

Garbers Grind Wheat Kernels To Make Bread

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EAST PETERSBURG (Lancaster Co.) — When Brenda Garber makes homemade bread, she grinds flour from whole kernel wheat. That might sound a bit old-fashioned, but Brenda's methods are far from outdated. She uses some of the newest machines available to homeowners.

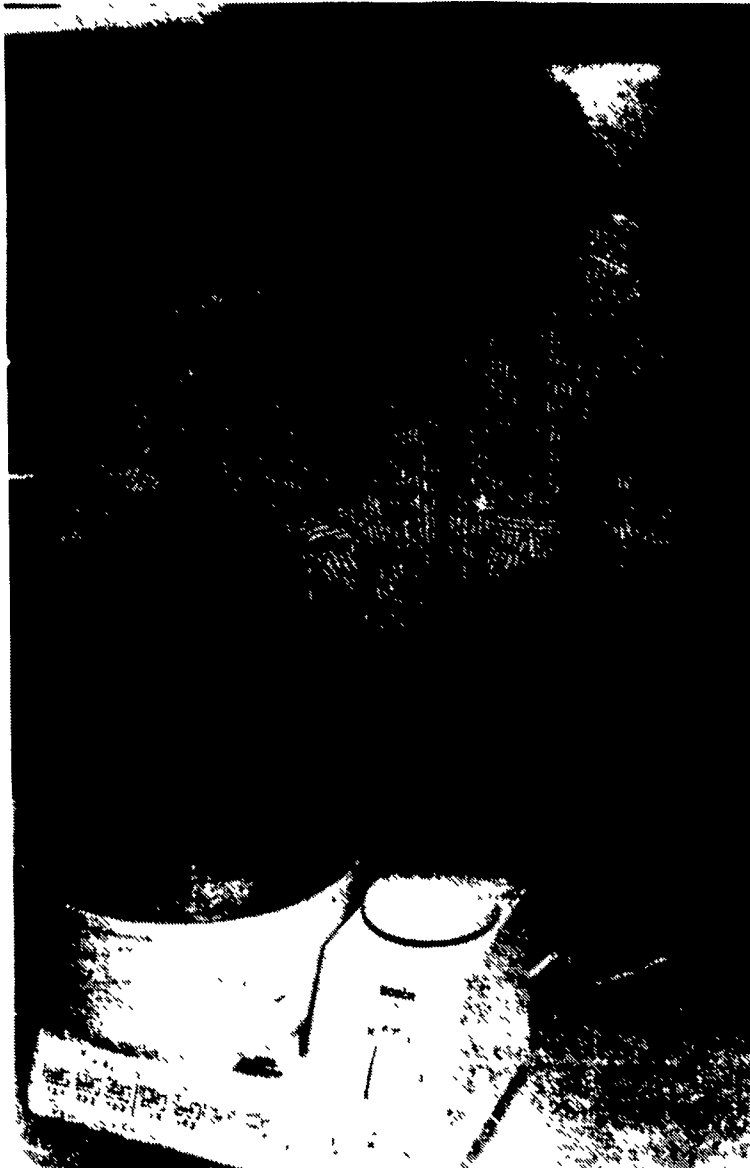
Within minutes she can change whole kernel wheat into the finest

sifted flour by using a grain mill, which is about a two-foot high canister-type container. The flour is then combined with other bread-making ingredients in a Bosch Universal Kitchen system that kneads six loaves of bread at one time. It takes two hours from start to finish to produce six loaves of bread.

While it is impressive to watch the whole kernel wheat transformed into flour within minutes,



Michele measures the freshly ground flour into bags.



This mixer kneads dough for six loaves of bread at one time. The dough is left in the bowl to raise and then formed into loaves and baked in the oven.



Brenda, Michele and Richard are ready to eat the raisin bread that they made from start to finish in two hours.

it may seem like an unnecessary step when flour is readily available at supermarkets.

But, Brenda contends, that the flour that she grinds is not at all like that available on supermarket shelves. She has researched and experimented with many different types of flours. About five years ago, she became convinced that dietary benefits from midwestern wheat was much better than that of locally grown wheat and of that sold at supermarkets.

Although the same wheat can be sowed locally, the nutritional benefits are not as great because weather and soil conditions vary.

"Montana wheat has twice the amount of gluten as wheat grown in this area," Brenda said.

Gluten is the elastic protein substance that gives cohesiveness to dough. Otherwise, bread is solid and firm. Most Americans — the Garbers included — prefer fluffier, softer bread.

For this reason, many recipes for whole wheat bread actually use only one-half whole wheat flour and the other half white flour.

But the wheat that Brenda grinds can be used entirely as the flour in bread recipes. It has enough gluten to give it the desired lightness. This means that all the whole kernel nutrients remain in the freshly ground flour.

Because white flour is derived from only the inner part of the wheat kernel, it loses most of the nutrients that whole wheat contains. Generally, white flour is enriched, but only about one-third of the nutrients are put back into the flour.

Also removed during the refining process is the bran, which is needed to provide fiber in diets. Many studies confirm that most American diets are lacking in fiber. It is believed that fiber helps to prevent cancer and many other diseases.

According to Brenda, freshly ground whole wheat contains so many nutrients that a person could exist almost entirely on bread and water if needed. She said that the



Brenda fills the grinder with whole kernel wheat. The Grain Master grinds the wheat into fine flour within minutes.

biblical references to "daily bread" confirms that bread was made to sustain the human body.

Brenda also uses freshly ground whole wheat flour in cookies and cake recipes.

Because the kitchen mill grinds the flour as fine as baby powder, the whole wheat texture in cakes and cookies is not as offensive as it is in most store-bought whole wheat flour, Brenda explained.

It is no easy feat for Brenda to

obtain the Montana wheat. Five years ago, she was told she needed to order a minimum of one ton. Dismayed, she put the idea on hold. She was assured by the Montana plant that she could easily distribute that amount among acquaintances because once people use it, they become firm customers.

Four years ago, Brenda placed an order for one ton of the flour.

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HOMESTEAD NOTES

