

Tentative list of workshops with brief descriptions:

1) Introducing Local Whole Grains to your Product Line.

Having a line of whole grain breads is becoming increasingly important, but there are issues to overcome, especially when using locally-grown varieties. Flavor and protein content can vary unpredictably and using true “whole grains”, meaning 100% extraction, as opposed to the reconstituted varieties available from large suppliers, requires careful reformulation. In addition, considerable market research is needed to establish which varieties will play well with the customer. Pricing is also something that needs thought. This two-day workshop will address each of these issues and include hands-on work with a variety of 100% extraction locally grown varieties. We will be working in the MGA research bakery with equipment commonly available to the small artisan baker. Meals included.

2) The Old World Bakery.

Artisan baking in the U.S. owes a great deal to our European heritage, but has taken on a character of its own. Whether you are a serious home baker or are running your own shop, it is worthwhile to explore the original Old World techniques and varieties. This two-day workshop will be a hands-on introduction to the main varieties of these ancient breads. We will work with rye, buckwheat and barely in addition to wheat and consider pumpernickels, flatbreads peasant and country breads among others. Bring your own favorite formula to share! Meals included.

3) A Village Bakery II

The Maine Grain Alliance is pleased to offer once again our two-day series of workshops covering all aspects of being the proprietor of a village artisan bakery. The curriculum will be on target whether this is just a gleam in your eye or you have been in the business for years. We have recruited expert professionals to cover marketing, financial management, equipment needs and, of course, hands-on production baking in our fully-equipped bakery and kitchen. Meals included.

4) Bakery Science

Understanding the underlying physics and chemistry of baking is essential to the never ending task of improving your product. This two-day workshop will address the processes that go into making the loaf. The contents of flour among differing varieties of grains. The roles of gluten, the roles of water, salt, shortening and other additives. What happens during fermentation, both by yeast and by natural leavening. How is flour bleached and what is the role of bleaching? What happens to the dough during baking? What contributes to the flavor of bread and how can it be manipulated? How does bread stale? All these matters will be addressed in discussions and at the bench. Meals included.