

GRAINS: RICE, PASTA, NOODLES AND OTHER GRAINS

Grain foods have been eaten by different cultures worldwide for many thousands of years, and they are still a valuable part of our diet today.

In fact, grain foods are the most important contributors of seven key nutrients in Australians' diets – fibre, iron, magnesium, iodine, carbohydrates, and B-group vitamins like folate and thiamine.¹

What's on our supermarket shelves in 2018?

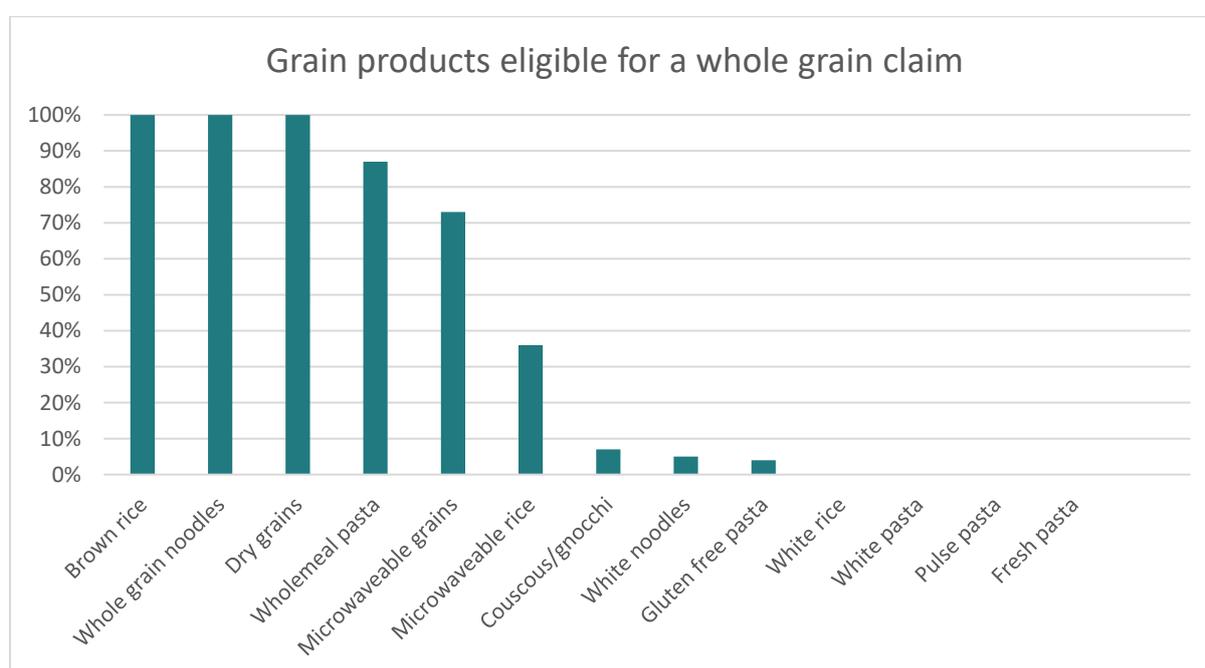
As part of the Grains & Legumes Nutrition Council (GLNC's) rolling annual audit, **536** grain products from the four major supermarkets in Sydney were audited in January 2018. This included **149 rice** products, **281 pasta** products, **56 noodle** products, and **48 other grains** (See the full breakdown at the end of this factsheet).

How your favourite grains stack up:

Whole grain

While all grains are nutritious, whole grains (those that still have each of the three outer layers intact) are the best choice, as they're naturally packed with more than 26 nutrients that are lost once a grain is refined. The Daily Target Intake for whole grains is 48g per day, and to make a claim around whole grain content, products need to have at least 8g of whole grain per serve.²

Table 1. Products eligible for a whole grain claim (>8g whole grain/serve).

