

Consumer understanding of labelling terms for foods marketed for gluten-free diet

Area of research interest: [Food hypersensitivity](#)

Study duration: 2009-03-01

Project code: T07059

Conducted by: Define Research & Insight Ltd

Background

The research was undertaken to understand how effective the labelling terms 'Gluten-Free' and 'Very Low Gluten' will be, any issues related towards the terms and how best to communicate these changes when they come into place.

Research approach

The discussion groups, paired depth interviews and face to face interviews were conducted with adults who had either been clinically diagnosed with coeliac disease (majority of sample) or non-clinically diagnosed, that is those who considered themselves gluten intolerant and were buying gluten-free products or had been advised that they may be gluten intolerant by their GP. The sample also included parents who had children with coeliac disease and who bought food for them.

Results and findings

The study found that reaction to the new label 'gluten-free' as a standalone was generally accepted, with the assumption that this would mean (as they assumed previously) that this product would not include any gluten. Further explanation of its gluten content (less than 20ppm) although small did raise concerns with the sample because of their position of understanding that it currently contained no gluten, although they were generally reassured once they heard that it would be suitable for most.

'Very Low Gluten' as a label was less straightforward for nearly all, as it was seen as requiring a judgement as to whether a product displaying this claim was suitable or not for them and their child. This caused anxiety amongst most of the sample who felt that rather than take the risk, they would avoid these products.

Research report

England, Northern Ireland and Wales

PDF

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