



**Dear EAT RIGHT MONTANA Friend:**

Happy Spring! May's **EAT RIGHT MONTANA** packet is the fifth in our 2001 **Real Guidelines for Real People** series. It focuses on the next Dietary Guideline: **Choose a variety of grains daily, especially whole grains.**

When it comes to grains, especially whole grains, Americans aren't getting enough. In a February 2001 story on the disease-fighting power of whole grains, the **Environmental Nutrition** newsletter reports that:

- **Most Americans eat less than one serving** of whole grains per day.
- **Only about 5 percent** of grain foods eaten in the US are whole grains.
- **Forty percent of Americans do not regularly eat any whole grains.**

Getting Americans into grains, especially whole grains, is an ongoing nutrition challenge. Lingering fad diet misperceptions and general consumer confusion keep consumers from enjoying the health benefits of grain foods. According to a 2000 Gallup survey commissioned by the Wheat Foods Council:

- 73% of respondents agree that complex carbohydrates are good for you.
- 52% think that bread is fattening and 48% think that pasta is fattening.
- 44% think that starches should be avoided.

These sites can help you clear up consumer confusion and "go with the grain."

- **Wheat Foods Council surveys US eating habits and offers science-based information about grains and fad diets @ [www.wheatfoods.org/](http://www.wheatfoods.org/)**
- **Another Wheat Foods Council site with beautiful photos, grain recipes & story ideas aimed at food writers @ [www.smartbread.com/](http://www.smartbread.com/)**
- **US Rice Foundation site features nutrition info & a wide variety of full-flavor recipes for white & brown rice @ [www.ricecafe.com/](http://www.ricecafe.com/)**

As always, we welcome your suggestions and comments.

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# Grains of Truth:

## How to read labels and packages of grain foods

Choosing whole grain foods is easy – if you know where to look. To get the whole grain goodness that your body craves, all you have to do is read labels and packages carefully. Here is a quick guide to the health claims and terms seen on grain foods.

**NOTE: The color of a food does not necessarily indicate whether it is a whole grain. Some breads have caramel coloring added to make them look like whole grains. Some whole oats products, like hot and cold cereals, are very light in color.**

### HEALTH CLAIM:

*“Diets rich in whole grain foods and other plant foods that are low in total fat, saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risks of heart disease and certain cancers.”*

If this statement is on a food package, it means that the food contains 51 percent or more whole grains by weight. It is approved by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

### INGREDIENT LIST:

- Look for foods with the words **whole** or **whole grain** before the grain’s name in the ingredient list.
- At a minimum, look for foods that list a whole grain – such as wheat, rye, oats, corn, barley, or rice – as the **first ingredient**.
- Foods that list all grains as **100% whole grain** will be the best sources of phytonutrients and antioxidants.

### GRAIN DEFINITIONS:

**Whole grains** give you the health benefits of all parts of the grain kernel, including:

- **Bran** – outer shell protects seed and contains fiber, B vitamins and minerals
- **Endosperm** – main part of the seed contains carbohydrates and some protein
- **Germ** – nourishment for seed contains antioxidants, vitamin E and B vitamins

**100% wheat** just means that wheat is the only grain used in the product. It does not reveal whether the wheat is whole wheat or not.

**Cracked wheat** is the grain kernel broken into coarse, medium or fine fragments.

Products made with cracked wheat may, or may not, include whole grains.

**Stone-ground** is a technique for grinding grains. It usually means that the grain is coarser and that the germ is intact. The bran portion may, or may not, be included.

**Multigrain** refers only to the fact that more than one grain is used in the product recipe.

The grains used may, or may not, be whole grains.

**Pumpernickel** is a coarse, dark bread made with a mix of rye and wheat flours. It may, or may not, be made with whole grain flours.

**Organic** refers to a method of farming and processing foods. This has nothing to do with whether or not a product is made from whole grains.

**Provided by Eat Right Montana**



## **Real Guidelines for Real People: Going with the whole grain**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Healthy Families 2001: Choosing tasty grains for health (5<sup>th</sup> in a series of 12)**

According to a recent Gallup survey, Americans know about the wholesome goodness of grains. Unfortunately, confusion and misperceptions seem to keep us from enjoying their health benefits.

“Americans recognize that grain foods are healthy foods,” says Lynn Paul, PhD, RD, registered dietitian with the MSU Extension Service in Bozeman. “The problem is that they aren’t eating enough grains, especially whole grains, to enjoy their health-enhancing, disease-fighting nutrients. The Gallup survey highlighted the myths and misperceptions that keep us from getting the grains our bodies need.”