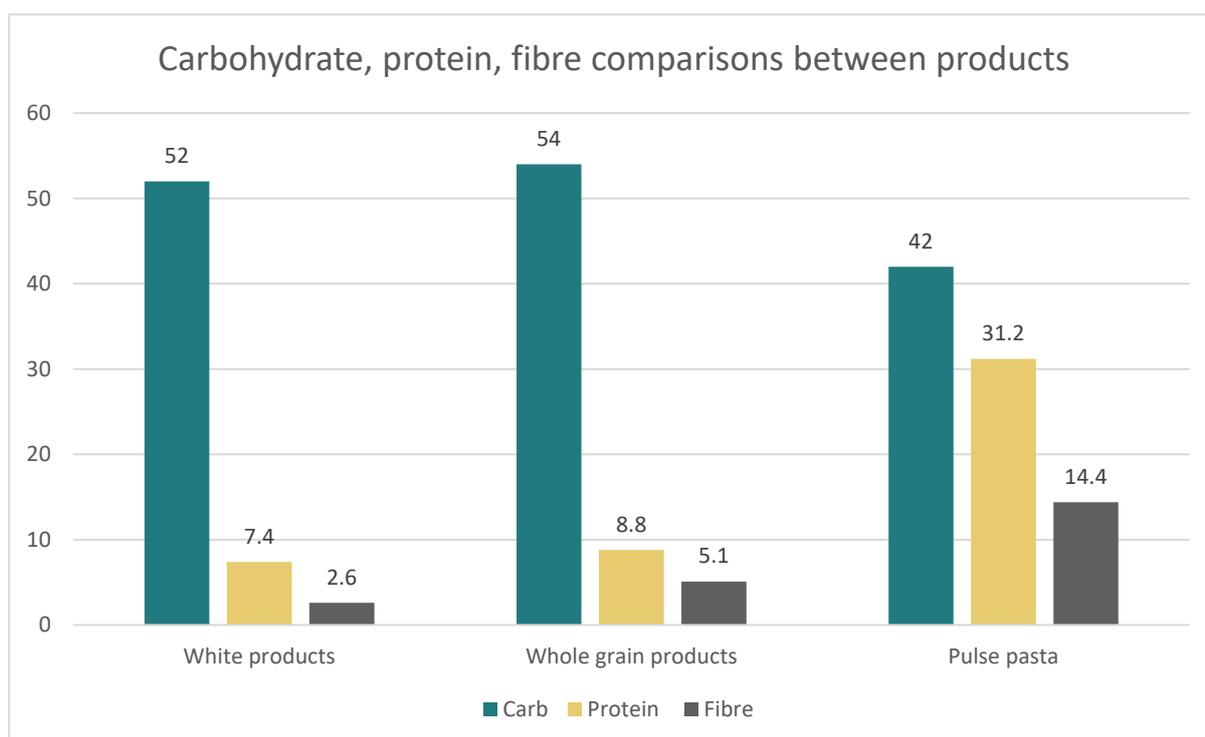


- The amount of whole grain per serve varied widely; between 6-125g per serve
- One in five products (20%) were eligible to make a whole grain claim, with at least 8g of whole grain per serve.
- All whole grain products were eligible to make a whole grain claim, with half of those audited exceeding the 48g DTI per serve.
- No white products (rice, pasta, noodles etc) contained any whole grain.

Key nutrients: carbohydrate, protein, and fibre:

Grain foods provide a range of nutrients, including carbohydrate, protein, and fibre. The following table compares the differences in these between all white and whole grain products, as well as pulse pasta (pasta made with legume flour), which was significantly different to all other products.

Table 2: Comparison of key nutrient averages between grain products per 100g.



- **Carbohydrate:** There was little difference between white and whole grain products, though pulse pastas were the lowest in carbohydrates.
- **Fibre:** Whole grain products had double the fibre of white products, and pulse pasta had more than five times the amount of fibre than white.
- **Protein:** 20% of whole grain products were a good source of protein, with at least 10g per serve, and more than one third of white products were a source of protein (5g per serve). Pulse pastas were particularly rich in protein, with around three times that found in whole grain products.

What has changed since our last grains audit in 2016?

- Over the last two years, a variety of new grains have hit our supermarket shelves (e.g. quinoa, teff, buckwheat).
 - 4 times the number of products than in 2016.
- More microwave grain products
 - These have doubled since 2016, rising from 35 – 67 products.
- There are new categories on the market
 - Pulse pastas weren't on shelf in 2016, while this year we captured 11 products.

Top tips for choosing a healthy grain product:

- Look for whole grain products – they're higher in fibre and protein, and just one serve (such as half a cup of cooked brown rice) will often provide more than your entire day's whole grain target.
- Keep some microwaveable grains on hand for convenient meals – they're just as nutritious, but quicker to prepare.
- Try experimenting with new grains – like freekah, amaranth, or pulse pastas. They're all nutritious and add variety to your diet.

Products audited:

<p>149 Rice Products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 73 White • 21 Brown • 35 Microwaveable, plain • 20 Microwaveable, flavoured 	<p>281 Pasta Products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 190 White • 15 Wholemeal • 23 Gluten Free • 10 Pulse Pastas • 12 Fresh, refrigerated • 27 Couscous & Gnocchi
<p>56 Noodle Products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 54 White • 2 Whole grain 	<p>48 Grains Products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 37 Dry • 11 Microwaveable

*Excluded: Flavoured dry noodles, filled refrigerated pasta (e.g. ravioli).

¹ ABS. Australian Health Survey: Nutrition First Results - Foods and Nutrients, 2011-12. Australian Bureau of Statistics; 2014.

² Grains & Legumes Nutrition Council. Code of Practice for Whole Grain Ingredient Content Claims, 2016.