

1 **Use of fermented quinoa flour for pasta making and evaluation of the**
2 **technological and nutritional features**

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5 *Anna Lorusso¹, Michela Verni¹, Marco Montemurro¹, Rossana Coda², Marco Gobbetti¹, Carlo*
6 *Giuseppe Rizzello^{*1}*

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8 *¹Department of Soil, Plant and Food Science, University of Bari Aldo Moro, 70126 Bari, Italy*

9 *² Department of Food and Environmental Sciences, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland*

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16 **Corresponding author. Tel.: +39 0805442950; Fax: +390805442911.*

17 *E-mail address: carlogiuseppe.rizzello@uniba.it*

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21 **Abstract**

22
23 Pasta was prepared by replacing 20% of semolina with native and fermented quinoa flour and the
24 effects of substitution on the technological and nutritional characteristics were evaluated. The
25 addition of quinoa reflected the chemical composition of pasta, which had higher fiber, protein, and
26 free amino acids content than semolina pasta, particularly in the case of pasta containing quinoa
27 flour fermented with selected lactic acid bacteria. Furthermore, free amino acids, total phenols, and
28 the antioxidant activity of pasta prepared with fermented quinoa flour were up to twice as high than
29 the other types of pasta. When fermented quinoa flour was used, the water absorption during
30 cooking was the lowest, even though cooking loss was also observed. The use of quinoa flour
31 affected the textural characteristics of pasta, increased the tenacity and, when fermented, also the
32 elasticity. The effects of quinoa fermentation were evident on the nutritional quality of fortified
33 pasta, showing the highest *in vitro* protein digestibility, protein nutritional indices (Essential Amino
34 Acid Index, Biological Value, Protein Efficiency Ratio, and Nutritional Index), as well as lowest
35 predicted glycemic index. These results indicate the positive effect of fermented quinoa flour on
36 pasta fortification.

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38 **Keywords:** quinoa, pasta, lactic acid bacteria

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44 **1. Introduction**

45 Pasta has a primary role in human nutrition, thanks to its complex carbohydrate profile, the large
46 global distribution, and the extended shelf life (Chillo, Laverse, Falcone, & Del Nobile, 2008). The
47 World Health Organization (WHO) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) consider pasta a
48 good vehicle for the addition of different nutrients to diet, since it can be fortified with protein,
49 dietary fibers, vitamins and minerals (Chillo *et al.*, 2008).

50 There is an increasing interest of producers, consumers, and the scientific community towards the
51 addition of high-protein vegetable ingredients deriving from legumes and pseudocereals to pasta
52 formulations (Chillo *et al.*, 2008; Rizzello *et al.*, *in press*; Valcárcel-Yamani & da Silva Lannes,
53 2012; Wang & Zhu, 2016). Even though fortification represents an efficient method to improve the
54 nutritional quality of pasta, the replacement of semolina is still a challenge for the food industry
55 (Rizzello *et al.*, *in press*), since the addition of alternative ingredients markedly affects
56 technological and sensory properties.

57 Quinoa is a pseudo-cereal originating from South America where its use as a staple food can be
58 dated to pre-Hispanic times (Diaz *et al.*, 2015). It has a high-protein content (14–16 g/100 g) (Chillo
59 *et al.*, 2008; Rizzello, Lorusso, Montemurro, & Gobbetti, 2016a) and its amino acid composition,
60 rich in histidine and lysine, is close to the ideal protein balance recommended by the FAO (Chillo *et*
61 *al.*, 2008; Rizzello *et al.*, 2016a). Quinoa has a relatively high quantity of vitamins and minerals,
62 iron and calcium (Chillo *et al.*, 2008); moreover, lipids have a high quality, and are particularly rich
63 in linoleate and linolenate (Chillo *et al.*, 2008), having a linoleic:linolenic acid ratio which falls
64 closer to the recommended values (5:1-10:1) for an healthy diet (Diaz *et al.*, 2013). During the last
65 years, the production of quinoa markedly increased, thus emphasizing its suitability for an extended
66 cultivation in different climatic regions of North America, India, and Europe (Rizzello *et al.*, 2016a;
67 Stikic *et al.*, 2012). Due to its nutritional quality, quinoa can have a role in functional food
68 applications, which is an increasing trend in the developed world. Some studies have highlighted

