Reviewer's report

Title: Ethnic differences in grains consumption and their contribution to intake of B-vitamins: Results of the Multiethnic Cohort (MEC) Study

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Reviewer: Patricia Metcalf

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The objective of this manuscript was to “identify major dietary sources of grains and describe their contribution to B vitamin in five ethnic groups”. Dietary intakes were assessed using a food frequency questionnaire. A major problem is that the food frequency questionnaire has not been validated for intakes of B vitamins. The list of foods for inclusion in their food frequency questionnaire was based on foods that contributed more than 85% of the intake of fat, dietary fiber, vitamin A, carotenoids, and vitamin C. From References 28 and 30. Furthermore, the response rates are very low (from 20% for Latinos to 49% in Japanese). This means that the data may not be representative of the actual residents. How well does the food composition data base measure the B vitamins. In general, food composition tables are not particularly accurate for micronutrients. Apart from folic acid which is measured in µg/day, the other vitamins are measured in mg/day, and all have very low recommended daily intakes.

In Tables 3 and 4 the ten major sources of thiamine and riboflavin only cover approximately 50% of the intakes of these vitamins.

As noted by the authors, the study was carried out over 15 years ago and consumption patterns may have changed since then.

Major compulsory revisions
1. The Methods section needs a more complete description of the accuracy of the FFQ in measuring the B vitamins.

Minor essential revisions
1. Discussion, 1st paragraph. Change “Ethnic differences in grains consumption were previously reported.” to “Ethnic differences in grains consumption have been previously reported.”
2. Discussion, 3rd paragraph. Add “of” to “… change color foods.”

Minor issues not for publication.
1. Background, 2nd paragraph. What is resistant starch?

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a
statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.