

# Grains

Grain products are foods made from wheat, rice, oats, cornmeal, barley, or any other grains. According to MyPlate and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, children need about 3 to 6 ounces of grains a day; teens and adults need 5 to 8 ounces.

## In general, a 1-ounce equivalent is:

- 1 slice of bread
- 1 4½-inch pancake
- 1 6-inch tortilla
- ½ of an English muffin
- 7 square or round saltines or snack crackers
- ½ cup of cooked rice, cooked pasta, or cooked cereal
- 1 cup of ready-to-eat cereal

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend half of our servings be whole grains. Whole grains have been shown to reduce the risk of heart disease, cancer, and diabetes. Whole grain foods include all parts of the grain—germ, bran, and endosperm. Refined grains contain just the endosperm.

## SPEND SMART: STRATEGIES FOR BREAD

### Look for whole grain

Whole grain products may cost a few cents more but the added nutritional value makes them a smart buy. Use these clues to make sure you get the whole grain you pay for.

- **Choose products with whole grain listed as the first ingredient:** whole wheat, whole rye, whole grain corn, whole oats, oatmeal, brown rice, wild rice.
- **Do not be fooled by color.** Caramel coloring may be added to give some bread products the appearance of being whole grain.
- **Read the Nutrition Facts label.** Whole grain products generally have at least 3 grams of fiber per serving.

### Be patient and experiment

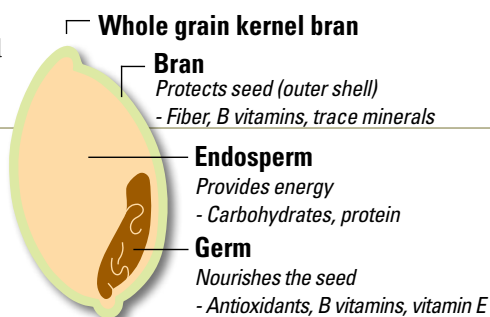
If your family prefers, or currently eats refined bread and crackers, start with products that list both whole wheat and enriched flour.

### Consider shopping at a day-old bread store

Check the prices and stock up if you have freezer space. Prices can be at least one-third to one-half less than the grocery store.

### Protect your investment – store and use bread wisely

- Store bread you will use soon in an airtight container at room temperature. Freeze the rest in airtight packaging and use within 6 months. Do not refrigerate; this draws moisture out of bread so it becomes stale more quickly.
- Use nearly-stale bread for French toast, stuffing, bread crumbs, or croutons.



## SPEND SMART. EAT SMART.®

[spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu](http://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu)

## CHECK YOUR \$-SAVING SKILLS:

### 1. Which words below indicate that the labeled product is a whole grain?

- wheat flour
- wheat bread
- multi-grain
- whole wheat flour
- seven grain
- 100% whole wheat
- unbleached
- cracked wheat

### 2. What is the better buy?

- a. Store brand quick oatmeal, \$1.59 for 18 ounces (36 ½-cup servings)
- b. Name brand oatmeal packets, \$3.49 for 10 individual servings
- c. Breakfast bar, \$2.59 for 6 bars

### 3. What is the better buy?

- a. Store brand "Complete Pancake/Waffle Mix," \$1.99 for 2-pound box
- b. Store brand "Old Fashioned Pancakes," \$1.99 for 2-pound box (requires egg, oil, and milk)
- c. Name brand "Complete Pancake Mix," \$2.99 for 2-pound box

(Answers on next page)

All prices in this publication were collected in central Iowa, Fall 2017. Although prices vary depending on date and location, the comparative differences generally follow a similar pattern.

