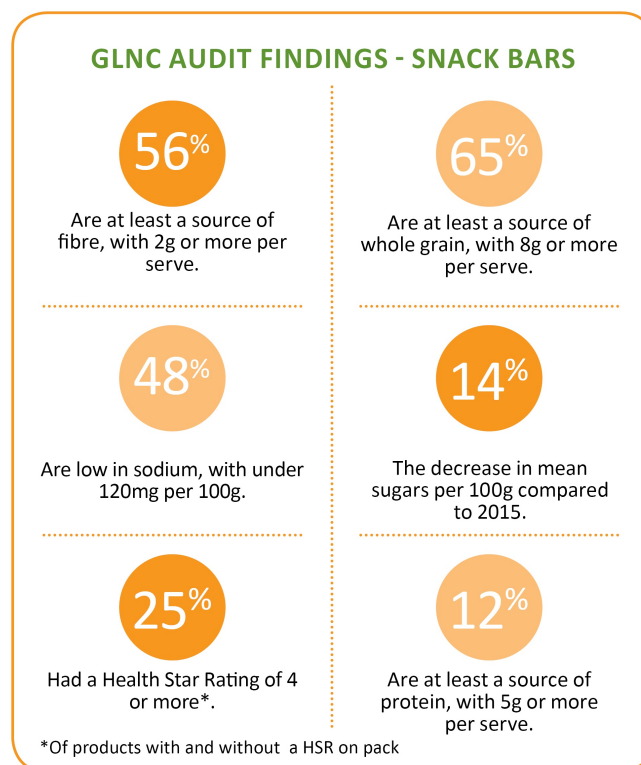


## GLNC PRODUCT AUDIT HIGHLIGHTS

### GRAIN BASED SNACK BARS

May 2019

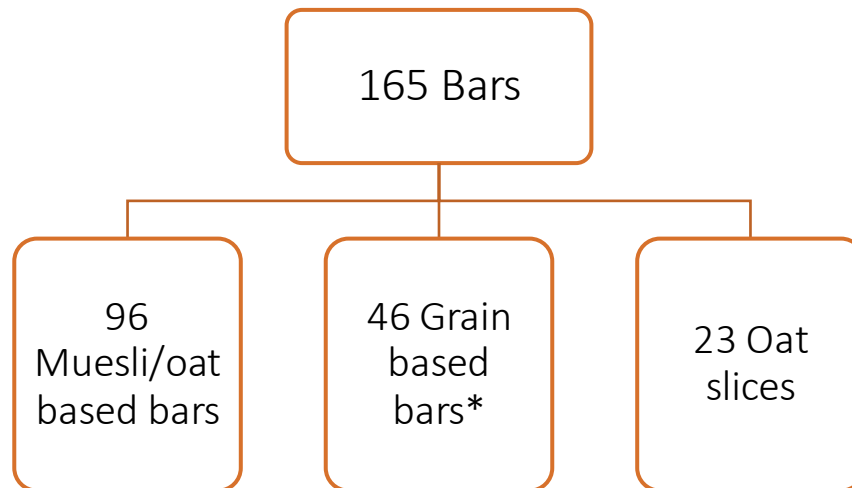
When it comes to snacking, it doesn't get much more convenient than snack bars, and many Australians enjoy eating them. One in five respondents in GLNC's 2017 Consumption Study reported eating snack bars,\* and an estimated 40% of Australian school children's lunchboxes feature muesli bars. In January 2019, GLNC audited 165 snack bars from the four major supermarkets in Sydney, excluding nut, protein/diet and fruit-based bars, by collecting product information in store and online. Read on for a summary of the audit:



#### Tips for choosing a healthy snack bar:

- **Look for whole grain bars:** As well as contributing to your [48g Daily Target Intake](#), whole grain bars were higher in protein and dietary fibre, and lower in sodium than non-whole grain.
- **Choose bars lower in saturated fat and sugars**
- **Choose bars with a higher Health Star Rating:** As a quick and easy way to choose healthier products.

\*Including muesli bars and others, such as breakfast, cereal, and other bars.



### Category overview:

\*Grain-based bars included those made from grains like wheat and rice (excluding oats), and included fruit-filled and gluten free bars.

