

## What's the Deal with Red Fife Wheat?

Perhaps the question should be “what’s the deal that people in ever-increasing numbers cannot eat wheat without major health problems?” Well, thank you, Dr. William Davis for the “Wheat Belly” book and for the videos that are available on You-Tube. These venues have opened a lot of eyes to the source of serious and even debilitating health problems associated with the consumption of wheat.

There is more to the story and **there should be** since wheat has historically been called “the staff of life”. As an example, no conquering army in human history ever considered going to war without a ready and sure supply of wheat and other gluten containing cereal grains. In fact, one of the most effective tactics of the aggressor in antiquity was to destroy the wheat crop one way or another before invading the people to be conquered.

So, on the face of the situation one has to ask, “If wheat and other cereals that contain gluten are so good for people, why are so many people unable to eat it today in the 21st Century?” The obvious answer is that the gluten may have changed in man’s efforts to select for disease resistance and yield through plant breeding techniques. Dr. Davis makes this case and suggests that a specific part of the gluten called gliadin is the culprit in modern wheat which was not present in landrace or heritage or older wheat varieties.

Although Dr. Davis and many others are ready to “throw the baby out with the bathwater” by suggesting that all wheat is therefore BAD and that perhaps all cereals containing gluten are to be banished from the human diet, let’s take a look at the evidence regarding the presence of gliadin in wheat.

Recent research seems to point to changes in the content of two different forms of gliadin. One is called  $\alpha 9$  and the other  $\alpha 20$ . The difference in the levels of these two forms of gliadin between wheat that has been bred since the early 1970’s and those bred for the most part much earlier are very significant. In fact, a little shopping around for laboratories who test wheat for all kinds of things has a test for “Allergenicity”. It measures gliadin content and rates the level of allergenicity on a scale of more or less allergic. One might well ask, “Since when is “food” a source of allergic response”? So this information has necessitated putting several safeguards into effect to protect people who suffer from gluten intolerance and Celiacs Disorder. Research testing for  $\alpha 9$  and  $\alpha 20$  gliadin rates Red Fife among the very lowest in the landrace and modern varieties.

Unfortunately, another possibility for digestive problems with wheat may relate to the production methods used by modern day wheat producers. These production practices which are increasingly being used include the use of the chemical, glyphosate or a sister compound, glufosinate. These chemicals are used to control weeds in the wheat, while defoliating or desiccating the wheat thus making the harvest proceed sooner. This practice improves the prospects for higher yields for a double-crop such as soybeans because they can be planted sooner.

The mode of action of the chemical is NOT like that of a normal desiccant which causes the plant cells to burst and dry. Glyphosate, more commonly known as Round-Up®,

translocates partially (about 20-25%) into the soil in root exudates and the remainder (75-80%) moves into the grain which is accumulating starch in the endosperm of the kernel. So the flour made from wheat that is receiving the per-harvest glyphosate application is also presenting a very strong and persistent chelating agent to the consumer. The mineral binding action of the chemical continues in the gastro-intestinal tract of whatever or whoever eats it even though it is eventually excreted in urine. This action interferes with the production of many different enzymes resulting in the chemical now being identified as an endocrine system disrupter. Some of these enzymes are essential in the proper digestion and assimilation of protein for normal cell growth and repair. Hence, the comment made recently by a Berne, Indiana practicing physician, "I'm not sure just how many people are REALLY gluten intolerant, but I won't deny that they feel better when they stop eating wheat." Do folks feel better because their intake of glyphosate has been reduced ?

So the growers of Red Fife Hard Red Wheat who are involved with Heritage Grains LLC are strictly adhering to production protocols that eliminate the use of glyphosate chemical directly on or immediately preceding the establishment of the crop. It has been clearly documented that Fusarium fungal infections in the wheat causing vomitoxin in wheat are increased when an application is made in advance of planting wheat.

Other quality safeguards include the Midwest grower's Red Fife seed source. Seed is certified organic and grown and processed in isolation from modern wheat variety production operations. Since wheat is very difficult to cross-pollinate locating production fields here in the mid-west is not difficult.

Keeping the RED FIFE wheat from being co-mingled in storage facilities with other wheat is a greater challenge. Heritage Grains growers are dedicated to keeping this from happening on their farms. Testing programs for vomitoxin, protein, falling number, presence of Genetically Modified traits and allergenicity are in place by Heritage Grains, LLC also to assure the miller of a raw material that meets the standards for food safety and purity whether being grown as certified organic or natural wheat.

Whether Red Fife is being grown for Organic Certification or Natural, the crop is monitored very carefully using the latest and most advanced plant nutrition nutritional and biological support available. Heritage Grains LLC is committed to a healthy soil, a nutrient dense plant which resists diseases and insect pests and a satisfied consumer.

Heritage Grains LLC has recently partnered with The Carthage Mill, and Milled & More LLC to make distribution of our high quality flour and berries in bulk and retail packaging very convenient and efficient. You can find their companies information on the For Sale tab of this website or contact us directly.