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## SPEND SMART: STRATEGIES FOR GRAINS

LESS THAN \$.10 PER OUNCE	\$.10 TO \$.20 PER OUNCE	\$.20 TO \$.30 PER OUNCE	MORE THAN \$.30 PER OUNCE
Brown rice* \$.06	Rotini, colored \$.10	Name brand honey and nut oat cereal \$.20	Name brand whole wheat cracker* \$.41
White rice \$.06	Saltines \$.12	Fruit and nut cereal \$.23	Bakery cookies \$.42
Store brand popcorn, bag* \$.06	Store brand honey and oat cereal* \$.14	Store brand wheat crackers \$.26	
Pancake mix \$.06	Name brand oatmeal* \$.15	Name brand oatmeal, individual packets* \$.27	
Frozen bread dough loaves \$.07	Muffin mix \$.15	Rice side dish mix \$.27	
Macaroni \$.08	Flour tortilla \$.15	Brown and serve rolls \$.29	
Store brand whole wheat bread* \$.09	Frozen biscuits \$.16	Store brand croutons \$.30	
Baking mix \$.09	Instant white rice \$.16		
Store brand oatmeal* \$.09	Instant brown rice* \$.16		
	Oatmeal cookie mix* \$.16		
	Name brand popcorn, microwave* \$.19		

\* Whole grain item

### As you look at the chart above, consider

- Whole grain choices are available in each cost category.
- Sugar-coated cereals and those with fancy flavors and shapes usually cost more and are less nutritious than plain forms.
- Instant hot cereals in individual serving packets may be more than three times the cost of the same cereals in larger boxes.
- Store-baked products (such as cakes, muffins, biscuits, and cookies) usually cost more than purchasing and making from a mix.

### Ideas

- Consider popcorn for a whole grain snack. Compared to other snack foods, it is low in calories, high in fiber, and is a bargain.
- Try the store brand. Do a blind taste test to see if your family can really tell the difference. They may be requesting foods because of the advertising or packaging.
- You can cook many hot cereals in a microwave oven for the same amount of time it would take to make an “instant” cereal. This “make your own” version will be more nutritious and less costly. If your family likes the flavor and convenience of the instant oatmeal packets, add sugar, dried fruit or cinnamon to the oatmeal and store in an airtight container. Check package label for microwave cooking directions.
- Prepare rice and noodle side dishes with your own seasonings. Mixes do not save much time because the cooking time is the same for homemade and mixes.



## Answers:

### CHECK YOUR \$-SAVING SKILLS

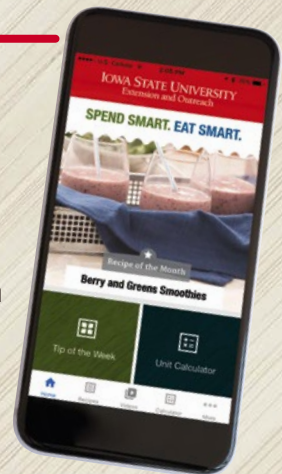
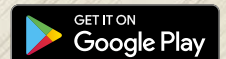
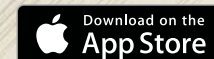
- Whole wheat flour and 100% whole wheat
- A—Store brand quick oatmeal (\$.04/serving)
- A—Store brand complete pancake mix

### EAT HEALTHY AND STICK TO YOUR BUDGET!

The Spend Smart. Eat Smart. app can help you at home and at the grocery store to

- Choose and prepare fresh fruit and vegetables
- Find recipes and meal ideas
- Compare products to find the best price

Download for free from your app store.

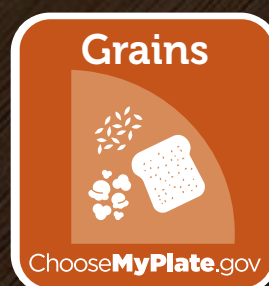


### EXPLORE THESE RESOURCES FOR MORE IDEAS

#### Iowa State University Extension and Outreach

- Spend Smart. Eat Smart.**—[spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu](http://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu)
- AnswerLine**—[www.extension.iastate.edu/answerline](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/answerline) (or, call 1-800-262-3804)
- Nutrition and Wellness**—[www.extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/nutrition](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/nutrition)
- Extension Store**—[store.extension.iastate.edu](http://store.extension.iastate.edu)

**Choose MyPlate**—[www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov)



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