



Europe announces comprehensive whole grain definition

The Grains & Legumes Nutrition Council™ (GLNC) has welcomed the [HEALTHGRAIN Forum Association](#) agreement regarding the definition of what constitutes a whole grain in Europe.

Published in the journal *Food and Nutrition Research* last week, the HEALTHGRAIN definition also includes a permitted list of grains and 'pseudo' grains, such as quinoa and amaranth, and processing guidelines that take into account current milling practices.

The HEALTHGRAIN definition is part of the process in reaching a precise understanding of what constitutes a whole grain, regardless of origin, an issue of particular importance in Europe.

The HEALTHGRAIN definition states:

- Whole grains shall consist of the intact, ground, cracked or flaked kernel after the removal of inedible parts such as the hull and husk. The principal anatomical components – the starchy endosperm, germ and bran – are present in the same relative proportions as they exist in the intact kernel.
- Small losses of components – that is less than 2% of the grain/10% of the bran – that occur through processing methods consistent with safety and quality are allowed.

GLNC – the independent authority on the nutrition and health benefits of grains and legumes in Australia and New Zealand – says the European definition for whole grain is consistent with the FSANZ Food Standards Code definition and guidance in other international jurisdictions such as the US FDA. It also takes into account the benefit of global harmonisation on the definition.

"We're delighted to see that the HEALTHGRAIN Forum Association has delivered on a key objective. The European definition also includes additional clarification on permitted grains and pseudo grains, which goes a long way to creating international harmonisation on the definition of a whole grain and is a welcome addition by the industry," said GLNC Managing Director, Georgie Aley.

"Another fact to consider is that while a clear definition of what constitutes a whole grain ingredient is very much welcomed, the next important piece of clarification required for the industry is a detailed definition for what constitutes a whole grain food."

GLNC has been addressing this issue in Australia and New Zealand and in response launched the Code of Practice for Whole Grain Ingredient Content Claims in July 2013.¹

"The GLNC Code of Practice for Whole Grain Ingredient Content Claims provides a clear definition of what constitutes a whole grain food. The Code sets a minimum of 8 grams of whole grain per serve to allow a food to be labelled as '*contains whole grain*'. This new minimum level provides a consistent message to consumers on which products are whole grain giving clarity on current labelling of whole grain foods in Australia and New Zealand," explained Ms Aley.

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¹ GLNC Code of Practice for Whole Grain Ingredient Content Claims
<http://www.glnc.org.au/codeofpractice/whole-grain-ingredient-content-claims/>