



Whole Grain Characterisation Adopted in the US

The American Association of Cereal Chemists International's (AACCI) Board of Directors recently approved the AACCI Whole Grains Working Group's characterisation of whole grain products. The characterisation asserts that for a food product to be labelled whole grain, it must contain 8 grams or more of whole grain per 30 grams of product.

The Grains & Legumes Nutrition Council™ (GLNC) – the independent authority for nutrition and health benefits of grains and legumes in Australia – is a member of the AACCI Whole Grains Working Group and welcomes the approval of the long awaited characterisation.

"The approval of the whole grain products characterisation has been highly anticipated not only by the American cereal grains industry but also the European and of course, Australian industry. As a participant of the Whole Grains Working Group, the Grains & Legumes Nutrition Council™ is pleased to see an agreed position towards defining whole grain products," stated GLNC Managing Director, Georgie Aley.

"The new characterisation is in line with the GLNC's soon-to-be-released industry standard for whole grain content claims in Australia with an emphasis on the minimum of 8 grams per manufacturer serve to be able to define a food as containing whole grains," Ms Aley outlined.

Dr Julie Miller Jones, AACCI Whole Grains Working Group Chair, who led the association's efforts on whole grains product characterisation said: "Currently, consumers are confused about what constitutes a whole grain food, and this characterisation provides clear guidance to those who seek to consume the recommended levels of whole grain foods."

The AACCI believe the recommendation will aid consumers in choosing which food products to eat to meet the American government's dietary guidelines. The guidelines state Americans should make half their grains whole, which means that each day they should eat at least three servings of grain foods containing 16 grams of whole grain or six servings that have at least 8 grams of whole grain.

The American recommendation is in line with the recently released Australian Dietary Guidelines which state that Australians should choose mostly whole grain or high fibre grain foods. The Australian Dietary Guidelines also specify that Australians need to eat six serves of grain foods each day. By eating food products containing the minimum whole grain content of 8 grams, Australians will also meet the GLNC's Daily Target Intake recommendation of 48 grams of whole grains per day.

A worldwide standard characterisation of a whole grain food levels the playing field for everyone in the cereal grain industry and allows for uniform messaging about whole grain food products. The language does not impact statements about products that are allowed by the law or other ingredients that might be in a food product, or the naming of food products.

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