



CONCLUSIONES PONENCIAS NUTRICIÓN

77th WORLD BREAD CONGRESS

From October 2nd to 6th, 2017, the International Union of Bakers and Confectioners UIBC held its 77th World Bread Congress in Mérida (Yucatan Peninsula - Mexico). Highlights of the Congress were the award ceremony for the World Baker and the World Confectioner of the Year 2017, as well as the conference about "Cereals, Bread and Health", by Prof. Beatriz Navia, from Complutense University of Madrid, Spain, and the conference "Can a gluten-free diet be dangerous to your health?" by Prof. Glenn Gaesser, from Arizona State University in Phoenix, USA.

Dr. Navia made an exhaustive review of the role of cereals in the diet, they contribute by balancing the diet and meeting the needs of fibre, vitamins and minerals, as well as their important role in the prevention of diseases, since their consumption is associated with "a lower risk of all-cause mortality, cardiovascular disease and cancer". The intake of three or more servings per day of whole grains, produces, in relation to cardiovascular diseases and type 2 diabetes, "a superior benefit compared to an increased consumption of fruits and vegetables". As opposed to what was previously assumed, recent studies have found that the phenolic content and, therefore, the total antioxidant activity of whole grains is higher than of most fruits and vegetables. It should be stressed that this supposedly greater antioxidant activity of fruits and vegetables was the what led to recommend their consumption more than cereals. Based on the compilation of numerous studies and meta-studies, Dr. Navia concluded that a greater consumption of whole grains has a protective effect against coronary heart disease, cholesterol, colorectal, pancreatic, endometrial and breast and prostate cancers. Likewise, "it would be advisable to try to increase the consumption of cereals for weight control". Regarding the fashion of gluten-free diets, Dr. Navia stated categorically that "following gluten-free diets should not be encouraged for people without celiac disease".

Prof. Gaesser was also categorical stating that "there is no evidence to suggest that following a gluten-free diet has any significant benefits in the general population," and that "the avoidance of gluten may result in a reduced consumption of beneficial grains, which may increase the risk of cardiovascular disease" and that, therefore, "the promotion of gluten-free diets among people without celiac disease should not be encouraged". Prof. Gaesser stressed that "gluten-free diets may be exposed to higher levels of arsenic and mercury, which can increase the risk for cancer and other chronic diseases," and that a gluten-free diet may have adverse consequences for the gastrointestinal health. Dr. Gaesser made a reference to non-wholemeal breads, stating that, according to recent studies, "a greater consumption of refined cereals is not associated with stroke risk neither in men nor in women" and that a pattern of high grain consumption, from both whole and refined sources, "is associated with the lowest risk of incident type 2 diabetes".