

April HMS/NCA Webinar – April 15, 2021
“Gluten-Free Farm to Table: Delicious, Nutritious and Affordable Options for Whole Food”

Questions:

CHEF KRISTINE KIDD

Q: What is your recommendation for storing gluten-free grains?

A: Store grains in a sealed container at room temperature for up to a month. However, if not using them within a month, store in a sealed container in the freezer.

Q: Do you have any suggestions for cooking amaranth besides making a porridge?

A: Add a few tablespoons of amaranth to other grains while you are cooking them. Add about 1/2 cup uncooked to granola before baking.

Q: Recipes often suggest blanching vegetables before putting on a pizza or on other baked items. Why? Is it necessary?

A: Blanching vegetables before adding them to a pizza or on other baked items enables the vegetables to be cooked by the time the pizza is ready.

Q: What other websites do you like for recipes?

A: For recipes and cooking information I like Epicurious.com, Bonappetit.com, seriouseats.com, thekitchn.com, cooking.nytimes.com, and Kristinekidd.com

Q: Do you have suggestions for encouraging kids to eat more vegetables?

A: To entice kids to eat vegetables, add to pizza, pasta, tacos, or other particularly loved gluten-free foods.

MELINDA DENNIS, MS, RD, LDN, MODERATOR

I would like to clarify the short response I gave during the webinar on gluten-free grains and encourage a note of caution when considering the purchase of gluten-free grains in a farmer’s market setting.

Q: Are vendors at farmers’ markets in the U.S. required to follow the Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) rules in terms of labeling naturally gluten-free grains as gluten-free? I frequently see oats labeled as gluten-free at local farmers’ markets, and I wonder how they are determining that. What questions can a person with celiac disease ask to determine the gluten-free status of naturally gluten-free grains in a farmer’s market setting?

A: It is not possible to give a blanket response to this question because cottage food laws (laws for residential kitchens) differ from state to state in the U.S. Individuals selling gluten-free grains at a farmer’s market MAY be aware of the Gluten Free Labeling Rule which states that any food product labeled gluten-free must test below 20 parts per million (ppm) gluten. Or, they MAY NOT be aware of the rule and erroneously place a gluten-free claim on a package of gluten-free grains assuming they are “naturally” gluten-free. You will need to investigate on an individual vendor basis and on a state-by-state basis. Buyer beware.

If you choose to research the vendor’s practices, here are SOME questions you can ask. It is not possible to provide every question you would ask because it depends on each answer given.

For these questions, we will assume it is a package of a SINGLE ingredient grain (quinoa, or amaranth, for example) or single ingredient flour (not a combination, such as granola, a homemade baked good, or mixed grains).

- **Do you grow the gluten-free grains yourself on your farm?**
- **Are gluten-containing grains (wheat, barley, rye) grown adjacent to or in rotation with your gluten-free grains?**
- **What steps are you taking to prevent cross contact? Is your grain transported in a dedicated gluten-free truck? Is it being milled and packaged in a dedicated gluten-free area?**
- **Does your farm follow the FDA’s gluten-free labeling rule?**
<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2013/08/05/2013-18813/food-labeling-gluten-free-labeling-of-foods>
- **Has your product been independently tested and to what extent? And does the testing facility use the R5 ELISA test (preferred test) to test your product?**
- **Is your product certified gluten-free? (this is not necessary but it’s helpful information)**

You want to be certain, among other practices, that the gluten-free grains are regularly being tested for gluten. Certainly avoid any gluten-free grain that is referred to as “naturally gluten-free and, therefore, safe for those on a gluten-free diet.” [As research shows that there is a significant risk for cross contact between naturally gluten-free grains \(such as oats\) and gluten-containing grains, be sure to only purchase gluten-free grains that are labeled gluten-free.](#)

Recommendation for individuals with celiac disease: Unless you are very familiar and comfortable with the vendor’s full practices and testing methods to determine the gluten-free status of their labeled gluten-free grains, **I recommend erring on the side of caution and purchasing labeled gluten-free grains from known national suppliers you find in the mainstream commercial stores and online*.** I emphasize this point, as well, when it comes to gluten-free oats given the controversy that continues around the safety of oats labeled gluten-free in the U.S. Please read [GlutenFreeWatchdog’s update on gluten-free oats](#) as this Q &A cannot cover the complexity of the oats topic.

*The exception is plain rice which does not need to be labeled gluten-free.

Q: Where can we purchase labeled gluten-free grains?

