

# As Global Wheat Prices Soar, Scottish Grain Security Becomes an Imperative

Researchers at the University of Edinburgh, together with Scotland The Bread, a local SME, have been working with farmers, millers and bakers to co-develop a new metric known as 'people and jobs nourished per kilogram.' This metric, calculated for each kilogram of flour and bread produced in Scotland, could help investors and consumers identify the most nourishing products, whilst helping to make Scotland more grain secure.

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Grain security is critical because nearly half of calories amongst young people in the UK come from grains, and products made from wheat flour such as bread and pasta form the foundation of UK diets. However, less than 3% of Scottish cropland is used for growing wheat as the climate is often deemed unsuitable and most of the wheat that is grown is used for livestock feed, bioethanol or distilling.

Scotland The Bread, working closely with the Balcaskie Estate in Fife, is proving that it is possible to grow and mill nutritious wheat flour here in Scotland. And bakers across Scotland, from Dumfries to Strathpeffer, have shown that delicious, wholemeal bread can be made with this flour. "The recent conflict in Ukraine combined with global energy cost increases and the effects of Brexit on trade have magnified the risk with which conventional farming systems now operate. Organisations like Scotland The Bread are disruptors seeking to build new ways to deliver nutrition and health." - Sam Parsons, Director of the Balcaskie Estate in Fife

When it comes to key nutrients, Scotland The Bread's products nourish more people than standard wholemeal products. For example, 1



kilogram of bread made from their Balcaskie spring wheat can nourish 5 adults in terms of magnesium requirements and 4 adults in terms of zinc requirements as compared to just 2 adults for these essential minerals for standard wholemeal bread. With real incomes expected to drop by 4% this year, maximising the nutritional quality of food purchases is especially important. "We believe everyone has the right to good, nourishing food which has been grown in a way that enhances our ecosystems and rural economies." - Connie Hunter, Miller-Manager of Bread for Good Community Benefit Society (aka Scotland The Bread), St Monan's.

An agroecological approach to growing wheat, innovative milling technology and slow sourdough fermentation ensure that nutrient waste from soil to slice is minimal. This method of production also nourishes jobs: if scaled to meet UK demand for milling wheat, it would support an estimated 8,000 jobs in agriculture.

The University of Edinburgh, Scotland The Bread, and other partners will be working together with Scottish SMEs to develop a Wheat Security Action Plan to ensure that bread that nourishes not only the people who consume it, but also those who produce it, is available to everyone in Scotland. "Our 'live laboratory' invites stakeholders to co-create a lasting improvement in public health and food security, one local loaf at a time." -Andrew Whitley, Honorary Chairman of Bread for Good Community Benefit Society (aka Scotland The Bread)

If your business is interested in contributing to this Action Plan, please contact Prof Lindsay Jaacks at [lindsay.jaacks@ed.ac.uk](mailto:lindsay.jaacks@ed.ac.uk).

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