



## RTP ...and food justice?

We took a trip a few weeks ago to find the geographic center of the Triangle in the Research Triangle Park and got scared away by the sounds of heavy machinery at the Hamner Institutes, one of many animal testing facilities in the Park. No doubt, RTP can be creepy. It's also one of the major employers in this area, counting over 40,000 people working in fairly high-paying jobs, and many of the ways North Carolina has changed in the past 20 years can be traced back to RTP and the migration and economic changes that came along with it.



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Let's review the story of how NC has changed, shall we? It has quite a bit to do with food! As I always remember hearing it, this state's economy used to be based on agriculture (particularly tobacco and cotton), but as the great economic wheel turned and farming declined, our fine state with it's legacy of great schools and strong universities brought itself into the 21st century. Farmland became biotech labs and programming havens and server farms, business boomed, and the Triangle became the best place in the nation to live, work and play.

We could tell the story differently. Farming didn't just pass away as a way-of-life on its own; farms consolidated. From 1978 to 2007, NC lost 30,000 farms, but the number of farms with yearly sales above \$500k increased 10 times. Farm consolidation in NC had a lot to do with new farming technologies that made large-scale agriculture cheaper, easier (and more destructive), while bringing down the market price of farm products until it was near impossible to make a living as a small farmer. Where did those new herbicides, fertilizers and

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bio-engineered seeds come from? RTP and research parks just like it! In fact, a Monsanto subsidiary was one of the first tenants of RTP.

For every person employed directly in the Park, there's at least one small farm somewhere else in NC that has closed in the past 50 years. So far as a solution, economic development planners have proposed to build more industrial parks like RTP in rural parts of the state.

Drive through Warren County, an hour north of Durham, and you'll see 1,000 acres of grassy land in full sun, vacant and waiting for high-tech employers. NC will pay \$12,500 for each job they create, but nobody's taking it. Meanwhile, over a quarter of the people living in Warren County are eligible for food stamps. I hear sweet potatoes do well in full sun.

## What we baked this week

### Half-wheat sourdough sandwich (840g/loaf)

Water (36% by weight), Organic whole-wheat flour (30%), Organic white flour (30%), Vegetable oil (3%), NC Honey (1%), Salt

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### Whole-wheat sandwich bread (840g/loaf)

Organic whole wheat flour (57%), Water (35%), Vegetable oil (4%), NC Honey (2%), Fair-Trade Molasses, Salt, Yeast

### 'Bakers surprise' loaf (795g/loaf)

Contains: Surprise! Definitely at least 50% of the flour is whole-wheat, everything's vegan, and I spotted: carrots, raisins, poppyseeds, oats, cornmeal, rye flour, bulghur, oat flour, dill, sourdough, yeast, and salt.

### Dilly Deli Rye (811g/loaf)

Organic unbleached bread flour (39%), Water (35%), Organic whole rye flour (16%), Vegetable oil (6%), Dill seed (2%), Sea Salt (2%), Dill (1%)

### Oatmeal-raisin muffins (465g/half-dozen)

Organic whole-wheat pastry flour (31%), Pecan milk (20%: pecans & water), Oats (15%), Raisins (11%), Water (10%), fair-trade organic sugar (6%), Vegetable oil (5%), Baking powder, Apple cider vinegar, Salt

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"Agricultural biotechnology encompasses a set of technologies – genomic science, functional genomics, bioinformatics and genetic engineering technology – that improve yields and enable new agricultural products when applied to crop plants and livestock. Advances in these technologies also enable expansion of agriculture into alternative, non-food and nonfiber products, including pharmaceuticals, chemicals, biomaterials and enzymes. ... The Research Triangle Region is strongly positioned to capitalize on the growth opportunities in both markets. The region has several assets that work synergistically to create biotechnology applications for food and fiber products, ... [including]

**a large agricultural industry and leadership in poultry and hog production, providing commercial pathways for launching improved agricultural commodities."**  
-The Shape of Things to Come 2009-2014', Research Triangle Region's 5-year economic plan

**Monsanto Corporation** "is a leading global provider of technology-based solutions and agricultural products that improve farm productivity and food quality. Monsanto RTP analyzes genes used in the company's corn and soybean research and development testing pipeline."

**BASF Corporation Crop Protection** "is a leading producer of agricultural products, including herbicides, fungicides, insecticides, plant regulators and seed technologies."

**Bayer CropScience** "focuses on preventing diseases through diagnosis, vaccines, and innovative medicines and offering high-quality nutrition by the process of agriculture."

**Syngenta Biotechnology, Inc.** "is a world-leading agribusiness committed to sustainable agriculture through innovative research and technology. SBI researchers use a combination of science and cutting-edge technology to develop innovative solutions that help farmers and food companies."

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