

Bread is an important part of the diet and a good source of nutrients and fibre – but, because we eat it so frequently, it is also the single biggest contributor of salt to our diet.

High salt diets result in high blood pressure, leading to an increased risk of heart disease and stroke. So the Food Standards Agency is working successfully with industry to reduce the levels of salt in 80 categories of food to help reduce people's daily intake. We have set a voluntary salt reduction target for bread of 1g salt /100g final product by 2012.

What can you do?

A research project by the Agency, the National Association of Master Bakers and Norfolk County Council looked at whether salt could be reduced in bread made in the craft bakery sector and identified recipe changes that would allow the production of bread in line with the salt target.

The results show that reducing salt levels to the voluntary target:

- is easily achievable
- should not affect the rest of your recipe
- is acceptable to customers

Research also shows that you can reduce the level of salt in bread by 25% over six weeks and customers will not notice the difference.

So if you want to make a real difference to the health of your customers, while maintaining the quality of your bread, **use the table on the back of this leaflet** to calculate the levels of salt in your bread and gradually reduce them.

What difference will it make?

Prior to the project, bread sampled from 25 craft bakers across Norfolk and Derbyshire showed that salt levels ranged from 0.94g salt/100g to 1.73g salt/100g in the final product.

This means a person eating four average slices of bread could be eating 1.17g more salt if they bought their bread from the craft baker with the highest salt levels compared with the one with the lowest.

The maximum recommended daily salt intake is 6g for adults and less for children.

What do other bakers say?

We asked several bakeries to test the recipes developed in the project in their shops:

We have maintained water absorption, which is a key factor for us, and the bloomers and sticks are as crusty as usual – just like they should be!

Bakery manager, City Bakery, Blackwall, London

I can't fault anything

Oven man, City Bakery, Blackwall, London

I changed our recipe from our original 2% added by flour weight in gradual reductions over eight weeks down to 1.1%. I had no comments from my customers during or after the changes and to coincide with the FSA campaign in October I had posters in my shop telling my customers that my bread was lower in salt.

Anthony Kindred, Kindred Bakery, Herne Hill, London

We'll be changing our salt levels tomorrow!

Christopher Freeman, Dunn's Bakery, Crouch End, London

James Freeman, owner of Victoria Bakery and brother of Christopher, came along to watch the baking to see how the trial dough handled and to check the quality of the bread. He was also impressed by the quality of the lower salt bread and changed the recipe in his bakery two days later to meet the 2012 salt target.

Quick guide: how much salt is in your bread?

Using one of the tables below, identify how much flour and how much salt you use to see the amount of salt in your final bread product. You can then see where you are in relation to the 2012 salt target and can start making reductions towards it.

For example, using Table 1: you use 48kg of flour and add approximately 1008g of salt – the estimated salt in your final product is 1.44g/100g.

Think about reducing the amount of salt to 960g and then continue towards the 2012 target.

Table 1: Metric

Weight of flour (kg)	Weight of salt (g)								
16	352	336	320	304	288	272	256	240	210
32	704	672	640	608	576	544	512	480	420
48	1056	1008	960	912	864	816	768	720	620
64	1408	1344	1280	1216	1152	1088	1024	960	830
100	2200	2100	2000	1900	1800	1700	1600	1500	1300
Estimated salt in final product g/100g	1.5	1.44	1.37	1.31	1.24	1.17	1.11	Meets 2010 FSA salt target	Meets 2012 FSA salt target

Table 2: Imperial

Weight of flour (lbs)	Weight of salt (oz)								
35	13	12	11	10.5	10	9.5	9	8	7.5
70	25	24	22	21	20	19	18	17	15
100	35	34	32	30	29	27	26	24	21
Estimated salt in final product g/100g	1.5	1.44	1.37	1.31	1.24	1.17	1.11	Meets 2010 FSA salt target	Meets 2012 FSA salt target

Table 3: Metric and imperial

Weight of flour (kg)	Weight of salt (oz)								
16	12.4	11.9	11.3	10.7	10.2	9.6	9.0	8.5	7.4
32	24.8	23.7	22.6	21.4	20.3	19.2	18.1	16.9	14.8
48	37.2	35.6	33.9	32.2	30.5	28.8	27.1	25.4	21.9
64	49.7	47.4	45.1	42.9	40.6	38.4	36.1	33.9	29.3
100	77.6	74.1	70.5	67.0	63.5	60.0	56.4	52.9	45.9
Estimated salt in final product g/100g	1.5	1.44	1.37	1.31	1.24	1.17	1.11	Meets 2010 FSA salt target	Meets 2012 FSA salt target

Recipes have been calculated in grams and converted to ounces, therefore subject to rounding errors. Based on 1oz = 28.35g.

Further information, including our online 'salt in bread calculator', is available on the Food Standards Agency website: food.gov.uk/saltcalculator