

GRAIN CHAIN UNANIMOUSLY PRAISES BALANCED RECOMMENDATIONS ON WHOLE AND ENRICHED GRAINS IN 2010 DIETARY GUIDELINES

We commend the U.S. Departments of Agriculture (USDA) and Health and Human Services (HHS) on their science-based 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans released today. We strongly support the key recommendations preserving grains as part of the foundation of a healthy lifestyle. The average American should eat six servings of grain foods daily, making half of those whole grains.

The complex carbohydrates in grain foods provide essential fuel the body needs. Wholesome grain foods provide an excellent and cost effective way for Americans to obtain good nutrition. Scientific research continues to support the importance of grain foods in a healthy diet. The July 2009 *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* reported that individuals who consume a medium-to-high percentage of carbohydrates in their diets have a reduced risk of obesity. The 2010 Dietary Guidelines continue to recommend Americans consume 45-65 percent of their daily calories from carbohydrates.

We further support the 2010 Guidelines' continuation of the recommendation to "make half your grains whole." Three servings of whole grains a day can reduce the risk of many chronic diseases. The Guidelines note evidence of the role whole grain consumption may play in achieving a healthy body weight. Unfortunately, consumption data shows that most consumers fall well short of this recommendation. We are committed to offering practical education programs to help consumers, foodservice operators and school menu planners increase whole grain consumption.

The 2010 Guidelines recognize that both whole and enriched grains offer a wide array of health benefits and can help to prevent a number of different health conditions and ailments. Enriched grains contain niacin, thiamine, riboflavin (except rice) and iron in amounts equal to those found in whole grains. Additionally, folic acid is fortified at twice the amount found in whole grain products.

We commend the 2010 Guidelines' approach to reducing Americans' sodium intake through a voluntary, gradual and incremental reduction in foods. While salt and sodium play a key functional role in grain foods, the grain sector has already significantly reduced sodium. The average sodium level in a slice of bread has dropped from 254 mg to 180 mg since 1963. Rice companies have reduced the amount of sodium in rice mixes. The grain chain continues to pursue alternative ingredients and technology to further reduce salt and sodium without sacrificing taste or functionality.

We urge USDA and HHS to improve their education efforts to consumers on how to incorporate the new Guidelines into their diets. While tremendous efforts have been undertaken to incorporate the latest science and medical data into the new Guidelines, without equal efforts to educate consumers the effort will have been for naught. Consistent national guidance based on sound science is the single most important factor in addressing the alarming obesity rates among adults and children. The grain chain will continue its efforts to educate American consumers regarding the healthy benefits of whole and enriched grain foods as part of the foundation of a healthy lifestyle.

American Bakers Association
AIB International
Grain Foods Foundation
Grains for Health Foundation
Independent Bakers Association
National Association of Wheat Growers
North American Millers' Association
National Pasta Association
Retail Bakers of America
USA Rice Federation
Wheat Foods Council

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