



Kernels

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The Tipping Point

In my career, I have helped manage how agricultural food groups dealt with a number of fad diets including the low cholesterol, low fat, low carbohydrate, and now, the gluten-free diet. Each fad diet has followed a similar cycle: initial publicity by an individual or organization promising miraculous results from following their diet plan (and often by purchasing their products, too), media interest in the diet building up to a significant amount of coverage that seems to promote the diet, then ultimately, the same media reexamining the diet after observing it didn't deliver all the amazing benefits promised by the early hype. We have reached that tipping point with the gluten-free fad diet as major media outlets are calling the diet into question (see the story on page 4 of this issue as well as the "News" section of the Wheat Foods Council website for links to many of these articles).

Gluten will remain a serious medical matter for the few individuals who have celiac disease or non-celiac gluten sensitivity, but for everyone else, the myth of the miracles of a gluten-free lifestyle is now being debunked. It is time to use your communications tools to add volume to the story that the gluten-free fad diet, like all the other previous fad diets, isn't the quick fix promised and is on its way out.

Tim O'Connor
President, Wheat Foods Council



Wheat Growers Corner

Important New Resource – “The Truth About Wheat” Video Available on WFC Website

There is an exciting new resource available on the Wheat Foods Council (WFC) website you need to check out: the video “The Truth About Wheat.” The video features wheat experts addressing claims being made about wheat and wheat foods in popular books and by the media, and sets the record straight. Topics discussed include: gluten, celiac disease, claims that wheat has “changed,” genetic modification, and refined or enriched wheat foods vs whole wheat.

The expert panel is comprised of Julie Miller Jones, PhD, Distinguished Scholar and Professor Emerita of nutrition in the Department of Family, Consumer and Nutritional Sciences at the St. Catherine University in St. Paul, MN; Brett Carver, PhD, Wheat Genetics Chair in Agriculture, Oklahoma State University; and Sara Olsen, a fourth-generation Colorado wheat producer and mom.



The show was originally aired in September 2015 by Oklahoma Public Television (OETA), working with the Oklahoma State Wheat Commission.

This new resource is available on the WFC website at: <http://wheatfoods.org/node/1193#node-1193>

We encourage you to share with your own audiences via your various social media platforms.

WATCH
THE VIDEO
HERE



The Gluten-Free Diet: Fad is Waning Under the Weight of Sound Science

Could the gluten-free fad be on the way out? Gluten-free dieting for those who don't have celiac disease (CD) or gluten-related disorders has become popular in large part due to media coverage, social media, and celebrity endorsements. But media tracking indicates that this fad diet tide is beginning to turn under the weight of sound science.

Here are some highlights from the mounting number of news stories taking a closer look at the gluten-free fad diet claims:

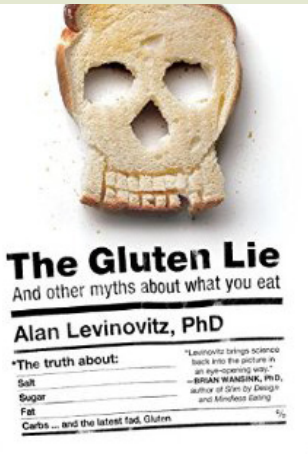


January 2015 Consumer Reports cover story, "6 Truths About a Gluten Free Diet:" "Gluten-free isn't more nutritious (and may be less so)."

June 29, 2015, Washington Post, "For Many, Gluten isn't the Villain It Gets Cracked Up to Be:" "If it's not a medical necessity, doctors say, going gluten-free could mean a diet that's lacking in important nutrients, damaging to your gut flora and — ironically, for those trying to slim down — making you fat."

July 4, 2015, New York Times, "The Myth of the Big, Bad Gluten:" "Are the gluten haters correct that modern wheat varieties contain more gluten than past cultivars, making them more toxic? Unlikely, according to recent analysis by Donald D. Kasarda, a scientist with the United States Department of Agriculture. He analyzed records of **protein content** in wheat harvests going back nearly a century. It hasn't changed."

Based more on fear, myth



The gluten-free fad diet is even being compared to religious food taboos or sacred diets. In the book "The Gluten Lie," published in April 2015 by Alan Levinovitz, an assistant professor of religion at James Madison University, the author points out that following fad diets, such as gluten-free, have become like a quasi-religious belief, based more on fear or myth – and savvy marketing – than reality.