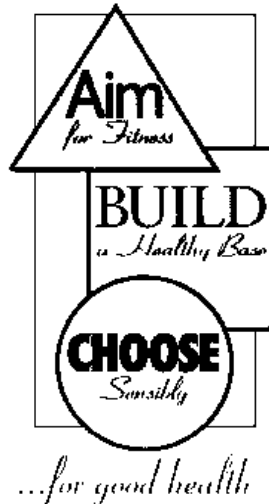
In terms of grains, Americans can talk the talk. In the Gallup survey, 83 percent of respondents knew that grains give you energy. Over 70 percent also knew that grain foods can help with maintaining a healthy weight, preventing heart disease, and reducing the risk of certain cancers. However, 52 percent thought that bread was fattening and 44 percent thought that starches should be avoided.

This confusion means that we are a step behind when it comes to walking the nutrition walk, says Paul. “Americans eat the bare minimum of grain foods – only about six per day – compared to the 6 to 11 servings recommended in the Food Pyramid. Our intake of whole grains is even worse – averaging less than one serving per day. Forty percent of Americans rarely eat any whole grains at all.”

Eat Right Montana, a statewide coalition promoting healthful eating and active lifestyles, urges all Montanans to choose a variety of grains daily, especially whole grains. While all grain foods can help build a healthful eating style, whole grains have some distinct health advantages.

The hidden goodness of whole grains is in phytonutrients, notes Dr. Paul. “Whole grains, like whole wheat, oats, and barley are loaded with compounds proven to lower cholesterol levels, improve blood sugar values, and fight cancer. The really good news is that the whole grains also taste great!”

**ATTACHED: *"Whole grains build great meals"* and *"Myths about carbohydrates & grains"***



## Real Guidelines for Real People: Whole grains build great meals

Whole grains offer wholesome nutrition in a delicious package. As with other whole foods, the “whole” is greater than the sum of the individual nutrients. In whole grains, the carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals, fiber, antioxidants and other phytonutrients work together in powerful ways to protect your health.

Choosing whole grain foods is easy – if you know what to look for on food packages. First, scan the ingredient list for the words “whole” or “whole grain” before the name of the grain. Look for terms like “whole wheat” or “whole grain oats” as the first ingredient.

Foods that are at least 51% whole grains can also carry this health claim: *“Diets rich in whole grain foods and other plant foods that are low in total fat, saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risks of heart disease and certain cancers.”*

## Choose a variety of grains daily.

### 1. Choose whole grain cold cereals.

- ✓ Give your whole day a wholesome kick-start by choosing a whole grain cereal for breakfast. And, remember, cereal – dry or with low-fat milk and fruit – makes a sensational snack too!!

### 2. Choose whole grain hot cereals.

- ✓ Hot cereal is always a heart-warming way to start the day. With a microwave and instant oatmeal, you can make a hot breakfast a reality – even on the busiest of mornings.

### 3. Choose whole grain waffles.

- ✓ Talk about quick, easy and delicious – whole grain toaster waffles are a triple treat. Tasty toppings add even more nutrient value. Try applesauce with cinnamon or blueberries with vanilla yogurt.

### 4. Choose whole grain muffins.

- ✓ Muffins (and milk) are great for desktop dining – for breakfast, coffee breaks, and afternoon snacks. Cereal boxes are often a super source for delicious, high-fiber, low-fat muffin recipes.

### 5. Choose whole grain bagels.

- ✓ Toasted or not, a chewy whole grain bagel always hits the spot. Look for whole wheat, seven-grain or pumpernickel. Order them plain or with your favorite flavor of reduced-fat cream cheese.

## **6. Choose whole grain breads and rolls.**

- ✓ The list of wholesome bread options is long on taste and variety. Check out your supermarket shelves for whole wheat, wheat berry, honey wheat, bran'ola, 7-grain, 9-grain, and even 12-grain!

## **7. Choose whole grain crackers and snacks.**

- ✓ Snack time is also the right time to enjoy whole grain foods. Look for crunchy or crispy crackers, pretzels and baked bagel chips. Low-fat popcorn and baked corn chips are also whole grains.

## **8. Choose whole grain tortillas.**

- ✓ Wrap up good health and great taste with a flavorful whole-wheat tortilla. Expand your tastes beyond the typical tacos and burritos to include salad and sandwich wraps of all varieties.

## **9. Choose whole grain rice and pasta.**

- ✓ Brown rice and whole grain pastas often have a nutty flavor and chewy texture. Both make delicious additions to hearty soups, hot casseroles and chilled salads.

