

This submission is provided by the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA), the peak medical body for clinical immunology and allergy in Australia and New Zealand to the Productivity Commission Review of the Regulation of Agriculture in response to the draft report issued by the Commission on 21 July 2016 regarding 'gluten-free' labelling. The proposed draft recommendation 9.2 only recognises those with coeliac disease. It does not recognise individuals allergic to wheat who are at risk of anaphylaxis. These individuals also rely on 'gluten-free' labelling to identify the presence of gluten in the foods they purchase. For individuals with wheat allergy, complete avoidance of wheat is critical for managing their allergy as even small amounts of wheat protein (including gluten) has the potential to trigger an allergic reaction including anaphylaxis. This differs to individuals with wheat intolerance or coeliac disease who are able to tolerate small amounts of gluten. The current Food Standards Regulations allows manufacturers to make a low gluten claim. This allows individuals with an intolerance or a preference not to have gluten in their diet to make an informed choice. It also allows individuals with wheat allergy to make an informed choice and prevent a potentially life threatening allergic reaction. ASCIA strongly opposed any changes to the current regulations on gluten free foods to ensure informed choices can continue to be made by wheat allergic individuals.