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CSPI Center for Science in the Public Interest

nonprofit publisher of *Nutrition Action Healthletter*

June 14, 2005

Ms. Susan Luong
Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment
Proposition 65 Implementation Program
P.O. Box 4010
Sacramento, California 95812-4010

OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH HAZARD ASSESSMENT
Received
JUN 22 2005
SACRAMENTO

Re: acrylamide

Dear Ms. Luong:

On behalf of its 100,000 subscribers/members in California,[1] the Center for Science in the Public Interest ("CSPI") welcomes the opportunity to submit these additional comments[2] on two of the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment's ("OEHHA") proposed changes to its regulations: (1) adding a new subsection to provide an alternative higher no significant risk level ("NSRL") for acrylamide of 10.0 micrograms for breads and cereals (rather than a 1.0 microgram NSRL for other foods)[3] and (2) adding a new "safe harbor" provision for warnings about acrylamide in food.

We commend OEHHA for basing its proposals on the purpose of Proposition 65 – to inform California's consumers – and for resisting the efforts by some to promote a different goal, such as protecting Idaho's potato farmers.[4] Judging from OEHHA's risk estimates, it appears that acrylamide in food causes about 180 cancers per year in residents of California. Another way of expressing that is that of the approximately 35 million people currently residing in California, roughly 12,000 will develop cancer due to acrylamide in food.

OEHHA's final regulations should be informed by several scientific facts:

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[1] CSPI is a nonprofit organization that focuses on food safety and nutrition and publishes *Nutrition Action Healthletter*. CSPI has 900,000 subscriber/members in North America.

[2] CSPI has submitted pervious comments on September 18, 2003 and May 6, 2005.

[3] These new NSRL would supercede the current NSRL of 0.2 micrograms for acrylamide.

[4] See, *e.g.*, "Idaho moves to protect its spuds," *San Mateo Daily Journal* (May 30, 2005) (Idaho Governor Dick Kempthorne met with Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger on May 9 to urge that California's restaurants and stores not be required to have a sign warning that french fries may cause cancer).

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Michael F. Jacobson, Ph.D.
Executive Director

- the United States government,[5] the International Agency for Research on Cancer,[6] and a joint Food and Agriculture Organization/World Health Organization expert group[7] have each concluded that acrylamide is a carcinogen in animals and is probably a carcinogen in people;

- acrylamide does not occur naturally in potatoes or in boiled potatoes and is formed in potatoes only when they are cooked in certain ways;[8]

- a few types of food – such as coffee, french fried potatoes, potato chips, some breads, some cereals, and some cookies – pose the greatest risks because of the combination of how much the average person eats and the average amount of acrylamide in these products;[9] and

- within a particular type of food (such as coffee or french fries), the amount of acrylamide varies widely among brands. Data collected by the Food and Drug Administration ("FDA") indicate that among 12 brands of unbaked french fries (excluding fast-food restaurants) tested, the highest level of acrylamide was 11 times the lowest; among 16 brand of potato chips tested, the highest level was 21 times greater than the lowest; among nine brands of restaurant french fries tested, the highest level was nine times the lowest; among the 23 unbrewed coffees tested, the highest level was seven times the lowest.[10]

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[5] "Acrylamide," *Report on Carcinogens*, 10th ed. (National Toxicology Program 2002).

[6] IARC monograph. http://www-cie.iarc.fr/htdocs/monographs/vol60/m60-11.htm (accessed June 7, 2005).

[7] Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (February 2005) at 17.

[8] Tareke E, Rydberg P, Karlsson P, Eriksson S, and Tornqvist M, "Analysis of Acrylamide, A Carcinogen Formed in Heated Foodstuffs," *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry* 2002 Aug 14;50 (17):4998-5006 at 5002.

[9] *Characterization of Acrylamide Intake of Certain Foods* (OEHHA March 2005) at 1. The 2005 Joint FAO/WHO expert group looked at dietary intake data for 17 countries and found (at 15) that for most countries the major contributing foods for total acrylamide exposure were french fries, potato chips, coffee, cookies, and bread and rolls.

[10] Calculated from data presented by the FDA in December 2002 and March 2003. FDA/CFSAN, *Exploratory Data on Acrylamide in Foods* (December 4, 2002) and FDA/CFSAN, *Exploratory Data on Acrylamide in Foods - February 2003 Update* (March 12, 2003).

There should be no special treatment of all breads and cereals because some breads and cereals are not healthy foods.

OEHHA estimates that while the daily acrylamide intake by average eaters of white breads does not exceed 1.0 microgram, the daily acrylamide intake for average eaters of whole grain and wheat breads may exceed 1.0 microgram and that the daily acrylamide intake for average eaters of most cereals exceeds 1.0 microgram.[11] OEHHA, therefore, proposes to set a NSRL for bread and cereal that is ten times higher than the NSRL for other foods because "breads and cereals are grain-based foods that generally have a high-fiber content, and are generally low in trans fat and saturated fat. In addition, whole grain and enriched and fortified breads and cereals are a good source of vitamins and other important nutrients."[12]

While it is true that almost all 100 per cent whole grain or mostly whole grain breads have at least 2 grams of fiber per slice and are low in saturated fat and trans fat, some of these breads have over 200 milligrams of sodium per slice (see enclosed article from the April 2005 *Nutrition Action Healthletter*). Eating two sandwiches a day made with such breads would provide the consumer with 800 milligrams of sodium, or more than half the amount recommended for roughly half the population (individuals with hypertension, African Americans, and other middle-aged and older adults) by the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.[13] OEHHA should not exempt unhealthy whole grain or mostly-whole grains breads. Perhaps more importantly, healthful foods do not provide immunity from cancer. People who choose more healthful breads have every right to be alerted to the presence of relatively high levels of carcinogens. It makes no sense to deprive those health-conscious people of information about high levels of acrylamide. Indeed, disclosure would encourage bakers to develop methods that would obviate the need for any warning under Proposition 65.

While it is also true that some cereals are high in fiber and are a good source of vitamins and other important nutrients, many are not. Moreover, many cereals contain unhealthy amounts of sugar (see the enclosed article from the November 2003 *Nutrition Action Healthletter*). And, as was explained above in the case of breads, people who choose to eat cereals — whether they are particularly healthful or not — deserve to be alerted to the presence of relatively high levels of carcinogens. It makes no sense to deprive those people of information about high levels of acrylamide. Indeed, disclosure would encourage food processors to develop methods that would obviate the need for any warning under Proposition 65.

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[11] Initial Statement of Reasons for Section 12705(e) (March 2005) at 2.

[12] *Id.*

[13] U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005*. http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/dga2005/document/pdf/Chapter8.pdf (accessed June 7, 2005)

For the food products that pose the highest public health risk OEHHA should require a warning label that the food contains an above-average amount of acrylamide unless the manufacturer presents evidence to OEHHA that its particular food contains a below-average amount of acrylamide.

