

Grain Milled at Pine Creek Grist Mill

BUCKWHEAT



Elizabeth Morales

Along with corn, wheat and rye, the Pine Mill produced Buckwheat flour. Buckwheat is not wheat (as is used for baking bread). Its a member of the Rhubarb family and bares no resemblance to the wheat we grind into bread flour. The seeds of the plant are black in color and triangular in shape with sharp edges. As a crop it is easy to grow, disease resistant and it benefits the soil. The seeds are planted in early summer and the crop is ready for harvest in as little as 35 days.

Buckwheat is a highly nutritious grain. It has no gluten. This is important as gluten is what makes bread dough made from wheat flour stick together in a ball, rise and form a loaf when baked. Bread made from Buckwheat would simply fall apart.

In the U.S. Buckwheat is made into pancake flour. Ask anyone over 60 years of age, and they will tell you of the Buckwheat pancakes they ate as a child. Up to 50-60 years ago, Americans ate huge quantities of Buckwheat pancakes. Today in the era of , instant breakfast foods, prepared cereals and microwave waffles, the good old Buckwheat pancake of pioneer times sadly has been largely forgotten.

RYE



While the cultivation of Wheat and other cereal grains goes back to the dawn of civilization, Rye is a comparatively modern crop. It was first cultivated in Northern Europe and is thought to have originated wild types of Rye which are weeds found in wheat crops in Asia Minor.

Rye is a winter-spring crop like winter wheat. It is sown at the same time as winter Wheat, Oas or Barley. The plant has an extensive root system and is an excellent cover crop for combating soil erosion. Rye is a vigorous plant that grows quickly to heights of a yard or more.

Rye does not have the gluten content of wheat and thus is rarely used alone in bread recipes. It is primarily used for dark breads like Pumpnickel, crisp breads (crackers) and for its starch content to be fermented to make Rye whiskey. Commercial Rye flours can vary. Some are bolted (sifted) to remove some of the bran. These flours will be lighter in taste, fiber content and color. Some are "whole" containing all of the grains content. Used alone the flavor of whole grain Rye can be too strong to make good bread. With Rye's lower glutin content, the loaf would not hold together properly either. Some "Rye" flours are premixed with up to 2/3's wheat flour. Be sure to read the label carefully to fully understand just exactly what you are getting when you buy Rye flour. Bread made from Rye flour also takes longer to rise then all wheat flours and may not rise as much as a comparable all wheat bread would.