69 the potential of quinoa in gluten-free extruded food such as pasta (Schoenlechner, Drausinger,
70 Ottenschlaeger, & Jurackova, 2010) and corn-based snacks (Diaz *et al.*, 2013).
71 Recently, quinoa flour sourdough fermented by autochthonous lactic acid bacteria (Rizzello *et al.*,
72 2016a) was used for the enrichment of wheat bread. Free amino acids, soluble fibers, total phenols,
73 phytase and antioxidant activities, and the *in vitro* protein digestibility, markedly increased during
74 fermentation (Rizzello *et al.*, 2016a). The results collected encouraged the use of quinoa and
75 selected starters for the manufacture of novel and healthy products.
76 In this work, fermented quinoa flour was used for pasta fortification with the aim of enhancing its
77 nutritional features. Fermentation with lactic acid bacteria has been previously applied to the
78 manufacture of pasta with the aim to confer specific nutritional characteristics. Durum wheat
79 semolina was fermented with a pool of selected lactic acid bacteria targeting gluten reduction
80 (Curiel *et al.*, 2014; Di Cagno *et al.*, 2005) and *Lactobacillus plantarum* strains were used to
81 produce vitamin B2-enriched pasta (Capozzi *et al.*, 2011). In the present study, native and
82 fermented quinoa flour were used as ingredients in semolina pasta manufacture aiming at evaluating
83 the effects on the nutritional and technological properties of the fortified pasta.

84

85 **2. Materials and methods**

86 *2.1. Raw materials and microorganisms*

87 Organic quinoa (*Chenopodium quinoa*) dehulled seeds imported from Argentina (Fundacion
88 Nuevagestion, San Ignacio de Loyola, Jujuy) were used in this study. Quinoa flour (QF) obtained
89 by milling with a M20 miller (IKA Werke GmbH and Co. KG, Staufen, Germany), was
90 characterized by the follow proximal composition: moisture, 11.4 g/100 g; protein, 13.0 g/100 g;
91 lipids, 5.0 g/100 g; total carbohydrates, 60.5 g/100 g; total dietary fibers, 8.4 g/100 g;
92 g.

93 Wheat (*Triticum durum*) semolina was purchased from Mininni mill (Altamura BA, Italy). Its
94 proximate composition was: moisture, 10.2 g/100 g; protein, 12.1 g/100 g.; fat, 1.8 g/100 g; ash, 0.6
95 g/100 g and total carbohydrates, 75.5 g/100 g.

96 *Lactobacillus plantarum* T6B10 and *Lactobacillus rossiae* T0A16 (previously isolated from quinoa
97 flour) (Rizzello *et al.*, 2016a) were used as starter for quinoa flour fermentation. The lactic acid
98 bacteria strains were routinely propagated at 30°C in MRS broth (Oxoid, Basingstoke, Hampshire,
99 England).

100

101 2.2. Quinoa fermentation

102 Prior to fermentation, *L. rossiae* T0A16 and *L. plantarum* T6B10 were cultivated at 30°C until the
103 late exponential phase of growth was reached (approx. 12h). Cells were harvested by centrifugation
104 (10,000 x g, 10 min, 4°C) and washed twice in 50 mmol/L sterile potassium phosphate buffer (pH
105 7.0). The lactic acid bacteria cells were suspended in the water used for dough preparation and
106 inoculated at an initial cell density of approx. log 7.0 cfu/g of dough. Quinoa dough was prepared
107 by mixing quinoa flour and tap water with a dough yield (DY, dough weight x 100/flour weight) of
108 160, corresponding to 62.5 and 37.5 g/100 g of flour and water, respectively. The dough was
109 fermented at 30°C for 16 h and used as ingredient for pasta making as described below. The pH of
110 quinoa dough was determined by a pHmeter (Model 507, Crison, Milan, Italy) with a food
111 penetration probe. Total titratable acidity (TTA) was determined according to AACC method 02-
112 31.01 (AACC, 2010). Presumptive lactic acid bacteria were enumerated using MRS agar medium
113 (Oxoid, Basingstoke, Hampshire, United Kingdom) supplemented with cycloheximide (0.1 g/L).
114 Plates were incubated at 30°C for 48 h, under anaerobiosis (AnaeroGen and AnaeroJar, Oxoid).

