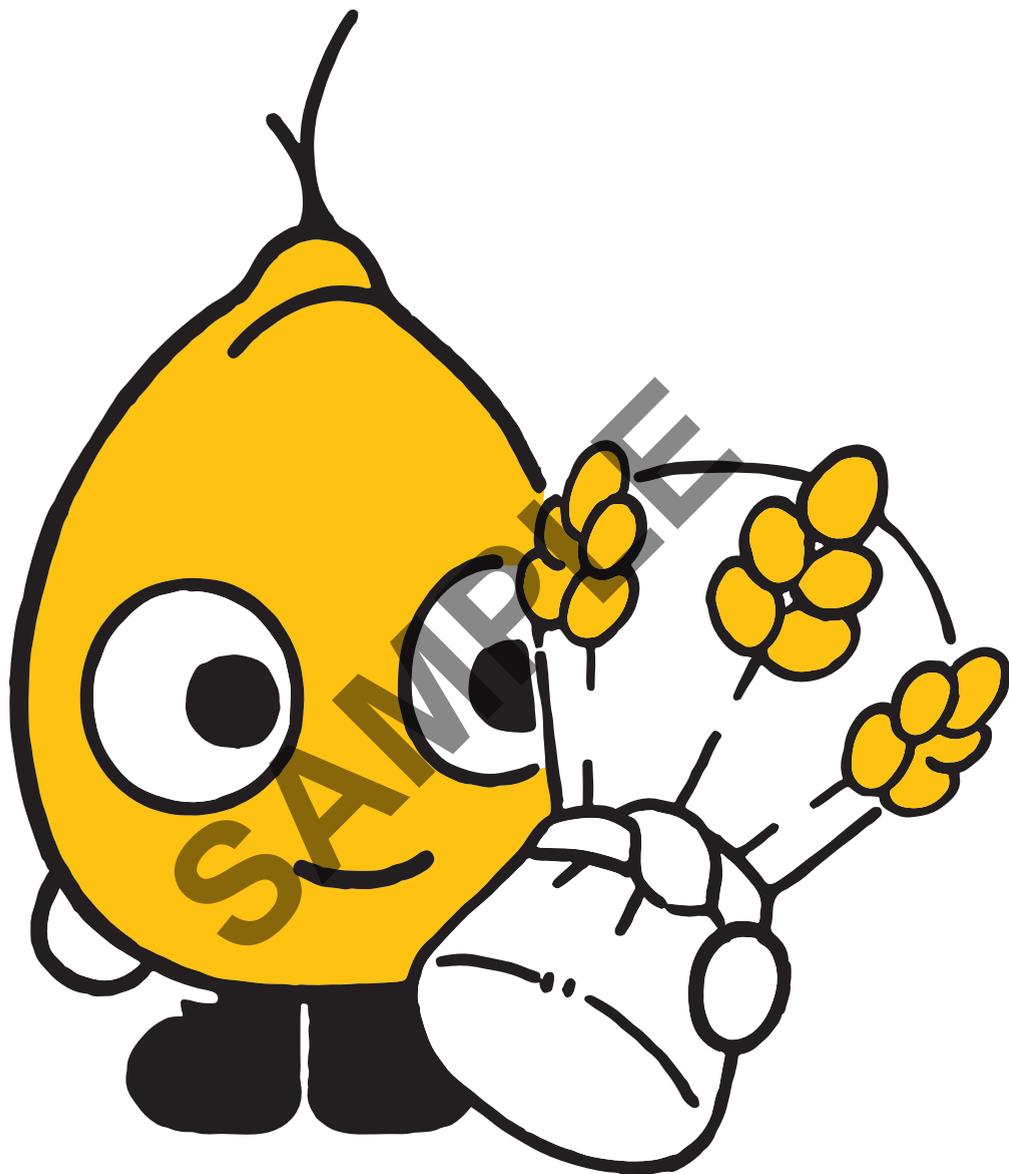


Chris Young and the Real Bread Campaign



# Bake Your Lawn

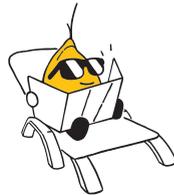
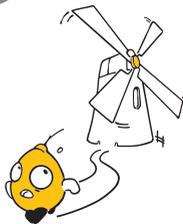
Your grow-a-loaf guidebook



# BAKE YOUR LAWN

Your grow-a-loaf guidebook

Chris Young and the Real Bread Campaign



**REAL BREAD  
CAMPAIGN**

**sustain**  
the alliance for better food and farming

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# Introduction

Mmm, Real Bread! How much time have you ever spent thinking about where it comes from? I don't just mean from a bakery but right back to the grain growing in a farmer's field. Lots of time? Some? None? Well, whatever, **Bake Your Lawn** is here to help you guide children in taking a handful of wheat and growing their own Real Bread.