A: Gluten-free grains can be found in many different locations. It is very important to choose gluten-free grains labeled gluten-free whenever possible (with the exception of plain rice) to avoid cross contact with gluten-containing grains. This list is not comprehensive and does not constitute endorsement.

- BobsRedMill.com – must be labeled gluten-free. Bob’s Red Mill has a facility that is for gluten-free grains/flours/products only and one that is for gluten-containing grains/flours/products.
- Nuts.com (must select from gluten-free pulldown)
- Mygerbs.com
- Teffco.com

- AncientHarvest.com
- Quinoa.net
- Amazon.com

See the Super Six handout on celiacnow.org to read about [the nutritional benefits of quinoa, amaranth, buckwheat, teff, sorghum and millet.](#)

NICOLE CORMIER, RD, LDN

How do you recommend drying herbs?

You can use an oven, a dehydrator or some herbs you can hang in bunches or spread out in mesh hanging dryers. I prefer using a dehydrator. Preset dehydrator to 95-115 degrees for herbs. You can increase to 125 degrees if needed. Most herbs will take 1 - 4 hours to fully dry.

This is the dehydrator I use: <https://stxinternational.com/STX-Dehydra-1200W-Stainless-Steel-Commercial-Grade-Food-Dehydrator-p27905584>

Hanging dryer: <https://www.amazon.com/HORTIPOTS-Collapsible-Hanging-Hydroponic-Vegetable/dp/B07MMJDHYN>

Read more about drying herbs in a dehydrator: <https://theherbalacademy.com/dry-fresh-herbs-using-a-dehydrator/>

Suggestions for encouraging kids to eat more vegetables

1. Let them grow food. Have them harvest food from the garden.
2. Guide them to play with their friends in the garden.
3. Bring them to the farmers' market to meet the farmers.
4. Invite them to have their own relationship with the farmer.
5. Let them make a mess in the kitchen.
6. Focus on creating a safe and fun space for everyone at the table.
7. Encourage the "one bite" try it and describe it using descriptive words.
8. Eat with them, try new foods with them and watch your own food opinions. The "daily drip" of your words sends belief system messages around food.
9. Pick a new food to research at the table. Learn about its history, nutritional benefits and different ways it can be prepared.
10. Share your own struggles with vegetables. Encourage them to have their own experience.

If I buy from a local farm, can I assume the food is "natural/organic" or are there questions I should be asking?

There are questions that will secure your buying produce that is grown with organic practices.

1. What does your farm use for fertilizers? Are they synthetic or organic?
2. Does your farm use pesticides or herbicides?
3. Does your farm use compost?

If they use organic or natural fertilizers, don't use pesticides or herbicides and use compost.....great!!

How to Start an Herb garden

1. To start an herb garden you will need **seeds, sunlight, water, quality soil, a container and nutrients.**
2. You can obtain seeds locally at a **nursery** or **hardware store** or shop **online**. Pick herbs you like to eat already.
3. Now you need to **pick a home** for your herb plants. Will they be **outside** in your garden? in pots on your **deck**? in a pot by a south facing window? The time of year and temperature requirements will dictate much of this decision. The good news is most seed packets will tell you the ideal temperature for your chosen herb and you can decide from there. Pots to hold your herbs can often be obtained free from local nurseries. Even if cost isn't an issue, it's nice to take plastic out of the waste and recycle stream and re-use it. Most herbs will need a minimum of four hours of sun and hopefully will get at least six hours of sun. Find a spot to grow them where you can achieve this.
4. Next you will need **soil**. For a beginner it's probably best to buy a seed starting mix of soil from a nursery, but as you progress in your gardening journey you'll likely want to make your own mix. A good mix would be about 35% coco coir (for aeration and moisture retention), 35% compost (for nutrients) 25% native dirt (whatever is lying around) and about 5% perlite (for water retention and aeration). Good soil should look like a tasty chocolate cake. it should appear rich, dark, crumbly, soft, fluffy, moist, and inviting.
5. Fill your container almost to the top with soil. Right now, herb seeds are cheap, and most herbs do well crowded together, so I seed about 5-20 seeds per container. Just sprinkle them on top then cover them with another sprinkling of soil. Your seeds should be covered 2-2.5 times as deep as they are tall or refer to the seed packet for depth instructions. Now, water in the soil after seeding until the top is moist but not drenched. You will need to keep the soil moist until you see some greenery emerge.
6. Once the seed emerges, water every other day or when the plant looks wilted. After a few weeks it's a good idea to use a liquid fertilizer to stimulate and sustain growth (like Cape Cod Ferments fermented fish fertilizer).