

# Survey: Consumers seek health benefits from gluten-free products

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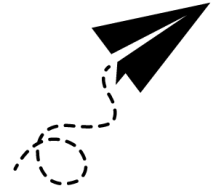
## Dive Brief:

- After consumers in a recent survey said that gluten-free bakery items were their top choice in the category, DuPont Nutrition & Health conducted trials in its bakery center to come up with higher-quality products. The company said in a release that a desire for healthy living more than gluten intolerance was behind this trend and that consumers are looking for better quality and wider availability.
- DuPont said the survey results also "revealed untapped potential for bakers to develop more and better-quality products with extra nutritional benefits." These include high fiber, no added preservatives, and low levels of saturated fats, carbohydrates and calories.
- According to Mintel research cited by DuPont, about 1% of the population has gluten intolerance due to celiac disease, but 11% of consumers in Italy and the U.K. buy gluten-free products and 8% do so in France and Spain.

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These survey results should come as no surprise to anyone who has been following the global gluten-free market. While it started out focusing on those with celiac disease and other types of gluten intolerance, those without dietary restrictions have increasingly been choosing gluten-free products because they're seen as healthier than some traditional products.

The trend is even stronger in this country than in Europe. According to [a study from The Hartman Group](#), 35% of U.S. consumers who buy gluten-free products have no special reason to do so, while 8% said they had a gluten intolerance. However, [research shows](#) it's possible that 5% to 10% more of the population has a gluten sensitivity of some kind. [According to Beyond Celiac](#), 83% of Americans who have celiac disease haven't been officially diagnosed, which could be another potential source of market demand.

Meanwhile, the market for gluten-free products expands. [Packaged Facts has reported](#) that U.S. sales of approximately \$973 million in 2014 were projected to surpass \$2 billion by 2019.

The challenge for food manufacturers has been to devise ingredient add-ons that will enhance the nutritional profile, texture and flavor of their gluten-free products. Some of these are nuts, pulses such as chickpeas, and ancient grains like buckwheat and quinoa, which bring taste, texture and additional protein to food items — and to their label claims.

General Mills has successfully taken the gluten-free route with some of its Progresso soups, as has Snyder's-Lance with its snack crackers. And many other manufacturers have joined the parade. Most recently, online meal kit company Green Chef Corporation [earned gluten-free certification](#) from the Gluten Intolerance Group's Gluten-Free Food Service program, whose label will be displayed on all of the company's gluten-free meal kits.

While some suggest that the gluten-free trend is a fad that [will eventually reach a saturation point](#) and fade away, the numbers indicate otherwise. In any case, adding a functional health halo to gluten-free bakery products certainly can't hurt food makers in a global marketplace where consumers are actively looking for one.