Consumers want to know both which foods pose the greatest risk of cancer and within these categories which brands are the most dangerous. The general warning proposed by OEHHA – to be posted at each retail point of sale or each point of display – does not give consumers this information. OEHHA justified its proposed warning on "the pervasiveness of [acrylamide] in many common foods and the public health necessity of encouraging people to consume a balanced diet."[14] The proposed sign does not provide any useful information. Though a web site offering more-detailed information is proposed to be included on the sign, people will not interrupt their shopping to go home and review the information on the web site. Such a sign would be waste of OEHHA's, industry's, and consumers' time and money.

Instead, OEHHA should require a warning on the labels of the foods in the few categories that pose the greatest public health risk: french fries, coffee, potato chips, some breads, some cereals, and some cookies. For these foods OEHHA should require a warning only on the packages of those brands that have an above-average amount (compared to all other brands in the same category) of acrylamide, such as "This [coffee] contains an above average amount of acrylamide, a chemical known to the State of California to cause cancer." Products with less than the average amount of acrylamide would not have to bear such a notice. That approach would provide an incentive to half the companies to bend every effort to lowering acrylamide levels.[15]

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[14] Initial Statement of Reasons for Section 12601 (March 2005) at 1.

[15] The German national and state governments have adopted a similar approach. The Federal Office of Consumer Protection and Food Safety ("FOCPFS") and the state governments identify within each food product group those particular products whose acrylamide levels are in the 10 percent with the highest contamination, and the lowest level within each product group acts as a signal level. The state government contacts the producers in the state with the most contaminated foods within each group to examine jointly what changes are possible to the recipe or production process to achieve cuts in the acrylamide levels. The FOCPFS periodically updates the data and adapts the signal level as acrylamide levels are reduced. See Muller, "Acrylamide minimisation concept got off to a successful start" (press release Nr. 365 (December 4, 2002) www.verbraucherministerium.de/englisch/acrylamid-pressemitteilung.htm (accessed May 9, 2003).

While some breads and cereals could be part of a healthy diet, there is no reason to believe that french fries, coffee, potato chips, and cookies are part of a healthy diet. Products exceeding the limit for acrylamide should be required to bear a warning notice. That presumably would encourage companies to seek to lower acrylamide levels[16] and might also discourage the consumption of relatively non-nutritious foods.

Sincerely,

Michael F. Jacobson, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Benjamin Cohen
Senior Staff Attorney

enclosures: "The Whole Story, How to Find the Best Breads," *Nutrition Action Healthletter* (April 2005)

"Cereal Trends, Not Your Mother's Rice Crispies,' *Nutrition Action Healthletter* (November 2003)

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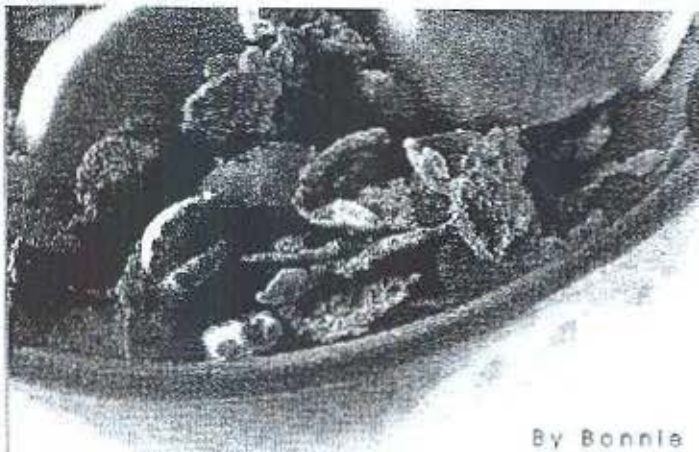
[16] For example, the 2005 report of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives says (at 13) that the European food industry said that an average reduction of 30-40 percent in acrylamide in potato chips has "been achieved by introducing several adjustments in the existing production procedures."



Cereal Trends

NOT YOUR MOTHER'S RICE KRISPIES

By Bonnie Liebman & Jayne Hurley

The cereal aisle is changing. Sure, you can still find shredded wheat, bran cereals, muesli, and other healthy standbys. You still have to wade beyond them: Froot Loops, Trix, and other multi-colored near-candies. And you still have to watch out for cereals like Basic 4, Smart Start, and Special K, which sound like they belong in the healthy group, but don't.

Just when you think you've got it all sorted out, cereal companies come up with new ingredients, claims, spin-offs, or other shtick. Some of the innovations are good, some are scams, and some are in between. Here's how to tell which are which.

The information for this article was compiled by Sarah Wade.

Natural Food Store Brands

Kellogg, General Mills, and Post. For decades, the Big Three cereal companies kept most smaller competitors out of the supermarket cereal aisles. Now some natural food store brands—like Barbara's Bakery, Health Valley, Kashi, and Nature's Path—have managed to get a foot in the door. (Kashi had the easiest time. It was purchased by Kellogg in 2000.)

The new arrivals are often packed with fiber-rich whole grains. Tired of raisin bran and shredded wheat? Now you can choose from mixtures of whole-barley, buckwheat, triticale, amaranth, rye, kamut, and more. Another plus: Most brands are lighter on added sugars (which are often disguised as evaporated cane juice, molasses, honey, and brown rice syrup).

The downside to the new arrivals: Most are not fortified with 10 to 25 percent of a day's worth of about a dozen vitamins and minerals, like nearly all cereals made by the Big Three. If you take a multivitamin-and-mineral every day, you don't need a fortified cereal. But if you (or your kids) don't take a multi, you may lose needed nutrients by switching to a natural food store brand.

Real Fruit

"Bursting with Real Berries!" gushes the label of (what else?) Berry Burst Cheerios. You'll also find fruit in Special K Red Berries, Kellogg's Fruit Harvest, and Post Honey Bunches of Oats with Real Strawberries.

It wasn't long ago that cereal companies tried to pass off artificially colored and flavored blobs of fat and sugar as real strawberries, blueberries, and raspberries. (The raisins and other dried fruit were always genuine.) The ingredient lists gave the blobs clever names like "blueberry bits," but they were essentially fake fruit.

Now several companies are adding real freeze-dried berries. Pour in your milk and the fruit springs to life. (Not a bad trick if you're trying to lure kids away from Apple Jacks or Fruity Pebbles.)

Of course, you're still better off tossing in your own berries, sliced bananas, or whatever. After all, the cereals aren't exactly brimming with fruit. We found only about 1½ (reconstituted) strawberries in each serving of Berry Burst Strawberry Cheerios, for example.

