

*Quality*  
is in our **nature**



## Canadian Buckwheat

*The Wheat That Isn't*



Hot buckwheat pancakes, drenched in Canadian buckwheat honey, are a temptation for anyone's palate. So are warm buckwheat muffins with lots of butter and maple syrup. And, for a dessert on a special occasion, you can't do better than an almond-raspberry torte made with buckwheat flour.

Interestingly, not one of these culinary delights has a single kernel of wheat in it—with buckwheat, you're not eating a grain at all, but the fruit of a plant related to rhubarb!

### **An ancient tradition**

Buckwheat originated in southern China, and people have been enjoying its pleasant, nutty flavour for at least 3,000 years. It's a well-established crop on Canada's eastern prairies for more than four decades, and much of the buckwheat we grow is exported. Almost half of it goes to Japan, where it's used in the production of soba noodles, a traditional Japanese dish.



Buckwheat is a versatile food that comes in several forms, each with its own distinct character. Groats are kernels that have been stripped of their inedible outer coating and have been crushed into smaller pieces, but are otherwise unprocessed. Kasha is groats that have been roasted to bring out their distinctive nutty taste, and comes in coarse, medium and fine textures. Buckwheat flour is made from ground groats and can be used to make baked goods ranging from waffles to bread. Finally, buckwheat helps make a superb natural sweetener, since bees love its flowers and use the nectar to make a dark, uniquely flavoured honey.

### **Versatile virtues**

Canadian buckwheat has more virtues than taste and adaptability. It's one of nature's best sources of high-quality, easily digestible proteins, and contains all nine essential amino acids. It's a good source of carbohydrates and dietary fibre, and rich in numerous minerals and vitamins. And since buckwheat isn't a grain, it contains no gluten, which makes it an ideal food for people on gluten-free diets.





It's becoming more than a food, too. The pharmaceutical and nutraceutical industries are looking into its potential for lowering blood cholesterol and fighting diabetes. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada has focused its own buckwheat research on improving the crop's functionality, and on adding value to its uses in both the food and non-food sectors. Canada's buckwheat industry, for its part, is working to develop a uniquely Canadian frost-resistant buckwheat as well as new varieties with increased starch content.

### Taste the Canadian difference

Dishes made with Canadian buckwheat are healthy, nutritious and deliciously different. For further information on Canada's buckwheat industry, please visit:

#### Government websites

- Agri-Food Trade Service  
[www.ats-sea.agr.gc.ca](http://www.ats-sea.agr.gc.ca)

#### Industry websites

- Canadian Special Crops Association  
[www.specialcrops.mb.ca](http://www.specialcrops.mb.ca)

