

Wheat Fiber for Rural Wealth and Health Roundtable

1:15pm - 2:15pm

- **Building a Baseline: Understanding Key Communities and Stakeholder Perspectives on Dietary Fiber and Increased-Fiber Wheat**

2:15pm - 3:15pm

- **Strengthening Community Education on Dietary Fiber's Role in Preventing and Managing Chronic Disease**



Introduction



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Introductions



- Please share your name and organization.
- What motivated you to join this conversation and engage in this work on grains and dietary fiber?

Agenda



- **Goal 1: Understand your own grain and fiber intake**
 - Dietary Guidelines for Americans
 - Perception vs reality
- **Goal 2: Community Education**
 - Current Dietary Fiber Education
 - Gaps in Education
 - Prioritizing Filling the Gaps
- Preparing for Fiber and the Future in Health

Purpose for today:

- What do you see as the two biggest gaps in health messaging related to grain fiber?
- What perception about grain fiber, food experience and health do you feel need to be prioritized?
- Approaches to reach underserved audiences.

US Health Impact

And the Coalition for Grain Fiber



Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) + Diabetes

Reduction

We expect increased-fiber varieties will reduce populations' disease risks.

*Nutrition Models** Cardiovascular disease 1-3%
Diabetes Type II: 3-4.5%

* Actual impact will depend on actual population diets

Current Cost

Family of 5
Over \$10,000
Each year

National
\$700 Billion
Each year

Annual Total US Wheat Crop: \$10-20BB

Other conditions that fiber intake *may* reduce include:

Pulmonary Disease
Cancer of the GI Track
Breast Cancer
Obesity

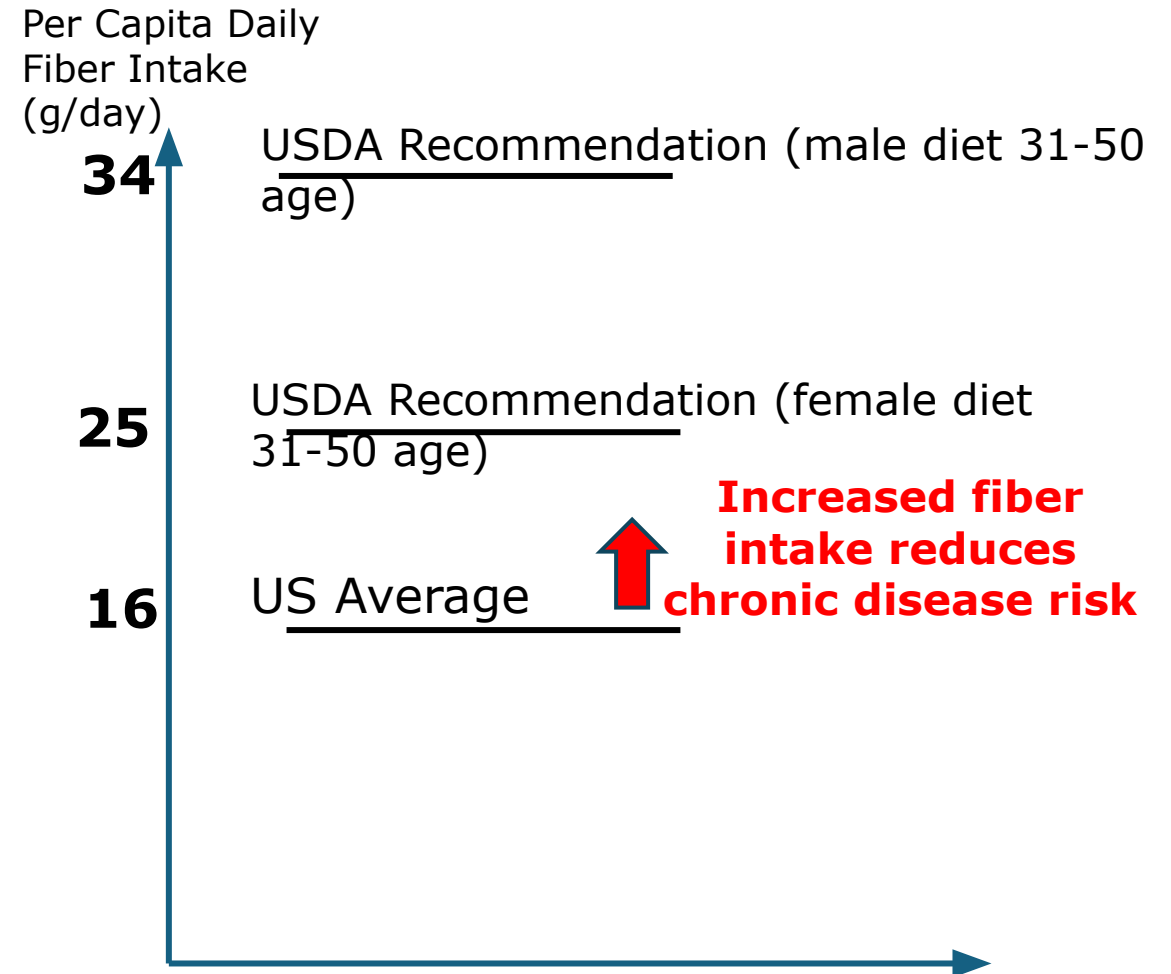
GI Symptoms
Degenerative Neurological
Conditions
Mental Illness
Arthritis

