

## Oats and the gluten free diet

There is much controversy over Oats here in Australia being suitable for a gluten free diet. The confusion lies in the fact that a customer can Google 'gluten free recipes' and up comes hundreds of references to 'gluten free oats' in their results. In 2007 the USA approved a gluten free status for oats that was being produced that was uncontaminated from the gluten found in wheat, rye and barley. In 2009, Kylie & Garry, started GK Gluten Free Foods, where we were currently producing a range of flour mixes for the gluten free market. Kylie connected with Gluten Free Oats LLC in the USA and the decision was made to import 1 pallet of pre packed gluten free oats. We were very quickly contacted by the authorities that advised us that the claim of gluten free on this packaging was illegal here in Australia.

Current labeling laws have relaxed a little during this time as the National Testing Authority of Australia now recognize the test for gluten that we do for each batch that enters Australia. This test displaying the results as <3ppm is displayed on our [Compliance Page](#). We can actually label this product Low Gluten until the code changes to enable us to label it gluten free. We have however decided to not label our oats 'Low Gluten' as we think this is still confusing for consumers. So until the Food Standards code changes we have settled on Gloriously Free Uncontaminated Oats or GF Oats as this is the only way we can communicate that this product is not contaminated from the gluten found in wheat, rye and barley.

The problem has been in the past that oats is contaminated at the farm level by other crops that are grown that contain gluten. The gluten actually impregnates into the steel of the machinery and storage bins that are used on the farms. When the oat seed comes into contact it is then contaminated throughout the process. The growers at GF Harvest in the USA had to actually sell all their machinery and storage bins and replace them to enable them to get a reading of <3ppm for their rolled oats. As a coeliac family they understand the important issue of providing a pure uncontaminated oat product.

Additionally the confusion that the single proteins or prolamins founds in grains equaled 'gluten'. If this was the case corn and even rice should also be deemed not fit for a gluten free diet. A study in the USA confirmed that 'gluten' is in fact a combination of proteins made up of at least 2 molecules gliadin and glutenin which form an elastic bond in the presence of water. Gluten is what makes dough sticky and flexible, not just one strain of protein eg. Avenin or Gliadin, which are names of the proteins found in oats and wheat respectfully. In very simple terms, if you tried to make a loaf of bread from oat flour it would fall apart.

The Coeliac Society of Australia has a statement that advises consumers the following:

"Evidence shows that uncontaminated oats are well tolerated by most people with coeliac disease. However, in some people with coeliac disease, oat consumption can trigger a potentially harmful immune response. Please note

that the absence of symptoms when consuming oats does not necessarily indicate they are safe – bowel damage can still occur despite the absence of symptoms.

It is recommended that individuals who wish to consume oats as part of their gluten free diet do so under medical supervision to ensure appropriate review and safety. Undertaking a gastroscopy and small bowel biopsy before and after 3 months of regular uncontaminated oat consumption can help guide whether an individual with coeliac disease can safely consume oats. “

So it is a controversial subject, and yes what is good for one person in relation to all foods may in fact not be good for someone else.

To see more articles, recipes and to purchase our brand to try “The oats you can Trust” please visit [GF-Oats.com.au](http://GF-Oats.com.au).

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