



8TH INTERNATIONAL WHOLE GRAIN SUMMIT

"Driving whole grain adoption throughout the food supply chain"

March 31- April 2, 2025 | Detmold, Germany

DETMOLD WHOLE GRAIN DECLARATION

An Action Plan for Driving Whole Grain Adoption Throughout the Food Supply Chain

from the participants of the 8th International Whole Grain Summit
in Detmold, Germany 2025

PREAMBLE

With a shared vision to elevate the grain-based field-to-fork value chain as a driver of public health, more than 100 experts and leading stakeholders from 27 countries and all continents convened at the 8th International Whole Grain Summit, held from 31 March to 2 April 2025 in Detmold, Germany. United by a commitment to science-based strategies and grounded in practical, real-world experience, participants worked together to shape a forward-looking vision and strategic roadmap. The Summit was supported by video statements from 20 companies based around the world, offering a powerful and compelling call to action for whole grains.

Building on the foundation of the Whole Grain Initiative – launched at the 6th International Whole Grain Summit in Vienna in 2017 and integrated into ICC International Association for Cereal Science and Technology in 2024 – delegates identified key priorities to accelerate progress. There is a growing recognition that the commercial sector can act either as a lever or bottleneck for that acceleration. In line with the Summit's purpose of "Driving whole grain adoption throughout the food supply chain", Summit participants strongly encourage the food industry – including manufacturers, millers, foodservice providers, and retailers – to engage more actively with the whole grain cause.

Key priorities discussed included addressing affordability and achieving price parity between whole and refined grain ingredients and products; encouraging the food industry to adopt incremental reformulation strategies that introduce whole grains gradually; and strengthening the connection between whole grains and sustainability in consumer messaging.

In advancing these priorities, there is a call for a cohesive, optimistic narrative that presents whole grains as delicious, modern, accessible, healthful, and sustainable – a message that must resonate both globally and locally, across and between cultures. Equally vital to this mission is robust, cross-sector collaboration and broad stakeholder engagement – including governments, researchers, NGOs, and industry partners across the value chain, especially those in foodservice and retail who engage directly with consumers) – to ensure whole grains reach more people, in more places, more often.

This declaration represents a consensus on the strategic actions required to enhance the global impact of the Whole Grain Initiative and to inspire the creation of a new "whole grain generation."



8TH INTERNATIONAL WHOLE GRAIN SUMMIT

"Driving whole grain adoption throughout the food supply chain"

March 31- April 2, 2025 | Detmold, Germany

TEN KEY SUMMIT TAKEAWAYS

1. **Processing as a tool for health and whole grain acceptance**

Processing isn't the enemy. It can enhance nutritional value, improve sensory properties, and ensure safety of whole grains. We need to foster more positive, science-based messaging around processing to build trust and understanding among consumers.

2. **Affordability and economic incentives are critical**

Whole grain affordability remains a key barrier to consumption, perhaps largely due to the absence of economies of scale in whole grain milling. Solutions include subsidies, cost-parity initiatives, economic value-chain analyses, and government incentives.

3. **Leveraging a "health by stealth" approach**

Gradual reformulation strategies that retain familiar taste and texture are often more acceptable to consumers. Even small, incremental increases in whole grain intake can deliver significant health benefits. Every gram counts.

4. **Lead with taste: strategic communication campaigns**

Messaging should lead with taste, fun, and ease, not just health. Successful campaigns tap into social media, influencers, and chefs, and normalize whole grains as part of modern, enjoyable eating — particularly for children and families.

5. **Improve labeling and align on WGI definition**

Current nutrient profiling systems often use fiber as a proxy for whole grain, which can obscure nutritional differences between whole and refined grain products. Classification systems, like Nova, may discourage whole-grain intake by including common grain foods in a category that consumers are told to avoid. It's vital to promote alignment with the WGI consensus definition of whole grains and advocate for better labeling schemes.

6. **Start early – establish healthy habits in children**

To build a "whole-grain generation," education should start in schools. School meals offer an opportunity to normalize whole grain consumption and reduce resistance to dietary change. Fun activities, appealing recipes, and clear institutional meal guidelines can foster early adoption and encourage long-term habits.

7. **Sustainability messaging is an underutilized opportunity**

Whole grains can align with planetary health, plant-based diets, and sustainable agriculture, but the message needs stronger narrative development. Case studies, and climate-focused marketing/communication campaigns should be explored further.



8TH INTERNATIONAL WHOLE GRAIN SUMMIT

"Driving whole grain adoption throughout the food supply chain"

March 31- April 2, 2025 | Detmold, Germany

8. **Collaboration across sectors drives change**

Effective change requires strong public-private partnerships involving government, NGOs, industry, and media. Shared standards, action plans, and cross-sector funding models are essential, as is broad stakeholder involvement throughout the food supply chain. To step-change whole grain intake, engagement from commercial stakeholders is especially critical.

9. **Policy, regulation, and fiscal tools must evolve**

Governments have a key role in incentivizing change through tax breaks, subsidies, and mandated standards. Policy should support ingredient reformulation, supply chain investments, and educational mandates, with a focus on system-level impacts.

10. **A unified, positive narrative is needed**

Across all conversations, there's a call for a cohesive, hopeful narrative that frames whole grains as delicious, modern, accessible, healthy, and sustainable. This story should unify stakeholders and resonate globally, locally, and culturally.

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

The Whole Grain Initiative has revised the focus and objectives of its working groups to both sustain ongoing efforts and integrate the key themes and actions identified during the Summit.

Experts from around the world – particularly those representing the private sector – are encouraged to contribute to one or more of the five working groups. To get involved, please contact ICC at office@icc.or.at.

⇒ **Working Group on Food Policy**

⇒ **Working Group on Processing,
Reformulation, and Industry
Engagement**

⇒ **Working Group on Communications**

⇒ **Working Group on Economic
Evaluation and Affordability**

⇒ **Asia-Pacific Region Working Group**

Additionally, the Whole Grain Initiative will support a "special project" on the topic of **Whole Grains and Sustainability**, partnering with environmental scientists and other experts through an interdisciplinary approach.

Further information on the Whole Grain Initiative can be found at www.wholegraininitiative.org/ and more details about the 2025 Whole Grain Summit in Detmold, Germany can be found at www.wholegrainsummit.com.