



# WHEAT AMERICA'S FAMILY FOOD

Wheat: Bring Everyone to the Table

Mealtime Made Easy

The Wheat Foods "Double-Take"

PLUS:

How to Store...

Ideas for Facebook Posts

10 Tweets about Wheat

5 New Recipes

# Wheat: Bring Everyone to the

**W**e're all looking for ways to make life easier and simpler. When it comes to food, add convenient, fast and healthy to the list. The answer to all of these things may come in a surprisingly edible form: wheat.

Cultivated and eaten by families of all kinds for 8,000 to 10,000 years, wheat is incredibly versatile, convenient, healthy, nutritious, and MOST importantly, it meets everyone's taste requirements. Pasta, bread, tortillas, wheat berries, bulgur, naan, udon noodles, couscous, and many other forms of wheat can provide the basis of meals that will bring everyone to the table.

Taking time for meals, preferably at a table, is a step in the right direction to increase your chances of eating healthfully. That's because paying attention to what we're eating, and interacting with others really does matter. Here's what research says meals may do for kids (Hammons):

- **35% less likely to engage in disordered eating**
- **24% more likely to eat healthier foods**
- **12% less likely to be overweight**

As for adults, a study looking at distracted eating found that participants who played a computer game while eating lunch didn't recognize feeling full afterwards and subsequently ate more calories when offered a snack a short while later (Oldham-Cooper).



But meals can be hard to plan, especially when juggling work, kids or other commitments, differing tastes, etc. Here are some tips on how to make meals happen in the midst of busy schedules:

## **Cook once, eat twice**

Cook larger amounts of food than you'll need for one meal. Not only can you eat the leftovers another night but you can also turn them into brown bag lunches.

## **Learn to cook slow**

Your slow cooker can be your "go-to" kitchen device. Cook a large batch of marinara for pasta, or slow cook a pork shoulder, whole chicken, or chuck roast and turn it into sandwiches, stew or soups, or use as burrito fillings.

## **Offer buffet dinners for busy weeknights.**

Try offering your household a "sandwich night" or "build your own burrito" night or "pasta bar" night. For more ideas, [click here](#).



# he Table

## Stock your pantry & freezer with things that can easily become dinner in a flash

Pasta and other grain-based foods store well and are ready when you are. Complement them with frozen vegetables, canned beans or tomatoes, jarred sauces, and easy-to-thaw protein sources (ground beef, chicken tenders, shrimp or even tofu). Keep loaves of French bread in the freezer, then pop one in the oven before dinner.

## Have a plan....and a back up plan

Try to plan 3 meals per week that work with your schedule. Then, think of 2 more meals you could make on the fly if the schedule goes haywire. Shop for the ingredients for those 5 meals. Whatever you don't use this week, use next week and plan again.



## References:

Hammons AJ, Fiese BH. Is Frequency Of Shared Family Meals Related To The Nutritional Health Of Children And Adolescents? *Pediatrics*. 2011 Jun;127(6):E1565-74. Doi: 10.1542/Peds.2010-1440. Epub 2011 May 2.

Oldham-Cooper RE, Hardman CA, Nicoll CE, Rogers PJ, and Brunstrom JM. Playing a computer game during lunch affects fullness, memory for lunch, and later snack intake. *Am J Clin Nutr* 2010 ajcn.004580; doi:10.3945/ajcn.110.004580

# 10 Tweets about Wheat America's Family Food

Kids who have meals with their families are 35% less likely to engage in disordered eating. #wfc

Your family is 24% more likely to eat healthier foods when eating together. #wfc

Children who eat at family meals are 12% less likely to be overweight. #wfc

Study: People eating lunch at the computer can't tell when they are full & snack more later. #wfc

Sandwich night, Pasta Bar or Build-a-Burrito: Great ideas for healthy weeknight family meals. #wfc

This week: Promise yourself you'll take the stairs rather than the elevator. Every time! #wfc

Do kids have all the fun? Try an Adult Play Date: Golf, Tennis, Walk or Hike to see friends. #wfc

Rock climbing, yoga, Tai Chi, fencing: Fun and exciting ways to get moving. #wfc

Healthy doesn't mean elaborate. A grilled tuna fish sandwich & carrots with milk fits MyPlate! #wfc

Here are some new recipes featuring America's Food: Wheat #wfc wheatfoods.org



# How to Store...

## White Flour

- Stored in an airtight container and kept in a cool place, flour has a shelf life of 18 months

from production date. Once open, the shelf life decreases.