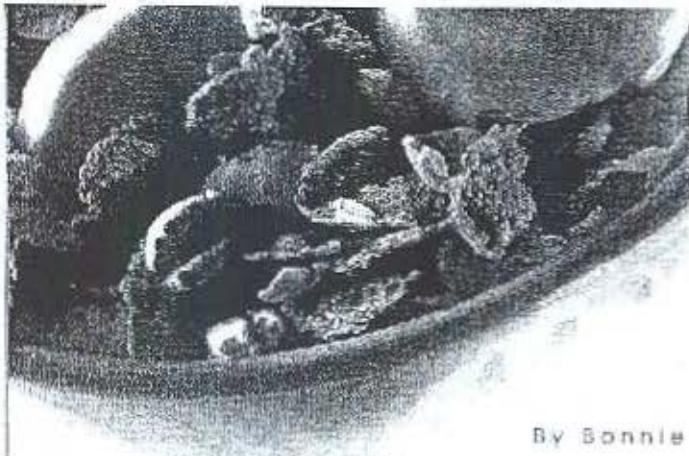
And the fruit is often added to mediocre cereals. A bowl of Special K Red Berries has only one gram of fiber. And Berry Burst Cheerios has more sugar—and less fiber—than the original Cheerios. But even a piddly amount of fruit is better than no fruit or fake fruit.

Weight Loss Claims

How can a cereal help you lose weight? Once you get past the sometimes grandiose claims on the front of the box, the answer is rather mundane: The cereal is simply part of a (often ordinary) lower-calorie diet.

Take Special K (suggested motto: "Nothing Special About It"). The front of the box says, "lose up to 6 lbs. in 2 weeks." But the back explains that Kellogg's Kick-Start Diet consists of having Special K with skim milk and fruit for two of your three daily meals—not exactly magical. The small print also notes that the *average* weight loss was only 4.2 pounds. And it neglects to mention that people who ate Special K twice a day lost no more

Photos: Stock Food/Supper, Inc.; Nick Wenig (bottom and right)



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Just when you think you've got it all sorted out, cereal companies come up with new ingredients, claims, spin-offs, or other shtick. Some of the innovations are good, some are scams, and some are in between. Here's how to tell which are which.

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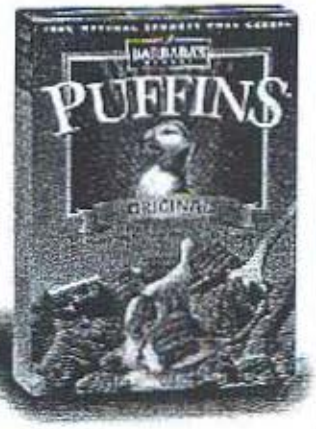
The downside to the new arrivals: Most are not fortified with 10 to 25 percent of a day's worth of about a dozen vitamins and minerals, like nearly all cereals made by the Big Three. If you take a multivitamin-and-mineral every day, you don't need a fortified cereal. But if you (or your kids) don't take a multi, you may lose needed nutrients by switching to a natural food store brand.



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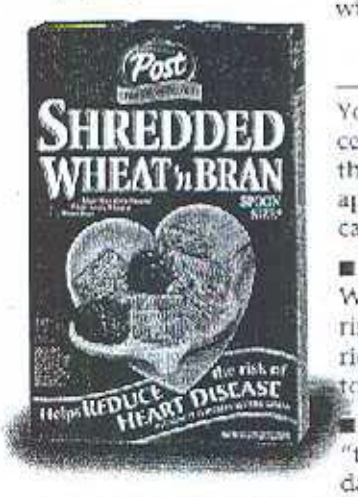
Photos: Shredded Wheat/Raggedy Andy, Nick Wheeler (Bottom and Front)

weight than people who ate other cereals twice a day.

Kashi GoLEAN is even bolder. The cereal is part of a "Natural Slimming System" that includes a GoLEAN Shake for lunch, a GoLEAN Bar for a snack, and "a healthy meal of your choice" for dinner. The recipes and meal plans on the Web site (*www.kashi.com*) are reasonably healthful. And GoLEAN cereal gets a Best Bite. (GoLEAN Crunch gets an Honorable Mention because it's got more sugar.)

But Kashi gets carried away. According to the box, GoLEAN's "combination of high protein and high fiber is a proven formula that curbs cravings and, with exercise, helps you build muscle so you burn more fat." Extra protein may curb muscle loss and fiber may lessen hunger. But "proven" is a bit strong. And it's unclear that a GoLEAN shake or bar helps people curb calories better than *any* mini-meal of foods with protein or fiber.



Heart Disease

You needn't look far to find a cereal with a heart disease claim these days. The FDA has approved several that cereals can use. Among them:

■ **Whole grains.** Post Shredded Wheat'n Bran "helps reduce the risk of heart disease because it is rich in whole grain," according to the box.

■ **Oats.** Cheerios notes that "three grams of soluble fiber daily from whole-grain oat foods, like Cheerios, in a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol, may reduce the risk of heart disease. Cheerios has 1 gram per cup."

■ **Low-fat.** Total Corn Flakes boasts that "while many factors affect heart disease, diets low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of this disease."

Low-fat cereals may qualify for a heart disease claim, but they're not as good as their (low-fat) whole-grain cousins. (Cocoa Puffs, Lucky Charms, and other sugary cereals are also low-fat.) So look for cereals (like Shredded Wheat'n Bran) with heart disease claims that mention whole grains or fiber.

Kashi Heart to Heart goes further. It's a "Healthy Heart System" that "includes a carefully selected balance of soluble fiber from natural whole grains, herbs, antioxidant vitamins, and plant-derived nutrients to help maintain a strong, healthy heart and blood vessels."

The soluble fiber from whole-grain oats is a legitimate claim. But it's not clear that Heart to Heart's green tea, grape seed extract, vitamins E and C, beta-carotene, and lycopene will make a difference. The B-vitamins (folic acid, B-6, and B-12) may cut the risk of heart disease by lowering homocysteine in the blood, but you'd get as much from almost any multivitamin (or highly fortified cereal like Total).

Breakfast Bars

"All the nutrition of a bowl of instant oatmeal," says the label of Quaker Oatmeal Breakfast Squares.

For years, cereal companies have been trying to convince people who eat breakfast on the run that they can get their cereal in a portable rectangle. Some (like Kellogg's Nutri-Grain Cereal Bars) are the nutritional equivalent of white bread and jam. Others (like Nutri-Grain Muffin Bars) are essentially low-fat cookies.

Milk-and-cereal bars by Kellogg and General Mills are the most deceptive, because they imply that each bar delivers a serving of milk. In fact, the "milk filling" consists largely of sugar, non-fat milk, and enough hydrogenated palm or palm kernel oil to supply two or three grams of heart-damaging saturated-plus-trans fat. All have 10 to 20 grams (about three to five teaspoons) of sugar and little or no fiber.

In contrast, Quaker Oatmeal Breakfast Squares have a nice shot of fiber (three grams for most flavors), though their calories (220) and sugar (20 grams) are higher than what you'll find in most bars. And if you eat one without milk, you're getting only four grams of protein (out of your 50-gram daily target).

