The U.S. Market for Whole and Other Grains: Trends, Statistics and Analysis

Description: After years of falling consumption, grains are back on the menu, with per capita use rising. Wheat, rice, oats, barley and a host of specialty grains are regaining acceptance from consumers, dieters and nutritionists. In turn, food manufacturers are developing new grain-based products and seeing new popularity for old standbys. But the focus is on grains in their healthiest forms - whole grains - rather than refined wheat and rice products that offer less in the way of fiber or nutrition. There is a marked increase in products using the food label "whole grain."

This resurgence has been driven by health and nutrition professionals who recognize that whole grains can play an important role in a healthy diet without necessarily contributing to weight gain or sugar imbalance. In addition to great taste and versatility, complex carbohydrates, the family of foods that includes whole grains, have numerous nutritional benefits. The restrictive high-protein/low-carb diet, the diet du jour for many years, contributed to the decline of the market for grains and grain-based foods, but consumers today are showing preference for a wider variety of foods and the health advantages that they offer.

This report examines today’s market for grains, including core grain foods such as flour, dry rice and rice mixes, hot cereal, and packaged or bulk grains such as barley, millet, amaranth, and quinoa. Corn is included as cornmeal only, in the flour category. The report focuses on market trends and market drivers for consumers. In addition, The U.S. Market for Whole and Other Grains: Trends and Developments explores the role of grains, especially wheat, in the global commodity markets, and how new trends such as grain-based ethanol production affects the food industry. The report also takes an in-depth look at market trends for specialty grains, including organic grains and the so-called “ancient grains,” such as amaranth teff, spelt, and quinoa, which are rapidly gaining recognition and popularity among consumers. Some of these grains are gluten-free, making them of special interest as the market for those with food allergies and sensitivities grows.

Using current Product Launch Analytics’ (a Datamonitor service) data, the report looks closely at new product introductions, especially value-added products. Information Resources Inc. data indicate sales trends, and Simmons data help to provide a picture of demographic trends.

Read an excerpt from this report below.

About the Author

Elaine Lipson is a writer, editor, researcher and communications consultant to the organic products and sustainable lifestyles industries. She specializes in textile art, craft and design and is exploring projects and partnerships integrating her concept of Slow Cloth. Elaine is also an expert in organic food, farming and industry issues and is the author of The Organic Foods Sourcebook. She contributes regularly to EcoSalon.com and has written for Yoga Journal, Ms., Surface Design Journal and many other trade, consumer and Internet publications. From 2005-2007, Elaine was the director of organic alliances and strategic initiatives at New Hope Natural Media, and previously was a senior editor for the original LOHAS Journal. Visit her blogs at lainie.typepad.com.

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