DGA Highlights

Dietary Fiber as Under-consumed Nutrient of Concern



- More than 90 percent of women and 97 percent of men do not meet recommended intakes for dietary fiber.
- Recommendations are based on levels observed to reduce risk of coronary heart disease and other diet-related chronic diseases.
- Dietary fiber is one of four under-consumed nutrients of concern (calcium, potassium, vitamin D, dietary fiber)



Dietary Guidelines for Americans

Grain Recommendations



- **Daily Recommended amount of Grains:**
 - At least 3 oz eq of whole grains/day
 - Less than 3 oz eq of refined grains



Dietary Guidelines for Americans

Grain Recommendations



Focus on meeting food group needs with nutrient-dense foods, beverages, and stay within calorie limits.

The core elements that make up a healthy dietary pattern include:

- Vegetables of all types—dark green; red and orange; beans, peas, and lentils; starchy; and other vegetables
- Fruits, especially whole fruit
- **Grains, at least half of which are whole grain**
- Dairy, including fat-free or low-fat milk, yogurt, and cheese, and/or lactose-free versions and fortified soy beverages and yogurt as alternatives
- Protein foods, including lean meats, poultry, and eggs; seafood; beans, peas, and lentils; and nuts, seeds, and soy products
- Oils, including vegetable oils and oils in food, such as seafood and nuts



To learn what the right amounts are for you, try the personalized **MyPlate Plan**.²

Based on decades of solid science, MyPlate advice can help you day to day and over time.



The benefits of healthy eating add up over time, bite by bite. Small changes matter. **Start Simple with MyPlate.**