## **10. Choose adventurous whole grain foods.**

- ✓ Add some international flavors to your meals with exotic grains – like bulgur, couscous, buckwheat or quinoa. Check out the options in the whole foods section of your supermarket or grocery store.

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For tips on tasty ways to enjoy whole grain foods, click on:

- **Wheat Foods Council**

<http://www.wheatfoods.org/>

- **General Mills Bell Institute of Health and Nutrition**

<http://www.generalmills.com/wholegrain/>

- **Dietary Guidelines for Americans**

<http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/dga/index.html>

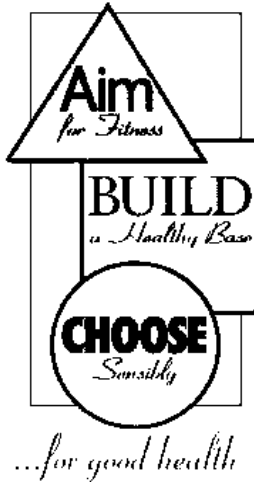
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**Celebrating  
Healthy Families  
2001**



**EAT RIGHT MONTANA**

*A coalition promoting healthy eating and active lifestyles*



## Myths about Carbohydrates & Grains

Some fad diets claim that carbohydrates are terrible – and they blame grains for everything from arthritis to obesity. With all these claims, it's hard to know what's fact and what's not. If you're on a quest for better health, improved performance and lifetime weight control, here's the straight story about grains.

### MYTH #1: Carbohydrates are fattening.

Not a grain of truth here. Studies show that people who eat more carbohydrates and less fat have an easier time with weight control. By weight, carbohydrates have less than half the calories of fat. Most grain foods are relatively low in calories and naturally low fat.

### MYTH #2: Grain foods contain empty calories.

On the contrary, grains are a great source of fiber as well as folate, thiamin, niacin, riboflavin, zinc, and iron. These nutrients occur naturally in whole grains and are added to enriched products. Some grains, like breads and pasta, are also fortified with calcium.

### MYTH #3: Most Americans eat too many grains.

Not! USDA says that we eat an average of just over six grain servings a day. This is a bare minimum, since the Food Guide Pyramid recommends 6 to 11 servings a day. In fact, nearly 2/3 of Americans do not meet the current recommendations for grain foods.

### MYTH #4: Athletes need protein, not carbohydrates.

High school athletes, soccer moms and weekend warriors need both. Carbos provide the fuel necessary for peak performances and are the preferred source of energy for physical activities. The more active and energetic your lifestyle, the more grains you need.

### MYTH #5: I could never eat 6 to 11 servings a day.

Of course you can! Grain servings are actually much smaller than you may think. A slice of bread, half a hamburger bun, and a medium tortilla all equal one serving. When it comes to cereal (cold or cooked), rice, and pasta, one-half cup is a serving.

### MYTH #6: Grains are boring.

Are you kidding? The incredible variety of grains guarantees tasty eating at every meal. Add adventure to meals and snacks with innovative touches – like deliciously different pizzas with grilled veggies or Mexican beans, salsa and cheese. Enjoy the health benefits of whole grains – with shredded wheat cereals, multi-grains breads and brown rice.



**Celebrating  
Healthy  
Families 2001**

# Healthy Families 2001:

## Real Guidelines for Real People

### January 2001

- **The New Dietary Guidelines: What's in them for you?**

### February 2001

- **Aim for a Healthy Weight: Getting real about weight management**

### March 2001

- **Be Physically Active Each Day: Spring into fun and fitness**

### April 2001

- **Let the Pyramid Guide Your Food Choices: Build a tasty eating style**

### May 2001

- **Choose a Variety of Grains: Great grains for life**

### June 2001

- **Choose a Variety of Fruits and Vegetables: 5 A Day and beyond**

### July 2001

- **Keep Food Safe to Eat: Putting safety first**

### August 2001

- **Making Sensible Fat Choices: Straight facts on fat**

### September 2001

- **Making Sensible Sugar Choices: Straight scoop on sugar**

### October 2001

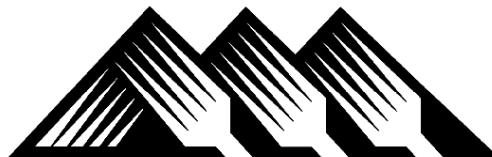
- **Making Sensible Sodium Choices: Straight shake on salt**

### November 2001

- **Making Sensible Beverage Choices: A toast to your health**

### December 2001

- **Year-Round Health: Real guidelines for real health**



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