

**Family Living  
Focus**

by  
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Did Santa bring you a bread machine? Are you a breadmaker who enjoys baking with unusual grains? I am living happily with my second bread machine, the first having thrown itself off on the floor once too often!

Bread machines have come a long way since they were first introduced. The brands and models on the market all work pretty well. There are surely differences among them and you will have to learn the quirks of any machine you buy. They will do pretty well if you follow a few basic rules.

Do read the instructions that came with the machine — not just the recipes. The basic operating guidelines will tell you in what order to add the ingredients to the machine. This varies from machine to machine and makes a difference, especially if you are using a delayed start. You also need to check about the temperature of the liquid added to the machine. Some machines will do a preheat on their own before starting to knead the dough. As with any yeast dough it is critical that you not use liquids that are too hot, or you will kill the yeast.

When you are first using the machine, stick with a simple recipe until you learn to recognize when the dough looks not too wet or dry. After mixing for a few minutes, the dough should have formed itself into a smooth ball

around the blade. If your machine seems to be straining or if the dough seems stiff or dry, add more liquid in 1 teaspoon increments. If it seems too soft or slack, add additional bread flour in 1 teaspoon increments until the right consistency is reached.

The flour that you use in your bread will make a big difference in the finished product. The best results will come with using bread flour because it contains more gluten-forming proteins than all purpose flour. This extra gluten will produce a taller, well formed loaf. Bread flour may also contain some ascorbic acid which helps improve the volume and structure of bread loaves. Bread flour comes in plain unbleached type and this winter there is also a Wheat Blend that has some whole wheat flour added for a "light wheat taste" with the extra lift it will give the loaf due to the high gluten. I mix it with rye for a nice textured loaf. Do not use all purpose flour or pastry flour for machine bread making. The volume and texture would be disappointing.

Breads made with additional grains such as oats, bran, wheat germ, or rye or those made with whole grain flour tend to be shorter and heavier because those grains absorb liquid but produce little or no gluten. Stone ground whole wheat flour produces short-

er loaves than those made with milled whole grain flour according to the Fleishmann's Yeast Bread Machine Favorites Cookbook. Some machines have a special cycle for whole grain or whole wheat that includes more rising time. If your machine doesn't have this cycle or if you don't want to bother with the added time, you can add extra gluten — about 1 tablespoon per loaf to compensate. This is what I do and it works very well for rye and whole wheat breads.

Gluten can be found at stores handling bulk flour product, in health food stores and from mail order sources such as King Arthur or Walnut Acres. It is vital gluten extracted from flour not high gluten flour. It is an additive.

With all this talk about the importance of gluten, it is worth mentioning that you can make bread in a machine without gluten at all. For those people who are gluten intolerant, there are bread machine mixes and recipes for making an acceptable bread. I have a friend who has celiac disorder and she now can make her own bread at home instead of buying high priced no gluten bread at the health food store.

Just a reminder about the storage of flour. It should be stored in a covered container because it will take on and lose moisture with the seasons, picking up moisture in the summer and drying out in the winter. This difference makes a difference with a bread machine and by hand but it is easier to compensate when you are hand kneading. A machine is much more sensitive to this kind of small change.

Whole grain flours will become rancid more easily because of the oils so if you don't use the flour up in a month or so, store it in the refrigerator or freezer. Bring to room temp before using. Flour products are also a happy home for cereal pests which can migrate

into the flour from other things in your pantry if you don't store it in starchy containers. Or they can be in the flour when you buy it. If you discover pests when you bring it home, take it back. Freezing flour for several days would destroy cereal pest eggs.

Here is my very favorite heavy duty wheat bread. It is a large loaf. (I buy the cracked wheat from King Arthur, or at my local grocery that handles bulk flours. It is worth searching for!)

**Wheat Wheat  
Wheat Bread**

- 1/2 cup cracked wheat in 1/2 cup boiling water, cooled to room temperature
- 2 tablespoons salad oil
- 1 12-ounce can evaporated milk — regular, lowfat or skim
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup honey toasted wheat germ
- 2 cups whole wheat flour
- 1 1/4 cups bread flour
- 2 1/4 teaspoons yeast or 1 envelope

Prepare cracked wheat and cool. Then add the ingredients to the machine in the order preferred by your machine. Start machine on regular cycle. Check after a few minutes to see if you need to adjust the water or extra flour. Adjust 1 teaspoon at a time as needed. It is wonderful toasted or thin sliced for grilled cheese sandwiches. Enjoy.



**FFA Exhibits Enlighten  
Farm Show Audience**

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Elizabethtown High School, Lancaster County, won first place in the FFA Window Exhibit competition at the 81st Pennsylvania Farm Show. Each exhibit communicated a simple, quick message related to agriculture, and was judged according to four criteria: effectiveness in catching attention, effectiveness in holding interest, effectiveness in teaching a lesson, general appearance and originality.

The Elizabethtown window was titled "Global Ag Exports." It featured a globe surrounded by various exported crops such as corn, wheat, cotton, fruits and vegetables. The exhibit also, displayed facts such as the United States exports \$60 billion in farm exports annually.

Upper Dauphin High School, Dauphin County, took second place with its window exhibit,

"Global Positioning System." This window showed a satellite interacting with the earth. It explained how satellites can interact with electronics on farm equipment to create a precise positioning system.

Third place honors went to Selinsgrove High School, Snyder County. Their window, titled "Dairy Foods Are For Everyone," showed four cows on a rotating platform surrounded by various dairy products. Fourth place went to Newport High School, Perry County, and fifth place went to West Snyder High School, Beaver Springs, Snyder County.

Judges for the competition were John H. Duncan, New Cumberland, who is an employee of the Department of Education and Dale Davis, Bloomsburg, who is a retired Agriculture Education Area Consultant.



REAL AMERICAN DAIRY ASSOCIATION

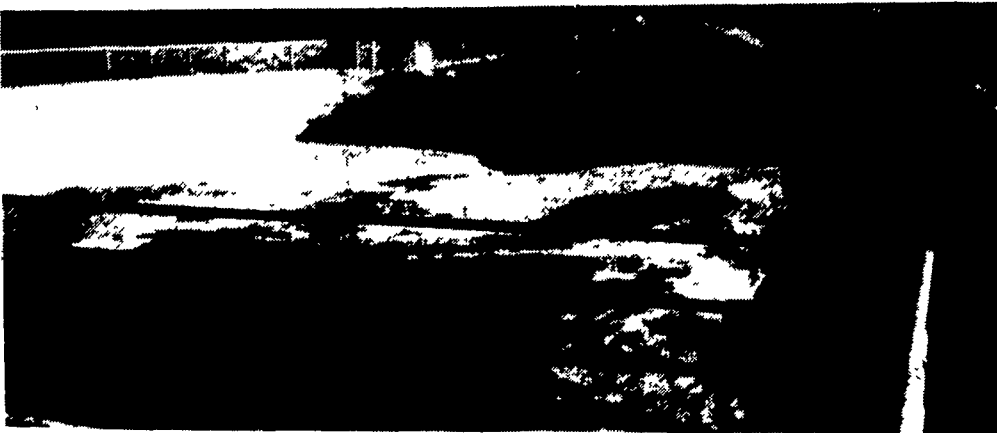
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