In an interview with the Washington Post, Levinovitz commented on the dangers of "doctors writing popular fear mongering books." The result, he said, can be "a form of mass sociogenic illness where people come to experience symptoms from eating food when in fact those symptoms are entirely psychosomatic."

A corrosion of common sense

Adding to the number of influential voices calling "foul" on gluten-free diet health claims is renowned exercise physiologist Dr. Glenn Gaesser, PhD, a researcher and professor at Arizona State University. In a recent article in the Journal of the American Academy of Physicians, Dr. Gaesser concludes that not only is there no evidence for a gluten-free diet weight loss claim, there is also no scientific evidence suggesting that the general public would be better off avoiding gluten. "While the gluten-free diet is a legitimate therapeutic tool for those affected by gluten-related disorders, there has been corrosion of common sense from people needlessly jumping on the fad diet bandwagon," he stressed.

"In fact, people who eliminate gluten may end up gaining weight because these foods often have more calories than their gluten-containing counterparts," added Dr. Gaesser. "There is also preliminary evidence that consuming gluten-containing foods, especially whole grain wheat products high in dietary fiber, may boost beneficial gut bacteria, which will be an interesting area of future study recognizing our growing understanding of the microbiome and its effect on health."

As scientific research sheds more light on the folly of the gluten-free fad, one thing is clear: removing beneficial grains from your diet, without a medical diagnosis, flies in the face of good nutrition and a healthy body.



Source: The Hartman Group's Health & Wellness 2015 and Organic & Natural 2014 reports, <http://tinyurl.com/pgncx9k>



Whole Grain-Rich Foods on the Menu for K-12 Students

Providing healthy, appetizing meals in America's school cafeterias is a key trend influencing nutrition for children. "School nutrition professionals have given school menus a healthy makeover, developing creative recipes that feature more whole-grains, fruits and vegetables with less sodium, fat and calories," states Patricia Montague, CEO of the School Nutrition Association (SNA). However, since implementation of the new school meal rules three years ago, school districts and their students continue to experience ups and downs, including challenges with implementation of the new mandate for grains.

Currently, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) requires that 100 percent of all grain foods served in schools must be "whole grain-rich." However, schools that experience hardship in meeting the man-

date may petition their state for an exemption. Foods that qualify as "whole grain-rich" must contain 100-percent whole grain or a blend of whole-grain meal and/or flour and enriched meal and/or flour of which at least 50-percent is whole grain.



In response to the school meal rules, the food service industry has reformulated products, including grain products like Mexican burritos and pizzas, using whole grain-rich tortillas and crusts that satisfy the grain standards. Industry has also developed whole grain flours that create better texture and color in baked goods and innovation using natural flavors has helped reduce sugar in products.

Recently, USDA reported that over 95% of schools are successfully meeting the updated nutrition standards. School districts nationwide are finding creative ways



