10 Quality of Hard, Soft, and Durum Wheats

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Wheat (Triticum spp.), civilization's basic food, is a complex, living, dynamic species that still hold many mysteries. These complexities, increased through the years by human selection, are the basis for the many uses of wheat. The most important food use is in the manufacture of flour for making bread, biscuit, and pastry products. Small amounts of wheat are converted into breakfast cereals, foods such as bulgur wheat, and semolina for the macaroni industry. Wheat also is a source of commercial starch and gluten. Wheat starch is used in the food and paper industries, in oil well drilling, as laundry starches, and in other products. It is no wonder that wheat quality means different things to different people.

Raw materials significantly different from the ordinary often do not have satisfactory quality characteristics, and usually require uneconomical modifications in the operations of wheat and flour processors. Storage and marketing of wheat are carried out by class, area, and market grades without regard to cultivar. Thus, the release of a cultivar with widely divergent properties may cause mixing and dilution of desirable traits.

Most quality characteristics important in processing are inherited and have been bred into the widely grown wheat cultivars accepted as stan-