



Overview of sliced breads available in Québec in 2017 and 2021

The Observatory has tracked the supply of sliced breads four years after its initial 2017 assessment. A broader offer was observed, with 340 products listed representing 80% of the market (compared to 294 products representing 75% of the market in 2017).



1 The results for sliced breads listed in 2021 show that:

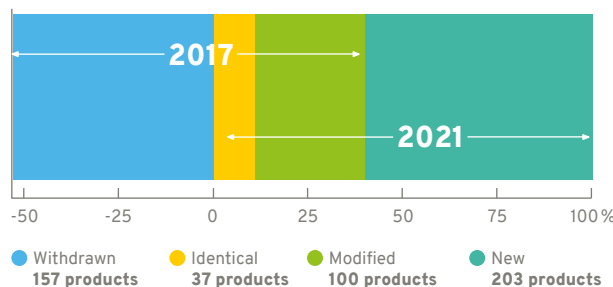
Mixed multigrain breads¹ still have the most **diversity**² (42% of the supply). However, these breads saw a drop in diversity and sales compared to 2017.

Despite this, they are the second best sellers after 100% refined grain breads (white breads).

As concerns main flour, wheat-enriched breads still offer the most diversity (48%) and represent the highest sales volume (72%).

In regard to the **status**³:

- Most of the products are new (n=203/ 340; 60%) or modified (n=100/340; 29%).
- New breads are more often mixed multigrain (n=85/203; 42%).



Similar to 2017, **enriched wheat flour breads** are lower in both fibre and protein, and higher in sugar and sodium.



New breads are higher in sodium, while **modified breads** have a lower sodium content.

¹ Mixed multigrain: Breads made from two or more types of grain and partly whole grain and partly refined grain.

² Diversity: number of different products.

³ Product status compared to 2017: New, identical, modified or taken off the market.

2 Evolution of nutritional composition

Breads purchased in 2021 are lower in saturated fat and sodium than in 2017. However, there has been little change in bread supply since the initial assessment.

- There was a diminution of sodium content in white breads. Since they are the most widely purchased, this could explain the overall sodium decrease in purchases.
- The saturated fat content of mixed multigrain bread decreased. As it is the second most popular type of bread, this could explain the variation in the saturated fat content of the purchased breads.

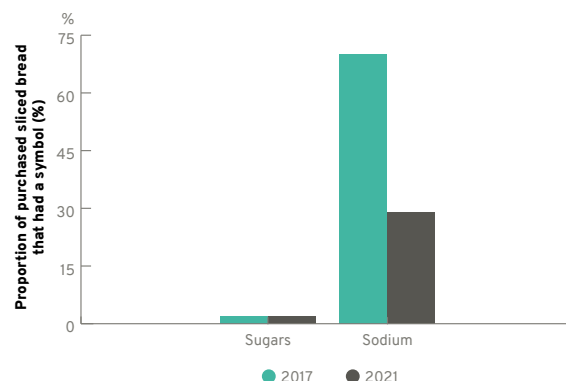


3 High level thresholds

To determine whether a product should carry a symbol indicating a high sodium, sugar and/or saturated fat content, the 15% Daily Value (DV)⁴ threshold is used for sliced bread (for a reference amount of 75 g).

- Of the breads available in 2021, 36% would have a symbol on their packaging for one of the three nutrients (representing 30% of sales). More than half of the products purchased in 2017 with a sodium symbol would no longer need one in 2021 (41% improvement):

- Sodium is still the nutrient most often involved in the display of the symbol (29% of products).
- White breads are still the most likely to exceed the voluntary sodium reduction target⁵.



- Although no symbol will be linked to **fibre** content, this nutrient remains a public health issue. Slightly fewer products (51% of products) meet the desirable 4g⁶ threshold in 2021 than in 2017.

4 Conclusion & course of action

As in 2017, the purchased **white breads** (100% refined grain) and **enriched wheat flour breads** have a less appealing nutritional composition than other breads available in 2021. Due to their high sales volume, these breads should be reformulated as a priority.

Once again, the **main flour**⁷ remains an indicator of nutritional quality.

White breads have seen a reduction in their sodium content, but it remains higher than other breads in 2021.

New breads do not appear to be more appealing options since they have lower protein and higher sodium levels than other breads (identical, modified or withdrawn).

⁴ Daily Value: The threshold determined by Health Canada representing a high quantity of a nutrient for a reference amount.

⁵ Voluntary sodium reduction target: Health Canada, in consultation with the food industry, has set targets to encourage sodium reduction in processed foods (330mg/100g of whole wheat, multigrain or raisin bread, 360mg/100g of white bread, 430mg/100g of hearth-baked bread and 460mg/100g of hearth-baked and flavoured bread).

⁶ 4g fibre threshold: The equivalent to the claim "high source of" fibre.

⁷ Main flour: First flour appearing on the ingredients list.

Data from this overview of sliced bread comes from:



Nutritional composition



Consumers purchases

Market coverage



77% of the offer
80% of sales

For more information : foodoffer.ca