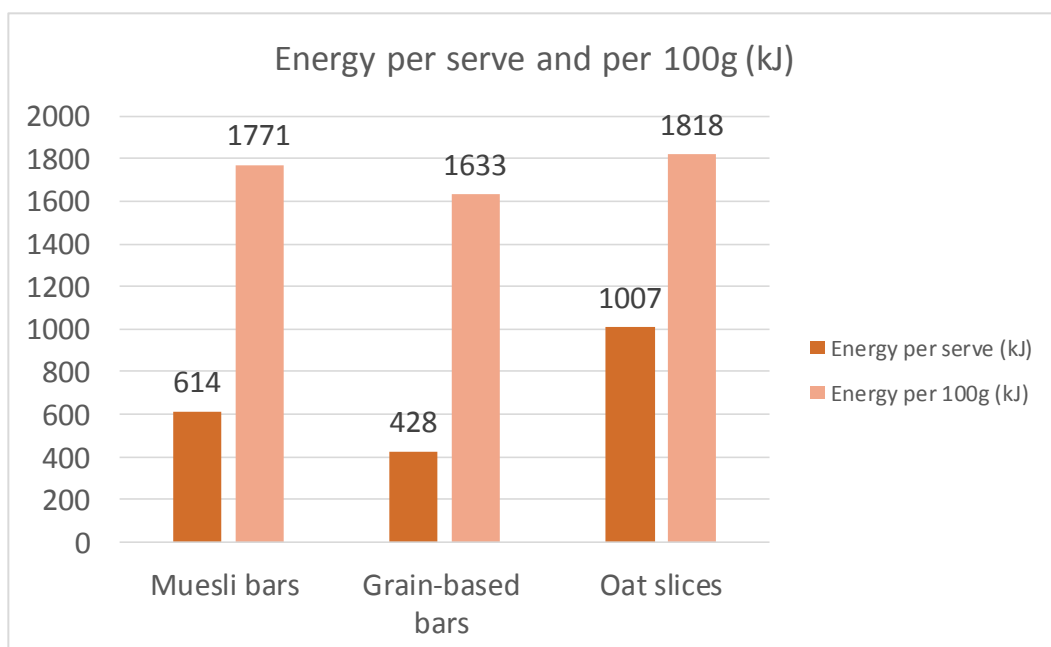
### Serving size:

Overall, the average serve size of bars was 35g, however there was variation between categories:

- Grain based bars had the smallest average serve size of **26g** (range 18 – 38g)
- Muesli/oat based bars were on average **35g** (range 20 – 65g)
- Oat slices were the largest, with an average serve size of **55g** (range 20 – 100g).

### Energy (kilojoules):

- Grain based bars had the lowest average energy per serve and per 100g.
- Oat slices were significantly higher in energy per serve, partly explained by their larger average serve size.



### Health Star Rating (HSR):

Overall, 63% of bars displayed a HSR, with the majority of these seen in grain based bars (80% of the category). Actual HSR of all products was calculated using the [HSR calculator](#), so that an accurate comparison could be made across all products:

- Muesli/oat based bars had the highest mean score of 3 stars, and greatest percentage of products rated 4 stars or above
- Almost half of the grain based bars were rated between 2-5-3.5 stars, and 86% of oat slices rated 2 stars or fewer

Category	HSR on pack (%)	Mean HSR (range)	≤2 stars (%)	2.5-3.5 stars (%)	≥4 stars (%)
Muesli/oat based	66 (n=63)	3.0 (0.5 – 5.0)	20	41	37
Grain based	80 (n=37)	2.4 (0.5 – 4.5)	39	47	13
Oat slices	17 (n=4)	1.7 (1.5 – 2.5)	86	13	0

### Whole grain (WG):

- Based on GLNCs Code of Practice for WG claims (The Code), 66% of bars were WG, with at least 8g per serve.
- At least 90% of muesli/oat based bars and oat slices were WG, and both had an average of 14g WG per serve, almost 30% of the 48g Daily Target Intake (DTI) for adults, and 44% of the 32g DTI for children (4 – 8 years).
- 60% of WG bars were registered with The Code, making it easy to choose a WG product

Category	WG products* (%)	Mean WG per serve (g)	Range WG per serve (g)
Grain based	4 (n=2)	1	0-12
Muesli/oat based**	90 (n=86)	14	3.6-26.3
Oat slices	92 (n=21)	14	6-29

\*Based on eligibility for registration with GLNCs Code of Practice (≥8g WG per serve)

\*\* 6% (n=6) of muesli bars did not state %WG ingredients

### Dietary fibre:

- More than half (56%) of bars were at least a source of fibre ( $\geq 2\text{g} - < 4\text{g}/\text{serve}$ ), with muesli/oat based bars, and oat slices emerging as higher fibre choices

Category	Mean fibre/serve (g)	Mean fibre/100g (g)	Range/serve (g)	Source of fibre $\geq 2\text{g} - < 4\text{g}/\text{serve}$ (%)	Good source $\geq 4\text{g} - < 7\text{g}/\text{serve}$ (%)	Excellent source $\geq 7\text{g}/\text{serve}$ (%)
Grain based*	1.5	5.8	0.1 - 7.3	26	2	2
Muesli/oat**	3.1	9.4	1.1 - 9.1	70	5	5
Oat slices	3.7	6.6	1.2 - 7.9	61	4	22

\*4% (n=2) products did not state fibre on-pack

\*\*11% (n=11) products did not state fibre on-pack

### Total sugars:

While no bars were eligible to make a low sugar claim ( $\leq 5\text{g}/100\text{g}$ ), there was a wide range in sugars per serve.

