

Cookies That Are Good for You?

The Buss family of Hunter promotes the benefits of whole wheat in their Upper Red Fork Innovation's line of Grandma Opal's Cookies

Nestled front and center between two varieties of Sara Lee pies, a little white tub is making a big impact. The contents on the shelves at the Enid United- Northgate Plaza supermarket don't stay around too long. Customers know where to find it, in the freezer section on the top shelf with the checkered label. People are coming from long and far to purchase Grandma Opal's cookies in chocolate chip and oatmeal raisin.

"Grandma Opal's is invading Sara Lee and it will always be on the top shelf until it is known by everyone," said Gerald Haury, United Store Manager. "I will keep it front and center until everyone comes in specifically for Grandma Opal's cookies."

Grandma Opal's cookies are the product of the Buss family, David, Tami, Kearstin, Tucker and Bo, of Hunter, Okla. The cookies come as pre-made dough in three pound tub, a 10 pound box, a 15 pound box of pre-portioned one ounce cookies and a 15 ounce package containing 12 pre-portioned cookies.

The Buss family teamed up with the Oklahoma Wheat Commission at the KNID Agrifest in Enid to hand out samples of the cookies. They provided both varieties and went through 350

pounds of dough, or approximately 5000 cookies, in two days!

Since the Agrifest in mid-January, the supermarket has sold approximately 3 cases of the pre-made dough. Haury would love for it to eventually consume a whole section in the freezer section.

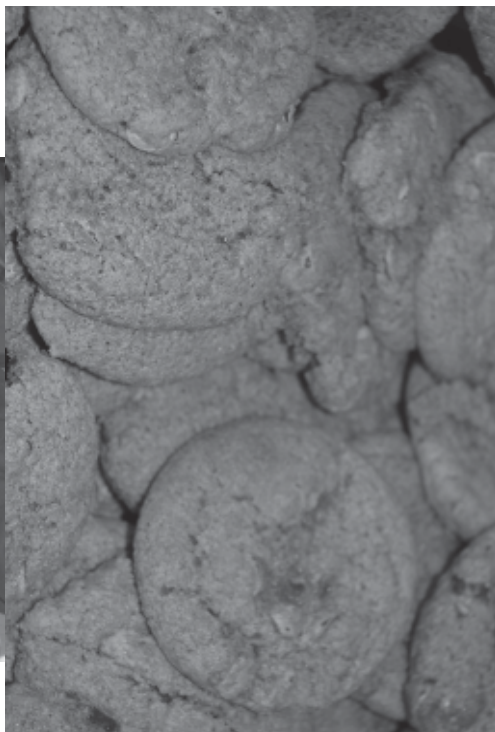
"Demand has not slowed down since the Agrifest," Haury said. "We cannot keep it on the shelves and the demand for the cookies really surprised me."

Made with 100 percent Hard Red Winter wheat flour, real butter and eggs, Grandma Opal's contains no preservatives. That was the goal when the Buss family started the process of creating a whole wheat cookie five years ago.

"We wanted a cookie that still had that real butter flavor," said David Buss. "Our end product is one that is different than other cookies because it is not falsely enhanced, nor does it contain shelf stabilizers."

The Start

Five years ago, the Buss' took a dry cookie mix of Tami's



Cont. pg 5

From the Chairman...

Hello Producers,

2008 has been extremely full for the Oklahoma Wheat Commission. Our trailer, mixer, oven and supplies has traveled across the state of Oklahoma with the executive director, office staff, commissioners and their wives baking and serving cinnamon rolls and bread at various events. At the KNID Agrifest in Enid, we also served the whole wheat chocolate chip and oatmeal raisin cookies that are featured in this edition of the Wheat Brief.

Some of the OWC and staff traveled to New Orleans, La., and put in long hours driving, baking and serving cinnamon rolls and bread at the National Farm Bureau Convention. Late February and early March brought the Commodity Classic, a national wheat, corn and soybean event held in Nashville, Tenn., where we met and visited with people in the wheat industry while serving.

Our group met in Stillwater, Feb. 14-15, 2008 for our regular monthly meeting and annual research review. We were delighted by the progress made in wheat research by the team at Oklahoma State University in 2007, **which is supported by your checkoff dollars**. OSU's Wheat Improvement Team continues its quest of improved genetic solutions

for the unpredictable environment endured by Oklahoma wheat producers. Topics covered included; How Partnerships Enhance Wheat Research, by Clarence Watson, associate director, Oklahoma Agricultural Experiment Station; and Challenges of Our Industry, by Mark Hodges, Executive Director of the Oklahoma Wheat Commission.

