

News in Your School

Berkeley Township Schools

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RD Corner

Hello! My name is Meredith Hesselein and I'm your school Registered Dietitian!

My main goals are to teach students lifelong healthy eating habits and to keep you up to date on food and nutrition news. If you have any questions or comments, feel free to contact me at:

meredith.hesselein@sodexo.com

What are Ancient Grains?

The Whole Grain Council defines Ancient Grains as grains that have been largely unchanged over the last several hundred years. Modern wheat would not be considered an Ancient Grain because it has constantly been bred and changed over the years. But Ancient Grains have been cultivated for millennia in the same way. Ancient Grains were worshiped and used by several ancient civilizations and are traditional diet staples in many countries throughout the world. They have become increasingly popular over the last 10 years in western countries and have made their way into grocery stores and restaurants everywhere.

Are Ancient Grains healthier than Modern Grains?

All whole grains, including Ancient Grains, are healthier than refined grains because they contain fiber, vitamins and minerals that are lost when whole grains are processed into refined grains such as white flour and rice. Many ancient grains grow well with lower levels of pesticides, fertilizers and irrigation making them a popular choice for those choosing to eat "organic" foods. Ancient Grains are a great way to increase the amount of whole grains in the diet and give it more variety.

What are some examples of Ancient Grains?

Bulgur: best known for its use in the popular Middle Eastern dish Tabbouleh, bulgur is made from cracked, parboiled wheat.

Farro: the oldest cultivated grain in the world, farro puffs like rice when cooked but is slightly chewy.

Freekeh: traditional grain of the Middle East and Northeastern Africa, freekeh has a nutty flavor and chewy texture.

Quinoa: actually considered a seed, quinoa is gluten-free and a complete protein.



let's get cooking...

WITH ANCIENT GRAINS

Tabbouleh Salad

Ingredients:

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup extra-fine bulgur wheat

4 Roma tomatoes, finely chopped

1 English cucumber, very finely chopped

2 bunches parsley, part of the stems removed, washed and well-dried; very finely chopped

12-14 fresh mint leaves, stems removed, washed and well-dried; very finely chopped

4 green onions, very finely chopped

Salt

3-4 Tbsp lime juice

3-4 Tbsp olive oil

Instructions:

- 1.) Wash the bulgur wheat and soak it in water for 5-7 minutes. Drain very well and set aside.
- 2.) Chop the vegetables and herbs as indicated above.
- 3.) Place the chopped vegetables and herbs in a mixing bowl or dish. Add the bulgur and season with salt. Mix gently.
- 4.) Now add the lime juice and olive oil and mix again.
- 5.) For best results, cover the tabbouleh and refrigerate for 30 minutes before serving.



Recipe from: The Mediterranean Dish