GRAINS & LEGUMES NUTRITION COUNCIL

Closing the Whole Grain Gap

Whole grains refer to cereal grains that contain the entire grain kernel: the bran, germ, and endosperm. They vary in shape, size, and colour, and can be eaten whole, rolled, cooked, or ground into flour.
Examples of whole grains include wheat, brown rice, oats and barley.

WHERE DO THEY FIT IN THE 2013 AUSTRALIAN DIETARY GUIDELINES?



Whole grains are included in the grains (cereal) food group, one of the five core food groups. The current Australian Dietary Guidelines recommend that most grain foods consumed should be whole grain and/or high cereal fibre varieties, such as wholemeal bread, brown rice and oats.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF CONSUMING WHOLE GRAINS?

Nutrient-Rich

Whole grains are a valuable source of dietary fibre, protein, and key vitamins and minerals, including iron, zinc, magnesium, B-group vitamins, and vitamin E.

Disease Prevention

A diet low in whole grains is one of the leading dietary risk factors for chronic disease in Australia, contributing to a higher risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, some cancers, and overall mortality.

Economic Benefits

If Australians met the recommended 48 grams of whole grains per day, it could generate substantial economic savings annually, including up to $717 million in reduced heart disease–related costs and $750 million in reduced type 2 diabetes–related costs.

WHAT ARE AUSTRALIANS CONSUMING?

48 grams per day is the recommended intake of whole grains for adults, the Whole Grain Daily Target Intake (DTI).

73% of Australians don't meet the whole grain DTI.

21 grams is the average amount consumed.

24% of total grain intake is whole grain.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Regular whole grain consumption supports overall health, yet most Australians fall short of the recommended intake. Setting a clear target of 48–50 grams per day in the Australian Dietary Guidelines would provide evidence-based guidance, strengthen public messaging, and align with global standards.

Effective uptake also relies on cross-sector collaboration across health, industry, and policy.

For a list of references, please scan the QR code.



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