So far, there's no substitute for the healthiest (high-fiber, low-sugar) cereals in a bowl of cold milk.

Soy

Soy has hit the mainstream. General Mills's Harmony cereal juxtaposes "with soy" and "proud to support The Breast Cancer Research Foundation" on its box. In fact, the evidence that soy protects against breast cancer is still inconclusive. What's more, Harmony has only two grams of soy protein per serving.

So far, the only well-established claim for soy is that it helps lower cholesterol. For example, Health Valley Soy Flakes notes that "after many years of research, the FDA has concluded that 25 grams of soy protein per day, as part of a diet low in saturated fats and cholesterol, may reduce the risk of heart disease."

Cereals like Harmony cannot carry the FDA-approved heart disease claim because they don't have enough soy. Foods need at least 6½ grams of soy protein per serving—a quarter of the 25-gram daily target—to qualify.

Other cereals can't make the approved claim because they contain soy *isoflavones* instead of soy protein. Barbara's Bakery SoyEssence, which has no soy protein and 21 mg of isoflavones per serving, points out that "in cultures where soy has been a staple for thousands of years, there are lower rates of obesity, heart disease and many types of cancers."

But so far, the evidence is shaky that the estrogen-like isoflavones can curb menopausal hot flashes, protect bones, or reduce the risk of cancer, heart disease, or obesity.

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From: Nick Wade

Flax

Flax is following in soy's footsteps. It's hot in natural food stores, which means that it's probably poised to show up in cereals made by the Big Three.

As the label of Nature's Path Flax Plus explains, "Omega-3 fatty acids, specifically alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), are found in canola oil, wheat germ, soybeans, hempseeds, and flaxseeds. Flaxseeds are the richest plant source of ALA."

The cereal box neglects to mention that fish oils, not ALA, are the omega-3 fats that are most strongly linked to a lower risk of heart disease. And our bodies may convert very little alpha-linolenic acid into EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid) and DHA (docosahexaenoic acid), the longer-chain omegas that are found in fish oil.

Nevertheless, if you're not getting omega-3s from fish, fish oil pills, or canola or soybean oils, the alpha-linolenic acid in flax may help (and certainly can't hurt). Most flax cereals have anywhere from 400 mg to 2,400 mg of omega-3s (ALA) per serving. The National Academy of Sciences recommends that women consume about 1,100 mg of alpha-linolenic acid a day and that men consume about 1,600 mg. (Soybean oil has 900 mg and canola oil has 1,300 mg per tablespoon.)

Flax*seed* (not flaxseed *oil*) is also a good source of fiber. Check the label to see how much fiber you're getting.

Other claims for flax are more iffy: Nature's Path Flax Plus says that omega-3 fats are "associated with reducing inflammation, discouraging blood clotting, and expanding blood vessels." According to Uncle Sam Cereal, "flaxseed, which contains omega-3 fatty acids, tends to be filling and can help curb the appetite." That's one part science and nine parts wishful thinking.

The Snap, Crackle, Pop Chart

Best Bites have at least 3 grams of fiber and no more than 8 grams of sugar. Honorable Mentions have no sugar limit, but have at least 5 grams of fiber. Neither has more than 1 gram of saturated fat. (We waived the sugar limit for Honorable Mentions because 5 grams of fiber is a substantial step towards your 25-gram daily goal. What's more, the sugar numbers on cereal labels include both *refined* sugar and the *naturally occurring* sugar in fruit. We wouldn't want the sugar limit to penalize high-fiber cereals, like raisin bran, that get some of their sugar from fruit.) Within each section, cereals are ranked from most to least fiber, then least to most sugar and calories.

	Calories	Fiber (grams)	Sugar* (grams)
6 grams of fiber or more			
✔✔ General Mills Fiber One *(1/2 cup)*[2]	60	14	0
✔✔ Kellogg's All-Bran Extra Fiber *(1/2 cup)*[2]	50	13	0
✔✔ Kellogg's All-Bran Bran Buds *(1/3 cup)*	70	13	8
✔ Nature's Path Optimum Slim *(1 cup)*	180	11	10
✔✔ Uncle Sam Cereal *(1 cup)*[1]	210	10	1
✔✔ Kellogg's Original All Bran *(1/2 cup)*	80	10	6
✔ Peace Cereal Essential 10 *(1 cup)*	170	10	9
✔ Kashi Good Friends Cinna-Raisin Crunch *(1 cup)*	150	10	11
✔ Nature's Path Optimum Power Breakfast *(1 cup)*	190	10	16
✔✔ Post 100% Bran *(1/3 cup)*	80	9	7
✔✔ Kashi GoLEAN or Original Good Friends *(3/4 cup)*[2]	110	9	7
✔✔ Post Shredded Wheat'n Bran *(1 1/4 cups)*	200	8	1
✔✔ Barbara's Bakery GrainShop *(2/3 cup)*	90	8	5
✔ Back to Nature Ultra Flax *(1 cup)*	190	8	11
✔ General Mills Multi-Bran Chex *(1 cup)*	200	8	12
✔ Kashi GoLEAN Crunch *(1 cup)*	190	8	13
✔ Malt-O-Meal Raisin Bran *(1 cup)*	190	8	17
✔ Post Raisin Bran *(1 cup)*	190	8	20
✔✔ Kashi Seven in the Morning *(1/2 cup)*	210	7	3
✔✔ Nature's Path Flax Plus or Heritage Multigrain *(1/4 cup)*[2]	100	7	5
✔ Nature's Path Muesli *(1/2 cup)*[1]	220	7	10
✔ Zoe Flax & Soy Granola *(2/3 cup)*[1]	180	7	12
✔ Nature's Path Granola, Hemp Plus, Pumpkin Flax Plus, or Raspberry Heritage *(1 cup)*[2]	270	7	13
✔ Kellogg's Raisin Bran *(1 cup)*	190	7	19
✔✔ Shredded Wheat, spoon size, any brand *(1 cup)*	170	6	0
✔✔ Nature's Path Millet Rice Oatbran or 8 Grain *(4/5 cup)*[2]	100	6	5
✔✔ Post Grape-Nuts *(1/2 cup)*	200	6	5
✔✔ Barbara's Bakery Cinnamon Puffins *(3/4 cup)*	100	6	6
✔✔ Kashi Organic Promise, Autumn Wheat *(1 cup)*	190	6	7
✔ Nature's Path Honey'd Raisin Bran *(3/4 cup)*	100	6	9
✔ Health Valley Golden Flax *(3/4 cup)*	190	6	9
✔ Quaker Oat Bran *(1 1/4 cups)*	210	6	9
✔ Health Valley Low Fat Granola *(4/5 cup)*[1]	190	6	10
✔ General Mills Gold Medal Raisin Bran *(1 1/3 cups)*	170	6	12
✔ Health Valley Raisin Bran Flakes *(1 1/4 cups)*	190	6	13
✔ Post Fruit & Bran *(1 cup)*[1]	200	6	15
5 grams of fiber			
✔✔ Shredded Wheat, any brand *(2 biscuits)*	160	5	0
✔✔ Barbara's Bakery Original Puffins *(3/4 cup)*	90	5	5
✔✔ Barbara's Bakery SoyEssence *(3/4 cup)*	100	5	5
✔✔ Nature's Path Multigrain Oatbran *(2/3 cup)*	100	5	5