A square metre of soil and barely a child's handful of wheat seeds should be space and grain enough to produce flour for a small loaf. If you have access to more space, go for it! If you have less space, you can at least grow some wheat in a flowerpot or planter to follow its life cycle.

This book builds on the Bake Your Lawn and Lessons in Loaf projects that we created and ran from 2010 to 2012. They helped thousands of school children not only to follow the journey from crop to crust but also discover the connections that bread has with almost every aspect of learning and life in general. Seeing photos of beaming children with Real Bread they'd grown is still a highlight of my decade and a half on the Campaign trail.

As a topic, Real Bread is an absolute gift to teachers. It can be used in pretty much every subject across the curriculum: ancient and modern foreign languages; art and design; citizenship; computing; design and technology; English; geography; health education; history; maths; music; personal, social and health education; religion; science subjects... Maybe not PE, unless you count all that digging, threshing and whatnot. On the music front, there are loads of songs to be sung about the whole process, from tilling to toast.

The level of detail in this book should be more than enough for children of all ages, abilities and levels of interest, allowing you to filter, select and present as appropriate to the young'uns in your charge. There's a chance you might even discover a thing or two yourself.

The book's title came from Real Bread Campaign co-founder Andrew Whitley, who really did bake his lawn. Sort of. Back in the 1970s, before anyone talked much about urban agriculture, Andrew turned his allotment in Stoke Newington's Clissold Park into a mini wheatfield, from which he produced his own Real Bread. Following the Village Bakery and Bread Matters years, Andrew has fully re-connected with the soil-to-slice ethos and is a figurehead in the UK's non-commodity grain revival through his Scotland the Bread work.

**Bake Your Lawn** is a companion to **Slow Dough: Real Bread**, in which you can find around 90 recipes; and **Knead to Know...more**, our handbook for setting up a microbakery.

Happy growing, milling, baking and eating,

**Chris Young**, Penge, February 2024

PS If it all goes thingies up at any point, please don't get too disheartened. You can grab a bag of grain or flour that someone else has produced and hop on the seed to sandwich journey from that point.

## Disclaimer

Bake Your Lawn is intended as guidance only and is to be read in conjunction with your own independent research. Sustain cannot be held responsible for the results of following any suggestions it contains. We have made reasonable efforts to ensure accuracy of the information and whilst we apologise for any errors or omissions, cannot be held responsible for any consequences that might arise because of them.

Awareness of, and compliance with, legislation applicable in your part of the world is your responsibility and you should check with the relevant authorities to ensure that you fulfil these obligations. When organising and running any practical projects (planting, harvesting, oven building, baking, experimenting and serving up food to eat, for example) you should always ensure that you have taken adequate precautions to ensure the health and safety of everyone involved.

Inclusion in Bake Your Lawn of any organisation, individual, product or service is not necessarily an endorsement and does not imply one. Any view expressed in this publication is that of the person quoted and not necessarily that of the Real Bread Campaign or Sustain. Conversely, not everyone named in the book necessarily agrees with everything we have said in it.

If you have feedback that you feel would enhance any future editions of Bake Your Lawn, please email it to [realbread@sustainweb.org](mailto:realbread@sustainweb.org)



# Grow

Real Bread can be made from all sorts of things (see page 87) but because most in the UK is made from wheat, that's what this book focuses on.

