

Identifying Gluten in Packaged Foods

The Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act states ‘wheat’ must be listed on the food label when wheat is an ingredient in the item. This is not true for oats, barley and rye; food manufacturers do not have to declare oats, barley or rye in the allergen statement. If you are unsure about a product’s ingredients avoid it.

Use these tips to help you make gluten-free food choices:

1. Read the allergen statement. If the product contains wheat, look for another option.
2. Read the ingredient list. Please refer the lists below for ‘gluten-free’ and ‘gluten-containing’ ingredients to decide if the food is gluten free or not.
3. Look for a statement regarding the facility in which the food was processed. If the food was processed in a factory that also processes wheat, then look for another option. Please note that it is not required to include a statement regarding the facility in which the food was produced on the label.



GLUTEN FREE ingredients

* An asterisk denotes controversial and confusing ingredients. Details on these follow in “Controversial and Confusing Ingredients”.

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|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| – Acacia gum | – Carboxymethylcellulose | – Malic acid | – Smoke flavoring* |
| – Acesulfame-potassium | – Carob bean | – Maltitol | – Sodium benzoate, metabisulphite, nitrate, nitrite, sulphite |
| – Acetic acid | – Carrageenan | – Maltitol syrup | – Sorbate |
| – Adipic acid | – Cellulose gum | – Maltol | – Sorbic acid |
| – Agar | – Citric acid | – Maltose | – Sorbitol |
| – Agave | – Corn syrup | – Mannitol | – Sorghum |
| – Align | – Corn, corn bran, corn meal | – Methylcellulose | – Spice |
| – Amaranth | – Cream of tartar | – Millet | – Starch* |
| – Annatto | – Dextrose | – Molasses | – Stearic acid |
| – Arrowroot | – Ethyl maltol | – Mono and diglycerides | – Stevia |
| – Artificial color | – Flax | – Monosodium glutamate (MSG) | – Sucralose |
| – Artificial flavor | – Fructose | – Montina | – Sucrose |
| – Ascorbic acid | – Fumaric acid | – MSG | – Tapioca (aka cassava or manioc) |
| – Aspartame | – Gelatin | – Natural color | – Tartaric acid |
| – Atole (blue corn) | – Glucono-delta-lactone | – Nut meal or flour | – Teff |
| – Autolyzed yeast | – Glucose | – Nutritional yeast | – Titanium dioxide |
| – Baker’s yeast | – Glucose syrup | – Papain | – Tortula yeast |
| – Baking soda | – Gluten-free oats | – Pectin | – Tragacanth gum |
| – Baking yeast | – Guaiaac gum | – Polenta | – Vanilla, vanillin, artificial vanilla, vanilla extract |
| – Bean flours | – Guar gum | – Polysorbate 60 and 80 | – Vinegar (not malt vinegar) |
| – Benzoic acid | – Herbs | – Propylene glycol | – Whey |
| – Beta carotene | – Honey | – Potato flour | – White sugar |
| – BHA | – Hydrolyzed corn protein | – Potato starch | – Wild rice |
| – BHT | – Hydrolyzed soy protein | – Propionic acid | – Xanthan gum |
| – Brewer’s yeast in supplements only | – Invert sugar | – Psyllium | – Xylitol |
| – Brown sugar | – Isomalt | – Quinoa | |
| – Buckwheat | – Karaya gum | – Rennet | |
| – Calcium disodium EDTA | – Lactic acid | – Rice, rice bran, rice flour | |
| – Cane sugar | – Lactose | – Saccharin | |
| – Carageenan | – Lecithin | – Sago | |
| – Caramel color* | – Lentil flour | – Seeds | |
| – Caramel flavoring | – Locust bean | – Silicon dioxide | |

Maltodextrin, dextrin and modified food starch are most often gluten-free, however, in rare instances these ingredients may be made with wheat. When you see any of these ingredients in a food, you must refer to the allergen statement. If wheat is NOT in the allergen statement, then maltodextrin, dextrin and modified food starch are gluten-free. Do not eat any food that included wheat in the allergen statement. These ingredients are discussed in the “Controversial Ingredients” section.