WIT faculty members are: Brett Carver, wheat breeding and genetics; Liuling Yan, wheat molecular genetics and breeding; Jeff Edwards, assistant professor small grains extension specialist; Bob Hunger and Art Klatt, wheat pathology and development of disease-resistant germplasm; David Porter, aphid resistance; Kris Giles and Tom Royer, Hessian fly control; Bjorn Martin, stress physiology; and Patricia Rayas-Duarte, cereal chemistry. Other topics covered were Jointed Goatgrass Management with Centerfield, the new OSU Clearfield variety, and development of a weather-based model for predicting First Hollow Stem.

I encourage you to request a copy of the publications covering the above mentioned topics. You may contact the office of the Associate Director of the Oklahoma Agricultural Experiment Station, OSU, 139 Agricultural Hall, Stillwater, Ok 74078 (405)-744-5398 and ask for "Research Report P-1018, Partners in Progress: Wheat Research at OSU 2007" and/or "Highlights of Wheat Research at OSU 2007 #MP-176. Some really good materials are presented in these research publications.

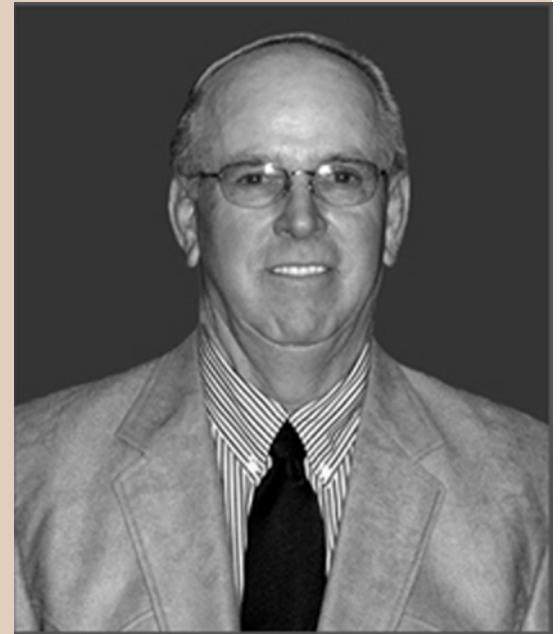
I would also like to congratulate commissioner Don Schieber on his appointment as U.S. Wheat Secretary/Treasurer. Don's term will begin in July 2008 and as he proceeds through the officer chairs of USW, he will bring beneficial information to the OWC.

I hope some of you have been enjoying the benefits of the rise in wheat price. As the warm spring days approach I remind each of you to be safe as you prepare and operate your equipment for a safe and wonderful wheat harvest.

I want to thank all of you for your support!

Sincerely,

Tom Glazier, Chairman



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Money Under the Microscope

by Mary Kay Scott, as featured in the *Cowboy Journal*

The waving wheat of Oklahoma always has been at the mercy of Mother Nature, but it soon could be controlled in a laboratory by a cutting-edge scientist.

After joining the Oklahoma State University Wheat Improvement Team only one year ago, Liuling Yan, assistant professor in the OSU Department of Plant and Soil Sciences, has made a discovery that has the potential to redefine the production of wheat in Oklahoma.

In this Great Plains state, wheat serves a dual purpose to producers: grain harvest and cattle production.

“Oklahoma is unique because it relies heavily on both uses,” said David Porter, department head and professor in the OSU Department of Plant and Soil Sciences.

For many families in Oklahoma, this bilateral crop provides additional agricultural opportunities and profits. Both avenues of wheat production are interdependent upon each other. Porter said most Oklahomans do not see the value of cattle that comes from wheat. In turn, the maximum economic value of wheat reflects cattle production.

The economic value of wheat is not only seen by Oklahoma producers but also by other members of the scientific community. Support from the Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology, the Oklahoma Wheat

Commission, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Coordinated Agriculture Project and the National Research Initiative grant program make Yan’s research possible.

Yan, a native of China, has



pinpointed the genomic sequence responsible for the flowering process in winter wheat varieties. By analyzing the genetic code, Yan is able to identify a crucial piece of the biological switch between the vegetative and reproductive stages in this species.

As wheat makes its way through the growth cycle, it must make critical transitions between growth stages.

In terms of cattle production and grain harvest, the transition between vegetative and reproductive stages is one of the most critical, said Brett Carver, wheat genetics chair in agriculture and regents professor in the OSU Department of Plant and Soil Sciences.

During the vegetative growth stage, the nonreproductive plant

parts (leaf and stem) are exposed. The emergence of the reproductive plant parts (flower and seed) transitions the plant into the reproductive growth stage. Having a more accurate understanding and timeline of this process, specifically in certain varieties of wheat adapted to Oklahoma and the southern Great Plains, is the foundation of Yan’s research.