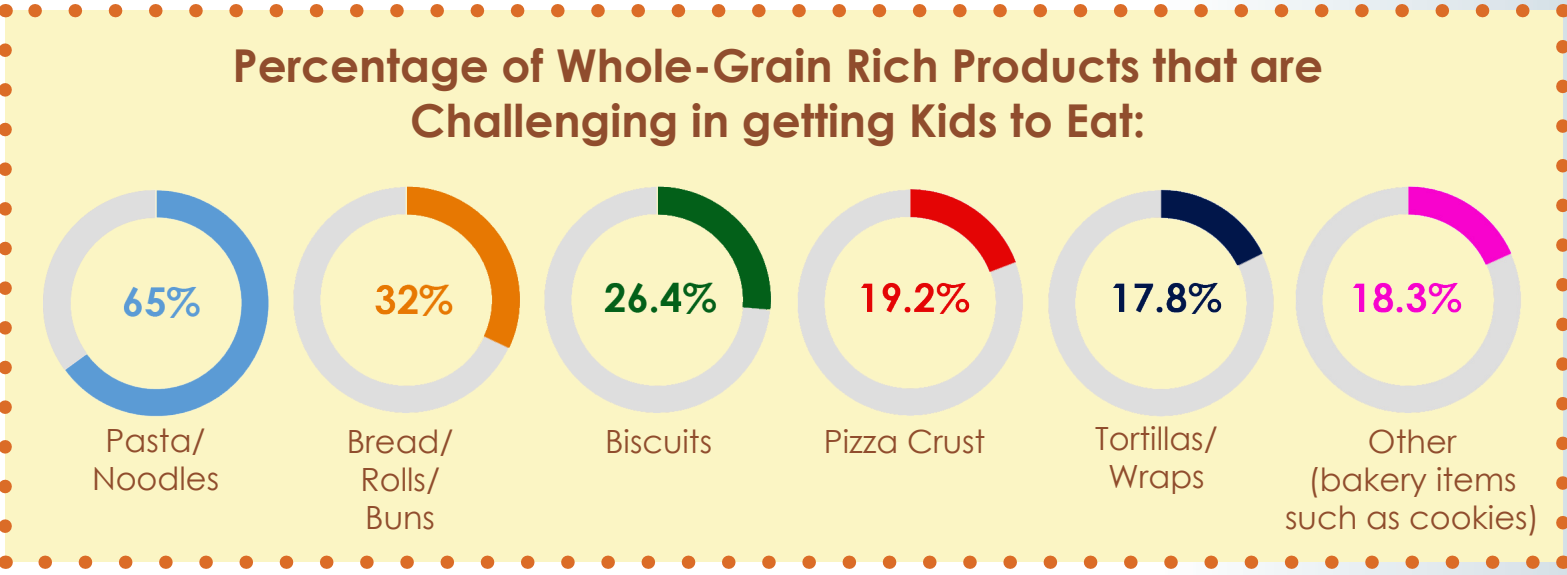
to improve menus and get students excited about healthier choices. Successful trends include taste and nutritional makeovers, more ethnic food and local sourcing of fresh fruits and vegetables, cooking classes, school gardens and programs to educate students about healthy eating.

"School districts are working hard to promote those healthy choices with student taste tests and engaging nutrition education initiatives that get kids excited about trying foods they might not have encountered at home," adds SNA's Montague.

However, according to SNA's 2015 Nutrition Trends survey, more work still needs to be done at the school level, especially when it comes to meeting the whole grain-rich requirement. Nearly 29% rated this issue as

presenting a "significant challenge." And it's not just product availability that has school foodservice directors frustrated. Getting kids to eat the new foods may be the biggest challenge of all. In fact, according to the SNA survey, lack of student acceptance of whole grain-rich foods was top ranked by a wide margin across all district segments, with the percentage citing this issue never dropping below 90%.

The bottom line is that much work remains to be done on the school nutrition front although progress is being made. According to a recent USDA fact sheet, kids ate 13 percent more of their entrees and nearly 20 percent more of their vegetables in 2014 than in 2012, resulting in less food ending up in the trash than before the national standards were updated.





Bringing Home the (Wheat) Gold:

Michele Tuttle Finishes in Top Ten at ITU Finals

Wheat Foods Council-sponsored triathlete Michele Tuttle, MPH, RDN, Team USA triathlete and registered dietitian, came up with some big wins at the 2015 International Triathlon Union (ITU) World Triathlon Grand Final September 15-19, 2015, in Chicago. She placed sixth in the Sprint World Championship (50-54 age-group), third for the U.S. team, with a time of 01:15:36, beating her former record set during the 2013 London ITU triathlon. Michele also placed eighth in the Olympic Distance World Championship with an official time of 02:07:45.

The Wheat Foods Council (WFC) sponsored Michele's training to highlight the role of wheat foods in the diet. "We could not be prouder of Michele," declared Tim O'Connor, WFC president. "Her discipline and determination over the past year has been phenomenal. As a registered dietitian, she also knows the importance of making smart dietary choices, including wheat foods, to be at her best whether competing in triathlons or managing the daily stresses of a working mom. We look forward to having her as an ongoing member of the WFC team to educate consumers about the role of wheat foods as an essential component of a nutritious diet."

As a part of its sponsorship, the WFC featured Michele throughout her training this past year, and she shared insights about her workout regimen, dietary choices and the importance of wheat foods in her training.

"Not only does wheat factor into my pre- and post-race nutrition in terms of the nutrients it provides, but more importantly, I really love eating wheat-based foods like bread, pasta, cereal, bagels, and cookies," imparted Michele. "The truth is, life would not be much fun for me without wheat."

For more information about Michele's training journey visit the **Wheat Foods Council's Facebook page** or follow Ms. Tuttle on Twitter **@irongirlrd**.



"The truth is, life would not be much fun for me without wheat."