	Calories	Fiber (grams)	Sugar* (grams)
✔✔ Post Bran Flakes *(3/4 cup)*	100	5	5
✔✔ Kashi Heart to Heart *(3/4 cup)*	110	5	5
✔✔ General Mills Wheat Chex *(1 cup)*	180	5	5
✔✔ Quaker Crunchy Corn Bran *(3/4 cup)*	90	5	6
✔✔ Kellogg's Complete Bran Flakes *(3/4 cup)*[1]	100	5	6
✔✔ Health Valley Soy Flakes *(1 1/4 cups)*	190	5	7
✔✔ Familia No Added Sugar Swiss Müesli *(1/2 cup)*	200	5	8
✔ Malt-O-Meal Balance with Berries *(1 cup)*	110	5	10
✔ Kellogg's Raisin or Strawberry Mini-Wheats *(3/4 cup)*[2]	180	5	10
✔ Post Selects Banana Nut Crunch *(1 cup)*	240	5	11
✔ Frosted Shredded Wheat, spoon size, any brand *(1 cup)*	180	5	12
✔ Barbara's Bakery Shredded Oats *(1 1/4 cups)*	220	5	12
✔ Quaker Squares *(1 cup)*[1]	220	5	12
Kellogg's Cracklin' Oat Bran *(3/4 cup)*[X]	200	5	15
✔ General Mills Wheaties Raisin Bran *(1 cup)*	180	5	18
✔ General Mills Total Raisin Bran *(1 cup)*	170	5	20

3 to 4 grams of fiber

	Calories	Fiber (grams)	Sugar* (grams)
✔✔ Weetabix *(2 biscuits)*	120	4	2
✔✔ Health Valley SoyO's *(1 cup)*	180	4	2
✔✔ Health Valley Flakes, Amaranth, Blue Corn, Fiber 7, Healthy Fiber, or Oat Bran *(3/4 cup)*[2]	100	4	5
✔✔ Barbara's Bakery Shredded Spoonfuls *(3/4 cup)*	120	4	5
✔✔ Nature's Path Heritage Bites *(3/4 cup)*	100	4	6
✔✔ Alpen No Added Sugar or Salt *(2/3 cup)*	200	4	7
✔✔ Familia Low Fat Müesli *(2/3 cup)*	190	4	8
✔✔ Post Selects Great Grains Crunchy Pecans *(1/2 cup)*	220	4	8
Alpen Original *(2/3 cup)*	200	4	11
General Mills Wheaties Energy Crunch *(1 cup)*	210	4	13
Quaker 100% Natural Granola *(1/2 cup)*[1,X]	220	4	14
Familia Original Recipe Swiss Müesli *(1/2 cup)*	210	4	16
Kellogg's Müeslix *(2/3 cup)*	200	4	17
General Mills Oatmeal Crisp *(1 cup)*[1]	210	4	18
Kellogg's Raisin Bran Crunch *(1 cup)*	190	4	20
✔✔ General Mills Cheerios *(1 cup)*	110	3	1
✔✔ Malt-O-Meal Toasty O's *(1 cup)*	110	3	1
✔✔ Barbara's Breakfast O's *(1 1/4 cups)*	110	3	2
✔✔ Health Valley Just Flakes or Oat Bran O's *(3/4 cup)*[2]	100	3	3
✔✔ General Mills Wheaties *(1 cup)*	110	3	4
✔✔ Post Grape-Nuts Flakes *(3/4 cup)*	110	3	4
✔✔ General Mills Whole Grain Total *(3/4 cup)*	110	3	5
✔✔ Nature's Path Heritage O's or Kamut Krisp *(3/4 cup)*[2]	110	3	5
✔✔ Barbara's Bakery Crispy Wheats *(3/4 cup)*	110	3	6
✔✔ General Mills MultiGrain Cheerios *(1 cup)*	110	3	6
✔✔ Kashi Medley *(3/4 cup)*	120	3	6
✔✔ Nature's Path Oaty Bites *(3/4 cup)*	120	3	7
✔✔ Health Valley Apple Cinnamon or Honey Nut SoyO's *(1 cup)*[2]	180	3	7
General Mills Basic 4 *(1 cup)*	200	3	14
Post Selects Cranberry Almond Crunch *(1 cup)*	210	3	14
Kellogg's Just Right *(1 cup)*	220	3	15
Kellogg's Low Fat Granola *(1/2 - 2/3 cup)*[1]	210	3	16
Quaker 100% Natural Low Fat Granola *(2/3 cup)*	210	3	18
Kellogg's Apple Cinnamon Fruit Harvest *(1 cup)*	190	3	19

Less than 3 grams of fiber

	Calories	Fiber (grams)	Sugar* (grams)
Post Honey Bunches of Oats *(3/4 cup)*[1]	120	2	7
Quaker Life *(3/4 cup)*[1]	120	2	8
Kellogg's Strawberry Blueberry Fruit Harvest *(3/4 cup)*	110	2	9
Kashi Organic Promise, Cranberry Sunshine or Strawberry Fields *(1 cup)*[2]	120	2	9
General Mills Berry Burst Cheerios *(1 cup)*[1]	110	2	11
General Mills Honey Nut Cheerios *(1 cup)*	120	2	11
General Mills Harmony *(1 1/4 cups)*	200	2	11
Kellogg's Smart Start *(1 cup)*	180	2	15
Quaker Puffed Wheat *(1 1/4 cups)*	50	1	0
Kellogg's Corn Flakes, Crispix, Product 19, or Special K *(1 cup)*[2]	110	1	3
General Mills Brown Sugar & Oat Total *(3/4 cup)*	110	1	9
Kellogg's Special K Red Berries *(1 cup)*	110	1	10
Post Honey-Comb *(1 1/4 cups)*	110	1	11
General Mills Apple Cinnamon Cheerios *(3/4 cup)*	120	1	13
General Mills Lucky Charms or Trix *(1 cup)*[X]	120	1	13
Kellogg's Apple Jacks, Froot Loops, or Frosted Flakes *(3/4 -1 cup)*[2]	120	1	14
General Mills Corn or Rice Chex *(1-1 1/4 cups)*[2]	120	0	3
Kellogg's Rice Krispies *(1 1/4 cups)*	120	0	3
General Mills Total Corn Flakes *(1 1/3 cups)*	110	0	4

