

Public Private Partnership to Promote Whole Grain Consumption

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A Public Private Partnership promises much and presents an exciting option to increase whole grain consumption. The whole grain content in the Danish diet in 2011–2012 seems to have increased markedly since calculations in 2004. Average whole grain intake is now 60 g/day/10 MJ in 2011–2012. In 2004, it was only 36 g/day/10 MJ (2). The Danish Whole Grain Campaign consists of 34 partners, including government, health organizations, and commercial partners such as producers, millers, gas stations, retailers, and craft bakeries.

Background

As a reaction to the Atkins diet, the Danish Whole Grain Campaign started out as a public health campaign in January 2009. Our scientific background is described in the report “Fuldkorn” (Whole Grain) published by DTU Food—The National Food Institute (1). This scientific report shows that the average intake of whole grain was only 36 g/day/10MJ. The recommended intake is 75 g/day and back in 2008 only 6 % at the recommended intake. As a result of establishing the Whole Grain Partnership, the Danish Food Administration upgraded one of the eight dietary guidelines to include whole grain specifically. If you eat in accordance with the eight dietary guidelines, you eat the diet that helps to prevent cancer, heart diseases, overweight, and diabetes. The partnership model is depicted in Figure 1.

All three stakeholder groups are very important for the campaign to succeed contributing with their own strengths. This is a unique constellation that we think gives an opportunity for moving whole grain consumption much faster than if the campaign was driven by only one partner. The partnership has a joined whole grain secretariat with two full-time employees placed at the Danish Cancer Society. The budget is approximately 400.000 Euros/year and is financed by all the partners paying a yearly membership fee (Figure 2).

All partners are in it for the social responsibility and to improve public health. However, a lot of the commercial partners' engagement is in the possibility of increasing sales of whole

grain products in a new market focusing on product development and marketing whole grain products. It is always hard to do a double sell, where you have to a) convince the consumer of the benefits of a whole class of products and also b) convince them that your product is superior in this class. The whole grain campaign can take on the first task leaving the manufacturers with only one task: differentiating their product within

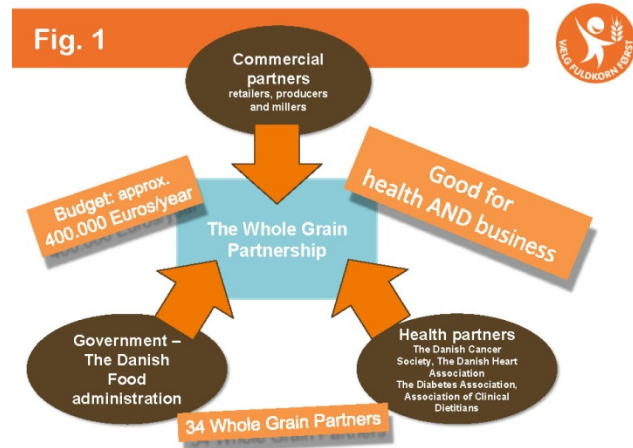


Fig. 1. Organization of the Whole Grain Partnership

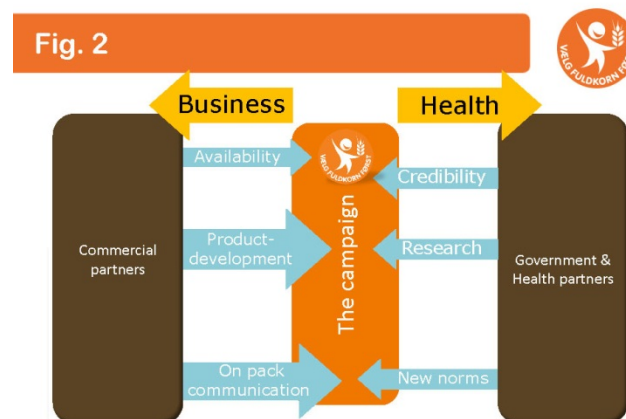


Fig. 2. Contributions from the Whole Grain Partners

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the category of whole grain. By participating in the partnership, the health organizations and government can motivate companies to develop whole grain products and reformulate existing products to contain more whole grain, and they also give the campaign legitimacy.

