

How-and Why-to Take Part in WHOLE GRAIN SAMPLING DAY 2020

Today, most people only need to try a new whole grain to realize they like it. This means that the best way to increase whole grain consumption is to find ways to help everyone try more whole grains.



**WEDNESDAY
MARCH 25, 2020**

WholeGrainsCouncil.org

That's why Oldways and the Whole Grains Council invented Whole Grain Sampling Day. Held every year on the last Wednesday in March, Whole Grain Sampling Day is a creative, open-ended celebration unfolding in different ways in thousands of locations at the same time. Our goal is to have people everywhere saying, "That was great! Where have whole grains been all my life?"

We invite you to join us on **Wednesday, March 25, 2020** for the next Whole Grain Sampling Day. The benefits to your diners are obvious: they'll learn how delicious and nutritious can team up, with whole grains, and they'll reap the many health benefits of whole grain foods. But what are the benefits to you as a university foodservice operation?

Four Great Benefits

for Colleges and Universities

- 1. Increase Sales.** Whole Grain Sampling Day can drive traffic to your dining halls and cafés. But you have to help us help you out, by planning a whole grain promotion.
- 2. Positive Press.** Not everyone can combine delicious with nutritious. Show the world you have what it takes to meet the challenge, with tasty whole grain options!
- 3. Improve Health.** According to a recent study in the *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, college students are more likely to eat whole grains when they understand their benefits.
- 4. Erase the Veto Power.** When you make it clear you have something for all different tastes, you'll attract groups of friends.

Participation is Easy

There are no fees and almost no rules—virtually anything goes, as long as it celebrates whole grains. We'll brainstorm with you, provide you with support materials, and help you get local and national publicity for your creative promotion of whole grains.

Read on, for ideas and next steps. And don't miss our highlights of previous years' Whole Grain Sampling Day events, on the last page.

Ideas for **Colleges and Universities**

Need ideas on how to participate? Whole Grain Sampling Day is not a one-size-fits-all operation, so there are great ways for kitchens of all sizes to take part. We are happy to help you at any point in the process, and here are some ideas to get you started:

- **Highlight Existing Whole Grain Menu Items!**

There's no need to create new menu items - unless of course you want to. If you've already got delicious dishes on your menu—feature those!

- **Use Current Whole Grain Favorites to Sell Something Else**

If you've got an item that sells well, use it to help you promote something new! (i.e. "If you like our Wild Rice Medley, try our NEW Quinoa Salad!")

- **Go for BOGO!**

In your à la carte operations, consider offering a free dessert or beverage when a guest purchases a dish with whole grains. Even better if the dessert is whole grain—ask us for ideas!

- **Put on a Show!**

If you have the time and space, have a chef conduct a cooking demonstration with samples of a "new menu item." You can even provide the recipe as a take-home to try in the dorm kitchen or off-campus.

- **Meet and Greet with Local Vendors**

If you source any whole grains locally, ask your provider to come in and distribute flyers, samples or coupons. Everyone wants to meet the baker who provides your delicious breads or the pasta-maker behind that fabulous whole grain fettuccine!

- **Make the Better Choice the First Choice**

Institute whole grains as "the norm" on your menus, and let customers ask for refined options. Whole Grain Sampling Day is a great time to start.

Whole Grain Sampling Day is about reducing
barriers, not just offering freebies.



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How to Commit and Promote

Just do it! But seriously—all we ask is that you tell us you’re in, and we’ll help you do the rest. (No contract to sign, no fee to pay.)

In addition to listing you on our site as a participant in our festivities, we’ll be broadcasting to our newsletter subscribers and enlisting the help of popular bloggers and other consumer press to get the word out about all our Sampling Day partners’ diverse activities.

At the same time, we encourage you to promote your participation too, in ways that only you can do:

Promotion Tips

for Colleges and Universities

Post signs around your dining halls and campus cafés. Start early so students know something special is happening on March 25.

If you print a daily menu, draw special attention to whole grains there; you can even use our [Whole Grain Sampling Day logo](#).

Talk up your plans on your website, Facebook page and Twitter. You know your diners—take this opportunity to introduce them to something new!

For [ideas on what has been done in the past](#), take a look at just a few whole grain promotion ideas from other colleges and universities that could be applied to your event.

- **Syracuse University** promoted a “Daily Grain” and organized a series of tastings under the “Try Me” banner. Together with their marketing efforts, the chefs prepared great dishes like “Cheesy Quinoa Pilaf with Spinach.”
- Bon Appetit at **Roger Williams University** made whole grains standard at every culinary station in both the Upper Commons and Baypoint Café locations.
- Sodexo at **George Mason University** promoted whole grains with a recipe contest and a consumption-and- variety tracking challenge and passed out whole grain samples.
- **Virginia Tech** created posters with the theme “Colonel Grains Wants You! for Whole Grain Boot Camp!” They created new whole grain dishes, and invited diners to fill out feedback cards rating the dishes; one diner’s card was picked at random to win a mountain bike.

Don’t Miss Out

Contact Caroline Sluyter today at (617-896-4832) or caroline@goldwayspt.org, and join the Sampling Day fun.

PAST WHOLE GRAIN SAMPLING DAY EXAMPLES

Inspiration, from past creative ideas, for every segment of the market!

Foodservice



Guess the Grains Sampling Bar
Compass NA cafeteria

QSR



Buy One, Get One Free offer
Auntie Anne's

Healthcare



Chef Demo and RD Talk
Rex Healthcare



Duck Boat Sample Give-away
Whole Grains Council

Food Mfr.



Facebook Sweepstakes
Better4U Foods

QSR



Twitter Giveaway
McDonald's

Supermarket



Quiz Game, Whole Grain Prizes
Giant Eagle Supermarkets



Mayoral Proclamation
City of Boston

University



U MN Campus Flash Mob
Grains for Health Foundation