Breakfast Bars

	Calories	Fiber (grams)	Sugar* (grams)
Kashi GoLEAN Bars[1,X]	290	6	32
Kashi GoLEAN Crunchy Bars[1,X]	160	5	14
Quaker Oatmeal On The Go Bars[1,X]	190	3	14
Quaker Oatmeal Breakfast Squares[1]	220	3	20
Kellogg's Special K Bar[1]	90	1	9
Kellogg's Cereal & Milk Bars[1,X]	110	1	11
Kellogg's Nutri-Grain Cereal or Yogurt Bars[2]	140	1	13
General Mills Oatmeal Crisp Fruit'n Cereal Bars[1]	150	1	14
Quaker Fruit & Oatmeal Cereal Bars[1]	130	1	15
General Mills Milk'n Cereal Bars[1,X]	170	1	16
Kellogg's Nutri-Grain Muffin Bars[1]	170	1	17

✔✔ Best Bite. ✔ Honorable Mention. *Includes both added (refined) sugar and any natural sugar from fruit. [#]Contains the artificial sweetener aspartame (NutraSweet). [1]Average of the entire line. [2]Average of the varieties listed. [X] Contains more than 1 gram of saturated fat.

Daily Values (daily levels for a 2,000-calorie diet): *Fiber:* 25 grams. *Saturated Fat:* 20 grams.

Source: Manufacturers and U.S.D.A. National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference (*www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp/index.html*).

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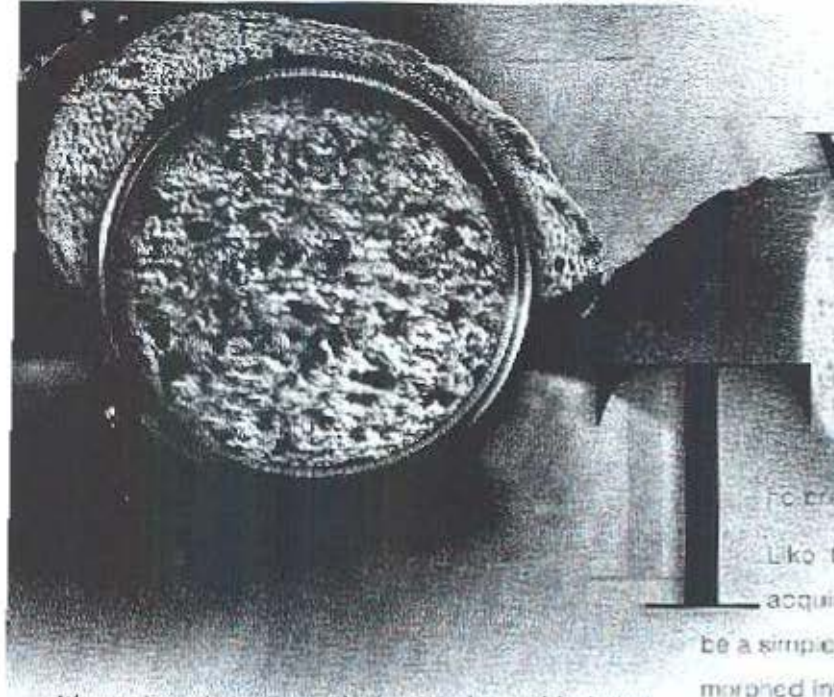

The Whole Story

How to Find the Best Breads

BY WAYNE HURLEY & BONNIE LIEBMAN

The bread aisle isn't what it used to be.

Like toothpaste, vitamins, and cell phones, breads have acquired a dizzying array of bells and whistles. What used to be a simple, 30-second decision (whole wheat, white, or rye?) has morphed into an exercise that requires the patience of Job, not to mention strong reading glasses.

But the inconvenience is a small price to pay for the results: a new selection of breads that are jam-packed with whole grains, fiber, and flavor. Here's how to find the winners...and spot the frauds.

It's not clear what woke up the bread industry. Maybe last year's low-carb craze was hurting sales. Maybe bread makers figured out how to cash in on a new government-approved health claim—that whole grains could reduce the risk of heart disease and some cancers.

Or maybe bakers realized that bread—like breakfast cereal and orange juice—was ripe for "market differentiation." Translation: tinker with the recipe and you can slap a "low-carb," "light," "heart healthy," or "extra fiber" claim on your package.

Here's a guide to get you through the bread aisle. We didn't look at most whites, ryes, or pumpernickels, since they're largely made using refined flour. We also ignored small regional brands.

Best Bites have no refined grains. Honorable Mentions have whole grains as the first (most predominant) flour or grain. Neither has more than 200 mg of sodium per slice. That might not sound like much, but it means that a sandwich has 400 mg before you put anything in it.

100% Whole or Mostly Whole-Grain

Nearly every bread in our "100% Whole-Grain" category earned a Best Bite, while just about all of the "Mostly Whole-Grain" breads got Honorable Mentions. ("Mostly" means that whole grain flour or a whole grain comes before refined flour in the ingredient list.) Breads in those categories that didn't make a Best Bite or Honorable Mention had too much sodium. Some tips to remember while shopping:

■ **Fiber.** A typical slice of whole-wheat bread has 2 grams of fiber (if it weighs 1 ounce) or 3 grams (if it weighs 1.5 ounces). That's not too shabby. The latest targets are 21 grams a day for women over 50, 25 grams for younger women, 30 grams for men over 50, and 38 grams for younger men, according to the National Academy of Sciences.

Some multi-grain breads reach 4 or 5 grams of fiber per slice, usually by adding highly processed oat, cottonseed, or wheat fiber. That fiber is missing the nutrients and phytochemicals that come with whole grains. It may help prevent constipation and diverticulosis, but may not reduce the risk of heart disease and diabetes.

■ **Heart healthy.** Any bread that's at least 51 percent whole grain can claim that it may lower the risk of heart disease or cancer. (The bread also has to be low in saturated and trans fats and not high in sodium, but most breads meet those criteria.) So a product like Sara Lee Heart Healthy Multi-Grain may be no better for your heart than a similar whole-grain bread without "Heart" in its name.

■ **Extra vitamins & minerals.** A few companies toss in some extra nutrients to make their breads stand out. Sara Lee, for example, adds vitamin D (10 percent of a day's worth), calcium (15 percent), and folic acid (10 percent) to its Heart Healthy *Plus* 100% Whole Wheat and its (similar) EarthGrains Extra Fiber breads. Each has about 5 grams of fiber per slice. In contrast, Sara's Heart Healthy *Classic* 100% Whole Wheat has no vitamin D, less calcium (6 percent) and folic acid (4 percent), and 2 grams of fiber per slice.

Do you need the extras? It depends on what you get from other foods or supplements and who you are. For example, if you're over 70, you may need the vitamin D (80 IU in two slices) to help you reach the current target of 600 IU a day. Most multivitamins have only 400 IU of vitamin D. What's more, some experts believe that people over 60 need 1,000 IU a day (see cover story).

