



Summary of Health Canada's Report "Sodium Intake of Canadians in 2017" July 23, 2018

- Since 2010, the average daily sodium intake of Canadians has been reduced from 3,400mg to 2,760mg. This drop represents a 60% advancement towards Health Canada's target of 2,300mg/day.
- This sodium reduction is great news for public health as according to Health Canada's own estimate, a reduction of 640 mg over 10 years, should result in up to 64,000 fewer cases of coronary heart disease and 36,800 fewer cases of stroke annually.
- Bakers have almost doubled the food industry average sodium reduction of 8%. Between 2009 and 2015 sodium levels were reduced in white pantry breads by 13% and wheat pantry breads by 16%, even though sodium is an important functional ingredient which:
 - Strengthens and tightens the effect on the gluten in dough. Without adequate salt in the formulation, the resulting bread would be weak and crumbly over the shelf life of the product.
 - Is essential to fermentation control. When salt and yeast compete for water, salt wins and yeast is slowed down resulting in a more uniform cell structure and better overall bread texture quality.
 - Promotes consistent colour formation during the baking process when the fermentation process is controlled.
 - Is a natural antioxidant that brings out flavours and aromas present in the flour and other ingredients.
- Canada sodium reduction has outpaced other jurisdictions such as the UK where after 11 years of sodium reduction education campaign and industry voluntary initiatives, the daily intake still exceeds 3,200 mg. Similarly, the current US daily sodium intake is estimated at 3400 mg.
- Sodium intake remains high for few segments of the population (males between 14 to 30 years old), not all Canadians consume too much sodium.
- Bakery products, which include: breads, muffins, cookies, desserts, crackers, and granola bars are the top food sources (20%) of sodium. This report does not differentiate between bread and other bakery products. BAC will be asking Health Canada to provide the data in a way that is consistent with the 2004 report.
- Bakers remain committed to further reduce sodium in baked products recognizing Canadian consumer's expectations for taste, texture, health and cost.