115

116 2.3. Pasta making

117 Experimental pasta was manufactured using a pilot plant La Parmigiana SG30 (Fidenza, Italy).

118 Formulas for doughs used for pasta making are reported in Table 1. All the doughs for pasta making

119 were made with a DY of 130, corresponding to a mixture of 23 g/100 g water and 77 g/100 g flour.
120 A reference pasta was made only using wheat semolina (WP).
121 Two types of pasta containing quinoa were made: quinoa pasta (QP) in which the 20% of semolina
122 was replaced by native quinoa flour, and a fermented quinoa pasta (FQP), in which the fermented
123 quinoa dough was added to obtain the same percentage of replacement of semolina with quinoa
124 flour. Ingredients were mixed in three steps (1 min mixing and 6 min hydration). Then, the final
125 dough was mixed for 30 s and extruded at 45-50°C, through a n.76 bronze die (150 mm diameter).
126 The extruded material was cut with a rotating knife for short pasta shapes to obtain grooved
127 “macaroni”. For drying, pasta was arranged on frames (1.5 kg for frame) and treated according to
128 the cycle described in Table 1S, at low temperature (55°C).

129

130 *2.4. Hydration test, cooking time, cooking loss and water absorption.*

131 The method of Marti, Fongaro, Rossi, Lucisano, and Pagani (2011) (ratio pasta : water of 1:20, 180
132 min of incubation) was used to determine the hydration at 25°C, while the method of Schoenlecher
133 *et al.* (2010) was used to determine the cooking time. The optimal cooking time (OCT)
134 corresponded to the disappearance of the white core. Cooking loss (expressed as grams of matter
135 loss/100 g of pasta) was evaluated by determining the amount of solids lost into the cooking water
136 (Curiel *et al.*, 2014). The increase of pasta weight during cooking (water absorption) was evaluated
137 by weighing pasta before and after cooking. The results were expressed as $[(W_1 - W_0)/W^0]*100$,
138 where W_1 is the weight of cooked pasta and W_0 is the weight of the uncooked samples.

139

140 *2.5. Chemical characteristics of pasta*

141 Total titratable acidity (TTA) was determined as mentioned in 2.2. Protein (total nitrogen \times 5.7),
142 lipids, ash, total dietary fibers (TDF) and moisture contents were determined according to the
143 AACC approved methods 46-11A, 30-10.01, 08-01, 32-05.01, and 44-15A, respectively (AACC,

144 2010). The amount of total starch was determined using Ewers' polarimetric method (ISO
145 10520:1997).

146 A phosphate buffer extract, obtained by grinding pasta samples in 50 mmol/L phosphate buffer, 0.1
147 mol/L NaCl, pH 7.0, was used for peptide and free amino acids (FAA) analyses. Peptide
148 concentration was determined by the *o*-phthaldialdehyde (OPA) method (Church, Swaisgood,
149 Porter, & Catignani, 1983); FAA were determined by a Biochrom 30 series Amino Acid Analyzer
150 (Biochrom Ltd., Cambridge Science Park, England) as described by Rizzello, Nionelli, Coda, Di
151 Cagno, and Gobbetti (2010a).

152 The concentration of total phenols of pasta samples cooked until the OCT was determined on
153 methanolic extracts (ME) as described by Slinkard and Singleton (1997), and expressed as gallic
154 acid equivalent.

155 The 2,2-diphenyl-1-picrylhydrazyl (DPPH) radical scavenging activity was also determined on the
156 methanolic extract (ME) of cooked pasta samples, as previously described by Rizzello, Nionelli,
157 Coda, De Angelis, and Gobbetti (2010b).

158

159 *2.6. Texture and color analysis*

160 Instrumental Texture Profile Analysis (TPA) was carried out with a TVT-300XP Texture Analyzer
161 (TexVol Instruments, Viken, Sweden), equipped with a cylindrical probe (diameter 95 mm). For the
162 analysis, pasta samples were cooked until the OCT, left to cool at room temperature and placed in a
163 beaker (diameter, 100 mm; height 90 mm), filled to about half volume. The selected settings were
164 the following: test speed 1 mm/s, 30% deformation of the sample and two compression cycles (with
165 a break of 30 s). TPA was carried out (Gámbaro, Feszman, Giménez, Varela, & Salvador, 2004)
166 using Texture Analyzer TVT-XP 3.8.0.5 software (TexVol Instruments).

