**Local businesses struggle with new trans fat guidelines from Health Canada**

**Central Newfoundland bakery says ban on trans fat could put some out of business**

Some food products sold in Newfoundland and Labrador contain amounts of trans fat that are much higher than what Health Canada considers safe.

According to guidelines set out in 2007, trans fats in oils and margarine can be no more than two per cent of the total fat, and five per cent for all other foods.

* [**Health Canada guidelines**](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/nutrition/gras-trans-fats/index-eng.php)

A CBC News Investigation found some items on grocery store shelves in the province that contain up to 30 per cent more trans fat than they should.

## Cutting trans fat not easy

West Tower Bakery in Gambo sells baked goods that exceed trans fat guidelines. A spokesperson for the company says it plans to cut back but it's not easy.

"Some things just won't work," said Roxanne Weinheber, who is working to revise West Tower Bakery's recipes.

Cutting back on trans fats in foods isn't an easy task, says one business owner in Gambo. (Mario Anzuoni/Reuters)

"I can change the margarine but there's some products that come in that I can't control," said Weinheber.

"Trans fat is not something that I buy by 20 kilograms and put two scoops in every recipe. It comes in stuff beyond my control. It could mean one of the best sellers I got here I can't produce."

## The science

Trans fat comes from the process of hydrogenation. It's formed when liquid oils are made into semi-solid fats like shortening or margarine. It keeps food solid at room temperature and extends the shelf life.

Weinheber says many of West Tower's recipes include hydrogenated margarine. She says a non-hydrogenated replacement won't work because the oils often separate.

Trans fats still appear in some products made in Atlantic Canada, including crackers made by Newfoundland company Purity. (Moira Donovan/CBC)

"As a consumer, I wouldn't want to buy a product that was just oozing out grease and oil," said Weinheber.

"So, my philosophy, if I wouldn't eat it or buy it I wouldn't want a consumer to eat it or buy it."

Instead, the company will have to come up with new recipes.

## Healthier options

Weinheber said making changes to offer healthier solutions is expensive and could put local bakeries out of business--something she learned the hard way.

'If I wouldn't eat it or buy it I wouldn't want a consumer to eat it or buy it.'- Roxanne Weinheber

She used to own Chatman's Bakery in Charlottetown, Newfoundland. Weinheber said when she started selling her products to big food suppliers like Loblaws and Costco, she had to make changes to make her food healthier — including cutting back on trans fats.

"I didn't have the financial support to allow the consumer to be aware of what we were doing to protect them," said Weinheber.

Weinheber said the research and development involved in finding new recipes that worked without trans fat was costly and that, along with the investment in food safety equipment, put her company out of business.

West Tower Bakery bought Chatman's in 2014 and now Weinheber's job is to get rid of trans fat in West Tower's products. She said the company will roll out new recipes by the end of 2016.

