soda	2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1 teaspoon salt	
1/4 cup sugar	
4 eggs	

Directions

In a large bowl combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt and sugar.

In a jug, whisk together eggs, oil, buttermilk, and vanilla extract. Whisk together the wet and the dry ingredients. Whisk while you spell out W.A.F.F.L.E.S, or 7 times roughly. A few lumps and bumps are all good. Just like pancake batter, they work themselves out while the batter rests. Refrigerate for 10 minutes.

Pre-heat your waffle iron to medium heat then generously butter or grease it. Spoon roughly 1/4-1/3 cup of batter into a preheated waffle iron.

Cook the waffles until golden and crisp. (all waffle irons are different but roughly around 3-4 minutes) TIP: Resist the urge to open the waffle iron while cooking so you don't let out all that lovely steam that will give you a crisp, brown waffle.

Once cooked remove from the waffle iron and set aside. Repeat this process until all of the batter has been used.

To serve:

Stack the waffles, top with butter, maple syrup and enjoy! Cover and store in the refrigerator for 1 day.

Nutrition

One serving/slice provides approximately: Calories/serving: 426 , 11 g Protein, 46 g Carbohydrates, 1g Fiber, 22g Fat (3 g Saturated), 98 mg Cholesterol, 317 mg Sodium

**Recipe provided to the Wheat Foods Council by Gemma Stafford, Bigger Bolder Baking.

Everything's Better with Breakfast!

Ingredients

6-6-inch pita breads
Extra-virgin olive oil
6 large eggs
3/4 cup (6 ounces) mascarpone cheese
Grated zest of 1/2 large lemon
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
3 packed cups (3 ounces) arugula or baby spinach
8 ounces thinly sliced prosciutto

Directions

Heat a grill pan over medium-high heat.

Brush each side of the pita breads with 1/2 teaspoon olive oil and grill 2 to 3 minutes on each side, until crisp. Remove from the grill and cool slightly.

In a large skillet, heat 1 tablespoon olive oil over medium-high heat. Crack the eggs directly into the pan and cook until the egg whites are set, 2 to 3 minutes.

Combine the mascarpone cheese, lemon zest, 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/2 teaspoon pepper in a small bowl. In a medium bowl, whisk together 3 tablespoons olive oil, the lemon juice, 1 teaspoon salt and 1/2 teaspoon pepper until smooth. Add the arugula and toss until coated.

Spread each pita with 2 tablespoons of the mascarpone mixture. Divide the prosciutto on top. Divide the arugula and mound on top of the prosciutto. Carefully place a fried egg on top of each pita. Season the eggs with a pinch of salt and pepper. Serve.

Nutrition

One serving provides approximately: 325 calories, 16.8 g protein, 38.1 g carbohydrates, 5.4 g fiber, 13.2 g fat (4.8 g saturated), 202 mg cholesterol, 3 mg iron, 556 mg sodium.

BREAKFAST PITAS



FOR MORE RECIPES, VISIT:
[WHEATFOODS.ORG/RECIPES](https://wheatfoods.org/recipes)



Member Profile: King Arthur Flour

King Arthur Flour has been sharing the joy of baking since 1790. As a 100% employee-owned company, King Arthur is committed to their employees, their local community, and their broader community of home bakers and bakeries. In these times of uncertainty, they remain intent on brightening peoples' days and fostering community through baking.

We recently caught up with Carey Underwood, Director of Mission Driven Partnerships & Programs, Rachel Lewis, Brand Director, and Brad Heald, Director of Mill Relations to discuss the impact that the pandemic has had on wheat flour overall, particularly home baking.



So, let's start with the situation we find ourselves in today. How has the pandemic impacted the wheat flour industry?

Whether first timers or experts, people have turned to baking during the pandemic, and its popularity is 'rising.' Retail sales of all baking staples is up 60% and Flour, specifically rose 92%. This significant growth is attributable to a number of factors, but in general baking is comforting during these uncertain times, and it's a great way to pass the time alone or with family and friends.