167 The chromaticity co-ordinates of the samples (obtained by a Minolta CR-10 camera) were reported
168 as color difference, ΔE^*_{ab} , calculated by equation (1), where ΔL , Δa and Δb are the differences for

169 L, a and b values between sample and reference (a white ceramic plate having L = 93.4, a = - 1.8
170 and b = 4.4).

171

$$172 \quad \Delta E * ab = \sqrt{(\Delta L)^2 + (\Delta a)^2 + (\Delta b)^2} \quad (1)$$

173

174 2.7. Nutritional characterization

175 The *in vitro* protein digestibility (IVPD) of pasta samples, cooked until the OCT, was determined
176 by the method of Akesson and Stahmann (1964) modified by Rizzello *et al.* (2014). The IVPD was
177 expressed as the percentage of the total protein, which was solubilized after enzyme hydrolysis. The
178 modified method of AOAC (2005) was used to determine the total amino acid profile of the
179 digested protein fraction (Curiel *et al.*, 2014). Amino acids were analyzed by a Biochrom 30 series
180 Amino Acid Analyzer as described above. Since the above procedure of hydrolysis does not allow
181 the determination of tryptophan, it was estimated by the method of Pinter-Szakács and Molnán-Perl
182 (1990). Chemical Score (CS) estimates the amount of protein required to provide the minimal
183 essential amino acids (EAA) pattern for adults, which was recently re-defined by FAO in 2007
184 (Millward, 2012). It was calculated using the equation of Block and Mitchel (1946). The sequence
185 of limiting essential amino acids corresponds to the list of EAA, having the lowest chemical score
186 (Block & Mitchel, 1946). The protein score indicates the chemical score of the most limiting EAA
187 present in the test protein (Block & Mitchel, 1946). Essential Amino Acid Index (EAAI) estimates
188 the quality of the test protein, using its EAA content as the criterion (Oser, 1959). EAAI was
189 calculated according to the equation (2):

$$190 \quad EAAI = \sqrt{\frac{(EAA_1*100)(EAA_2*100)(\dots)(EAA_n*100)[sample]}{(EAA_1*100)(EAA_2*100)(\dots)(EAA_n*100)[reference]}} \quad (2)$$

191 The Biological Value (BV) indicates the utilizable fraction of the test protein (Oser, 1959). BV was
192 calculated using the equation (3):

$$193 \quad BV = ([1.09 * EAAI] - 11.70) \quad (3)$$

194 The Protein Efficiency Ratio (PER) estimates the protein nutritional quality based on the amino acid
195 profile after hydrolysis. PER was determined using the equation (4), developed by Ihekoronye
196 (1981):

$$197 \text{ PER} = -0.468 + (0.454 * [\text{Leucine}]) - (0.105 * [\text{Tyrosine}]) \quad (4)$$

198 The Nutritional Index (NI) normalizes the qualitative and quantitative variations of the test protein
199 compared to its nutritional status. NI was calculated using the equation (5) of Crisan and Sands
200 (1978), which considers all the factors with an equal importance:

$$201 \text{ NI} = (\text{EAA} * \text{Protein (g/100 g)}) / 100 \quad (5)$$

202

203 *2.8. Starch hydrolysis index and predicted glycaemic index*

204 The analysis of starch hydrolysis was carried out on pasta samples, cooked until the OCT with a
205 procedure mimicking the *in vivo* digestion of starch (De Angelis *et al.*, 2009). The degree of starch
206 digestion was expressed as percentage of potentially available starch hydrolyzed at different times
207 (30, 60, 90, 120 and 180 min). The non-linear model proposed by De Angelis *et al.* (2009) was
208 applied to describe the kinetics of starch hydrolysis. The hydrolysis curves were obtained with the
209 software Statistica 8.0. Wheat flour bread (WB) was used as the control to estimate the hydrolysis
210 index (HI = 100). The predicted GI (Capriles & Areas, 2013) was calculated using the equation (6),
211 with wheat bread as the reference (GI wheat bread = 100).

$$212 \text{ GI} = 0.549 * \text{HI} + 39.71 \quad (6)$$

213

214 *2.10. Statistical analysis*

215 All the chemical and physical analysis were carried out in triplicate for each batch of pasta. Data
216 were subjected to one-way ANOVA; paired-comparison of treatment means was achieved by
217 Tukey's procedure at $P < 0.05$, using the statistical software Statistica 8.0 (StatSoft Inc., Tulsa,
218 USA).

