

GLNC Consumption & Attitudes Study Results: 2017

After years of going against the grain, promising new research from the Grains and Legumes Nutrition Council (GLNC) has found fewer Australians are limiting grain foods and more of us are enjoying legumes.

The triennial Consumption Study, which looked at data from over 1,100 Australians, found that 47% of us limit grains - encouragingly, significantly less than the 60% recorded in 2014¹. While the persistence of Paleo, [low-carb](#) and gluten free diets are likely still pushing the trend of grain-avoidance, these results suggest the wide-spread fear of grains is slowing. Additionally, data showed that the reduction in consumption of grain foods has now plateaued after a 30% decline was observed between 2011 and 2014¹.

Since 2014, consumption of all [grain foods](#) has remained steady at six serves per day, this is split into an average of four serves of [core](#) grain foods a day and two serves of [non-core](#) grain foods¹. Core grain foods are those recommended as part of a healthy diet, like bread and breakfast cereals, rice and pasta.

As for whole grain, only 30% of Australians eat enough whole grain, with a massive 70% falling short of the recommended [48 grams per day](#), eating an average of under two serves per day¹. And kids are eating even less whole grain at just 16 grams a day². For those who enjoy enough whole grain on a daily basis, they're benefitting from more than 26 nutrients and phytonutrients that help to protect us against chronic disease and arm us with good health.

But what about legumes?

Overall, we're not a country of big legume-eaters, but it's encouraging to see a greater proportion of Australians now including them, with 28% eating them regularly, up from 24% in 2014¹. And the benefits of legumes, like chickpeas, lentils, kidney beans etc, is equally exciting, with every additional 20 grams eaten daily - the equivalent of around a tablespoon - reducing risk of early death by 7-8%³.

Interestingly, whilst the number of Australians eating legumes has increased, the number of serves per person has actually decreased. This is likely due to a shift in how we're eating legumes, with fewer people eating pulses as a staple cultural food and more of us eating legumes as a snack.

So what else has changed?

The study also picked up on some interesting trends around the grain and legume foods Australians are eating. The percentage of people eating porridge, for example, has doubled between 2014-2017, while fewer people are choosing breakfast biscuits¹.

The way we eat is evolving too, with snacking on the rise - nowadays two out of three Australians snack every day⁴ and GLNC's Consumption Study supports this trend with more people eating crisp breads and snack bars. We're also getting more adventurous with our staple foods, eating more alternative breads like flat breads and wraps. And although more Australians are eating increasing amounts of whole grain, many of us are choosing to have the best of both worlds by choosing high fibre white breads¹ more often.

Altogether, the data shows positive movement for both the grains and legumes categories. If you'd like to see more insights into our study, you can view the results in an easy-to-digest infographic [here](#).

How can you reap the wonderful benefits grains and legumes offer? It's as simple as adding half a cup of legumes, or an extra serve of whole grain foods to your day! Try subbing half the mince in your Bolognese with lentils, or adding a handful of oats to your morning smoothie. For more inspiration, check out our [recipes](#).

References

1. GLNC. Australian Consumption & Attitudes Study. 2017. Unpublished.
2. Suthers, R. Broom, M. Beck, E. (2018) Key Characteristics of Public Health Interventions aimed at increasing whole grain intake: a systematic review. *J Nutr Educ Behav.* 1499-4046
3. Darmadi-Blackberry I, Wahlqvist ML, Kouris-Blazos A, Steen B, Lukito W, Horie Y, et al. Legumes: the most important dietary predictor of survival in older people of different ethnicities. *Asia Pacific journal of clinical nutrition.* 2004;13(2):217-20.
4. IPSOS. Food Trends. 10 Trends Which Are Reshaping the Food & beverage Market. 2016