GLUTEN CONTAINING Foods to Avoid

** An asterisk denotes controversial and confusing ingredients. Details on these follow in the “Controversial and Confusing Ingredients” section*

- Ale
- Atta
- Barley
- Barley malt
- Beer
- Brown rice syrup*
- Brewer’s yeast
- Bulgur
- Cooking spray for baking (contains wheat flour)
- Couscous
- Dinkle
- Durum
- Einkorn
- Emmer
- Enriched flour
- Farina
- Farro
- Fu
- Gluten, gluten flour
- Graham
- Graham flour
- Hydrolyzed wheat protein
- Kamut
- Lager
- Licorice
- Maida (Indian wheat flour)
- Malt
- Malt extract
- Malt syrup
- Malt flavoring
- Malted milk
- Malt vinegar
- Matzoh
- Modified wheat starch
- Oats
- Oat bran
- Oat syrup
- Orzo
- Ovaltine
- Panko
- Processed in a factory with wheat
- Roux
- Rye
- Seasoning*
- Seitan
- Semolina
- Smoke flavoring*
- Soy sauce
- Spelt
- Tabouli
- Tempura
- Triticale
- Wheat
- Wheat berries
- Wheat flour
- Wheat germ
- Wheat starch
- Wheat starch hydrosyla

Controversial Ingredients

- “Caramel color” is gluten-free. It is generally made from corn. Even if barley is used caramel color is highly processed to the point that not gluten remains.
- “Dextrin” is gluten-free ONLY WHEN THE ALLERGEN STATEMENT DOES NOT INCLUDE WHEAT. It is most often made from corn or tapioca. If dextrin is made from wheat, it would be declared on the allergen statement.
- “Maltodextrin” is gluten-free ONLY WHEN THE ALLERGEN STATEMENT DOES NOT INCLUDE WHEAT. It is most often made from corn, waxy maize, or potato. If maltodextrin is made from wheat, it would be described in the ingredient list and declared in the allergen statement.
- “Modified food starch” is gluten-free ONLY WHEN THE ALLERGEN STATEMENT DOES NOT INCLUDE WHEAT. It may be made from wheat and this would be declared on the food allergen statement. If a food contains modified food starch, but does not list wheat in the allergen statement, then modified food starch is derived from another grain that is gluten-free.
- “Natural flavors” are gluten-free. According to Shelley Case, RD gluten containing grains are not commonly used as flavoring agents however barley is rarely used. In the case that barley is used as a flavor it is almost always listed as “barley malt extract”, or “barley malt flavoring”, or “barley malt syrup”. Some companies may list it as “flavor (contains barley malt)”. It is very rarely that it is hidden in a food as “flavor” or “natural flavor”. Due the rarity of hidden barley in flavors, you do not need to restrict or exert caution with “flavor” or “natural flavors” on a gluten-free diet.
- “Rice syrup” and “brown rice syrup” are not gluten-free. Occasionally rice syrup is made with barley enzymes and contains very low levels of residual gluten. Call the food manufacturer for foods that you regularly consume.
- “Seasoning” is often not gluten-free; you must check the allergen statement. It may utilize a wheat-based carrier.
- “Smoke flavoring” may utilize barley malt flavoring but this is usually used in the ingredient list and not hidden.
- “Starch” is gluten-free on all foods except meat products. “Starch” always refers to cornstarch, unless it is a meat product or a pharmaceutical or dietary supplement, in which it may contain wheat. Read the allergen statement on meat products, pharmaceuticals and dietary supplements. Call the manufacturer when necessary.
- The terms “hydrolyzed plant protein” or “hydrolyzed vegetable protein” are not allowed on food labels. The source of the protein hydrolysate must be listed on the food label.