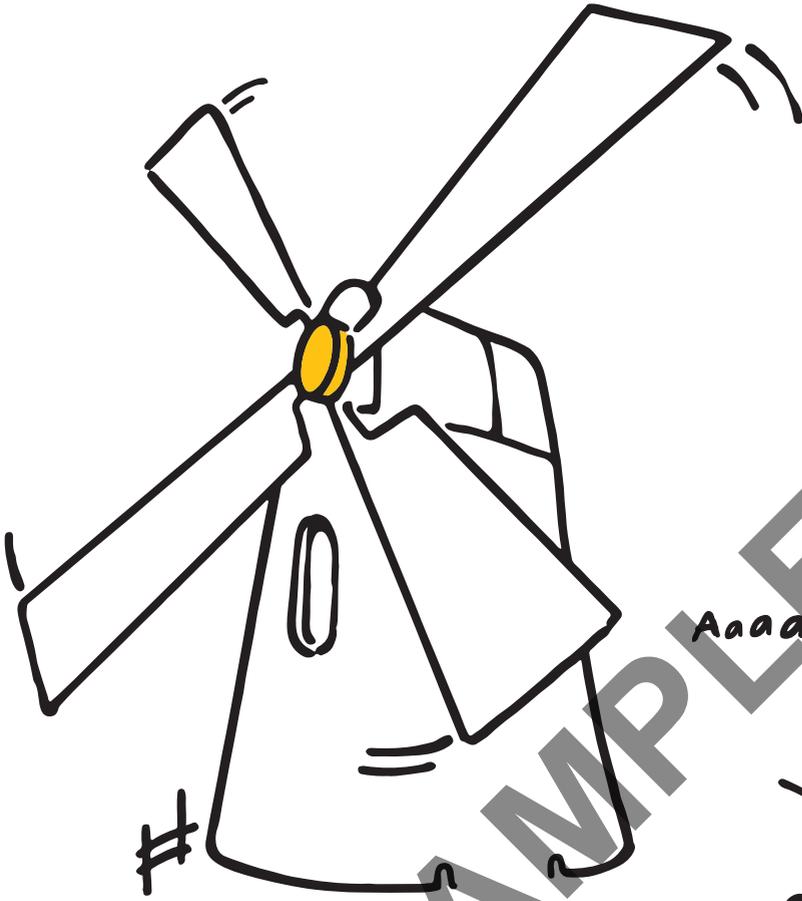
Please don't be daunted! As with the rest of the book, this section goes into far more detail than you'll probably need for a small-scale project. What it basically says is that all you need is to find a patch of soil, chuck a handful of wheat seeds at it, cover them and leave the plants to grow.

## Wheat

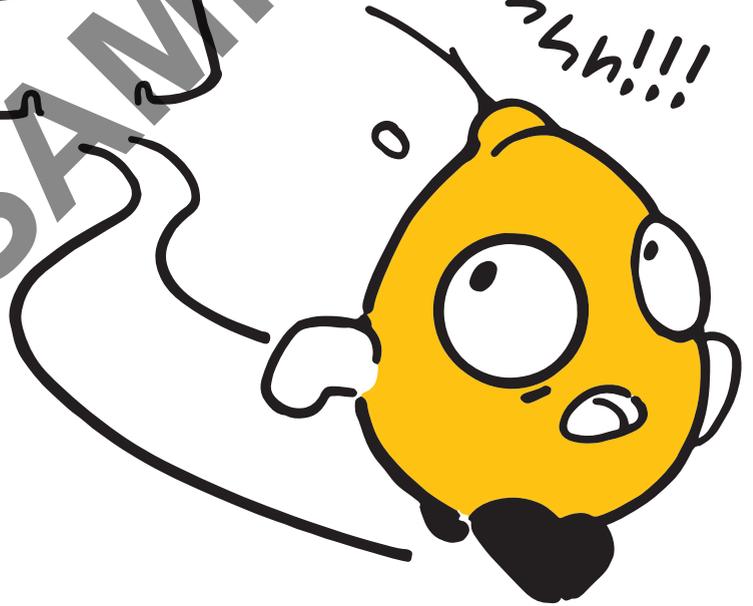
Wheat is a type of grass. Though maize takes the global top crop spot based on weight produced, wheat fields cover more of the earth's surface than any other grain.

The scientific name for common (aka modern or bread) wheat, which is the stuff most often used to make bread (plus biscuits, cakes, pastry and whatnot) in the UK, is *Triticum aestivum*. There are umpteen cultivars, or varieties, of *T. aestivum*. Each differs in yield (how much grain the plant from each seed will produce), protein and vitamin content, cooking qualities (e.g. whether better for bread or cakes), flavour and so on.

Almost every wheat field you see is planted with a single variety. This will have been selected from a limited number that are widely available to farmers and usually from an even smaller list of varieties recommended each season by the UK farming industry's Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board.



Aaaarrrrrrrrrr!!!  
hahah!!!



SAMPLE

# Mill

Although bread can, theoretically, be made from intact, whole grains, they are usually ground into flour using some sort of mill.

Again, there is probably much more here than you need to know. In short, you chop the wheat plants down, leave them somewhere to dry, shake the grains free, get rid of unwanted bits, then grind the wheat into flour.

## Harvesting

Most grain grown in the UK is gathered by combine harvesters, so called because they combine the tasks of cutting the stalks, threshing, winnowing and collecting the grains.