- For longer storage, keep white flours in the refrigerator in an airtight container. All-purpose and bread flour will keep up to two years at 40° F in your refrigerator, according to the Wheat Foods Council.

## Whole Wheat Flour

- Store opened whole wheat flour in the refrigerator or freezer for long-term use. Whole wheat flour will keep for 2 to 6 months in the freezer.
- Since whole wheat flour can become rancid or pick up unwelcome flavors, always store in a plastic bag or airtight container.

## Pasta

- Dried pasta can be stored indefinitely on the pantry shelf in an airtight container in a dry area that is not exposed to extreme temperatures.
- For best flavor, the USDA recommends storing dried pasta for no more than two years. Some manufacturers will stamp their packages with a “best if used by” date.
- Cooked pasta can be stored in airtight containers in the refrigerator for 3 to 5 days.
- If possible, store pasta and sauce separately in the refrigerator (but together in the freezer). To reheat, drop pasta in boiling water for a few seconds and drain.
- Or, freeze cooked pasta for up to 2 weeks: Cool the pasta slightly, then drizzle with a little olive oil or cooking oil and toss gently. Spoon into airtight containers or freezer bags.
- When freezing pasta, best results are achieved when using shapes used in baked recipes. It's best to prepare the recipe and freeze it before baking. To bake, thaw the dish to room temperature and bake as the recipe directs.

## Bread

- Bread is best stored at room temperature. Keep sliced and wrapped sandwich bread in its wrapper, tightly closed with a twist tie.
- In warm humid areas, it may be best to freeze the bread and defrost slices as needed. Wrapped bread may be kept in a freezer for up to 3 months.
- Avoid storing bread in a refrigerator since the inside temperature (about 41°F/5°C) is the temperature at which bread stales most quickly.

## Baked Goods

- Cookies and other baked goods can be stored tightly wrapped in the freezer. Flavor and quality will decline if frozen, so try to thaw and enjoy within 2 – 4 weeks. Watch freezer placement carefully, as baked goods can absorb strong aromas. If freezing soon after baking, be sure baked goods are cooled thoroughly before storage.
- Cookie doughs can also be frozen raw. Line pan with parchment paper, place dough on paper, and cover tightly with plastic wrap. Thaw at room temperature before baking.
- Alternatively, store a ball of prepared dough in a sealable freezer bag, then thaw, drop cookies on the cookie sheet and bake.

## Couscous and Other Grains

- Uncooked grains can be stored in sealed bags or other containers at room temperature or refrigerated for up to one year.
- If cooked, it can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 3 days, or frozen for up to 2 weeks.



# Ideas for Facebook Posts

## Wheat: America's Family Food Recipe Contest

Enter their favorite “local” family wheat-based recipe in a contest. Wheat is found in just about every cuisine, global and U.S. regional. Host a recipe contest for several weeks during the summer or fall, to see how creative your shoppers can be in incorporating wheat into a nutritious meal. A great prize? Yummy breads or other baked goods from your bakery!



## Wheat for Kids

Wheat is America's Family Food, and kids have a big part at the table. Part of the versatility of wheat is that it produces dishes everyone loves, kids as well as adults! Ask your shoppers to submit their favorite Kid-Friendly Wheat Dishes for the summer months, or the upcoming back-to-school season. Have them send along a photo of their children and/or family enjoying their favorite wheat-based dishes. Kids would love your bakery-made cupcakes as prizes.



## A Recipe a Week for Favorite Wheat Dishes

The Wheat Foods Council web site is your one-stop-shop for recipes, photos and nutritional information for many wheat-based foods. We've recently added an exciting set of recipes to the ever-growing database. Check them out under “Latest Recipes” here, and share with your shoppers on a weekly or more regular basis.



## Follow Us!

Be sure to follow us at [Facebook.com/wheatfoods](https://www.facebook.com/wheatfoods) and you'll find a wealth of interesting, informative, and fun posts to share with your shoppers.