Meet Some of the 2015 Kids' "State Dinner" Winners

Wheat Flour Tortillas: A part of their winning recipes

Nearly 1,000 entries were submitted to this year's Healthy Lunchtime Challenge, a nationwide recipe contest for kids ages 8-12 that promotes cooking and healthy eating. The 55 winning recipes were selected based on their healthfulness, taste, originality, affordability, and following USDA's MyPlate recommendations. In July, the winners joined the First Lady at the White House for the Kids' "State Dinner," where the menu featured a selection of their recipes. Here are a few of the recipe winners who used wheat flour tortillas as an ingredient. Find out what these budding chefs had to say about their recipes:



Alabama Fancy Fish Tacos

"I wanted to make something healthy that gave me energy to play sports. I play outside a lot after school or I have a ballgame and I wanted something good to fill me up. I'm kind of a picky eater, but I love fish and I knew I wanted it to be the main ingredient. My mom adds vegetables in food that I may not see, so I like these better because they are different colors and I can tell which ones I'm eating!" - Jay Wolanzyk, age 10, Alabama

Caribbean Delight

"Last year I wanted to surprise my mom with a gift on Mother's Day, but I didn't have money to buy her anything and my sister didn't want to sing a song with me, so I decided that making something that she would like to eat and that was healthy for her, would be the ideal gift. She is from the Dominican Republic and we live in Florida, so I thought why not prepare a dish that is Caribbean and Floridian! She also has high cholesterol, so I had to research the best foods to help reduce cholesterol levels. I thought what better way to honor her culture, our agriculture in Florida, and her good health!" - Bobby Sena, Age 12, Florida



Shake It Off with a Turkey Roll

"I presented to the school board my suggestions to help students identify what makes a lunch healthy. This recipe is one of my favorites. I saw in my experiment that pre-packaged food and fruit snacks/chips and other unhealthy foods were in my friends' lunch boxes. It is important to teach my friends what good choices look like and how what FUEL they choose for their bodies affects how they perform throughout their day." - Izzy Washburn, Age 9, Kentucky

M"eggs"ican Quesadillas with Pineapple Dipping Sauce

"I tried different recipes out and let my family be my taste testers and decide which one would be best. My mom and dad like our family to eat healthy most of the time, but I don't always like some of the vegetables, so I hid them in the quesadilla so everyone is happy! This dish uses all of the food groups in one dish, but we added some mini fruit kabobs for extra vitamins. I hope you enjoy it!" - Riley Higgins, Age 9, Oklahoma



Indian Tacos

"When I was little, I lived in San Francisco, and was exposed to all sorts of culture and food. One of my favorites was Indian food, so I decided to make an Indian style dish. I would serve this dish with mango and chai." - Dillon Andrews, Age 12, Wyoming



To view all of the winning recipes, visit the White House's "Let's Move" website for a full list of winners with links to their recipes and blogs posted by each of the kid chefs: <http://www.letsmove.gov/kids-state-dinner-winners>

Fall in Love with Easy, Mexican-Themed Meals

Wrap a warm, soft tortilla around these yummy fillings for a simple, delicious lunch or dinner, or make your own tortillas – a great activity for the whole family!

Whole Wheat Tortilla Pinwheels

Ingredient List:

6– 8" whole wheat tortillas
1 – 8 ounce package of light cream cheese, soft-ened
1 teaspoon chili powder
1 teaspoon cumin
½ teaspoon paprika
4 medium-sized green onions, bulbs and green tops, chopped
1 – 7 ounce can of diced green chilies, drained
1 - 8 ounce bag Mexican blend cheese, shredded
1 - 2¼ ounce can black olives, chopped (skip this for a low sodium option)
Cilantro, fresh, for garnish (optional)



Cover Recipe

Directions:

In a medium bowl, mix together cream cheese and next three ingredients until well blended. Fold in green onions, green chilies and cheese. Spread a thin layer of cream cheese mixture onto tortillas and sprinkle each with 1/6 of the olives. Fold in about 1 inch on each side of tortilla toward the center, fold up bottom inch of tortilla to the middle and continue to roll up tortilla to the opposite end. Wrap tightly in plastic wrap and chill 2-3 hours in refrigerator as they are much easier to cut once chilled well. Cut into 1 inch slices using a serrated knife and place pinwheels on a festive serving platter. Garnish with fresh cilantro if desired.

