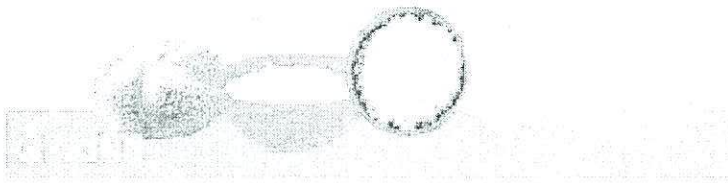




United States Department of Agriculture

OMB Number 0584-0535

Food Groups



What foods are in the grain group?

Any food made from wheat, rice, oats, cornmeal, barley or another cereal grain is a grain product. Bread, pasta, oatmeal, breakfast cereals, tortillas, and grits are examples of grain products.

Grains are divided into 2 subgroups, **whole grains** and **refined grains**.

Whole grains contain the entire grain kernel -- the bran, germ, and endosperm. Examples include:

- whole-wheat flour
- bulgur (cracked wheat)
- oatmeal
- whole cornmeal
- brown rice

Refined grains have been milled, a process that removes the bran and germ. This is done to give grains a finer texture and improve their shelf life, but it also removes dietary fiber, iron, and many B vitamins. Some examples of refined grain products are:

- white flour
- degermed cornmeal
- white bread
- white rice

Most refined grains are *enriched*. This means certain B vitamins (thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, folic acid) and iron are added back after processing. Fiber is not added back to enriched grains. Check the ingredient list on refined grain products to make sure that the word "enriched" is included in the grain name. Some food products are made from mixtures of whole grains and refined grains.

Some commonly eaten grain products are:

Whole grains:

brown rice
buckwheat
bulgur (cracked wheat)
oatmeal
popcorn

Ready-to-eat breakfast cereals:

whole wheat cereal flakes
muesli

whole grain barley
whole grain cornmeal
whole rye
whole wheat bread
whole wheat crackers
whole wheat pasta
whole wheat sandwich buns and rolls

Refined grains:

cornbread*
corn tortillas*
couscous*
crackers*
flour tortillas*
grits
noodles*

Pasta*

spaghetti
macaroni

pitas*
pretzels

Ready-to-eat breakfast cereals

corn flakes

whole wheat tortillas
wild rice

white bread
white sandwich buns and rolls
white rice

Less common whole grains:

amaranth
millet
quinoa
sorghum
triticale

*Most of these products are made from refined grains. Some are made from whole grains. Check the ingredient list for the words "whole grain" or "whole wheat" to decide if they are made from a whole grain. Some foods are made from a mixture of whole and refined grains.

Some grain products contain significant amounts of bran. Bran provides fiber, which is important for health. However, products with added bran or bran alone (e.g., oat bran) are not necessarily whole grain products.

This page was last updated on February 09, 2011 12:54 PM