



Specialty Grains

We are all familiar with the major grains such as wheat, corn, oats, etc. However, there is a whole (and in some cases ancient) world of specialty grains out there. They offer unique characteristics and nutritional benefits. We carry many of these specialty grains, others can be ordered by special request including milled products (flour, flakes). Here is a brief review of these grains making a comeback and enjoying increased popularity:

Amaranth

A South American gluten-free cereal with a high-fiber, nutrient-rich seed.

Buckwheat Groats

It is actually not a grain (the plant belongs to the rubarb family), so is suitable for consumers who are allergic to grains and grasses

Kamut

A form of wheat from ancient Egypt, with a unique flavor and texture. Contains gluten but some wheat-sensitive people can eat it.

Millet

A gluten-free, readily digestible grain that provides a balance of amino acids. Suitable for people on wheat-free diets.

Quinoa

Native to the high altitude valleys of the Andes. This nutty-flavored grain is high in protein. Gluten-free

Spelt

One of the oldest cereal grains known to man. Nutritionally similar to wheat, except that it is higher in protein. Some wheat-sensitive people can eat it.

Teff

Smallest sized grain, native to Ethiopia, sweet and malty in flavor. It contains more iron than wheat or barley. Gluten-free.

Market Place

Sesame – Prices steady to slightly easier. Forecasts in India call for normal monsoon. Timing will be important. If monsoon comes early, farmers will plant more cotton and peanuts. If monsoon comes late, Sesame will be favored. We recommend hand-to-mouth buying strategy.

Poppy – Our spot market will have to catch up with replacement cost. This means slightly higher prices ahead

Caraway – prices steady

Sunflower – Spring planting conditions have been good. If favorable growing conditions continue throughout summer we should see a gradual return to a more traditional price range.

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Market Place

Flax prices are still upward. Since last year's crop debacle when rain and frost reduced the yields and quality, many producers have sold out of Brown Flax. The prices, consequently, increased even higher. So far, H.P. Schmid has sufficient quantities at its warehouse locations. New crop plantings are up but this has had little impact on current crop pricing. It is still difficult to find good quality flax from the current crop.

California **Almonds**

The "subjective" report of May 11th is a telephone poll of hundreds of small growers, polling their expectation of the crop. The consensus was 850 million pounds.

We don't believe this report to be of significant value, and would rather wait for the "objective" report (due out about June 30) which is produced by a USDA count of a sample of almond trees. If the "objective" report shows a similar anticipated crop to the "subjective" report then new crop pricing could take another increase.

Pumpkin – supplies in China are getting scarcer. New crop will not be available until November. Further price increases are likely.



Thinking Of Going Organic?

Certification Made Easy

If you're planning to convert either a portion of, or all of your business to organic, there is a new world you are about to enter. The world of *organic certification*. While this step into the unknown might seem overwhelming, when broken down into logical procedures and steps, it becomes much less daunting of a task.

It is mandatory, as of October 21, 2002, under the OFPA (Organic Foods Production Act) regulated by the USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) that those companies and individuals involved as handlers and producers in the organic food industry (with the exception of retail stores, and companies that gross under \$5,000 per year) be certified by an accredited organic certifier under the USDA's NOP (National Organic Program). The accredited certification companies or organizations are agents of the USDA and perform certifications for the USDA.

How do you decide which one of the almost 100 (currently there are 56 domestic and 41 foreign accredited certifiers) USDA approved certifiers to choose to be your certifier?

A few questions to consider:

Where is your intended market? Whether you'll be selling products locally, nationally, or internationally, will strongly influence your choice. What is your projected volume? Since certification fees vary considerably, you have to evaluate and justify the cost of certification based on your annual revenues of your organic business. What type of business are you involved in? Certifiers can be accredited and authorized to perform certifications for any, or all, of three categories; organic handlers (processors, distributors, etc.), organic producers (growers, wild crops), or livestock operations.

Contact the Organic Trade Association (<http://www.ota.com>), or the USDA (<http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop/CertifyingAgents/Accredited.html>) for a list of certifiers. Get recommendations from other businesses about their certifier.

The Basics of Organic Certification:

An audit trail for traceability, approved pest control methods, and approved sanitation procedures are three of the keys to certification. To become organically certified you must demonstrate the functioning ability to maintain care, custody, and control of the organic products you deal with. In other words, the organically produced agricultural products that come into your business, must not be contaminated or compromised in any way that diminishes the organic nature of these products. Any product or method that is not approved by the USDA for organic production cannot be used with your organic products. An inspector will be sent to your farm, office, or facility, and will be verifying compliance to the OFPA (organic rule). They will examine your procedures and the supporting documentation, which verifies those procedures.

Remember, the name of the game here is to maintain organic integrity.

If you have an audit trail or recall system, or if you maintain Kosher or other similar certifications, you are well on your way towards meeting the requirements for organic certification and enjoying the many benefits of this exciting and rewarding growth industry.

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New Jersey Warehouse

We have completed our move from Uncommon Carrier to Accem Warehouse. Now, you can pick up our Organic as well as our Conventional items at the same place. That makes things easy and saves transportation cost! The new address is: Accem Warehouse, 63-69 Hook Rd, Bayonne, NJ 07002, Phone: (201) 858-3899

Web Site

Did you know that H.P. Schmid, Inc. has a great web site? That's at least the response from many customers. Product information, our latest Certificates and Specification Sheets, as well as Nutritional Information is conveniently available. Try it!

Same day pick ups

We can picture the situation: Just yesterday there was enough product, but today, we are almost out, and we need more right away. We are trying our best to help! Please be aware, though, rush fees may be associated with a rush order.

Tahini is a paste made from Sesame Seeds, and it is used in dips such as humus. We have Tahini in 40 lb pails at our San Francisco warehouse.