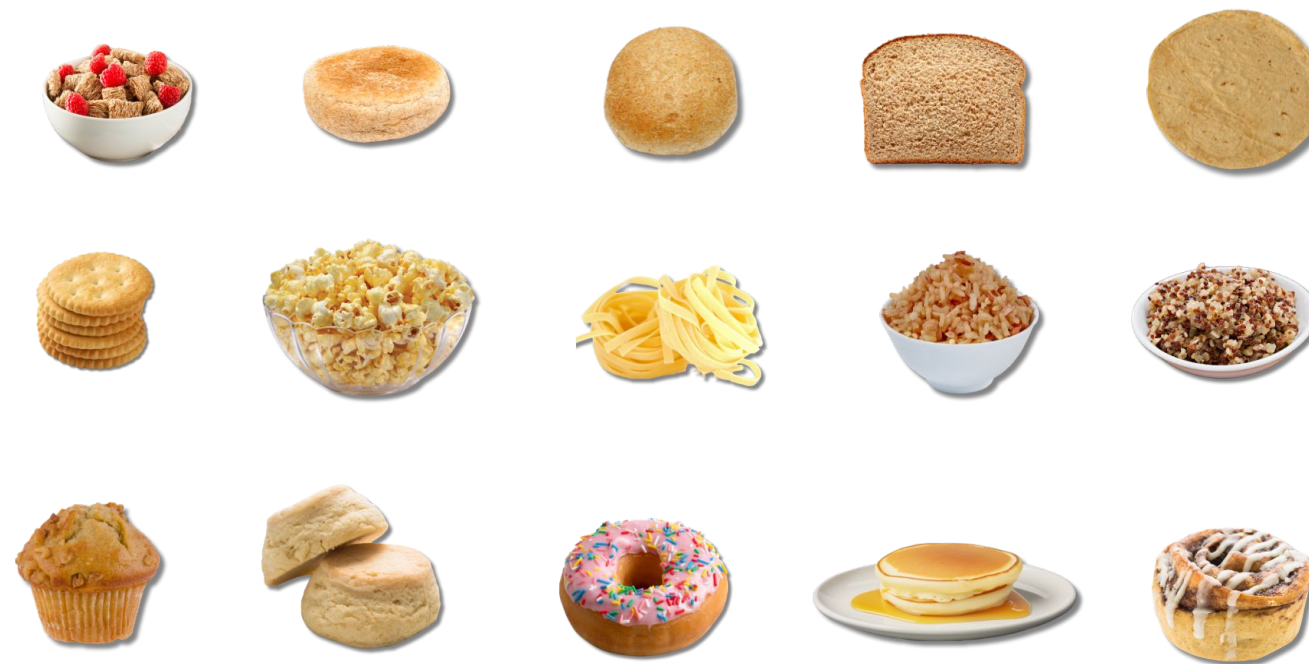


Dietary Guidelines for Americans

Grain intake recommendations



Daily Recommendations*		Total Grains in ounce-equivalents	Whole Grains in ounce-equivalents
Toddlers	12 to 23 months	1¼ to 3 oz-equiv	1½ to 2 oz-equiv
Children	2-3 yrs 4-8 yrs	3 to 5 oz-equiv 4 to 6 oz-equiv	1½ to 3 oz-equiv 2 to 3 oz-equiv
Girls	9-13 yrs 14-18 yrs	5 to 7 oz-equiv 6 to 8 oz-equiv	2½ to 3½ oz-equiv 3 to 4 oz-equiv
Boys	9-13 yrs 14-18 yrs	5 to 9 oz-equiv 6 to 10 oz-equiv	3 to 4½ oz-equiv 3 to 5 oz-equiv
Women	19-30 yrs 31-59 yrs 60+ yrs	6 to 8 oz-equiv 5 to 7 oz-equiv 5 to 7 oz-equiv	3 to 4 oz-equiv 3 to 3½ oz-equiv 3 to 3½ oz-equiv
Men	19-30 yrs 31-59 yrs 60+ yrs	8 to 10 oz-equiv 7 to 10 oz-equiv 6 to 9 oz-equiv	4 to 5 oz-equiv 3½ to 5 oz-equiv 3 to 4½ oz-equiv



1-ounce equivalent of grains

Dietary Guidelines for Americans

Recommendations vs reality



Think about your daily grain sources and intake:

- What foods provide the grains you consume daily?
- How many ounces of grains do you typically eat each day?

Thank you for being a part of the discussion today!



<https://go.unl.edu/grain-intake>

Current Community Education

Promoting Fiber Rich Diet



- **MyPlate:** The USDA's MyPlate initiative encourages Americans to eat a balanced diet that includes fiber-rich foods like fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. It provides tools and resources to teach people how to meet dietary guidelines, emphasizing fiber as essential for good health.
- **SNAP-Ed (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Education):** SNAP-Ed delivers nutrition education to low-income individuals, focusing on incorporating fiber-rich foods into meals. It includes cooking demonstrations, meal planning, and grocery shopping tips.
- **Eat Smart, Live Strong:** A USDA initiative targeting older adults, this program includes strategies for increasing fiber intake through simple, affordable meal options that emphasize whole grains and fiber-rich vegetables.
- **EFNEP (Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program):** EFNEP offers nutrition education to low-income families, promoting healthy eating habits that include more fiber. The program uses hands-on lessons and food preparation techniques to increase the consumption of whole grains, fruits, and vegetables.