# Mealtime Made Easy

Though we may rarely think about it, food and meals are the glue that often holds families and communities together. Whenever we share food with others we often share stories, ideas and simply enjoy being together. Some people avoid family meals due to the stress involved in preparing and/or cleaning up afterwards, not to mention the “communication” issues some families face when they gather around the table. Here are some tips to make meal time easy, tasty and enjoyable for everyone:

## Keep meals simple.

As the US Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) MyPlate shows, a complete meal includes a protein source, fruits and vegetables, grains, and something from the dairy group. Meals don’t have to be elaborate or take hours of preparation and cooking time.

A grilled tuna fish sandwich with baby carrots and a glass of milk, or an omelet stuffed with mushrooms, spinach, onions, and some cheese, served with toast can easily meet basic nutrition requirements. And, fortunately, there are many sources of inspiration for easy meals on the Internet.

If you need ideas, try some of these from the Wheat Foods Council: [www.wheatfoods.org/recipes](http://www.wheatfoods.org/recipes).

## Ask for meal suggestions.

Invite everyone in your household to suggest meals they would like to have. Ideally, have them offer to take charge of (or at least assist with) preparing the meal as well. Those who don’t prepare the meals can help clean up.

## Have ground rules for acceptable table conversation.

For example, come up with a way to “table” controversial discussion topics until dinner is over. Or, implement a civility rule: Everyone at the table must treat all others present with respect and dignity to keep their seat at the table.

## Use conversation starters.

If your household is out of practice for having conversations over dinner, some of the ideas [here](#) can get you started.

## Share your meals with others.

Everyone knows people who live alone or hate to cook. Invite people to share your table (and the work). If you live alone, sharing with others can make it fun and more enjoyable to cook a meal.



It may not be realistic for your household to eat together every day, especially if you have kids with active schedules. Still, if you make it a priority to find time to eat together regularly, whether it's for dinner, breakfast or other times, it will happen. Sports and other activities for kids are great, but try to avoid letting them interfere with meal or family time. You can plan to eat either before activities or afterwards. Plan a time to eat together when most family members can be there. This might mean eating breakfast together a few days a week or setting aside Sunday evenings for an all-hands-on-deck meal that everyone helps prepare, eat, and then clean up.

**Here are some basic ways to plan simple meals with different flavor options. Bon Appetit!**

Cuisine	Grain/ Wheat	Protein	Flavoring Agents/ Spices	Side Dishes
Italian	Pasta	Chicken, pork, beef, fish/seafood, vegetarian	Marinara, olive oil, pesto, lemon or garlic, basil, Parmesan cheese	Salad, fruit
Mediterranean	Couscous	Chicken, pork, beef, fish/seafood, vegetarian	Turmeric, cloves, all-spice, cinnamon, garlic, feta or goat cheese	Salad, fruit
Mexican	Tortillas	Chicken, pork, beef, fish/seafood, vegetarian	Salsa, avocado, cayenne, cumin, Monterey Jack or cheddar cheese	Black beans, pinto beans, green peppers, onions, tomatoes, olives, lettuce
American	Sandwich Roll	Chicken, pork, beef, fish/seafood, vegetarian	BBQ sauce	Coleslaw, fruit, yogurt, mixed greens, cucumbers
Asian	Udon or other Noodles	Chicken, pork, beef, fish/seafood, vegetarian	Teriyaki, ginger, chili sauce, peanut sauce	Edamame, broccoli, Chinese cabbage, snow peas

# Got Dinner?

## Do a Wheat Foods “Double-Take”

When you include wheat-based products in your menu planning, you’re doing more than adding important nutrients to your meal. You’re also making it easier to eat healthfully and deliciously throughout the week. When you do your grocery shopping, stock up on the wheat foods products listed here, then double up when cooking for use in other dishes throughout the week to make dinner fast and tasty. Here are some examples from the Wheat Foods Council:



### Dinner Double-Take #1

- On the weekend, (or when you have time): cook two 13.2 ounce packages of whole wheat penne pasta
- Use half the cooked pasta to make Cilantro Pesto Pasta with Chicken (see recipe in this tool kit)
- Toss the remaining pasta in a bowl or plastic container with olive or vegetable oil and keep covered in the refrigerator
- Later in the week, use the remaining pasta to make the Caprese Pasta Salad (see recipe in this tool kit)

