

Canadian Attitudes to Gluten-Free Study

Media backgrounder

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Udi's Healthy Foods

KEY FINDINGS

- Approximately 4.3 million Canadians (12.3 per cent) have gone gluten-free or reduced.
 - Note: Based on Statistics Canada, April 2013 population estimate of 35,141,542.
- The vast majority (81 per cent) who reduce or eliminate gluten from their diets feel healthier, happier and more energetic.

Reasons for going gluten-free:

- Gluten intolerance (21 per cent)
- Supporting a family member (15 per cent)
- Medical condition (15 per cent)

Health benefits of cutting / reducing gluten:

- Improved gastrointestinal health (52 per cent)
- Healthier weight (36 percent)
- Improved activity levels (32 per cent)
- Better mood (31 per cent)

REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Canadians who have already adopted the gluten-free / reduced lifestyle, compared to those who have recently tried going gluten-free or reduced:

	Following gluten-free / reduced diet	Tried gluten-free / reduced diet in the past six months
Canada	12.3%	6%
British Columbia	17.4%	10.6%
Quebec	12.5%	2.9%
Alberta	12.3%	6.6%
Ontario	12.1%	7%
Atlantic Canada	10.4%	5.8%
Prairies	4.5%	2.4%

- Nearly 11 percent of British Columbians have tried a gluten-free or reduced gluten diet in the past six months.
- Atlantic Canadians are the most likely to consider themselves ‘foodies’ (59 per cent), compared to other regions across the country (49 – 52 per cent).
- Quebec residents are the least likely to follow a balanced diet (51 per cent), compared to 61 to 71 per cent in other provinces.

CHALLENGES TO GOING GLUTEN-FREE

- Bread is the most commonly reported challenge.
- In the baked goods category, 79 per cent of Canadians say bread is very or moderately important in their family’s diet.
- Nearly one in four (24 per cent) of Canadians who are gluten-free or gluten-reduced say they cheat with bread
- Other perceived obstacles that prevent consumers from reducing gluten include cost (35 per cent) lack of information (31 per cent), and product availability (27 per cent).
- More than half (63 per cent) of Canadians don’t feel confident identifying products that contain gluten – presenting a barrier to adopting a reduced or gluten-free lifestyle.

The following table shows Canadians’ knowledge about gluten in common foods:

	Think Contains Gluten	Think Does Not Contain Gluten	Not sure	Contains gluten (reality)
Bread	75%	3%	22%	Yes
Beer	49%	9%	42%	Yes
Soy Sauce	24%	27%	49%	Yes
Licorice	13%	24%	63%	Yes
Rice	33%	31%	36%	No
Buckwheat	35%	17%	48%	No
Quinoa	10%	40%	51%	No

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

Additional survey findings include the following highlights:

- Twenty-one per cent of Canadians are concerned about eating too much gluten.
- Twenty per cent have tried a gluten-free product.
- More than 75 per cent of Canadians following a gluten-free or reduced-gluten lifestyle identify themselves as eating a balanced diet (84 per cent), in comparison with those who do not follow a reduced-gluten diet (64 per cent).
- Sixty-three per cent of Canadians don’t feel confident identifying products that contain gluten, presenting a barrier to adopting a reduced or gluten-free lifestyle.

- Nearly half of Canadians (46 per cent) would be skeptical if told that a tasty substitute was available – suggesting a low familiarity with the current range of gluten-free products.
- Only one-third of Canadians who have gone reduced or gluten-free find it easy to eat out at restaurants.
- There is a low awareness amongst Canadians (6 per cent) of a federal tax credit for those requiring a gluten-free diet.

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