

# HOW AND WHY TO TAKE PART IN WHOLE GRAIN SAMPLING DAY 2021



**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.**

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 31, 2021** 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 food service provider?



## 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.

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## Ideas for Colleges and Universities

Need ideas for 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 have 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 31. If you print a daily menu, draw special attention to whole grains there; use our [Whole Grain Sampling Day logos](#).

### ■ Enlist social media.

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 an idea of what has been [done in the past](#), here are just a few whole grain promotion activities 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@oldwayspt.org](mailto:caroline@oldwayspt.org) and join the Sampling Day fun.

**No Contract To Sign, No Fee To Pay.**

## PAST WHOLE GRAIN SAMPLING DAY EXAMPLES

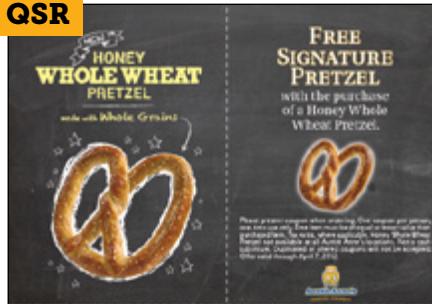
Inspiration from past creative ideas for every segment of the market!

### Food Service



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

### Food Mfr.



Facebook Sweepstakes  
Better4U Foods

### QSR



Twitter Giveaway  
McDonald's

### Supermarkets

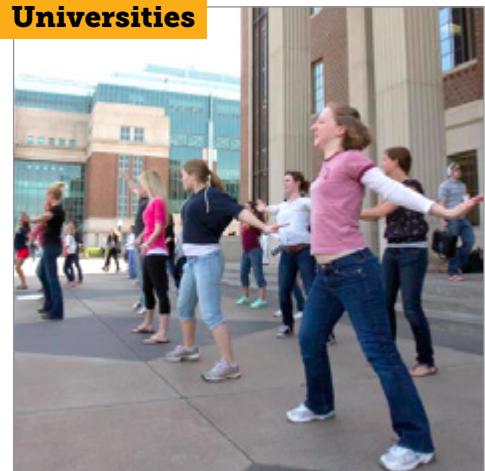


Quiz Game, Whole Grain Prizes  
Giant Eagle Supermarkets



Mayoral Proclamation  
City of Boston

### Universities



UMN Campus Flash Mob  
Grains for Health Foundation