Grains of truth about COMMERCIAL BREADS

Definitions

Bread, called the staff of life, differs greatly in size, shape, texture, appearance, and flavor. Yeast breads come in a variety of shapes, including flatbreads such as pita or focaccia, buns, rolls and loaves in the form of hearth or pan breads.

Pan breads: These can be made from white flour, whole wheat, or a combination of flours. They are baked in loaf pans for a softer crust. Pan breads may include coarse-textured home-style, richer premium, and buttery split-top breads.

Hearth breads: Baked directly on the hearth for crispier crusts, some white hearth breads include French, Italian and Vienna bread.

Whole wheat bread: This bread is made entirely from whole grain wheat flour, which contains all the components of the wheat kernel—the germ, bran and endosperm. Label will read 100% Whole Wheat.

“Wheat” bread: Not to be misconstrued with whole wheat bread, this type usually contains a mixture of about 75 percent of white flour and 25 percent whole wheat flour.

Mixed grain breads: Other grain or vegetable flours, such as rye, oat, triticale, buckwheat, amaranth, potato, alfalfa, soy and barley, are used.

Variety breads: In today’s market, you can purchase nearly any variety of flavors and seasoned breads from the sweet fruity and nutty flavors to the savory and spicy.

History

Around 10,000 B.C. man first started eating a crude form of flat bread—a baked combination of flour and water. Ancient Egyptians are usually credited with inventing the oven and discovering yeast leavening. About 3,000 B.C. they started fermenting flour and water mixtures by using wild, air-borne yeast. Eventually they added sugar, salt and flavorings such as poppy and sesame seeds.
because the wheat germ in the whole wheat flour is about 10 percent fat.

However, the nutrient profile of whole wheat bread remains excellent. It has two grams of fiber, primarily insoluble. Foods containing insoluble fiber have been shown to help prevent colon cancer and possibly breast cancer. Almost a gram of iron per slice, a substantial amount of folic acid (17.5 micrograms), vitamin E, copper, vitamin B_6_ and the three major B vitamins make it a nutrient dense food.

**Wheat bread, mixed grain or variety breads:**
All of these vary slightly in nutritional value. Be sure to read the label.

The National Center for Nutrition and Dietetics of the American Dietetic Association recommend that Americans eat at least three servings of whole grain foods daily. The label should list first “whole wheat flour” or contain a combination of whole grain ingredients for it to be a whole grain food. When shopping for whole grain bread, remember that not all brown based bread is whole wheat. A brown color may be the effect of caramel coloring, which will be listed on the label. Its nutrient value is similar to white bread.

**Labeling**

Read labels. These are your best source of nutrition and ingredient information. The Federal Nutrition Labeling and Education Act (NLEA) of 1990 standardized nutrition labels.

To alleviate consumer confusion, only certain terms—which have very strict definitions under the NLEA—may be used on a product. The core terms are “free,” “low,” “low-fat,” “low calorie,” “high,” “good source,” “reduced,” “less,” “more,” “light,” and “healthy.”

Only seven nutritional claims may be made regarding a nutrient or a food and its effect on the risk of a disease or health-related condition. Those claims of risk-reduction that apply to breads define fiber-containing grain products and their relationship to cancer the risk of heart disease.

The list of mandatory nutrients which must be on the label includes: total calories, calories from fat, total fat, saturated fat, trans-fat, cholesterol, sodium, total carbohydrates, dietary fiber, sugars, protein, vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, iron and folic acid. Thiamin, riboflavin and niacin are not required because deficiencies of these are no longer prevalent due to the enrichment of white flour.

**Storage**

Breads begin to stale once removed from the oven. Keep pan breads tightly wrapped and store at room temperature. Refrigerator storage has a tendency to stale bread quickly. Refrigerate only those breads that have a custard or meat filling. Crusty breads should be stored in paper bags that breathe. To freeze, wrap in air-tight, freezer-suitable packaging. Freeze and hold breads and rolls at 0°F up to three to six months. Commercially baked breads may be frozen in their own wrappings if they are used in one or two weeks.

Thaw frozen bread at room temperature. Microwave thawing is not recommended because bread may dry out and become over-heated, which results in toughening.

19201 E Mainstreet, Suite 103
Parker, CO  80138
(303) 840-8787/Fax: (303) 840-6877
E-mail: wfc@wheatfoods.org
URL: www.wheatfoods.org

In cooperation with the SD Wheat Commission

Revised 2005