

2.1: Introduction - Understanding Ingredients

Ingredients play an important role in baking. Not only do they provide the structure and flavour of all of the products produced in the bakery or pastry shop, their composition and how they react and behave in relation to each other are critical factors in understanding the science of baking. This is perhaps most evident when it comes to adapting formulas and recipes to accommodate additional or replacement ingredients while still seeking a similar outcome to the original recipe.

In this book, we look at each of the main categories of baking ingredients, listed below, and then explore their composition and role in the baking process. In addition to these categories, we will discuss the role that salt and water play in the baking process.

The main categories of baking ingredients are:

- Grains and flours Sweeteners
- Fats oils Leavening agents Eggs
- Dairy products
- Chocolate and other cocoa products Nuts and seeds
- Thickening agents
- Spices and other flavourings
- Fruit

Note: For most measurements used in the open textbook series, both S.I. (metric) and U.S./imperial values are given. The exception is nutritional information, which is always portrayed using metric values in both Canada and the United States.

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