

## Ungluing sticky subjects

**Q:** I've heard a rumor that there is gluten in envelope glue. Is it true?

**A:** It's no wonder this rumor keeps resurfacing. If you do an Internet search on the gluten in the glue on envelopes, or the related question of whether there is gluten in the adhesive on US postage stamps, you will be convinced this is a real problem.

Web site after web site, story after story, and book after book about celiac disease, repeat the statement that gluten can be found in envelopes and stamps.

But it's not true.

Tonya Muse, senior vice president of the Envelope Manufacturers Association, states that adhesives used on envelopes do not contain gluten.

There are actually only a few envelope glue manufacturers in the US. National Starch & Chemical, a New Jersey company, is one of the largest adhesive suppliers in the world. A company spokesperson says it makes its glue from corn, which is gluten free.

As for postage stamps, the US Postal Service points out that 98 to 99 percent of the stamps it now sells are pressure adhesive stamps. You peel them off a paper backing and press them onto your mail. No licking required for anyone, including celiacs. Even if you happen to get a stamp that needs to be licked, the adhesive on it is gluten free, says Roy Betts, a spokesman for the US Postal Service.

So relax and get that bill or letter in the mail.

**Q:** Is vegetable broth gluten free?

**A:** The Food and Drug Administration has a specific definition of vegetable broth when it is used in canned tuna, but does not detail the exact ingredients in other cases. Vegetable broth in tuna has to be made from two or more of the following vegetables: beans, cabbage, celery, garlic, onions, parsley, peas, potatoes, green or red bell peppers, spinach or tomatoes. That means the broth used in canned tuna is gluten free, as is plain canned tuna. The beans used may include soy beans, in which case soy has

to be noted on the label as required by the Food Allergen and Consumer Protection Act. While this has nothing to do with the gluten-free status of tuna, it might affect those who have soy allergies in addition to celiac disease.

In general, broth is defined as the liquid resulting from cooking vegetables, meat or fish in water. By that definition it would always be gluten free.

But canned vegetable broth can contain other ingredients as well. For example, Swanson's Vegetarian Vegetable broth contains high fructose corn syrup, sugar and potato flour. The Swanson broth, as well as College Inn, Imagine Foods, and Pacific Foods brands are all gluten free. In fact, it is unlikely that you would find a vegetable broth that was not gluten free. Vegetable broth is more likely to be gluten free than chicken or beef broth, which sometimes contain hydrolyzed wheat protein. But you have to read the ingredients label to be sure.

**Q:** I am confused about the potential for gluten in orange juice. When I read the labels for orange juice with extra calcium, I don't see any ingredients that would cause me to think there was gluten. Is there?

**A:** Orange juice is a product that is highly likely to be gluten free, even if it has calcium or vitamins added. But you might start to wonder when you see ingredients other than the juice from oranges.

First, plain pure orange juice, which is made strictly from oranges, is always gluten free. Not only that, it's extremely healthy, providing all the Vitamin C an adult needs daily in an 8-ounce glass. It also has zero fat and provides thiamin, niacin, calcium, magnesium, folate and Vitamin B. And that's without the addition of anything.

But we live in a health-conscious world and right now it's popular to add a variety of "enhancements" to orange juice. Generally, these are vitamins or minerals and do not contain gluten.

Roy Crockett, director of communications for Coca Cola, says all the com-

pany's Minute Maid, Hi-C and Simply Orange products are gluten free.

That includes its enhanced Minute Maid juices—Heartwise, with added plant sterols from highly refined oils to lower cholesterol; Multi-Vitamin, with ramped up amounts of vitamins; Active, with glucosamine to protect cartilage and joints; Extra Vitamin C & E, plus Zinc; Home Squeezed with Calcium and Vitamin D; and Original plus Calcium.

Tropicana, which is a PepsiCo company, is a little more difficult to figure out. In the past, the company has said that only its plain pure orange juice is gluten free. PepsiCo did not respond to requests for more updated information.

You will find some ingredients in the company's specialty juices that you'd never expect to find in orange juice, including tilapia, sardine and anchovy in the mega 3 fish oil and gelatin in the Healthy Heart with Omega 3 brand. But those ingredients are gluten free.

The Orange Juice with Fiber has maltodextrin. Since it does not mention wheat on the label, it cannot be derived from wheat. But even if it was, it would be gluten free because maltodextrin is so highly processed no gluten protein remains.

Most of the other Tropicana orange juice flavors contain mostly vitamins and minerals. The Light and Healthy does list natural flavors, which the company previously said it could not guarantee were gluten free. Wheat is not listed on the label, so they would have to be made from barley or rye to cause a problem for those on the gluten-free diet.

The bottom line is that orange juice is highly likely to be gluten free. As with any food, always read the label to be sure. Plain, pure orange juice contains only the juice from oranges, so you always know you are safe with it.

—Amy Ratner

If you have a question about ingredients in the food you eat, send it to [amy@glutenfreeliving.com](mailto:amy@glutenfreeliving.com) or via postal mail to Amy Ratner, Gluten-Free Living, 560 Warburton Ave. Hastings-on-Hudson, NY 10706. We regret that we cannot respond to all the questions we receive.