Current Community Education

Promoting Fiber Rich Diet



- **WIC (Women, Infants, and Children):** WIC provides nutrition education and resources to low-income pregnant women, new mothers, and young children, emphasizing fiber through whole grains and fresh produce.
- **Let's Move!:** This initiative encourages healthy eating habits, including increasing fiber intake through fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
- **Whole Grains Council:** Emphasize the importance of whole grains and fiber in preventing chronic diseases.
- **Fiber-Rich Campaigns by the American Heart Association (AHA):** AHA promotes fiber as part of heart-healthy eating through its Heart-Check program, encouraging whole grains and high-fiber foods.
- ***Personalized counseling:** Education and medical nutrition therapy including grain and fiber recommendations also occurs through individual nutrition counseling

Minority Populations

Nebraska Extension Work



Other Current Non-Science Based Information and Influencers



- **Rise of Nutrition “Influencers”**
 - Social media and online platforms amplify voices without formal nutrition training.
 - Easily accessible information often lacks scientific evidence.
- **Common Misconceptions Spread by Influencers**
 - Carbohydrates (CHO): Often demonized as harmful, despite being essential for energy.
 - Grains: Misrepresented as universally "unhealthy," leading to unnecessary avoidance.
 - Gluten: Promoted as harmful for everyone, despite its relevance only to those with celiac disease or specific intolerances.
- **Consequences of Misinformation**
 - Misinformation creates confusion and fear around essential food groups.
 - Leads to unbalanced diets, nutrient deficiencies, and unwarranted dietary restrictions.

Community Education

What's next?



How can we enhance community education about dietary fiber's roles in helping to reduce, prevent, and manage chronic disease including diabetes type II, cardiovascular disease, and obesity?

Coalition for Grain Fiber

Enrolling the World's Favorite Foods in the Fight Against Disease



Action: Increase fiber in white flour and whole wheat to benefit all socioeconomic groups, with no change in consumer behavior.

Science Cost: Less than \$140 million

Goal: Cut chronic disease.

- Potentially very high return
- ~\$200+ cost savings per American family.
- Low/ mid/ high-income nations all benefit together.

Community Perceptions of Food and Health Technology

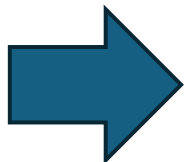
Coalition for Grain Fiber



What if the consumer who can afford \$20 / loaf bread takes increased-fiber wheat away from the masses?

Every community has its own bias and history that will impact how they perceive food-related innovation, including:

- Farmers: frequently asked ‘what *more* can you do for the good of society?’ without concern for farmers’ well-being
- Black communities ‘feel like test animals’ due to the Tuskegee Syphilis experiments and many unethical studies since
- Many socioeconomic groups report negative perceptions of gluten and wheat

 To succeed we need to understand how key demographic groups view Coalition for Grain Fiber efforts

Community Perceptions of Food and Health Technology

Coalition for Grain Fiber



To positively influence, we need to understand people's perceptions of food—which is more than just volumes of food intake. We aim to deepen background information, and then monitor for change, that will help us:

- Target impactful education
- Behavioral retail strategies that will support consumers' selection of healthier foods
- Build support for the Coalition for Grain Fiber, while reducing barriers to the food's and related policy adoption
- And to respond to emergent shifts in consumer perception and diet that result from our activities (or other's.)

Table Discussion:

- How do we develop a baseline understanding of key communities and key approaches to communities and target stakeholders thinking about dietary fiber?
- Perceptions about:
 - The Coalition for Grain Fiber Project

Community Outreach

Whom to Engage- Proposal of next steps



Nebraska: Urban and Rural Communities Across Nebraska, including long-time residents and recent immigrants

- White communities
- Diversity of Black American communities
- Latinx communities
- Indigenous communities
- Middle Eastern families (working with cultural brokers in native language)
- Include sample of higher income socioeconomic groups

Historically Black College & University Communities

- Survey of workshop participants at HBCU conference, October or November, 2025
- Follow-on community surveys

Funding opportunities

Community Outreach

Whom to Engage- Proposal of next steps



- What do you see as the two biggest gaps in health messaging related to grain fiber?
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- List approaches to reach underserved communities and stakeholders.

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<https://go.unl.edu/next-steps>