### Dinner Double-Take #2

- Cook 1.5 cups of dry bulgur and brown 2 pounds of extra lean ground beef
- Use  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup cooked bulgur and 1 pound of extra lean ground beef for the Beef & Sausage Meatloaf with Bulgur (see recipe in this tool kit)
- Put the remaining  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup bulgur in a tightly covered container in the refrigerator; also refrigerate the cooked, drained ground beef in a tightly covered container
- Later in the week, use the cooked bulgur and ground beef to make stuffed peppers (see instructions under “options” at the end of the Beef & Sausage Meatloaf with Bulgur recipe)

### Dinner Double-Take #3

- Cook 12 cups of dry whole wheat fusilli or penne pasta
- Use half the cooked pasta (6 cups) to make Pasta with Tomato, Kalamata Olives and Argula (see recipe in this tool kit)
- Toss the remaining pasta in a bowl or plastic container with olive or vegetable oil and keep covered in the refrigerator
- Later in the week, use the remaining pasta to make Mediterranean Style Pasta Toss with Feta and Capers (see recipe in this tool kit)

# Cilantro Pesto Pasta with Chicken



## Ingredient List:

### Cilantro Pistachio Pesto (makes $\frac{3}{4}$ cup)

1 bunch fresh cilantro (about 2 cups)  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1 tablespoon lemon juice  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup grated Parmesan cheese  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon cayenne pepper  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup salted pistachios, toasted, divided  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt  
 $\frac{1}{3}$  cup olive oil

### Rest of recipe:

1 (13.25 ounce) box whole-wheat rotini or penne pasta  
2 cups shredded or chopped cooked white meat chicken (cooked leftovers or rotisserie chicken are options)  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup grape tomatoes, halved

## Directions:

To prepare pesto, put cilantro, garlic, lemon juice, Parmesan cheese, cayenne pepper, pistachios (minus 2 tablespoons), and salt in a food processor or blender. Add about half the olive oil and blend. Add remainder of olive oil and blend until mixture reaches desired consistency.

Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Cook pasta according to package directions; drain. Return pasta to cooking pot on low heat, add pesto and chicken, heating until warmed through. Add tomatoes. Stir to combine.

Top with reserved 2 tablespoons of nuts then serve. Can be served warm, room temperature or cold as a summer salad.

**Servings:** 10      **Calories/Serving:** 265

**Nutrition:** One serving provides approximately: 14 g Protein, 30 g Carbohydrates, 4 g Fiber, 10 g Fat (2 g saturated), 25 mg Cholesterol, 3 mcg Folate, 2 mg Iron, 166 mg Sodium

*Adapted from a recipe developed by Christy Wilson, RD*

## Ingredient List:

1 (13.25 ounce) box whole-wheat penne (or other shape) pasta  
4 medium tomatoes, chopped or  
1 pound grape tomatoes, halved  
½ pound fresh low-fat, mozzarella cheese, in ½” cubes or fresh mozzarella “pearls”  
1/3 cup chopped fresh sweet basil  
¼ cup olive oil  
1 tablespoon Italian seasoning  
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar  
½ teaspoon salt (optional)

## Directions:

Cook pasta according to package directions. Rinse with cold water and drain. Add tomatoes, cheese and sweet basil.

In a separate small bowl, combine oil, seasoning, vinegar and salt (if using). Add to pasta mixture and chill.

**Servings:** 10      **Calories/Serving:** 266

**Nutrition:** One serving provides approximately: 9 g Protein, 31 g Carbohydrates, 4 g Fiber, 12 g Fat (4 g saturated), 18 mg Cholesterol, 1 mcg Folate, 1 mg Iron, 22 mg Sodium

# Caprese Pasta Salad



# Pasta with Tomato, Kalamata Olives and Arugula



## Ingredient List:

2¼ cups chopped plum tomatoes  
¼ cup chopped pitted Kalamata olives  
1½ tablespoons olive oil  
¼ teaspoon salt  
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper  
2 garlic cloves, minced  
6 cups hot cooked whole-wheat fusilli  
or penne pasta  
3 cups baby arugula  
2 ounces shaved fresh pecorino  
Romano cheese

## Directions:

Combine first 6 ingredients in a large bowl. Add hot pasta and arugula. Toss gently. Divide pasta mixture among 4 bowls, and sprinkle with cheese.