“Designing an Agricultural Genome Program,” posted on the National Academic Press Web site, compares the genetic building blocks of some of the major agricultural commodities. The wheat genome contains 16 billion basepairs,

“oversized” compared to the 2.3 billion in corn and the 3 billion in the human genome. Yan’s arduous task of analyzing the intricate genetic code could ease the efforts of not only Oklahoma wheat producers but also those working to produce improved wheat varieties.

“You are able to rely on DNA, rather than Mother Nature,” Carver said.

“There’s so much more that I can’t see,” Carver said. “You can guess in the field, but you can nail it down in Yan’s lab.”

With Yan’s discovery, OSU’s Wheat improvement team is able to not only predict the wheat flowering process more effectively but also to use this research to help produce improved wheat varieties. With this ability, Porter said it could be possible to

Wheat Improvement Team Benefits from Discoveries

delay or stall the flowering process.

What does this mean for producers? More money in the pocket of rural America. With a more accurate understanding of the genetic building blocks of wheat, researchers can increase profit on both avenues of wheat production.

The accuracy in predicting the flowering process would allow producers to have a more precise date as to when to remove their cattle from wheat pasture grazing, Porter said. This would eliminate the risk of any damage to the plant during flowering that occurs by letting cattle graze too long. “The right timing must occur for the transition from vegetative to reproductive growth stages,” Carver said. “This is crucial when grazing cattle.”

Carver said cattle put a tremendous amount of stress on wheat, removing the canopy.

“We ask wheat to redevelop after cattle graze it, with no drop in grain yield,” Carver said. “This is a lot to ask.”

On the other hand, with Yen predicting flowering more accurately, producers could gain extra days to extend their cattle’s grazing period. This could be done by eliminating a premature halt in grazing and by stalling the flowering process to allow producers to have an extended grazing period.

“Each day cattle graze means money in the producer’s pocket,” Porter said. This additional income, Porter said, essentially goes back to rural America. He said the little things add up and this could be a rejuvenation of rural economy. Although producers have been lucky enough to see an

increase in the price of wheat, he said producers are still not as profitable as they should be. Although most of Yan’s current research is directed toward producers using wheat for dual purposes, the same methodology could be applied to producers harvesting wheat for grain only.

“You could eliminate competition,” said Case Medlin, associate professor in the OSU Department of Plant and Soil

In an “average” crop year, the Oklahoma Wheat Commission grants approximately \$1/2 million from checkoff funds to wheat research. That is traditionally 20 percent of the funds collected.

Sciences. Medlin, who works as a weed science specialist, said he believes Yan’s research could be applied to weed control. If Yan is able to stall or delay the flowering process, why not expedite the process for those harvesting for wheat grain? With this idea, Medlin said he wonders if wheat could be harvested before weeds develop and mature. This could eliminate competition and reduce the need for traditional weed control methods.

“You could outfox Mother Nature and harvest a clean grain,” Medlin said.

Carver said grain “cleanliness” is a characteristic for which international buyers look. This concept would allow producers to offer a more desirable product to domestic and international markets. Yan’s research leaves the faculty at OSU, producers and scientists across the state with questions and possibilities to help resolve traditional problems in wheat production.

“We were lucky to get Dr. Yen here,” Porter said. “He had the opportunity to go anywhere. He wanted to stay with wheat and build a program around a crop he loved.”

Yan said he has been working in wheat science for more than 20 years. “OSU has a great wheat improvement team,” Yan said. “It was wheat that connected me to OSU.”

Educated in his native country, China, at Yangzhou University and at Victoria University in Australia, Porter said Yan has made an immediate impact on a level that takes most faculty members years to achieve. Yan has allowed OSU to remain competitive in the science of wheat improvement and to help produce better varieties of wheat for Oklahoma.

For more information on the OSU Wheat Improvement Team, visit <http://www.wit.okstate.edu>.

Mary Kay Scott was a member of the Agricultural Communications Cowboy Journal class before accepting the position of Communications Director with the Texas Wheat Producers Board.

Grandma Opal's Cookies ... f/m pg. 1

grandmother Opal to Oklahoma State University's Robert M. Kerr Food and Agricultural Products Center to convert the recipe to make larger volumes.

The initial cookie mix was marketed in one pound bags that required eggs and butter. The Buss' family felt it was an inconvenient product and did not sell as much as they envisioned. Therefore, they headed back to OSU to formulate the current pre-made dough.

"The FAPC helped us not only create the dough, but also helped with labeling and packaging issues," David said. "They also pointed us in the right direction when it came time to find volume packagers."

