

## GLNC Public Statement - Revision to Australian Dietary Guidelines

In response to the announcement [in July](#) by the Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health, providing funding to the National Health and Medical Research Council for the review of the 2013 Australian Dietary Guidelines, the Grains & Legumes Nutrition Council (GLNC) will be calling for a greater emphasis on plant protein foods. Specifically, diets with adequate whole grains - as suggested by the Global Burden of Disease data<sup>1</sup> - and legumes, which have major benefits in terms of sustainability in dietary patterns both for human and planetary health, require greater emphasis in dietary guidance.

While whole grains have been included in Dietary Guidelines since 1979, we now know low consumption of this basic food group accounts for the greatest number of preventable deaths, up to 7400 annually in Australia<sup>2</sup>. Currently, Australians consume less than half of the 48g Daily Target Intake for whole grains. GLNC suggests a change in wording of the guidelines relating to grain foods, from '*mostly whole grain and/or high cereal fibre*' to ***Choose whole grain and high fibre cereal foods, selecting from a wide range and type of grains***<sup>3</sup>, which better reflects the most recent evidence in this area. For example, whole grain and wholemeal breads, brown rice and pasta, oats and whole grain breakfast cereals and whole grain crackers.

Australians need to increase legume consumption by 470% to meet the amounts proposed in the 2013 Guidelines<sup>4</sup>. Consumption currently sits at approximately 4g per day. Legumes/beans are currently classified as both a vegetable and as a meat alternative in the guidelines, understating the

importance of these foods in future dietary patterns. GLNC is calling for the legume/ beans group to be promoted more clearly as an essential and separate food group to be included daily, with recent evidence supporting chronic consumption of 50-190g even in conditions such as Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus, with improved glycaemic control<sup>5</sup>. Read the full papers [here](#)<sup>3</sup> and [here](#)<sup>5</sup>.

In making these suggestions, GLNC does not seek to displace meat, as the current recommendation of 455g as both a maximum and minimum for red meat is an important source of essential nutrients in the Australian diet. Over the last several years, GLNC has been working to highlight the importance of whole grains and legumes within the Australian food supply system, presenting a range of scientific and consumer research. See [glnc.org.au](http://glnc.org.au) for more information.

## References

1. GBD 2017 Risk Factor Collaborators (2018). "Global, regional, and national comparative risk assessment of 84 behavioural, environmental and occupational, and metabolic risks or clusters of risks for 195 countries and territories, 1990–2017: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2017." *Lancet* **392**(10159): 1923-1924 DOI: 1910.1016/S0140-6736(1918)32225-32226.
2. Crosland, P., Ananthapavan, J., Davison, J., Lambert, M. and Carter, R. (2019), The economic cost of preventable disease in Australia: a systematic review of estimates and methods. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, 43: 484-495. doi:[10.1111/1753-6405.12925](https://doi.org/10.1111/1753-6405.12925)
3. Curtain, F & Grafenauer, S. 2020. Historical & Global perspectives on Grains and Whole Grains within Dietary Guidelines. Accessed here <https://doi.org/10.1094/CFW-65-3-0029>
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5. Bielefeld, D., et al. (2020). "The Effects of Legume Consumption on Markers of Glycaemic Control in Individuals with and without Diabetes Mellitus: A Systematic Literature Review of Randomised Controlled Trials." *Nutrients* **12**(7).