


# Experience with confusing food labelling from celiacs point of view

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- more than 400 foods declared as gluten-free foods or common foods were analyzed (October 2004 – June 2005)

- ELISA kit used:

- Ridascreen Gliadin kit

- Gliadin ELISA kit

- Ingezim Gluten kit

- 5 samples declared as gluten-free foods revealed gliadin content higher than 10 mg/100 g DM

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# Labelling of gluten-free foods and food legislation

the Czech Republic:

Decree No. 54/2004 Coll. relating to foods for special dietary uses

Decree No. 113/2005 Coll. relating to the labelling, presentation and advertising of foods

European Union:

Directive 2000/13/EC

Directive 2003/89/EC

Directive 2005/26/EC

The situation is clear in case of declared (labelled) gluten-free foods

In case of common foods – 25<sup>th</sup> November 2005 – all substances with allergenic effect are subject to labelling rules, to give appropriate information to consumers suffering from food allergy

Celiacs can find important information on labels of all foods from November 2005

IS IT TRUE???



IS IT REALLY HELP AND ADVANTAGE FOR CELIACS??

The products are divided into 3 groups:

3. The producers do not declare the ingredients correctly – the product contains gluten but it is not clear from the label, you don't find the important information
4. The producers declare that gluten is present, but it is not correct
5. Unfamiliarity with food legislation and bad interpretation of some decrees, regulations etc., and other examples

## **Group 1**

**COCOA BAR – gliadin content > 30 mg/100g DM (not declared as gluten-free food)**

Ingredients declared by producer: sugar, cocoanut, glucose syrup, powder milk, chocolate icing (vegetable fat, sugar, cocoa powder, vegetable and animal hard fat), ethylvanilin, cocoa, aroma, rum

**Cream dessert biscuit – gliadin content 7.5 mg/100g DM**

**Cream dessert vanilla, cream dessert chocolate – gliadin content 1.5 mg/100 g DM**

Ingredients declared: cottage cheese (48 %), sugar, flavouring component 5 % (aroma, colour E 150a - caramel), stabiliser - modified starches, E 410 (carubin) and E 412 (guar gum)

Ingredient not declared – scraped wheat biscuit (4 %)

November 2005 is important for these dangerous food products

## ***Group 2***

### **Chocolate advent calendar**

### **Chocolate Christmas figure and other chocolate products**

Gliadin content < 1 mg/100g DM

Ingredient: sugar, cocoa butter, milk powder, cocoa mass, lactose, powder, lecithin, vanilla, dried whey

Remark of producers:

„The product contains (can contain) gluten“

2 labels:

Paper box

„The product can contain traces of hazelnut, cashew nut, peanut, almond“

Polyethylene bag

„The product can contain traces of nuts + traces of gluten; the product is not suitable for celiacs“

## **Vanilla pudding with whipping-cream**

Gliadin content - 1.1 mg/100g DM

Ingredients:

Pudding – milk, sugar, wheat modified starch, stabiliser carageenan, aroma, colour E 104 (quinoline yellow), E110 (orange yellow S)

Whipping cream – cream, sugar, glucose syrup, gelatine, emulsifier E 472b (lactic acid esters of mono- and diglycerides of fatty acids), stabiliser guar gum and carageenan

Remark of producer – product is not suitable for celiacs

### **Group 3**

#### **Rice crisp bread with cheese**

Ingredients: rice, cheese, whey, aroma, yeast extract, salt, citric acid, emulsifier lecithin

#### Remarks of producer

the product can contain traces of gluten

the product is gluten-free

Gliadin content < 5 mg/100 g DM

The producer wanted to label rice crisp in accordance with Decree No.113/2005 Coll. (allergens have to be indicated on the label) and Decree No.54/2004 Coll. (Gluten-free foods)

CAFIA opinion – it is correct

## **Group 3**

### **Buckwheat smooth flour**

Gluten content much higher **> 50 mg/100 g DM**

Not declared as gluten-free or naturally gluten-free; the producer uses the same technological equipment for other cereals

August 2005 – the producer had to withdraw the product from circulation

CAFIA conclusion - Gluten can not be presumed by consumers and therefore they must be warned of its presence on the packaging. The producer committed deception of consumers and deficient labelling could pose a health threat to patients suffering from coeliac disease.

Directive 2003/89/EC– the sale of products that do not comply with Directive shall be prohibited; any products which do not comply with Directive but which have been placed on the market or labelled prior to this date may be sold while stocks last.

## **Rice pasta – gliadin content < 1 mg/100 g DM**

Ingredients in English :rice flour, wheat flour, egg, salt

Ingredients in Czech: rice flour, salt

### CAFIA conclusion

The composition of pasta stated on the label in Czech and English was inconsistent. The case cannot be considered as consumer deception. Information on foodstuffs that are sold on the Czech market must be in Czech and if it is true, consumer is not deceived, even though information in another language is different.

## FEARS OF CELIACS

The producer will write remarks concerning gluten content in products more often than it is really necessary

**Reason** – Directive 2003/89/EC and national regulation on the base of Directive and producers' fear of sanction and fines

**Result** – possible decreasing of number of food products suitable for celiacs

Czech Agriculture and Food Inspection Authority fines the producer, who labels food products incorrectly:

- declared gluten-free foods – gliadin content  $> 10$  mg/100 g DM (Decree No.54/2004 Coll.)
- common foods – gliadin determination reveals gliadin presence and its presence is not labelled on the food product (November 2005)
- common foods- the remark of producer „the product contains gluten” is on the label and the analysis doesn't reveals gluten presence (November 2005)

# Conclusion

- First experience showed many unanswered questions relating to new food legislation.
- Broad discussion among food inspection authorities, producers and celiac societies seems to be necessary and useful for the correct access in the future.
- Better life quality of celiacs and the wide choice of correctly and truly labelled foods should be the aim of all partners.
- In authors opinion the indication of specific vegetable origin of starch would be very useful, not only when the starch may contain gluten.

A vibrant field of flowers, primarily white with some pink blossoms, stretches across the foreground and middle ground. The flowers are densely packed and appear to be in full bloom. The background features a bright blue sky filled with large, fluffy white clouds. The overall scene is bright and cheerful, suggesting a sunny day in a garden or park.

Thank you for your attention