The Buss' original intent for their product was to become another avenue to generate an income for the family farm. They hoped to target schools, hospitals and residential living facilities by promoting the health aspect of their cookies. In doing this, they would have additional revenue from their own land, their own farm.

"We sold lamb and various products at the farmers markets in Tulsa and Oklahoma City for nine years," Tami said. "When we created Grandma Opal's, we were hoping to generate enough income to cover some of our living expenses."

Now

Haury believes in local grown products, the perfect promotion of the items and will do whatever it takes to help. He believes once the locals are hooked the Buss' have it made.

"Without Gerald we would not have had a local outlet," David said. "He has been really supportive of our operation."

David and Tami have done all of the footwork getting their product into school the systems.

They are not opposed to going into schools on the suggestion of the general public; all they need is the name of the school and their nutrition director. They then work with the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry to work their way onto the menus.

"We have worked with the Farm to School program at the Department of Agriculture," David said. "Chris Kirby has been spreading the word about the cookies and helping us out immensely."

They are currently working with a packer and distributor based out of Tulsa to make it more convenient for the schools.

"It is our hope to be on all school lunch menus," Tami said. "Having our product on the same distributor's list as all of the other products they order will make it easier for them."

A family that does their own legwork, a product that is health conscience and the support of the

Oklahoma Wheat Commission will only make this product a more popular item at the local stores. The list of stores has grown even while writing this story!

Baking Instructions:

Since these cookies come pre-made, baking is a snap. Tami warns that ovens vary by elevation and by cooking method.

"They bake different in a convection oven than a traditional over," Tami said. "I suggest people play with a few cookies before baking a whole batch."

Simply place cookies in a preheated 350 degree oven for 12-15 minutes, or until slightly brown and then let them cool approximately five minutes on the cookie sheet. Next, remove from the cookie sheet to a cooling rack.

"Mine are usually gone before they cool," Tami said. "My family likes them hot!"

Grandma Opal's Cookie Dough

Available in chocolate chip and oatmeal raisin, in three pound tubs, 10 pound boxes, 15 pound pre-portioned boxes and a 15 ounce package with 12 pre-portioned one ounce cookies.

Upper Red Fork will deliver and can ship anywhere in the U.S.

Dough is available at the following locations:

United Supermarket- Northgate Plaza, 1010 W. Willow, Enid, (580) 234- 1122

United Supermarket- Westgate Plaza, 4110 W Owen K Garriott Rd, Enid, (580) 237- 7131

United Supermarket- Southgate Addition, Cherokee, (580) 596- 3365

Native Roots Market- 132 W. Main Street, Norma, (405) 831- 1711

Bruner's Old Time Meat Market- 8013 S. Sheridan, Tulsa, (918) 622- 7648

Oklahoma Food Co-Op- 1524 NW 21st, OKC (405) 613- 4688

Baking Instructions:

Bake in a preheated 350 degree oven for 12-15 minutes, or until slightly brown. Let cool approximately five minutes and remove from cookie sheet to a cooling rack. (Ovens vary due to elevation)

Oklahoma Wheat Commission

at work for Oklahoma's wheat producers.

The Oklahoma Wheat Commission promotes greater utilization of wheat in domestic and international markets through research, market development and public education. Oklahoma producers fund such efforts through a 1½ cent per bushel checkoff.

Commissioners

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Staff

Mark Hodges ,	Executive Director
Kathy Stevenson ,	Chief Financial Officer
Fonda Gentry ,	Administrative Assistant
KC Keffer ,	Director of Communications
Mike Schulte ,	Director of Marketing

Accomplishments January- March, 2008

- ✦ Baked product at the: KNID Agrifest, Enid, Okla.; American Farm Bureau Convention, New Orleans, La.; American Farmers & Ranchers Annual Convention, Oklahoma City; Commodity Classic, Nashville, Tenn.; Oklahoma Crop Improvement Association Meeting; Oklahoma City;
- ✦ Provided baked products for: the Oklahoma Pork Council, Dalhart Ag Expo, AgriPro meeting, Wheat Quality Council annual meeting,
- ✦ Attended: Wheat Quality Council annual meetings, Kansas City; US Wheat meetings, Washington, D.C.; USW Hard Red winter wheat testing meeting, Kansas City; FAPC Culinary Research Alliance meeting, Stillwater, Okla.; Ag in the Classroom Advisory Council meeting,
- ✦ Worked with education officials in Ottawa and Grady counties, John Marshall High School, OKC
- ✦ Organized a First Hollow Stem educational seminar with officials from Oklahoma State University and the Canadian county extension office.
- ✦ Sponsored and hosted the Annual State Wheat Research Review in Stillwater.

Oklahoma *Wheat* Brief

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