

Study says confusion reigns over whole-grain claims in school lunches

June 2 2009

While most nutrition experts agree that school lunches should include more whole-grain products, a new study from the University of Minnesota finds that food-service workers lack understanding and the resources to meet that goal.

The study, which involved school food-service directors from across Minnesota, appears in the current issue of the *Journal of Child [Nutrition and Management](#)*. Because they serve so many meals to children each day, school food-service directors have a major influence on students' food choices and in turn their overall health, the authors note.

Most experts recommend at least three servings of whole-grain foods a day, but American children fall far short of that goal, averaging about one serving per day.

The U of M researchers found that while food-service workers are aware of the [health benefits](#) of whole-grain foods, they aren't always sure whether a food product meets whole-grain criteria. The directors also cited higher costs and difficulty finding vendors who sold whole-grain products.

The latest study is part of an ongoing series in which researchers from the university are measuring awareness of [whole grains](#) and testing ways to incorporate them into children's diets, particularly in school nutrition programs.

"The goal is to remove confusion surrounding the definition of a whole-grain food and to provide simple standards to follow when ordering whole grain products for school meals," said Len Marquart, the project's lead researcher and an assistant professor in the university's [food](#) science and nutrition department. "This will require working together--enhanced communication among vendors, distributors and manufacturers along with key players in government, industry and [school](#) foodservice."

Source: University of Minnesota ([news](#) : [web](#))

Citation: Study says confusion reigns over whole-grain claims in school lunches (2009, June 2)
retrieved 26 April 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2009-06-whole-grain-school-lunches.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--