

# Breadmaker relies on ancient grains

By Matthew Weaver  
Capital Press

SPOKANE — When Shaun Thompson Duffy and his family moved to Spokane five years ago, he found the close proximity to the Palouse — one of the nation's most productive wheat-growing areas — appealing.

"It just sort of makes sense for a bread baker to be here," Thompson Duffy said. "There's so much potential here, with food, with grains, with life in general."

Thompson Duffy owns Culture Breads. He currently sells his breads at the Rocket Market and Doma Coffee, and through subscription.

He maxed out at 50 customers, and had to get a bigger oven to take on more people. He still has a waiting list of 150 people.

He said he intends to open a storefront in the Perry District in south Spokane at the end of August.

Originally from Texas, Thompson Duffy attended culinary school and was a chef in Las Vegas, New York City and hotels in Texas and Chicago, where he began, in his words, "exploring" bread.

"You can be at the top of the bread game but you can still have a life," he said.



Matthew Weaver/Capital Press  
Culture Breads owner Shaun Thompson Duffy talks about his flour milling and bread-baking

"And you can really do it on your own terms."

Thompson Duffy, 36, uses ancient, heritage or landrace grains, including spelt, einkorn, rye, Khorasan wheat, Turkey Red wheat, sonora wheat, Egyptian barley and Red Russian wheat, of which he says, "It's my favorite grain in the world."

He buys the grains from area farmers. Carole Landt, a Reardan,

Wash., farmer, provided Thompson Duffy with Khorasan wheat, or kamut, an ancient wheat whose grains are double the size of other wheat.

"I think he's a caring individual that wants to make great, healthy bread for people," she said. "I believe in that process, and I'd sure like to move that movement along."

Don Scheurman is

co-founder of Palouse Heritage, which raises heirloom landrace grains in Endicott, Wash. He hopes Thompson Duffy is successful as "a voice in educating about bread" and provides "landrace breads to the Spokane market that are good for the soul, the soil, the environment and the health of his friends and customers."

Thompson Duffy currently mills his grains in Post Falls, Idaho, once a week and bakes



Matthew Weaver/Capital Press  
Shaun Thompson Duffy bakes bread made from freshly milled ancient and heritage grains Feb. 17 in south Spokane.

using a custom wood-burning oven in south Spokane. He will switch to twice a week as the weather gets warmer and move a mill into the bakery.

He gives talks about bread and setting up bakeries or pizza shops in the region, and offers bread-baking classes at Spokane public libraries.

He hopes to encourage businesses to use whole grains for flavor, nutrition and digestibility.

Thompson Duffy eventually wants 7 to 9 tons of each grain each year, although he's interested in smaller amounts,

too. Thompson Duffy is looking for farmers who use natural practices and no chemicals. He's also willing to contract-mill grains for farmers looking to sell flour.

"I'm looking for the funkier grains, just stuff that's good and cool and whole," he said. "I don't really use a lot of modern wheat. I'm not one of those guys who doesn't use modern wheat, but ... the funkier the better."

Thompson Duffy can be reached at culturebreads@gmail.com

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