

# Harvest Loaf

## You will need:

4 cups all purpose OR whole wheat flour  
    plus more for kneading (up to 2 cups)  
2 cups warm milk  
Large teaspoon brown sugar  
5 teaspoons dried yeast  
4 tablespoons melted butter  
Scant teaspoon sea salt  
½ cup white sugar  
1 cup dried currants  
1 egg yolk  
1/8 cup sesame and/or sunflower seeds  
A little beaten egg, or milk

Measure 4 cups of flour into a large, warm mixing bowl. Dissolve the brown sugar in the warm milk and sprinkle the yeast on top. Stir mixture and leave in a warm place until frothy (12-15 minutes).

Prepare a clean table in the kitchen for breadmaking; create a festive mood with a lighted candle and some flowers nearby. Place the mixing bowl with the flour on the table, and arrange the following ingredients around it in saucers or little bowls: white sugar and salt mixed; currants; egg yolk; seeds. When the yeast mixture is frothy, add the melted butter.

Now you are ready to make your bread dough. No doubt the children's fingers will want to be active too, so they can be encouraged to join in. They may like to spend some time creating a landscape in the flour while the preliminary preparations are made in the kitchen.

Pour yeast mixture into the mixing bowl with the flour. Sprinkle on the salt and sugar. Mix with a fork after this and the addition of the next two ingredients. Add currants. Add whole egg yolk. Begin mixing the dough with your hands. Add the seeds. Turn dough out onto a floured board and knead thoroughly. Add additional flour in ½ cup increments while kneading until dough is smooth and elastic and no longer sticky.

Two rises are needed for this bread. When the dough has been kneaded, it can be placed in an oiled mixing bowl (turn the bread dough over in the bowl so its top is oiled as well – this keeps the dough from sticking to the bowl and the cloth). Place it, covered with a damp cloth, and set aside in a warm place for half an hour to rise. Keep the dough safe from drafts while it is rising. I think it is easiest to preheat the oven to the lowest setting, turn off the heat, and place the dough inside to rise. Then punch down (kids love this part!) and knead briefly (4-5 times), form your dough into a loaf and place on a greased baking sheet. Brush with beaten egg or milk. Leave in a warm place to rise (approx. 30-40 minutes) and bake at 350 F for about an hour. The loaf should be golden brown and give a hollow sound when tapped firmly on the base.

Once it has cooled, slice the bread and serve. Individual rolls can also be formed from the dough after punching it down. In this case the baking time would be shorter.