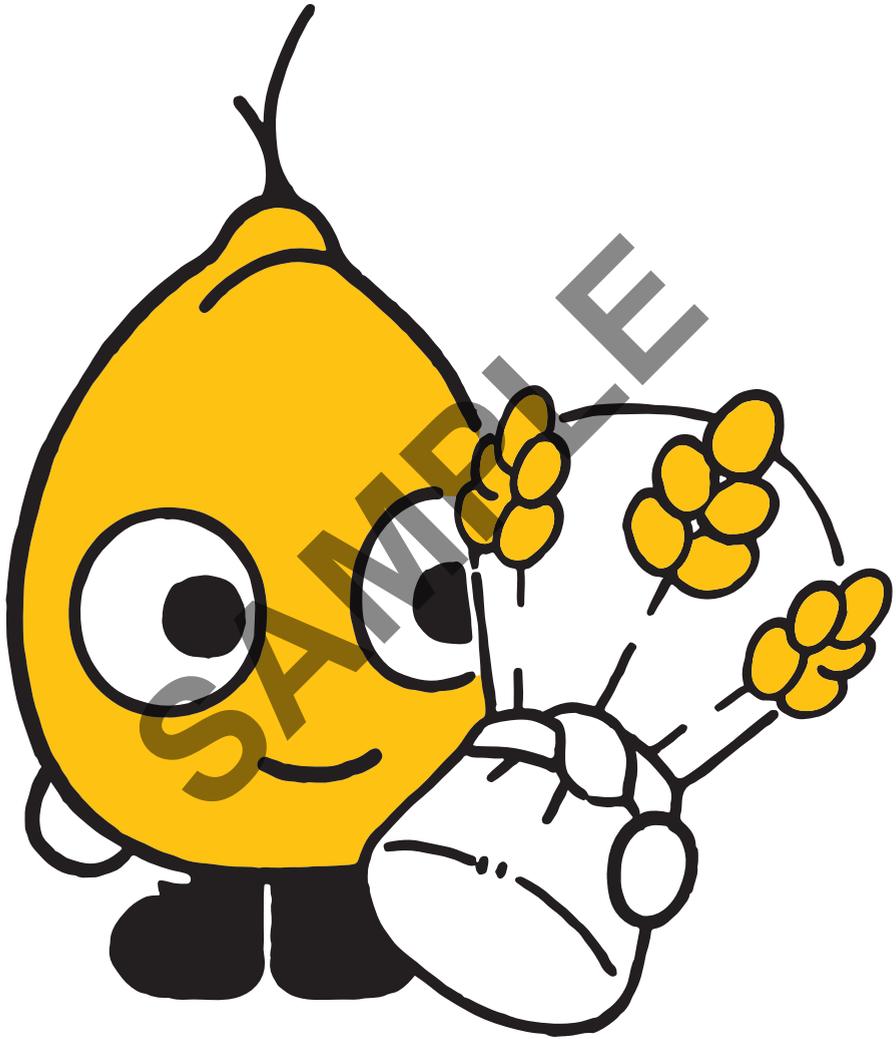
Historically, these tasks would have been separate, mainly carried out by people with hand tools, with some machine and animal assistance. As you probably don't have access to a combine harvester, and your crop is too small for one anyway, traditional methods (or approximations of them) are more appropriate.

Health and safety time again: supervise children (and anyone else who needs an eye keeping on them) at all times for all of the activities in this chapter. Whatever you use to harvest your wheat, it will be sharp; during threshing, hard little grains can fly off in all directions - including towards eyes; and wheat husks can blow off to places they're not wanted. As well as old outdoor clothing, it's advisable to wear protective gear, such as goggles, gardening gloves and boots or other sturdy footwear.

## Knowing when to harvest

Whether you plant your wheat in the winter or spring, it should be ready to harvest sometime between late July and early September. Farmers use a variety of equipment and tests to know when their wheat is ready, with just the right amount of moisture and protein at the peak of its bread-making potential.

Without all that kit, you'll need to rely on your senses. In simple terms, when the stalks and ears have all turned from green to a golden or a dusty, pale brown colour, it's probably time to gather them in. A traditional way to be more certain if your wheat is ready to harvest is to take an ear, roll it between your hands to free the



# Field notes

The following articles are by people involved in running seed to sandwich projects with children. Longer versions of these originally appeared in the Real Bread Campaign supporters' magazine True Loaf.

## Bakers' Bush

*During her time as deputy head of Greenside Primary in Shepherd's Bush, west London, Georgina Webber was the driving force behind a pioneering whole-school approach to food.*

Our journey towards breaducation and setting up our own microbakery at Greenside Primary School has been an eight year one. In 2015, we decided that we were not happy with the standard of the school lunches served by the local authority catering contractor, so decided to bring catering in-house.

