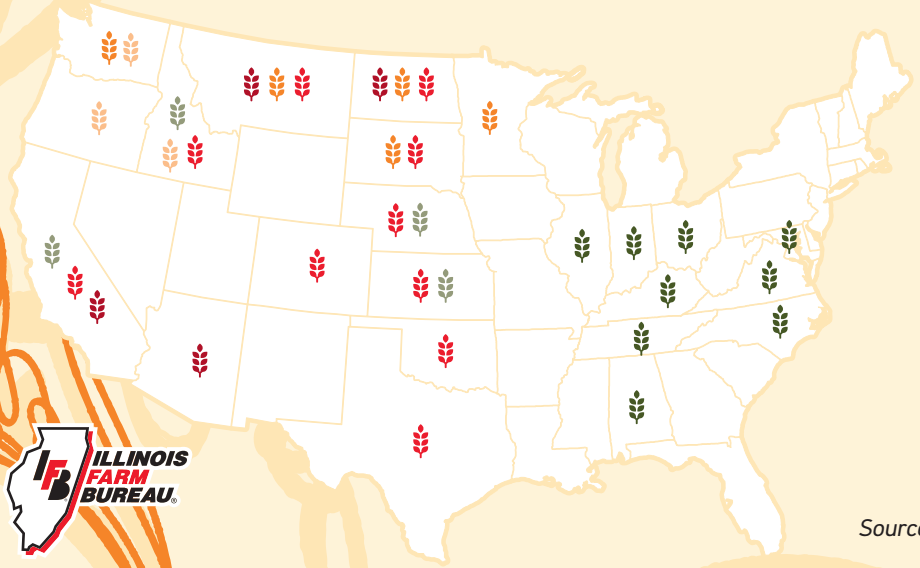
CLASSES OF WHEAT

Wheat is used to make a large variety of delicious breads, pastries, cakes, and pastas. A walk down any baking aisle will reveal several types of flours: all-purpose, whole wheat, bread, cake, semolina, and more - all of which behave differently. While some flours are made using different parts of the wheat berry (with or without the bran, for example), many are dependent on the class of wheat itself. There are six main classes of wheat grown in the United States, largely tied to different geographies.



WHERE DOES WHEAT GROW?

- HARD RED WINTER
- HARD RED SPRING
- SOFT RED WINTER
- SOFT WHITE
- HARD WHITE
- DURUM

Sources US Wheat Associates*

ILLINOIS FARM BUREAU®

SIX MAIN CLASSES OF WHEAT:

HARD RED WINTER
Great for bread flour and all-purpose flour due to its high protein content. Hard Red Winter wheat is used for things like Asian noodles, flatbreads, and cereal. Hard red winter is commonly grown in the Great Plains.

HARD RED SPRING
Often called the "aristocrat of wheat" due to its mild protein content which makes it perfect for so-called designer breads. Hard red spring wheat is great for rolls, croissants, French bread, and bagels, and commonly grown in Montana, the Dakotas and Minnesota.

SOFT RED WINTER
A low gluten and low protein wheat ideal for cookies, flatbreads, crackers, and pretzels. Illinois is one of the leaders of Soft red winter wheat production! Soft red winter is grown east of the Mississippi River.

SOFT WHITE
Appearing much whiter in color than other classes, this wheat low in protein is perfect for cakes, pastries, and Middle Eastern flatbreads. Soft white is grown in the Pacific Northwest.

HARD WHITE
Best used in tortillas, ramen, and hard flatbreads. Hard white also makes excellent white whole wheat bread because of its light color. Hard white is the newest class of wheat and also grown in the Great Plains.

DURUM
High in gluten and protein, Durum wheat is perfect for pasta. It's rich amber color is indicative of it being the "gold standard" for premium products like high-quality pasta, couscous and Mediterranean breads. Durum wheat is primarily grown in Montana, and North and South Dakota, with less grown in Arizona, and California.