*\*Time Saver Tip: Cook the whole box of pasta according to package directions. Freeze the leftovers in a freezer bag, reheat for later use.*

**Servings:** 4      **Calories/Serving:** 386

**Nutrition:** One serving provides approximately: 14 g Protein, 45 g Carbohydrates, 6 g Fiber, 16 g Fat (3.5 g saturated), 15 mg Cholesterol, 25 mcg Folate, 2 mg Iron, 587 mg Sodium

## Ingredient List:

6 cups hot cooked whole-wheat penne pasta  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar  
3 garlic cloves, crushed  
2 cups chopped fresh or baby spinach  
½ cup chopped fresh basil  
¼ cup chopped pitted Kalamata olives  
2 tablespoons capers  
¾ cup (3 ounces) crumbled feta cheese

## Directions:

\*Cook pasta according to package directions; drain. Return cooked pasta to cooking pot. With heat on low, add olive oil, vinegar and garlic, heat until warmed through. Add spinach and basil, toss well. Remove from heat and stir in remaining ingredients.

*\*Time Saver Tip: Cook the whole box of pasta according to package directions. Freeze the leftovers in a freezer bag, reheat for later use.*

**Servings:** 4      **Calories/Serving:** 398

**Nutrition:** One serving provides approximately: 12 g Protein, 45 g Carbohydrates, 6 g Fiber, 18 g Fat (4.5 g saturated), 19 mg Cholesterol, 41 mcg Folate, 2.5 mg Iron, 558 mg Sodium

# Mediterranean Style Pasta Toss with Feta and Capers

A close-up photograph of a grey ceramic bowl filled with a Mediterranean-style pasta toss. The dish consists of whole-wheat penne pasta, fresh spinach leaves, chopped basil, pitted Kalamata olives, capers, and crumbled feta cheese. The bowl is set on a light-colored wooden surface with a folded tan napkin underneath. In the background, a glass of water and a plate of bread are visible on a white tablecloth.



# Beef and Sausage Meatloaf with Bulgur

## Ingredient List:

- ¾ cup bulgur, uncooked
- ¾ cup skim milk
- 1 pound extra lean ground beef
- 8 ounces ground Italian sausage
- ¼ cup Cilantro Pistachio Pesto\* (option: use purchased pesto)
- 1 cup diced onion
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 2 eggs, large
- 1 (14.5 ounce) can diced tomatoes
- ½ teaspoon dry oregano
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ cup catsup for topping

## Directions:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a large bowl combine bulgur and milk, stirring until combined. Let stand until milk is absorbed, about 10 minutes. Add ground beef, Italian sausage, pesto and all remaining ingredients except catsup. Using hands, mix until well combined. Shape into 1 loaf or four small loaves, place on sheet pan. Top with catsup. Bake in preheated oven until internal temperature of meat reaches 165°F; about 1 hour.

### Options:

**Meatballs:** Shape meat mixture into approximately 40 meatballs (about 2 tablespoons each). Place on baking sheets lightly coated with cooking spray, bake at 450°F for 15 minutes. Heat in favorite sauce for use as a main dish or appetizer. Can be frozen in zip-lock freezer bag after cooling for later use.

**Stuffed peppers:** Fill peppers with meat mixture. Top with sprinkling of Parmesan cheese. Bake at 350°F until peppers are tender and meat mixture reaches 165°F; about 45 minutes to 1 hour.

**Servings of Meatloaf:** 8      **Calories/Serving:** 313

**Nutrition:** One serving provides approximately: 21 g Protein, 20 g Carbohydrates, 4 g Fiber, 17 g Fat (6 g saturated), 99 mg Cholesterol, 15 mcg Folate, 2 mg Iron, 736 mg Sodium

\*For Cilantro Pistachio Pesto recipe refer to Cilantro Pesto Pasta with Chicken recipe on [wheatfoods.org](http://wheatfoods.org)