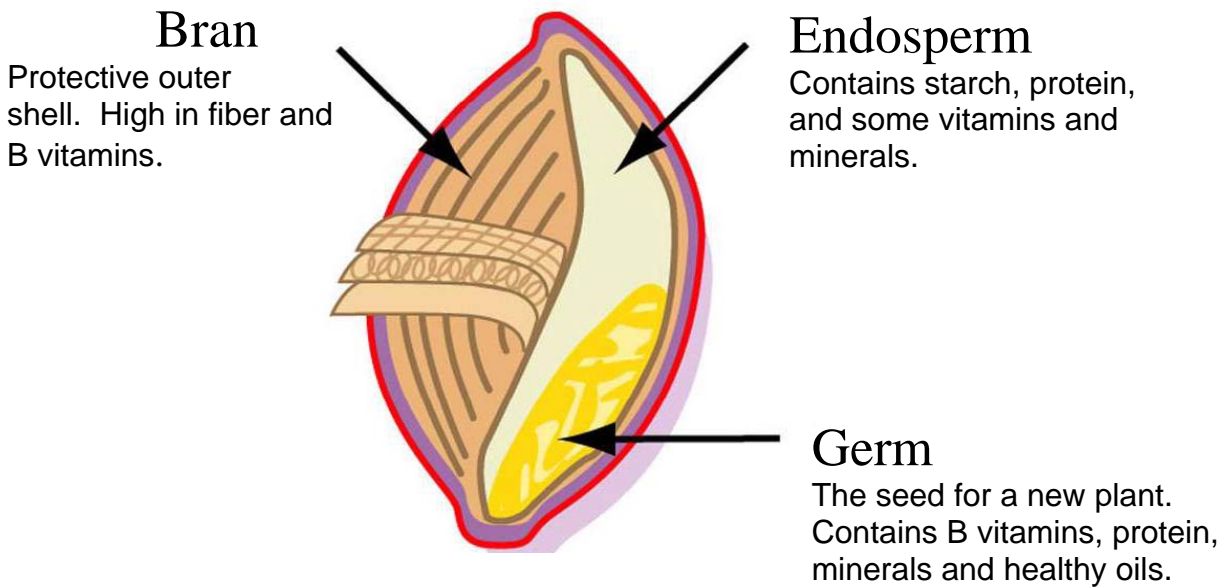


What is a Whole Grain?

Whole Grains vs. Refined Grains

All grains can be whole or refined depending on how they are processed. Grains are naturally “whole” when they grow in the field because they have all three parts of the kernel: the bran, germ, and endosperm, as shown in the picture below.

Grain Kernel



Whole Grains: grains that have all three parts of the kernel: bran, endosperm, and germ.

Enriched = Refined = White grains: The bran and the germ are removed during processing and only the endosperm is left.

Three Parts of a Grain	Nutrients in each part	Whole Wheat Grains	White/Enriched/ Refined Grains
Endosperm	starch, protein, some vitamins and minerals	✓	✓
Bran	fiber, B Vitamins	✓	
Germ	B vitamins, protein, minerals, and healthy oils	✓	

Health Benefits of Whole Grains:

When the bran and the germ are removed from the grain to make white or enriched grains, the nutrients of the bran and the germ are also removed. Whole grains have more nutrients and provide more benefits than refined grains.

- More fiber, B vitamins, minerals, and healthy oils
- Improve digestive health
- Lower risk of heart disease
- Lower risk of some cancer
- Lower risk of diabetes
- Help with weight management

How to Find Whole Grain Products in the Store:

Look for foods with the word “whole” first on the ingredient list.

Example:

Whole Wheat Bread:

Ingredients: Whole wheat flour, water, high fructose corn syrup, wheat gluten, soybean, and or canola oil, yeast, salt, honey.



White Bread:

Ingredients: Enriched wheat flour, water, high fructose corn syrup, wheat gluten, soybean, and or canola oil, yeast, salt, honey.



Look for these key words in the ingredient list to determine if a product is made with whole grains:

Whole Grains	Enriched/Refined/Processed Grains
Whole wheat	Enriched flour, or bleached flour
Whole grain [name of grain]	Wheat flour
Brown rice	White rice
Corn	De-germinated (on corn meal label)
Oats, oatmeal	
Bulgur	