KNEAD to KNOW
the Real Bread starter

The introductory guide to success in baking Real Bread for your local community
Foreword

Whether you are a professional baker, a home baker who would like to turn a hobby into a career or just someone who loves Real Bread, then this handbook will become an invaluable tool. It contains advice, recipes and insights from some of the most experienced members of our trade: bakers, millers and retailers. We have all learnt our craft through years of experience, through trial and error and occasionally even by making mistakes, dusting off the flour and starting again and now you have the opportunity to learn from all of that massed experience.

For my own part, I believe there is something addictive about flour; that something magical happens when you mix flour with water. With good ingredients, passion and this handbook by your side you can master the dough, learn the language of bread and continue on your journey as a successful Real Bread baker.
Introduction

So, you want to be a successful Real Bread baker for your local community. Well, here’s a good place to start.

Beyond tips on setting yourself up to produce and market tasty loaves of Real Bread successfully, Knead to Know offers some answers to questions including:

- What are the opportunities to forge and strengthen links with my local community?
- How can I make a healthier loaf?
- In what ways can I reduce the negative environmental impacts of my business?

Who is this for?

As bringing Real Bread back into the hearts of our local communities and food economies is a key concern of the Campaign, we concentrate on small-scale production and newcomers to the exciting world of professional baking. Even if you are up and running already, you will find this guide contains information that should be of use, such as suggestions for marketing your Real Bread, for example.

Will Knead to Know tell me everything I need to know?

This isn’t a bread bible, a recipe book, nor does it aim to be a comprehensive manual to starting your own business. Instead, it is a buffet of tasters with pointers to where you can explore and find out more about the topics you find the most appetising.

Importantly, reading is no substitute for rolling up your sleeves and getting stuck into the dough. In Real Bread making, you learn some of the most important lessons with your hands in your own bakehouse. Also extremely useful is spending time alongside an experienced professional, either on a course or better still as an employee or voluntary apprentice at an artisan bakery.

We’ve enriched Knead to Know with thoughts from people who know how to knead. You can find out who they are in the Roll of Honour section near the back.

If you have advice from your own experiences that you feel would be of use to other people in the growing Real Bread community in Britain, which you would be happy for us to help you share through our website and publications, such as any future editions of Knead to Know, please email realbread@sustainweb.org
The characteristic lower volume and large, uneven holes in continental-style breads are made possible by flours that have lower protein levels and/or weaker types of protein. For advice on the appropriate flour to use, tell your miller or flour supplier the type of bread you are making.

Organic ingredients
The number and amount of toxic petrochemical herbicides, fungicides, and pesticides used in growing grain in a lower input system of farming (such as organic and biodynamic) will have been lower than in ‘conventional’ systems. The amount of petrochemical fertilisers will also have been lower. Some organic and biodynamic farmers will have used no artificial substances at all.

This will all have had a lower negative (and in some cases an actual positive) impact on the health of the soil, surrounding water systems, and lead to fewer and lower levels of potentially toxic chemical residues in the food chain.

www.pan-uk.org

The question of which is ‘better’ - locally-grown in a ‘conventional’ system, versus organically grown further afield, is complex and one that the Campaign doesn’t attempt to answer.

Stoneground vs. roller milled flour
Modern roller milling is ruthlessly efficient at stripping away the nutrient-rich germ and outer layers of cereal grains, leaving behind a white powder that’s not much more than starch and gluten. When adding the separated parts back together to make ‘wholemeal’ flour, a roller-miller might exclude the nutrient-rich germ.
Notes on Real Bread recipes and methods

What loaves should I bake?

Importantly, you need to do your research to find out what your local market demands and take heed of the results. Yes, you can (and arguably should) share with your local community the joys of breads that perhaps they aren’t used to buying, but you have to strike the right balance between what you want to bake and what will sell. There’s no use in continuing to bake a batch of your favourite 100% sourdough rye every day if nobody’s buying it.

The needs of different local markets vary and ultimately it’s up to you what you bake but if the majority of your customers are asking for a white tin loaf, the continuation of your business might depend upon you meeting that demand. If so, take pride in baking the best white tin loaf of Real Bread you can and satisfy your personal needs by baking other loaves as specials, which might mean a 3kg batch of dough on a Saturday.

The consensus on how many different breads to bake seems to be: a few types, all made well. This is especially applicable to new bakeries and those with smaller output.

Some suggestions from Colin Hilder:

- Start with a small selection of good quality products and get those into the market – you need the exposure and cash flow.
- Research comparable producers nationally matching your profile and learn from their websites and offerings.
- Research your local competition and market outlets – visit them and talk to them where feasible.
- Don’t forget that your business will grow and prosper based on the purchasing habits of conservative shoppers.
- Introduce relevant new products gradually, but be careful not to spend disproportionate amount of time in the test kitchen.
- Try and spot developing national buying trends (examples over the past couple of decades - organic, sourdoughs, ciabatta, spelt, continental breakfast pastries, gluten-free).
- Encourage feedback from your own customers and learn from this – but don’t let them dictate your production or distribution by accommodating one-off special requests or special arrangements.
- When ready, add complementary baked or other products with higher margins e.g. cakes, pastries, biscuits and sandwiches. This will increase the order value from the customer, and get extra use (therefore value) out of the oven as the temperature falls after baking bread, and from your other equipment.