The calcium (300 mg in two slices of the Plus or Extra Fiber bread) is helpful if you're not getting recommended levels (1,000 mg a day if you're 50 or under and 1,200 mg a day if you're over 50). But it's not helpful for men who already get plenty of calcium, since some studies suggest that 1,500 mg or more a day may raise the risk of prostate cancer.

Bells & whistles. Sara Lee Heart Healthy Plus and EarthGrains Extra Fiber breads have extra vitamin D, calcium, fiber, and folic acid.

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Photos: Panel-Stock (top), Nick Koning (bottom)

The fiber (10 grams in two slices) is impressive. But much of the extra fiber in the Plus and Extra Fiber breads comes from cellulose, which is highly processed, so it may not match 10 grams of fiber from, say, a bran cereal.

Partially Whole-Grain

Almost whole grain. Don't assume that "whole grain" on the label means no refined white flour in the bread. In Arnold's welcome new Whole Grain Classics line, it means more whole grain than white.

If the first flour in the ingredient list is refined (it will typically say bleached or unbleached enriched wheat flour), the bread didn't get a Best Bite or Honorable Mention. But you can use the ingredients and grams of fiber to guesstimate how much whole grain you may be getting.

For example, Natural Ovens Sunny Millet, Multi-Grain, Hunger Filler, and Right Wheat breads have 4 grams of fiber per slice. Untreated high gluten wheat flour (which is refined) is the first flour, but each bread also contains roughly half a dozen whole grains.

So they clearly have more whole grains than, say, Pepperidge Farm LiteWorks Family Wheat (2 grams of fiber per slice), Country Hearth Honey Wheat Berry (1 gram), or Baker's Inn Hearty Potato with Grain (0 grams).

Light

Light breads are lower in calories—typically 40 to 50 per slice—because their slices are smaller or because they have added fiber or both. (Since fiber passes through the digestive system without getting absorbed, companies can subtract the fiber's calories from the calories they list on the Nutrition Facts label.)

But most light breads are largely white flour. Exception: Arnold (or Brownberry) Bakery Light 100% Whole Wheat is a Best Bite that can help dieters keep their calories down to 40 per slice without compromising on whole grains.

Lower-Carb

Lower-carb breads usually have fewer calories (40 to 70 per slice) than ordinary breads. (We put breads in the Lower-Carb category if they had names like "Carb Counting" or if they made a carb claim.) Like some light breads, they shed calories by keeping slices smaller and bumping up the fiber. But unlike light breads, lower-carb loaves have more whole grains. In fact, more than a dozen of them earned Best Bites.

Sliced Style. Breads with carb claims have fewer calories because slices are smaller and companies add fiber.

The information for this article was compiled by Emily Foote.

Photos: Nick Wanna

The Bread Basket

Best Bites are 100 percent whole-grain (a few may have a trivial amount of refined flour). Honorable Mentions have whole wheat or another whole grain as the first (most predominant) flour or grain. Neither has more than 200 mg of sodium per slice. Within each section, breads are ranked from most to least fiber, then least to most sodium.

Bread *(1 slice—1 ounce unless otherwise noted)*	Calories	Fiber (grams)	Sodium (milligrams)
100% Whole-Grain			
✔✔ Nature's Own Healthline Double Fiber Wheat	40	5	150
✔✔ EarthGrains Extra Fiber 100% Multi-Grain *(1.5 oz.)*	110	5	180
✔✔ EarthGrains Extra Fiber 100% Whole Wheat *(1.5 oz.)*	110	5	180
✔✔ Sara Lee Heart Healthy Plus 100% Multi-Grain made with Honey *(1.5 oz.)*	110	5	180
✔✔ Sara Lee Heart Healthy Plus 100% Whole Wheat made with Honey *(1.5 oz.)*	110	5	180
✔✔ Sara Lee Heart Healthy Plus 100% Multi-Grain or 100% Whole Wheat[1]	80	4	140
✔✔ Healthy Choice Hearty 100% Whole Grain 5-Seed, Honey Wheat, or Soy & Flaxseed[1]	60	3	120
✔✔ Oroweat Master's Best Winter Wheat	100	3	120
✔✔ Pepperidge Farm Natural Whole Grain[2]	90	3	140
✔✔ Rubschlager 100% Stone Ground Whole Wheat	70	3	140
✔✔ Rubschlager European Style Whole Grain	70	3	140
✔✔ Pepperidge Farm Farmhouse 100% Whole Wheat *(1.5 oz.)*	110	3	150
✔✔ Arnold Natural 100% Whole Wheat Oat *(1.5 oz.)*	100	3	160
✔✔ Healthy Choice Hearty 100% Whole Grain *(1.5 oz.)*	80	3	170
✔✔ Arnold Natural 100% Whole Wheat *(1.5 oz.)*	90	3	180
✔✔ Stroehmann Dutch Country 100% Stone Ground Whole Wheat *(1.5 oz.)*	90	3	180
✔✔ Brownberry Dutch Country 100% Stone Ground Whole Wheat *(1.5 oz.)*	80	3	190
✔✔ Rubschlager 100% Rye Rye-Ola Sunflower *(1.5 oz.)*	110	3	190
✔✔ Arnold Natural 100% Whole Wheat 9 Grain *(1.5 oz.)*	100	3	200
✔✔ Rubschlager 100% Rye Rye-Ola Soy *(1.5 oz.)*	100	3	200
Oroweat 100% Whole Wheat *(1.5 oz.)*	100	3	210
Roman Meal California 100% Whole Wheat *(1.5 oz.)*	100	3	210
Baker's Inn 100% Whole Wheat *(1.5 oz.)*	110	3	220
Baker's Inn Honey Whole Wheat *(1.5 oz.)*	110	3	230
Cobblestone Mill 100% Whole Wheat Hearty Recipe *(1.5 oz.)*	100	3	240
✔✔ Pepperidge Farm 100% Stoneground Whole Wheat	70	2	100
✔✔ Arnold Stoneground Multi-Grain	70	2	110
✔✔ Arnold Stoneground 100% Whole Wheat	70	2	120
✔✔ Nature's Own 100% Whole Wheat	50	2	120
✔✔ Stroehmann Dutch Country Family Grains Heart Healthy 100% Whole Wheat	70	2	120