The Logo and the Whole Grain Strategies

The logo: high whole grain contents and low contents of fat, sugar, and salt (3).

Criteria are established for bread, flour, grains, rice, crisp bread, breakfast cereals, and pasta. Our whole grain strategies include:

- Availability—new products and adding whole grain to existing products
- Product innovations—developing new well-tasting products
- Logo and communication—campaigns and PR
- Events and new norms—example: the whole grain breakfast club

Results

Logo awareness: 52% (general public Q1 2012) and 69% (women—responsible for buying groceries Q1 2012). Confidence in the logo: 82 % (general public Q1 2012). 86% says “Whole grain is healthy” (Q1 2012). Products: 632 products in July 2013; 150 products in January 2009. More than double up in partners since the beginning.

Challenges

Cooperation Between Health Organizations, Government, and Commercial Partners with Different Interests.

One challenge working within a PPP is to have all partners participating and working together. It can be a problem in a PPP if the organizations are not participating enough or do not have the right approach or commitment, are only participating “by name” alone, and only do it to strengthen their image but do not deliver results! However, many of these challenges can be addressed positively in the following ways:

- Build and maintain consensus. Work on common goals, strategy planning, and action plans that commit everyone. Follow up on results.
- Build and maintain a truly broad PPP—invite new partners to participate.
- Ideal role distribution (listen, be open, and understand each other’s perspectives.)
- Strong governmental and NGO support
- Listen to the partners, and find and focus on activities where the interests of health and profit converge
- Create results and excitement. Make partners proud of being part of it.

It is hard work to get there. It took us almost 2 1/2 year to establish the partnership. It is very important that all partners contribute to keep up the good spirit. The more you participate, the more you gain.

Availability and Products that Taste Good. The logo is important for the consumers to see which products are whole grain and “healthy.” The logo defines the contents of whole grain, fat, sugar, and salt. It is easy to make whole grain products, but it is still difficult to make them in accordance with the definitions of the whole grain logo to assure nutritional legitimacy and with a good taste at the same time. This gives the industry the opportunity to make even better use of product

development experts. Products have to be interesting to buy for both retailers and consumers.

Address the People Who Eat the Very Least Whole Grain.

It is important to motivate partners to add whole grain to as many products as possible—both logo products and other products. We think it is important to meet the consumer where they are and in the products they eat. It is a difficult task to move a person who eats a lot of fast food to eat healthy. That is why whole grain needs to be in as many products as possible.

Examples of How We Work Together

February Campaigns 2012—To Have Young Men Eat More Whole Grain. Young men have a lower average intake than the general public. By scanning the QR code on campaign posters, they could enter the campaign site with information about whole grain recipes for “hangovers” and a competition to win two tablets. The campaign was primarily on internet social media. We had posters hanging in cafes, night clubs, vocational schools, and soldiers’ barracks all around the country. Increase in awareness of logo for the age group 18–25 went up by 10% to 63%. The campaign theme was about young people who do not want to miss out on anything—the good party, the weekend get-together with friends, and Facebook updates—and we thought they should not miss out on the whole grain either.

Whole Grain May 2012. Branded material was available for all partners to recommend to the consumers that you can eat whole grain for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Free recipe books in retail stores, gas stations, and health organizations counseling centers. The goal of this campaign was to increase logo



Fig. 3. An example of whole grain advertising



Fig. 4. Examples of Whole Grain Campaign events

awareness by 20% points and increase sales in volume by 20% compared to the same period last year.

The Whole Grain Breakfast Club—Ph.D. Project. Students and teachers at four vocational schools eat whole grain breakfasts every morning while researchers are testing the students' power of concentration, among other things. Whole grain partners are sponsoring whole grain products. This creates a positive dialogue between students and teachers eating breakfast together. Hopefully this initiative will reduce dropout rates and if so we will try to influence politicians to have whole grain breakfasts at all vocational schools.

See other campaign events in Figure 4.

Acknowledgments

All the partners in The Whole Grain Partnership and the National Food Institute.

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