

Dear Dr. Meinig: Help please! I have been enthusiastically grinding my own whole wheat flour in an effort to conserve vitamins, etc. However, my favorite buttermilk whole wheat bread recipe calls for soda instead of yeast - but only 1 teaspoon to 1 pound flour. I am wondering if the soda might destroy the very vitamins that I am trying to save? In other words, by using soda am I defeating my purpose in using freshly ground flour?

Another question: Would you consider that water cress gathered along the stream on Creek Road is safe to eat - if washed carefully? Thank you! M. H.

Dear M. H.: Many years ago our Southern California State Dental Journal reported that baking soda inactivated or destroyed B vitamins. I don't know how accurate or scientific the study was and I haven't been able to locate any other substantiation.

Inasmuch as you are using whole wheat because it retains its B vitamins, I would suggest you substitute yeast or potassium bicarbonate baking powder. The Guide for Living Foods, obtainable from the Price Pottenger Nutrition Foundation, for \$10.60 has a recipe for this product. It may be ordered direct from PPNF, P. O. Box 2614, La Mesa, CA 92041.

Sewer effluent has not been dumped into the creek by the city for a number of years and we do not have any industries that use the stream to discard waste. Just how much of the chemical fertilizers and pesticides from ranches and homes enters into the run off that ~~gets~~^{flows} into the stream is difficult to assess. Neither the County Health Department nor the city has made any

studies but all waterways and most water wells throughout the country are contaminated.

The extent to which water cress is effected is difficult to determine. The water cress I see growing in the stream bed along the golf course appears lush and healthy. When comparing it to the commercially grown product I find it impossible to make a judgement or to advise you one way or the other. With such limited knowledge and no actual testing I cannot professionally suggest you eat it but at the same time I would not hesitate to use it personally.

Everyone has a question about nutrition. Send yours to: Dr. George E. Meinig, c/o OVN, Box 277, Ojai, CA 93023.