

# Increasing Australia's grain fibre intake could save the economy **\$3.3 billion a year**

**November 30th, Sydney** – New research, conducted by Deloitte Access Economics and Nutrition Research Australia, shows that if every Australian adult adds **two to three serves of high fibre grain food** to their daily diet it could save the economy an estimated **\$3.3 billion a year from reduced healthcare costs and lost productivity**.

Almost half of Australian adults are deliberately limiting their intake of grain foods<sup>1</sup> and **four out of five** are not getting enough fibre to help reduce the risk of chronic disease, diseases such as cardiovascular disease (CVD) and type 2 diabetes (T2D).

The research, commissioned by Kellogg Australia, shows that CVD and T2D currently cost the economy almost \$22 billion a year in healthcare costs and lost productivity. Given the effectiveness of grain fibre in reducing the risk of these chronic diseases<sup>2,3</sup>, the research looked into how increasing our grain fibre intake may help to reduce the burden.

Modelling by Deloitte Access Economics show that if every Australian adult adds just **one serve** of high fibre grain food each day, which contains four to five grams of grain fibre, it could save the economy \$1.5 billion and help prevent **64,000 cases** of cardiovascular disease and **126,000 cases** of type 2 diabetes a year.

The Assistant Minister for Health, **Dr David Gillespie**, welcomed these latest findings:

*"These are Australia's two most prevalent chronic diseases, and have a significant impact on Australia's economy in direct healthcare expenditure and lost productivity. The research indicates that fibre from grains has the greatest potential to reduce the combined risk of developing these two diseases.*

*"If all Australians added a small amount of extra grain fibre each day to their diet, we could significantly improve the health of hundreds of thousands of Australians, as well as the health of the economy.*

*"Adding more fibre to your diet is as simple as eating fruit, vegetables, cereals and wholegrains each day, as recommended by the Australian Dietary Guidelines.*

*"The health and wellbeing of our nation is our top priority and we are determined to ensure that the importance of fibre is not overlooked."*

Kellogg Australia and New Zealand Managing Director, **Belinda Tumbers**, said:

*"We've been investing in fibre for decades and we know the benefits for health and wellbeing. The fact that we are not eating enough shows that perhaps, as a nation, we don't realise how important it is.*

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1 GLNC. Australian Grains & Legumes Consumption and Attitudinal Report. 2017

2 Threapleton et al. (2013). BMJ; 347; F6879

3 Interact Consortium (2015). Diabetologia; 58 (7)

*"This research demonstrates the importance of fibre, especially grain fibre, and the big impact it can have on both our health and the economy. Hopefully it will act as a reminder for people to eat more high fibre grain foods to help reduce their risk of chronic disease."*

The research examined data from the Australian Health Survey to determine the current fibre intakes of Australians. Grain fibre, because of its already proven potential to reduce risk, was then used to model increases in intakes to recommended levels.

Foods containing four to five grams of grain fibre include:

- A bowl of high fibre cereal or porridge
- 2 slices of wholemeal bread
- ¼ cup of whole grains such as barley or corn

**Note:** This research was conducted by Nutrition Research Australia and Deloitte Access Economics using data from the 2011-13 Australian Health Survey, which is representative of the Australian population together with relevant public health reports. This research was commissioned by Kellogg Australia.

**ENDS**

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