



By trying whole grains from different countries and cultures, students can take part in a world tour of good-for-you grains.

## Objective

Raise students' awareness of and preference for a variety of whole grains through multicultural educational displays and tasting experiences.

## The Event

Each classroom adopts a different whole grain to present about to other classes, such as whole-wheat flour, brown rice, barley, oatmeal, bulgur wheat, whole cornmeal, or quinoa. The class researches the whole grain, including where and how it is grown, how it fits into the traditions of different regions, and nutritious ways it can be eaten. Students may also find cultural examples in places such as in artwork or historical literature that demonstrate the food's importance.

Each class then prepares an educational display and decorates the classroom to promote its whole grain to other classes and share its new knowledge. For example, a class can present on quinoa and cover its uniquely high protein content, the South American countries where it is primarily grown, its role as a sacred grain in the Incan civilization, and various side dishes and salads in which it is commonly found as an ingredient.

If possible, students can also bring in samples of the whole grain and healthy dishes featuring it, such as tabouleh with bulgur, whole-wheat pasta with durum wheat, or whole-grain tortillas with cornmeal. Alternatively, parent volunteers can prepare samples in the classroom.

## Planning

**Coordinate with school staff.** Wellness committee members, teachers, and school nutrition staff members can help plan the event and encourage students to research their grain, the various cultures where it is popular, and the geographical regions where it is grown, as well as decorations students can make related to their grain. A list of whole grains for classes to select from should be determined, as well as what resources are available for researching and decorating. The school nutrition staff can also plan how to incorporate selected whole grains into upcoming menu items, if possible.

**Pick a date for your event.** To maximize the impact of your event, avoid dates when other food-related activities or events are planned, especially if classroom decorations are involved.

**Select a different whole grain for each class.** Encourage students to identify interesting facts about their class's whole grain to incorporate into their event day presentations. Research can be conducted during class, at the library, or as part of a homework assignment.

## Planning (cont'd)

**Arrange for the event day's success.** Teachers can plan time for students to set up their displays and prepare tastings, if possible, before a schoolwide tour begins. Each classroom can be supervised by a faculty member while the students tour classrooms in groups. Timed announcements on the public address system can alert students when they should move on to the next tour stop.

**Arrange displays accordingly.** Students can decorate the classroom, the door, or nearby hallways to feature their whole grain and the global regions where it is grown and consumed. For example, a class can spotlight corn by drawing cornfields on the chalkboards in the classroom. A class presenting on oats can make a collage of pictures from different recipes in which oats are used as an ingredient.

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# Team Up Success



### School

- Each class will have an opportunity to present its whole grain during the tour on the event day.



### Classroom

- Fifth and sixth grade teachers can help students explore culinary traditions and learn about the different types of whole grains grown throughout the world using Team Nutrition's *Dig In!*: Lesson 6: *The Global Garden* materials (see appendix, page 95).
- Art teachers can help students make creative displays that demonstrate the visual attributes of the whole grain.



### Cafeteria

- School nutrition staff can display samples of the whole grains in the cafeteria.
- If possible, the different whole grains can be featured on the school menu during the weeks following the event day.



### Community

- If including a tasting, invite local grocery store staff, restaurants, or community organizations to contribute whole-grain foods.
- Invite a local chef or registered dietitian to talk with students about how to cook whole grains.
- Culturally based community organizations may also want to share some of their whole-grain traditions with the students.



## Media

- Take photos of the classroom displays, and post them to the school's Web site or in the school's newsletter.

## Home

- Collect recipes to send home with the students. For ideas, consult Team Nutrition's *Recipes for Healthy Kids Home Cookbook* (see appendix, page 99).
- Send students home with the Team Nutrition's *Ten Tips Nutrition Education Series: Make Half Your Grains Whole* activity sheet (see appendix, page 96).
- Post Team Nutrition's *Whole Grain Rollover* widget (see appendix, page 99) on the school's Web site to show ways kids and the whole family can enjoy whole grains.
- Play FNS' video on whole grains (see appendix, page 98) at a parent meeting, or share the link in the school or parent organization's newsletter.



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# Schools **IN** Action

In **Las Cruces, NM**, students at **Conlee Elementary School** celebrated International Food Day by hosting an event called *Foods and Farms Around the World Food Tasting Day*. During this event, students, parents, and staff explored the connections between culture and food. Participants learned about how specific ingredients are grown, the types of foods that are grown in other countries, and how those foods are incorporated into meals and traditions. They also talked about the roles that both food and farmers around the world play in helping local communities thrive.

**The Luther School** in **Luther, MT** hosted a monthly cultural meal focusing on healthy food options and traditions that incorporate them. One Native American-themed meal featured wild rice as a healthy whole grain, roasted root vegetables, and beef and bison jerky. It was served outdoors, where students sat on blankets to add cultural authenticity.



[Photo] A **Conlee Elementary School** student celebrates Italy as part of her school's *Foods and Farms Around the World* event.