Makes: 36 pinwheels (6 tortilla rolls, cut into 6 one-inch pieces each)

Servings: 18 (2 slices/serving) **Calories/Serving:** 140 (for 2 slices)

Nutrition: One serving (2 slices) provides approximately: 6 g protein, 10 g carbohydrates, 2 g fiber, 9 g fat (4 g saturated), 20 mg cholesterol, 4 mcg folate, 0 mg iron and 370 mg sodium.

Roasted Chicken Wrap

Ingredient List:

3 large boneless chicken breast halves, skinned
3 cloves garlic, peeled
1/2 cup balsamic vinegar
3 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon sugar
2 teaspoons cumin
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 medium white or yellow onion, sliced into rings
1/2 red bell pepper, sliced lengthwise
1/2 green bell pepper, sliced lengthwise
1 tablespoon fresh oregano leaves or 2 teaspoons dried
6 – 10-inch flour tortillas, warmed in aluminum foil in oven



Directions:

Preheat oven to 375°F. In a blender or food processor, combine garlic cloves, vinegar, olive oil, sugar and cumin until smooth. Dip chicken breasts into vinegar mixture; save remaining mixture in refrigerator. Place breasts into a baking pan and bake uncovered, 30 minutes. Turn breasts over and baste topsides with vinegar mixture; return to oven for another 30 minutes; basting occasionally with vinegar mixture. When chicken is done, cut into strips and keep warm until ready to serve. (If you prefer to shred the chicken with a fork, bake 15 minutes longer). Meanwhile, heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat; add onions, pepper strips and oregano. Cook about 15 minutes until onions and peppers are limp and tender, stirring often. Divide onions and peppers equally among warm tortillas and top with chicken mixture; wrap. Serve immediately. Garnish with sour cream, salsa or guacamole, if desired.

Servings: 6 **Calories/Serving:** 265

Nutrition: Each serving provides approximately: 265 calories, 10 g protein, 26 g carbohydrates, 1 g fiber, 14 g fat (2 g saturated), 18 mg cholesterol, 10 mcg folate, 2 mg iron, 178 mg sodium.

Wheat Flour Tortillas



Ingredient List:

1 cup whole wheat flour
1¾ cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 cup water

Directions: Preheat electric skillet to 350°F or a cast iron or non-stick griddle over medium heat. Do not oil griddle or skillet. Combine whole wheat flour, all-purpose flour, baking powder and salt. Stir in oil until mixture is crumbly; add the water to form soft dough. Knead by hand for 5 minutes. Cover; let dough rise 30 minutes. Divide dough into 12 equal pieces. Flatten and roll each ball of dough on lightly floured surface until paper thin, turning frequently. Roll from the center outward until tortillas are 8-inches in diameter. Cook tortillas 45 seconds to 1 minute on each side, until light brown specks appear. Do not overcook. A well made tortilla puffs as it is cooking. Remove from griddle or skillet and wrap in clean towel to keep warm. Serve warm or use in your favorite recipe.

Note: To warm tortillas, preheat oven to 400°F. Place tortillas directly on the rack and heat 3 to 4 minutes. If using a microwave, place tortillas in the microwave, cover with a paper towel and microwave for 15 to 20 seconds. When serving a number of tortillas at once, place them in a tortilla warmer basket and cover until ready to serve. This keeps them warm and soft.

Servings: 12 tortillas

Calories/Serving: 117

Nutrition: One tortilla provides approximately: 117 calories, 3 g protein, 21 g carbohydrates, 2 g fiber, 2 g fat (1 g saturated), 0 mg cholesterol, 28 mcg folate, 1 g iron, 241 mg sodium.

Unwrapping the Secrets of America's Love Affair with Tortillas

Whether eaten wrapped around a savory filling or warm and fresh all by themselves, tortillas have become a food staple in American homes. Industry innovation, a growing Hispanic population, and the influence of Hispanic and ethnic foods have made tortillas a favorite among consumers.

Tortillas are second only to white bread in popularity, according to data from the Tortilla Industry Association. In fact, of the 55 winning recipes submitted by kid chefs for the 2015 "Healthy Lunchtime Challenge," almost one quarter of them featured tortillas as an ingredient. These budding, young chefs joined First Lady Michelle Obama at the White House this summer for the 2015 Kids' "State Dinner." Some of the recipes containing wheat tortillas included, "Indian Tacos," "Caribbean Delight," "Shake It Off with a Turkey Roll," and

"Tortillas are second only to white bread in popularity..."

