
The Weekly Read-It

John Muir School PTA Newsletter

January 31, 2006

Grant a Wish!

Join the PTA in granting the wish of a John Muir teacher or staff member. This fourth annual tradition is a small but important way for us to give back to the wonderful people who nurture and educate our children. Teacher/staff turn in their completed Wish Lists Friday, **February 3rd** and letters and lists will come home with your student the following week. Help us show our appreciation by responding/donating items, your time, or making a financial contribution by **February 14th**.

DATES TO REMEMBER:

Friday, Feb. 3-Applications for BUSD due!

Friday, Feb. 10-100th Day Celebration!

Friday, Feb. 17-Lincoln's Birthday-**NO SCHOOL**

Monday, Feb 20-President's Day Holiday, **NO SCHOOL**

Tuesday, Feb. 21-PTA Meeting, **6:30-8:00pm AND** Staff Lunch Sponsored by **Second Grade!**

Tuesday, March 14-PTA Meeting, 6:30-8:00pm

Tuesday, March 21-Staff Luncheon Sponsored by Third Grade



INTRAMUIRAL THANK-YOU

AND last, but not least A BIG thank-you is owed to Lisa Jackson at Kid's Village for helping out with planning and organizing the Intramuirals!!!!

Getting ready for the 100th Day Celebration!

Date: **Friday, February 10th** Time: **9am-3pm** Volunteer Opportunities! **Tuesday, January 31st 3:15-5pm** in the Computer Lab to gather supplies with Barbara Vogel (2 volunteers) **Thursday, February 9th 5:30-7:00pm** (5 volunteers) to help set up the activity centers. **Friday, February 10th** (2-3 volunteers per session) Clean up at the end of the day (4 volunteers) Schedule:



| <u>Time</u> | <u>Classes</u> |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| 9:20-10:20 | First |
| 10:45-11:45 | Second |
| 12:45-1:40 | Kindergarten |
| 1:50-2:50 | 3rd Grade |

4th and 5th graders tutor the younger grades at the centers.

Please email Tracy Schrider at tracy@schridermith.net or call 510-845-0584 to sign up. Thank you!

Enrollment Forms Due To BUSD THIS Friday, 2/3.

Please remember that enrollment forms are due this Friday, February 3rd. Do not assume that because you have a child that attends John Muir School, that their sibling(s) is automatically enrolled here. If they do not receive your application by 2/3, your child could be enrolled at another school!

Italian-style winter greens

Whole Grains: Why the Fuss?

by Harvard Health Publications

We hear it so often that it hardly registers: Eat your fruits, vegetables and whole grains. The merits of fruits and vegetables seem pretty clear, but do whole grains deserve their place in the trinity? Are they really better than refined grains?

A kernel of history

All grains—including wheat, oats, rye and barley—grow as kernels. Each kernel has three layers: bran, on the outside, germ, in the center, and endosperm, between the others (see "The three layers of grain," below). The endosperm contains most of the starch, the germ contains the majority of the vitamins, minerals and oils, and the bran contains the bulk of the bulk, the dietary fiber.

Throughout most of human history, people used whole kernels to make bread and other grain products. Whole grain, in fact, is still the rule in much of our world. But bread baked from whole grains tends to be coarse, dense and dark. It didn't take long for millers to learn how to separate a kernel of grain into its three parts; the next step was to use the endosperm for baking. The result is lighter, whiter bread, which quickly became the favorite of folks who could afford it. But another result is that the bran and germ are discarded—along with most of the vitamins, minerals and fiber.

With the industrial revolution, milling became mechanical and refined grains fell in price. In part, perhaps, because it had been a symbol of privilege, white bread quickly became the standard fare; in the United States, the changeover occurred principally in the 1880s. Refined grains retain their primacy in America today. Foods made from refined grains contribute to obesity, heart disease, and diabetes—all unfortunate signs of an affluent society.

What's missing?

Separating the wheat from the chaff is one thing; extracting the endosperm from the bran and germ is quite another. Bran constitutes about 15% of a kernel of whole grain; germ, 3%; refined flour contains less than a tenth of a percent of each. Refining removes about 25% of the selenium, depriving men of a substantial amount of the mineral that may reduce the risk of prostate cancer. The table on below illustrates some of the other nutritional differences between whole and refined flour.

Putting it back

Human beings are ingenious creatures. First, they learned to remove the vitamins and minerals from grains; next, they learned to put them back. During the first half of the 20th century, nutritional deficiency diseases became common in many parts of the United States. For example, in 1928 about 200,000 cases of pellegra were recorded, 7,000 of which were fatal. Refined grain wasn't the only culprit, of course, but pellegra can be prevented by just 16 milligrams of niacin (vitamin B) a day. In response, many bakers began to add vitamins to flour in the 1930s. In 1941, the surgeon general made it a priority in order to "make our men as good as our machines." For the past 60 years, the FDA has mandated the addition of nutrients to refined flour; the list has expanded to include niacin, thiamin, riboflavin, iron, calcium, vitamin D and folic acid. Every product made from "enriched" or "fortified" flour has these nutrients added to meet specific standards.

Still missing

Fortification restores some of the lost vitamins and minerals to refined flour. But others, including selenium, are still lacking. It's easy enough to take a vitamin pill to make up the difference, but no vitamin or mineral will replace the dietary fiber removed by milling.

What is fiber?

Your mother called it roughage and her mother called it bulk. Today, though, chemists call it a polysaccharide polymer containing at least 20 sugar residues, and nutritionists call it dietary fiber. By any name, dietary fiber is complex carbohydrate made up of dozens, even hundreds, of sugar molecules that link to form large, branched chains. Fiber forms the structural backbone of plant stems, seeds and leaves, as well as the bran layer of grain. Although fiber is found in many plants and vegetables, it's entirely absent from all animal cells and from foods derived from animals and fish.