	Calories	Fiber (grams)	Sodium (milligrams)
✔✔ Home Price 100% Whole Grain Wheat	50	2	130
✔✔ Mrs Baird's 100% Whole Wheat	70	2	130
✔✔ Home Pride Whole Grains 100% Whole Wheat[3]	70	2	140
✔✔ Rubschlager Sunflower Multi-Grain	80	2	140
✔✔ Sara Lee Heart Healthy Classic 100% Whole Wheat	70	2	140
✔✔ Brownberry Natural 100% Whole Wheat *(1.5 oz.)*	100	2	150
✔✔ Brownberry Natural 12 Grain *(1.5 oz.)*	100	2	180
✔✔ EarthGrains Honey Whole Grains *(1.5 oz.)*	110	2	160
✔✔ Home Pride Whole Grains Honey Whole Wheat	70	2	160
✔✔ EarthGrains 100% Stone Ground Whole Wheat *(1.5 oz.)*	100	2	170
✔✔ Merita Country 100% Whole Wheat	70	2	170
✔✔ Wonder Stoneground 100% Whole Wheat	80	2	170
✔✔ Arnold Whole Grain Classics 100% Whole Wheat *(1.5 oz.)*	90	2	180
✔✔ Sara Lee Heart Healthy Multi-Grain *(1.5 oz.)*	100	2	180
✔✔ Sara Lee Heart Healthy Homestyle 100% Whole Wheat *(1.5 oz.)*	100	2	190
✔✔ Healthy Life Natural Whole Grain 100% Wheat *(1.5 oz.)*	100	2	200
Mostly Whole-Grain			
✔ Natural Ovens 100% Whole Grain *(1.5 oz.)*	80	4	90
✔ Healthy Choice Hearty 7-Grain *(1.5 oz.)*	80	3	170
✔ Strehmann Dutch Country Family Grains Healthy Sandwich	60	2	110
✔ Healthy Choice Soft Honey Wheat	60	2	120
✔ Healthy Choice Soft Multigrain	60	2	120
✔ Arnold Whole Grain Classics Healthy Multi-Grain *(1.5 oz.)*	100	2	160
✔ Arnold Whole Grain Classics Brain'nola *(1.5 oz.)*	100	2	160
✔ Arnold Whole Grain Classics 7 Grain *(1.5 oz.)*	100	2	180
✔ Rubschlager Stone-Ground Wheat *(1.5 oz.)*	90	2	180
✔ Arnold Whole Grain Classics 12 Grain *(1.5 oz.)*	110	2	190
✔ Arnold Whole Grain Classics Health Nut *(1.5 oz.)*	110	2	190
✔ Baker's Inn Harvest Multi Grain *(1.5 oz.)*	110	2	190
Brownberry Natural Health Nut *(1.5 oz.)*	100	2	220
✔ Pepperidge Farm Very Thin Slice Wheat *(0.5 oz.)*	40	1	70
✔ Roman Meal Round Top, Sandwich, or Split Top	70	1	130
✔ Baker's Inn Raisin Wheat *(1.5 oz.)*	110	1	170
✔ Arnold Country Classics Country Wheat *(1.5 oz.)*	100	1	180
Partially Whole-Grain			
Natural Ovens Sunny Millet *(1.5 oz.)*	70	4	60
Natural Ovens Multi-Grain *(1.5 oz.)*	60	4	80
Natural Ovens Hunger Filler *(1.5 oz.)*	60	4	90
Natural Ovens Right Wheat *(1.5 oz.)*	60	4	90
Natural Ovens Nutty Natural *(1.5 oz.)*	70	3	90
Pepperidge Farm Farmhouse 12 Grain *(1.5 oz.)*	120	3	160
Roman Meal Honey Wheat Berry *(1.5 oz.)*	100	3	160
Roman Meal Sun Grain *(1.5 oz.)*	100	3	170
Nature's Own Honey 7 Grain	60	2	90
Nature's Own Healthline Wheat 'n Soy	60	2	160
Oroweat Oatnut 3-Seed *(1.5 oz.)*	120	2	160
Pepperidge Farm LifeWorks Family Wheat	90	2	170
Oroweat Dark Wheat or Seven Grain *(1.5 oz.)*	110	2	180
Oroweat Health Nut Original *(1.5 oz.)*	100	2	180
Pepperidge Farm Farmhouse Harvest 7 Grain or Honey Wheatberry *(1.5 oz.)*	110	2	200
Baker's Inn Seven Grain *(1.5 oz.)*	110	2	240
Cobblestone Mill 9 Grain Hearty Recipe *(1.5 oz.)*	120	2	250
EarthGrains Honey Wheat Berry *(1.5 oz.)*	100	1	220
Country Hearth Honey Wheat Berry *(1.5 oz.)*	120	1	260
Mrs. Baird's Honey 7 Grain Recipe	80	0	130
White			
Nature's Own Whitewheat	50	3	120
Pepperidge Farm LifeWorks Family White	90	1	170
Wonder	60	0	130
Baker's Inn Hearty Potato with Grain *(1.5 oz.)*	110	0	220
Light			
✔✔ Arnold or Brownberry Bakery Light 100% Whole Wheat	40	3	60
Weight Watchers Wheat *(0.5 oz.)*	50	2	90
Nature's Own Healthline Light[2]	40	2	110
Wonder Light[2]	40	2	120
✔✔ Healthy Life 100% Whole Grain Wheat *(0.5 oz.)*	40	1	90
Pepperidge Farm Light Style *(0.5 oz.)*[2]	50	1	90
Lower-Carb			
✔✔ Natural Ovens Golden Crunch Lo-Carb *(1.5 oz.)*	80	4	80
✔✔ Natural Ovens Original Lo-Carb *(1.5 oz.)*	60	4	80
✔✔ Atkins Multi-Grain	70	4	120
✔✔ Natural Ovens Carb Conscious Soft Wheat *(1.5 oz.)*	70	4	120
✔✔ Healthy Life 100% Whole Wheat Whole Grain *(0.5 oz.)*	40	3	110
✔✔ Home Price Carb Action Wheat	60	3	110
✔✔ Arnold or Brownberry Carb Counting 100% Whole Wheat[1]	60	3	130
Arnold or Brownberry Carb Counting Multi Grain[1]	60	3	130
✔✔ Pepperidge Farm Carb Style 7 Grain	60	3	160
Pepperidge Farm Carb Style White	60	3	160
✔✔ Pepperidge Farm Carb Style 100% Whole Wheat	60	3	170
Healthy Life Italian or White *(0.5 oz.)*[1]	40	2	100
✔✔ Nature's Own Healthline Wheat 'n Fiber	60	2	110
✔✔ Sara Lee Delightful 100% Multi-Grain or 100% Whole Wheat made with Honey[1]	50	2	110
Sara Lee Delightful Wheat or White[1]	50	2	120
✔✔ Roman Meal Carb Aware 100% Whole Wheat	60	2	130
✔ Arnold Carb Counting Italian	80	2	140
✔ Strehmann Dutch Country Carb Consider Wheat Original Recipe	70	1	140

✔✔ *Best Bite.* ✔ *Honorable Mention.* [1]Average of the varieties listed [2]Average of the entire line. [3]Average of East and West Coast varieties.

Note: Due to regional differences in ingredients and slice sizes, the numbers on the package may not match the numbers in our chart.

Daily Values (daily limits for a 2,000-calorie diet): ***Fiber:*** 25 grams ***Sodium:*** 2,400 milligrams.

Source: manufacturers.

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