CONSUMERS

GENERAL CONSUMERS

CHARACTERISTICS

- Some value the social and environmental aspects of local and regional grain while others are skeptical
- Generally don't see a difference in taste or freshness

> ***"LOCAL GRAIN? I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT THAT IS. I DON'T LOOK AT MY BREAD OR MY PASTA AND SAY WHERE DID THESE GRAINS [COME FROM].***

FAMILIARITY WITH LOCAL GRAINS

- Locally sourced grain is a new concept for most general consumers
- Some consumers may know a bakery or product is locally made without knowing whether the grain was locally grown

PERCEPTIONS OF LOCAL GRAINS

- May come from a small farm
- May be more expensive and less accessible
- May not seem noticeably different from conventional grains in taste, freshness, or other practical attributes

KEY MOTIVATORS FOR PURCHASING LOCAL GRAINS

- Interest in the health benefits of local grains
- Personal connections and/or experiences
- Reasonable pricing
- Availability of local grains at places they shop (convenience)

CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS TO PURCHASING LOCAL GRAINS

- Price
- Convenience
- Sensory appeal
- Limited ability to differentiate "locally sourced" from "locally made"
- Limited general knowledge and awareness (e.g. benefits of local grain, where to access, different varieties, how to store grain, grain processing)

MARKETING RECOMMENDATIONS

PROMOTION

- Lead with flavor, including providing descriptions on packaging
- Offer tasting opportunities
- Make local clear: Provide marketing materials to distinguish products as "locally sourced" from "locally made"

CONVENIENCE

- Prioritize availability in places consumers already shop

PRODUCT

- Make products inviting: Use packaging and messaging that clearly communicate flavor, use, and origin
- Reduce barriers to trying local grains: Consider introductory pricing, sampling, and approachable package sizes

GRAIN ENTHUSIASTS

CHARACTERISTICS

- Motivated by the social and environmental benefits of local grain
- Value the practical benefits, including freshness and flavor, of local grain
- Value connections to farmers, makers, community, and place

> ***"THIS IS A PRODUCT THAT CAME FROM 45 MINUTES OUTSIDE OF THE METRO. THAT'S WAY COOLER TO ME THAN SOMETHING SHIPPED HUNDREDS OF MILES…KEEPING MONEY LOCAL IN THE COMMUNITY…, I JUST HAVE SUCH AN APPRECIATION FOR THINGS THAT ARE MADE BY HAND, ESPECIALLY THINGS THAT ARE FERMENTED, THINGS LIKE SOURDOUGH THAT ARE SO LABOR-INTENSIVE AND TIME-INTENSIVE."***

INITIAL HOOK FOR BECOMING A LOCAL GRAIN ENTHUSIAST

- Tasting local grains
- Personal connection to the local grain community
- Personal experience with the health and nutrition of local grains
- Learning about the importance of supporting regenerative agriculture

CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS TO PURCHASING LOCAL GRAINS

- Higher prices
- Limited availability where consumers typically shop
- Low consumer awareness and/or interest in origin of food
- Limited awareness of community programs, such as EBT, to help access local grains

KEY MOTIVATORS FOR PURCHASING LOCAL GRAINS

- Flavor and quality
- Supporting farmers and makers within the community and craftsmanship
- Supporting the environment and local economy

PROMOTION STRATEGIES

- Use strategic pricing to reduce cost barriers through sliding scale pricing, donation programs, or a price reduction schedule
- Lead with flavor and then tell story about benefits
- Create engaging community experiences through tastings, events, farm visits, and festivals
- Introduce local grains through educational settings, like schools
- Encourage enthusiasts to share local grains with friends, co-workers, and family, including via social media

MARKETING RECOMMENDATIONS

PARTNER WITH ENTHUSIASTS

- Be curious about who your enthusiasts are and engage with them
- Equip enthusiasts to introduce local grains to friends, family, and their communities through tastings or other opportunities
- Offer enthusiasts opportunities to be engaged with your story

ARTISAN GRAIN COLLABORATIVE

These consumer personas were created based on research conducted by Rebekah Schulz as part of her PhD program at the University of Minnesota.