



Bake for Victory!

Flour mills and bakeries joining in the war against COVID-19

by Vaughn Entwistle, Managing Editor, Milling and Grain

In the UK, the battle against COVID-19 has been joined at every level of society. The nation is inspired by the heroic efforts of our treasured NHS staff and many private citizens wish to do their part to help.

In the flour industry, many of the nation's mills that have never worked overtime switching to double shifts and even recruiting recently retired workers to help meet with surging demand. These efforts are likewise mirrored by the nation's bakers, with many examples of sacrifice and extraordinary generosity from bakeries across the UK.

One shining example is Bread-Source of Norwich, England.

Bread-Source

Bread-Source is a team of award-winning artisan bakers with shops in Norwich and Aylsham, two cities in South-east Britain. All their bread is made traditionally with high quality flour, water, natural yeast and salt with no artificial additives.

The National Loaf

In 1942, during WWII, the Federation of Bakers developed a wholemeal loaf as part of the Homefront effort to keep the country fed during rationing. The National Loaf, as it was named, was intended to be more nutritious than a standard white loaf. Like other forms of brown bread it had more bran which, in addition to other nutrients, meant that levels of thiamine (Vitamin B1) were higher than that typically found a loaf of white bread.

Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Steven Winter, the owner of Bread-Source, decided to reintroduce the National Loaf. Company marketing representative, Rosie Annabelle Mills-Smith, explains why; "These loaves will be available to those who have recently lost their jobs and who are in need—no questions asked. It means that we will provide free loaves to those who need it most."

But what does it taste like?

The original National Loaf produced during WWII was the product of a time where strict rationing was observed, which





meant that many modern ingredients were not available, affecting the taste and texture of the loaves. However, the modern iteration of the National Loaf benefits from modern baking techniques and ingredients, as Mills-Smith elaborates; “The Bread-Source National Loaf is a great tasting, slow-rising, highly nutritious loaf made using only 100 percent stoneground wholemeal flour, sea salt, water and yeast. This loaf doesn’t just taste great, it will also sustain you throughout the day.”

Good nutrition for a good cause

Bread-Source’s National Loaf is not only good for the body, is also provides nourishment for the soul. Thanks to the generosity of Steven Winter and his team of bakers who volunteer their time to create these loaves and, going forward, are looking to work with other bakeries and suppliers to roll this scheme out across East Anglia and the UK.

Recognising the unique situation we find ourselves in, Winter has made provision to ensure the ease of pick up for NHS workers, and social care staff who are offered a 24 hour ‘contactless’ pick up point at the Bakery Unit (Tuesday-Friday), where other staple foods including milk, eggs and butter will be available with a continuous 20 percent discount.

As Winter explains, “We are committed to our social responsibility as bakers to ensure nutritious (and delicious) food is available to all members of the community we operate within. We are also providing a delivery service within Norwich and Aylsham for those in isolation, the elderly, and other at-risk groups.”

With public spiritedness such as that displayed by Steven Winter and his Norfolk bakeries, it seems likely that we will the achieve victory in the war against COVID-19.

www.bread-source.co.uk