- Both grain, and muesli/oat based bars had  $\leq 8\text{g}$  per serve (~two teaspoons sugar)
- Oat slices had a substantially greater amount of sugar per serve, though this is partly explained by this groups larger average serve size, and when compared per 100g, grain-based bars were the highest sugar category
- Interestingly, there was little difference in sugars when comparing bars with, or without fruit (8.9g vs 7.5g/serve).

Category	With fruit (%)	Mean sugars per 100g (g)	Mean sugars per serve (g)	Range per serve (g)
Grain based	32 (n=15)	29.8	8.1	3.8 - 18.2
Muesli/oat	50 (n=48)	20	7.2	2.6 - 15.9
Oat slices	52 (n=12)	23.1	12	4.7 - 23.1

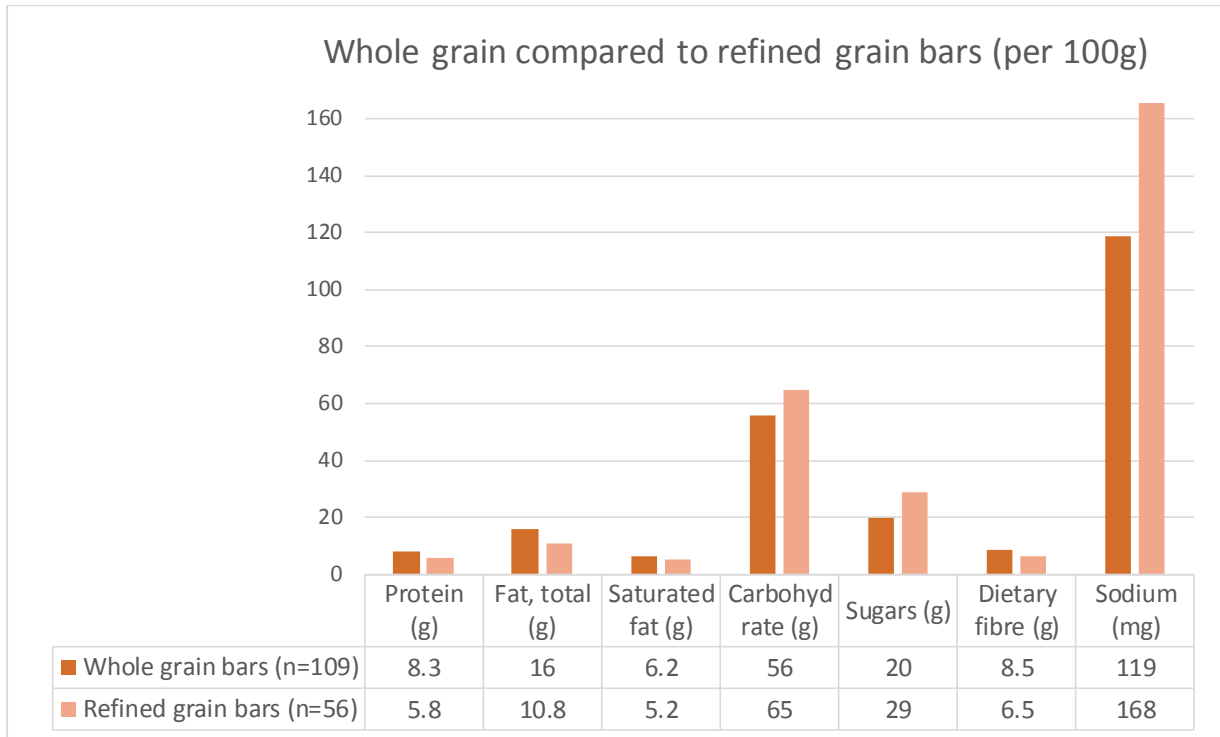
### Saturated fat:

- Few products were considered low saturated fat ( $\leq 1.5\text{g}/100\text{g}$ ), but the majority of grain and muesli/oat based bars met the National Healthy School Canteen (NHSC) Guidelines of  $\leq 3\text{g}/\text{serve}$ .
- Products higher in saturated fat often contained ingredients like coconut and butter.
- Bars with nuts included were slightly higher in saturated fat (3g vs 2g per serve).

Category	Mean saturated fat per 100g (g)	Mean saturated fat per serve (g)	Range per serve (g)	Low saturated fat (%)	NHSC Guidelines (%)
Grain based	3	1.1	0.1 - 2.8	30 (n=14)	100 (n=46)
Muesli/oat	4	1.6	0.3 - 6.5	5 (n=5)	89 (n=86)
Oat slices	13	7	2.7 - 14.1	0	13 (n=3)

**Whole grain bars compared to refined grain\*:**

- Whole grain bars were higher in protein, total and saturated fat, and dietary fibre, and lower in carbohydrate, sugars, and sodium



\* based on eligibility for registration with GLNCs Code of Practice ( $\geq 8$ g WG per serve).