



KERNZA® PERENNIAL GRAIN EARLY COMMERCIALIZATION

A Brief History

This timeline details the key events and partnerships of early Kernza® perennial grain commercialization. It begins with Kernza's entry into the market and includes events up to 2020. You can learn more about the ongoing work of Kernza research and development at [Kernza.org](https://www.kernza.org).

1980s

- Inspired by Wes Jackson's concept of producing grain from herbaceous perennials, Peggy Wagoner selects Intermediate wheatgrass (IWG) for the Rodale Institute's perennial agriculture research program



1990s

- The Rodale Institute initiates a breeding program in collaboration with Martin van der Grinten at USDA-NRCS Plant Materials Center, Big Flats NY (NYPMC) using germplasm selected at Rodale Institute

2003

- The Land Institute launches the IWG breeding program, led by Lee DeHaan, with germplasm selections from the Rodale Institute + NYPMC breeding program

2008

- DeHaan bakes an IWG chocolate cake for staff at The Land Institute. Wes Jackson is thrilled with the flavor and works with bakers in Chicago to serve IWG dinner rolls at the upcoming board meeting, where the founder of Chipotle Mexican Grill would be in attendance. The meeting sparked a plan to incorporate IWG into Chipotle's tortillas

2009

- DeHaan presents first business plan to The Land Institute's Board of Directors, laying out a commercialization trajectory for IWG
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2010

- 30 acres of Kernza are successfully planted at a farm near The Land Institute
- DeHaan refers to this planting as "Kitty Hawk," because it illustrated the promise for commercial production of the grain



2011

- First commercial milling of Kernza at Heartland Mill in Marienthal, KS
- Chipotle Mexican Grill begins tortilla recipe testing
- Kernza Trademark is registered
- Carmern Fernholz establishes first on-farm Kernza planting in Minnesota



2013

- Birchwood Cafe in Minneapolis becomes the first restaurant to feature Kernza
 - 90 acres of Kernza perennial grain are planted at The University of Minnesota Rosemount Research Station
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2014

- The Ecological Intensification Conference in Estes Park, CO catalyzes numerous collaborations, in the U.S. and around the world
- Patagonia Provisions establishes first grower contracts



2015

- Plovgh, Inc. begins coordinating Kernza supply chain activities, including the management of the trademark



2016

- February: General Mills starts Kernza R&D
- February: The Perennial, a restaurant in San Francisco, begins featuring Kernza
- August: Patagonia Provisions releases their film "Unbroken Ground"
- October: Patagonia Provisions releases Long Root Ale



2018

- June: Perennial Grains Story Project meeting
- September: Kernza genome is mapped



2019

- January: Healthy Food Ingredients develops first Kernza-exclusive processing line
- January: commercialization staff hired at The Land Institute and The UMN Forever Green Initiative
- April: limited edition Cascadian Farm cereal is released

2020

- The Land Institute launches Kernza.org
- First market research on Kernza is conducted at The Land Institute
- KernzaCAP is funded by the USDA



Learn more at Kernza.org