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Reducing energy consumption

The Carbon Trust

If you are keen to reduce the negative environmental impact of your bakery, then cutting your energy consumption (and consequently your CO₂ emissions) is something you will need to tackle.

The Carbon Trust offers 0% interest loans to organisations to help them qualify for a Carbon Trust loan. Visit www.carbontrust.co.uk/cut-carbon-reduce-costs/products-services/loans/pages/loans.aspx. You can read a case study of how a Carbon Trust loan helped a bakery to reduce costs and improve its environmental impact.

Businesses are also eligible for grants to help them meet energy-saving requirements.

Examples

- Renewable energy suppliers/tariffs
  - Shop around to find a supplier that offers energy profiles that are lower negative environmental impact.
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    - Good Energy
    - Ecotricity
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- A note on packaging

When choosing packaging, consider any negative impacts its production and disposal might have. What options do you have to reduce packaging that has involved the use of non-renewable materials, pollutants, high levels of energy and cannot be either reused or recycled?

- A recycled, unbleached paper bag that can then be recycled has many positives.

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Second-hand equipment

Disadvantages

The downsides of choosing used equipment can include that it might not last as long, be more prone to breaking down, be less energy efficient than newer models, lack safety devices (e.g., interlocking guards and instant brakes), some of which may be required by law. Old equipment might even have developed dangerous faults that are not immediately apparent. You could find that the money you saved by buying second-hand quickly gets swallowed up and even overtaken by the cost of repairs and perhaps having to buy a replacement piece of kit. Worse still, using an old machine might lead to a serious accident or injury.

You should always ask for an up-to-date electrical safety certificate, some companies offer limited guarantees on reconditioned equipment and if you shop around, insurance cover might be available for it.

Advantages

Some bakeries have relied upon ex-display, reconditioned and other second-hand equipment to be able to afford to start up. For example, Duncan Glendinning of The Thoughtful Bread Company told us that the hand washing basin was the only new fitting they bought for the original bakehouse. For some, the maxim ‘they don’t make them like they used to’ holds true and the older equipment has been preferable to that being produced now.

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Planning permission

Unless using premises that are already in use as a bakery or similar, a new bakehouse will usually require planning permission for a change of use application. Anyone can make an application, but you will need specialist information (your equipment supplier may be able to advise) to help ensure that your application is successful. Retrospective applications and non-compliance will end up costing you unnecessary time, money and aggravation.

PSA checklist

The Food Standards Agency gives the following checklist of issues you need to consider when starting up a food business:

- Have you registered your premises?
- Do the design and construction of your premises meet legal requirements?
- Are you aware of the main General Food Law Requirements?
- Do you keep written records of all the suppliers that provide you with food or any food ingredients?
- Have you put food safety management procedures in place and are you keeping up-to-date records of these?
- Do you and your staff understand the principles of good food hygiene?
- Have you considered health and safety and fire safety arrangements?
- Have you registered as self-employed?
- Do you need to register for VAT?
- Are you keeping records of all your business income and expenses?
- Are you keeping records of your employees’ pay and do you know how to pay their tax and National Insurance contributions?
- Do you describe food and drink accurately?
- Do you need to apply for any licences – e.g. for selling food on the street?

www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/enforceessential/startingup/

Street trading

If you are planning to have a stall or market outdoors then you may need to apply for a street trading licence. Street trading is defined as “the selling or offering for sale of any article in the street within designated areas”. Anyone who wishes to sell items from a trailer or stall in a street must first obtain a Street Trading Consent from the Council which will cost a certain amount per year. If you are trading on private land (for example, on an area outside a community centre or church hall) then you may not need consent, but whoever owns the land may need Planning Permission. To confirm the situation it is best to contact your council’s planning office. If you take a stall on a street market, the organiser will be able to advise you further.

Employment law and other relevant Legislation

There may also be other permits or licences for which you need to apply, and more regulations with which you need to comply. We have included links to some in the Bookshelf chapter and you can find much more advice on the following government sites:

www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?itemId=1083937186&type=RESOURCES

Bakers of Britain: it's time to get Real!

Do you ever think: ‘I wish there was a way I could help to bring Real Bread back to the heart of my local community’? Well, Knead to Know: the Real Bread starter shows how you can.

Whether setting out to bake once a month in your own home for a local producers’ market, joining together with your neighbours to set up a Community Supported Bakery, or to become a traditional craft baker, this introductory guide is for you.

Inside you’ll find information on ingredients, basic recipes, techniques, business models, legislation, money matters, equipment, voluntary apprenticeships, courses, equipment and ingredient suppliers, and much more. Knead to Know also contains expert advice for professional bakers on making the transition from additive-laden production to Real Bread, and how to market it successfully.

“Whether you are a professional baker, a home baker who would like to turn a hobby into a career or just someone who loves Real Bread, then this handbook will become an invaluable tool.”

Real Bread Campaign ambassador, Richard Bertinet

In between these wholesome slices of advice are tasty crumbs from people who know how to knead, including master bakers Paul Barker, Aidan Chapman, Paul Merry, and Andrew Whitley, plus UK Community Supported Bakery pioneer, Dan McTiernan of The Handmade Bakery.

“I certainly wish I had had something like this when I was starting out.”

Master baker, Troels Bendix

£15

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Real Bread Campaign
realbreadcampaign.org