At King Arthur, our primary mission is to inspire connections and community by spreading the joy of baking. During this time, we are committed to helping home bakers grow their baking skills, and we are doing everything we can to get our flour and other baking products to consumers.

Why this renewed interest in bread and baked foods?

Having more time at home due to stay-at-home orders has significantly influenced the surge of home baking. Family members of all ages are quarantined together and have discovered what we at King Arthur have known all along. Baking is a creative activity that allows the whole family to get involved and have fun. It is a great way to pass the time and take your mind off what's going on with the pandemic.

King Arthur wants to support this renewed interest in baking and encourage a baking lifestyle even beyond the stay-at-home orders. For example, pre-pandemic, King Arthur's "Bake for Good" program went into schools to teach students how to bake yeast bread, as an enrichment curriculum to teach math and science stem skills. Currently, King Arthur is making these resources available for virtual classrooms and home bakers as well.



Panic induced shopping has truly tested the strength of our nation's food supply, including supply and demand for wheat flour and wheat foods. How has King Arthur met this challenge?

First and foremost, there is no shortage of wheat. Consumer demand for wheat flour has grown 123% overall since the end of February. This growth was totally unexpected, and it has exceeded our warehouse inventory. But we have the wheat. There is supply being shipped to grocery stores to restock, but the products move so quickly many consumers are confronted with empty shelves.

King Arthur has partnered with mills to increase work hours and staff while adhering to physical distancing protocols. However, the industry is struggling to pack enough 5lb bags of flour in the traditional paper flour bags, so we worked with third party packaging facilities to put all-purpose King Arthur flour into resealable 3lb bags which we are selling via our website to get additional supply of flour to our consumers who can't find it on store shelves.

King Arthur has also reached out to support our bakery customers who have been hit hardest by the economic impact of the pandemic. King Arthur's "For Goodness Bakes" initiative buys bread and other baked goods from bakery customers across the country. The bakery then donates the baked goods to an organization in need in their community. It keeps our partners baking, builds community, and allows us to give back.

Do you believe there will be long term impact on consumer interest in wheat flour products?

For the foreseeable future, there will be more people eating at home versus eating out. Recent IRI data shows that over half of Americans (53%) will continue to make more meals at-home from scratch even once stay-at-home orders ease. Concerns about continued social distancing and the desire to save money during uncertain economic times most likely contribute to this longer-term trend. We expect an increased demand for flour and baking products through at least through January. Consumer behavior may well be affected by demographics and regional trends, since Covid-19 affected states and communities differently.

Why has there been so much interest in sourdough bread? Is this a new thing?

We've noticed an increasing trend for sourdough bread for a while now at King Arthur, but it's off the charts now. King Arthur provides a Bakers' Hotline staffed by expert bakers, and sourdough is one of the top hot topics. The top recipe featured on King Arthur's website is how to make Sourdough Starter with 2.5 million viewings in the past 10 weeks.

Finally, what does the King Arthur like most about its association with the Wheat Foods Council?

King Arthur Flour appreciates the WFC's efforts to promote cereal grains to consumers. Your focus on education and healthy living coincides well with our message at King Arthur.

**Learn more about
King Arthur Flour at:
www.kingarthurfour.com**



Easy Meals Made from Pantry Staples

Shopping for essentials and cooking at home has become a necessity. U.S. consumers have stocked up on all varieties of canned goods and other pantry staples, like bread, pasta, tortillas and pizza crusts. Bread and other grain products have been rediscovered as convenient, affordable shelf stable foods. They are versatile and can be paired with lean proteins, cheeses, vegetables or any other leftovers to create simple meals, like sandwiches, pizza, and wraps. Here are a few easy, nutritious recipes from the Wheat Foods Council. For other recipe ideas, [click here](#).



MEDITERRANEAN
PIZZA



TURKEY AND
CUCUMBER SANDWICH



MUFFIN BEEF CUP
CHEDDAR PIES



CILANTRO PESTO PASTA
WITH CHICKEN



ROASTED SALMON TACOS
WITH CUCUMBER SOUR
CREAM SAUCE