"Mexican Quesadillas with Pineapple Dipping Sauce."

Tortillas can be eaten plain or stuffed with various fillings. They are the food vehicle for traditional Mexican foods like enchiladas, burritos, and tacos, but also for many other non-traditional foods and dishes. Manufacturers are innovating with new flavors and sizes, creating tortillas for sandwich wraps, pitas, pizzas, breakfast meals, and even desserts.

Increased demand for fresh, nutritional foods is also impacting the tortilla industry and many consumers perceive tortillas to be a healthier alternative while also embracing their versatility. Producers now offer more nutritionally-fortified tortilla products, including whole grains, to entice health-conscious customers.



The U.S. Hispanic population is expected to reach almost 60 million by 2020, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The influence of Hispanic culture, combined with America's continued passion for Mexican foods and ethnic cuisine have made tortilla markets the fastest growing segment within the baking industry, according to an IBISWorld report on tortilla production in the U.S.

With such a diverse population, Americans are exposed to different cuisines, new flavors and like to try new foods. Seventy-seven percent of Americans eat ethnic foods while dining out at least once a month, according to Technomic, which recently compiled a list of the most popular ethnic cuisines for Parade Magazine. Mexican cuisine was second among the top 10 most popular, with Chinese and Italian cuisine rounding out the top three. However, what is considered an ethnic food is different for different people.

"...Mexican food is one of the three main cuisines that are simultaneously ethnic and mainstream for the American Consumer..."

"Along with Italian and Chinese food, Mexican food is one of the three main cuisines that are simultaneously ethnic and mainstream for the American consumer," notes Gustavo Arellano during an interview in the Christian Science Monitor. Arellano, a journalist in Orange County, CA, is author of the book, "Taco USA: How Mexican Food Conquered America."

In a culture where families are pressed for time and searching for easy menu solutions, tortillas offer a portable and convenient alternative for many recipes. Tortilla producers have responded to consumer preferences by creating fresh, healthy alternatives, more product variety, and new usage options that expand beyond traditional Mexican dishes. With tortillas, the delicious food possibilities are endless.





A New Study Supports the Importance of Global Flour Fortification

Adding Nutrients Decreases Anemia Prevalence

Fortifying flour with micronutrients, such as iron, folic acid, vitamin A or vitamin B12, has been found to effectively decrease the incidence of anemia, according to a recent paper published in the British Journal of Nutrition. Each year of consuming foods made with fortified flour resulted in a 2.4 percent reduction in anemia prevalence among non-pregnant women when compared with each previous year.



The study compared nationally representative anemia data from 12 fortification countries and 20 non-fortification countries for non-pregnant women. Researchers discovered that anemia prevalence had decreased significantly in those countries that fortify wheat flour alone or in combination with corn

flour. However, the occurrence of anemia remained unchanged in countries that did not fortify flour.

Researchers concluded that as more anemia studies are conducted using consistent methodology, the association between flour fortification and anemia frequency will be better explained, and stronger support for the effectiveness of flour fortification may be achieved.

Research was conducted by Jonathan Barkley, Kathleen Wheeler and Helena Pachón, investigators at the Food Fortification Initiative (FFI), and Emory University. FFI, formerly the Flour Fortification Initiative, is an international partnership working to improve health by advocating for fortification in industrial grain mills. The Wheat Foods Council is a partner of the FFI.



Why is flour fortification important for health? The answer is that vitamins and minerals are added to grain products, like wheat flour, to help prevent anemia caused by nutritional deficiencies and neural tube birth defects (NTDs) caused by insufficient folic acid. Fortifying wheat and other grain foods increases the nutritional value of staple foods without requiring people to change their dietary habits. Flour fortification boosts nutrition, resulting in a stronger immune system, more efficient body function, and improved cognitive development.

In the U.S., enriched grains, as mandated by the federal government since 1941, have the three major B vitamins and iron replaced in equal or larger amounts to those in whole grain products as defined by the standards of identity. In 1998, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) further mandated that enriched grains be fortified with folic acid. As a result, the incidence of NTDs in US infants has decreased 36 percent while folate-deficiency anemia in older adults has been almost totally eradicated.



Sources:

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Check out our resource section on the Wheat Foods Council website for more information on all things wheat!

www.wheatfoods.org/resources

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