This same philosophy extends out to the school garden, where we have a vegetable growing area. When we took control of the kitchen, we began growing some vegetables but wanted to make more of this amazing resource. We turned the garden into a science project that the whole school is involved in and began embedding it in our curriculum.

We thought about what we could do next, which is when the idea of a microbakery came in. We wanted to involve our whole school community in a project that would unite us through collective action. It would be one to help develop our knowledge and understanding of both food production and the food system. We wanted to show that good bread is for everyone.

### Getting kitted out

We rallied our school community to clear some ground at the front of the school, right on the street, where we planted our field of wheat. I say field, but it really is only a patch of about four square metres! With the wheat in the ground, the next thing we needed was some basic kit and, most importantly, a bread oven. Through the support of our Parent Staff Association and generous donations from some of our suppliers, we were able to buy a Rackmaster RM2020 oven, some baskets, dough scrapers and plastic tubs. Our school kitchen already had a Hobart mixer but it didn't (and still doesn't) have a dough hook. We went with what we had and made the plan from there.

# Roll of honour

## **Bake Your Lawn**

by Chris Young and the Real Bread Campaign

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This book builds on the Bake Your Lawn and Lessons in Loaf projects run, and accompanying guides published, by the Real Bread Campaign in 2010 and 2011. They were funded by The Big Lottery's Local Food Fund, Sustain and The Sheepdrove Trust.

As with those guides, and everything else the Campaign does, this book was a team effort. Chris thanks everyone who variously volunteered their time and utterly indispensable knowledge, advice, opinion, wheat seeds, packaging, distribution, design skills, recipes, proofreading and other assistance to the original projects, guides and this book. They include: Mike Ambrose, Lisa Asuncion, Paul Barker, Lyndsay Cochrane, Idris Caldora, Gemma Cope, Lianna Court, Kath Dalmeny, Raeoni Daly, Tyra Dempster, Gavin Dupée, Ellen Hanceri, Marcia Harris, Tom Herbert, Chris Lindop, Cassie Liversidge, Jane Mason, Dragan Matijevic, Sarah Moore, Liz Read, Jackie Schneider, Anna Soumeka, Patrick Thornberry, Alexandra Vaughan, Gerda Janse van Vuuren, Tom Walker, Georgina Webber, Gaye Whitwam, Andrew Wilkinson and Andrew Wilson.

Elements of the original Bake Your Lawn guide drew on teachers' notes created by The Brockwell Bake Association, whose founder, Andy Forbes, also contributed additional information and advice to our guide and this book. He remains a leading figure in the UK's non-commodity grain revival.

Thanks to Anne Parry, Mrs. Birch, Linden Groves, Chris Stafferton, Mark Moody, Claire Eckley, Malcolm Williams, Sarah Dickinson, Diana Keens, Nicola Jennings, Ida Fabrizio, Caroline Copleston, Adrian Clarke, Harry Kennedy, Sam Maydew, Susan Walton, T. Hodgson, Lucy Ravenscliffe, Mrs. Ditton, Mrs. Collins, Juliet Birch-Machin, Alex Basham-Collins, Rosemarie Parker, Rosie Beat, Francis Rayns, Maria Lewington, and everyone else who took part in our original Bake Your Lawn and Lessons In Loaf projects and shared their wheat diaries with us.

Chris also thanks: his family for ongoing love and support; Jeanette Longfield, Charlie Powell, Ben Reynolds, Quoc-anh Tran, Richard Watts, Sarah Williams and the rest of the Sustain family present and past; all Campaign ambassadors, supporters and volunteers over the years; and you for buying this book.

Last but not least, thank you to Andrew Whitley, who coined the name Bake Your Lawn, contributed to the original guide and most of our work since, and without whom the Real Bread Campaign wouldn't exist. Chris is sorry for not giving due credit to anyone he's missed off this list.



# Bake Your Lawn

## Your grow-a-loaf guidebook

Are you ready to help children take a handful of wheat and head off together on a seed to sandwich adventure by growing your own Real Bread?

Yes? Great!

The Real Bread Campaign created *Bake Your Lawn* to help teachers, (grand)parents, guardians and other youngster-wrangers to guide them in hands-on, soil-to-slice journeys of discovery. It includes guidance on micro-scale sowing, growing, harvesting, threshing, winnowing, milling.

Along the way, children (and some of their attendant adults) will learn fascinating facts and have the chance to try simple experiments. At the end comes the best bit: enjoying delicious, nutritious Real Bread made using the flour you grew.

*Bake Your Lawn* is brought to you by the people behind the recipe book *Slow Dough: Real Bread*, and the microbakery handbook *Knead to Know...more*.



£15

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