

CSA/GC

CELIAC SPRUE ASSOCIATION OF GREATER CHICAGO

Founded 1981

Chapter 19 of CSA/USA

September 12, 2005

FDA Division of Dockets Management
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852
Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act
Subject: # 2005N-0279
Members deciding on this decision,

I am a celiac and delighted you are working on definition of "gluten-free". I only wish such consideration on this legislation was in place 25 years ago. It would have prevented me illness from unknown "hidden glutens, time, frustrations, and expense in food choices safe for me.

"Gluten-free" should mean exactly what it states, "Gluten-free". Without a national strict standard, there is NO standard but confusion. Proper labeling makes wise consumers on healthy food choices. No wheat, barley, rye and oats should be included in the labeling. Oats grown, rotated in undedicated fields then processed in the US are contaminated for celiacs. Please include oats in "gluten-free" labeling. Manufactures state oats, are in any product as a single separate item, if not included in the "gluten-free" label. I do not eat oats on my doctor's advice.

I usually cook food from scratch with products that I know to be "gluten-free" and not contaminated. This has made me very aware of food ingredients. I have dedicated years of time and research to locate "gluten-free" food. This results in stress on today's busy families dealing with health concerns. Proper labeling will be a tremendous help to many, with wise choices on their foods. Presently, it takes extra hours for grocery shopping. I read every label before any purchase. Manufactures sales may increase on items when labeled "gluten-free". The Atkins diet fad proved that.

I would estimate less than 1% of food items are now labeled "gluten-free" in most grocery stores. To find these products, I have to travel to several stores or buy by mail order "gluten-free" foods. I would buy foods labeled "gluten-free" if so labeled over other choices. I Americans who have allergies to wheat or are wheat intolerance will also be helped when foods are labeled as "gluten-free".

Food companies would be well served to be aware of how they can help many with proper labeling on their food products. Labels should include the grain source modified food starch, HPV, spices, etc. in their products. Trace amounts and clean production lines also play a important role in my "gluten-free" food choices.

Your labeling decision will help many Americans make wise choices for their families.

Labeling "gluten-free" should mean: NO WHEAT, RYE, BARLEY, AND OATS.

Thank you for your time attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

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