



## Child Nutrition Corner: Food Inspires

*Childhood exposure to good food inspires healthy eating later in life.*

**Our May/June promotion is titled “Why Try Rye?”** Rye has long been the underdog grain relegated to the status of “acquired taste.” But not everywhere. There are countries such as Russia, Poland, and all of Scandinavia that have long embraced rye, serving their coarse black breads proudly. Learn more about this hearty winter grain with these fun facts.

- It’s grass! Rye is part of the Poaceae or Graminae family (a.k.a “true grasses”). It’s related to wheat and barley but was long considered a weed in barley and wheat fields.
- It’s huge in Russia. The former Soviet Union had long been the biggest producer and consumer of rye and now the Russian Federation holds those titles. Canada grows more rye than the U.S.
- Rye can make you skinny (in theory). Because it’s such a carb-rich grain, it can help make you feel full, even more so than eating wheat products, which in theory means you might eat less.
- It can be eaten by man and animals. Rye most often gets processed into flour for bread or fed to livestock. Most rye breads are a mix of rye and wheat flours, while Scandinavian-style black bread is made of pure rye flour.
- Oh yeah, you can eat the berries whole too. Whole rye berries can be boiled as a hearty alternative to a hot oatmeal breakfast or sprouted and sprinkled into salads. The berries are sweet and nutty with that unmistakably rye flavor.
- Rye is healthy. It’s a good source of soluble fiber, vitamin E, calcium, iron, and potassium, and has been linked to a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease, colon cancer, breast cancer and diabetes. Because rye is harder to refine than wheat, it retains more of its nutrients.
- It was once known as the “poverty grain” because it’s a robust grain that grows well in poor soils, it acquired this monicker. The fact that it was often harvested and eaten by impoverished communities surely reinforced this stereotype.
- Rye is lower in gluten than wheat. It will still be problematic for celiacs (don’t say we didn’t warn you) but rye is significantly lower in gluten than wheat.

- Rye is good for the environment. It's been used as a winter cover crop, especially in organic farming, for generations. Because it has deep roots, rye is able to capture nutrients, enhance soil health, prevent soil erosion, and reduce weeds without the use of herbicides.

You can always check out our [menus](#) for our featured foods! We plan to try our hand at rye bread in our bakery so watch for it. To learn more <https://www.foodrepublic.com/2013/03/01/10-things-you-didnt-know-about-rye-the-worlds-most-underrated-grain/>

Have a GREAT summer and visit your local farmers' market for fun grains, fruit and fresh vegetables.

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