219

220 3. Results and discussion

221 3.1. Quinoa fermentation

222 Prior incorporation to semolina flour for pasta production, quinoa flour dough was inoculated with
223 *L. plantarum* T6B10 and *L. rossiae* T0A16 and fermented for 16 h at 30°C. Compared with the
224 beginning, the cell density of lactic acid bacteria increased during incubation (approx. 2 log cycles),
225 up to 9.96 ± 0.3 log ufc/g of dough. The pH and TTA values of the quinoa flour dough before
226 fermentation were 5.64 ± 0.03 and 7.7 ± 0.2 mL 1 mol/L NaOH, respectively. After incubation, pH
227 decreased significantly ($P < 0.05$) to 4.02 ± 0.05 , while TTA increased to 27.7 ± 0.3 mL 1 mol/L
228 NaOH. *L. plantarum* T6B10 and *L. rossiae* T0A16 were isolated from quinoa matrices (Rizzello *et al.*
229 *al.*, 2016a) and already employed in quinoa flour fermentation thanks to the adaptability to the
230 matrix and their pro-technological characteristics (acidification kinetic and efficiency in
231 proteolysis). It was shown that, through their metabolic activities, *L. plantarum* T6B10 and *L.*
232 *rossiae* T0A16 allowed the increase of the antioxidant and phytase activities and *in vitro* protein
233 digestibility, and the degradation of condensed tannins in fermented quinoa dough (Rizzello *et al.*,
234 2016a). Consequently, the use of fermented quinoa dough in breadmaking, markedly improved the
235 biochemical, texture and sensory properties of enriched wheat bread (Rizzello *et al.*, 2016a).

236

237 3.2. Technological characterization

238 The amount of high-protein flour that can substitute or can be added to semolina represents a
239 compromise between nutritional improvement and achievement of satisfactory sensory and
240 functional properties of the pasta (Chillo *et al.*, 2008). According to previous researches, reporting a
241 decrease of sensory and technological quality (Rizzello *et al.*, 2016a; Stikic *et al.*, 2012; Valcárcel-
242 Yamani *et al.*, 2012; Wang & Zhu, 2016) in correspondence of high percentage of semolina
243 replacement, experimental pasta was produced with 20 g/100 g of quinoa.

244 After extrusion, the pH of the pasta was 6.12 ± 0.07 , 5.64 ± 0.09 , and 4.74 ± 0.04 respectively for
245 WP, QP, and FQP, while the TTA values were 2.1 ± 0.2 , 4.2 ± 0.1 , and 9.4 ± 0.02 mL 1 mol/L
246 NaOH respectively for WP, QP, and FQP. Water absorption capacity was first investigated on the
247 uncooked samples with the aim to evaluate how ingredients and processing conditions affected the
248 structure of pasta (Marti *et al.*, 2011). Indeed, it was reported that the ability of pasta to absorb
249 water is affected by raw material composition and processing conditions, which can promote
250 different micro- and macro-structures (e.g. porosity). Therefore, water absorption capacity is
251 considered to be one of the most important characteristics for pasta (Marti *et al.*, 2011). The kinetics
252 of water uptake at 25°C are shown in Figure 1. No significant ($P > 0.05$) differences were found
253 among the pasta samples before 60 min; then, the hydration of the pasta including quinoa was
254 significantly ($P < 0.05$) higher than WP. FQP had the highest hydration at 180 min (90 ± 4 g/100 g),
255 compared to QP and WP (7 and 16 g/100 g, respectively) (Figure 1). The relevant absorption of
256 water by QP and FQP can be attributed to the abundance of hydrophilic molecules (e.g. FAA and
257 small peptides, fibers) rather than to the effect of the processing conditions (forming and drying
258 conditions) (Curiel *et al.*, 2014).

259 The experimental OCT for WP resulted 8.7 min and a significant ($P < 0.05$) decrease in OCT was
260 found for pasta including quinoa flour (Table 2). Fortification of pasta with native quinoa flour led
261 to a higher water absorption during cooking and a higher cooking loss compared to WP (Table 2).
262 The opposite was observed when fermented quinoa was used and the water absorption during
263 cooking was significantly ($P < 0.05$) lower for FQP than WP and QP (Table 2). The cooking loss of
264 FQP resulted slightly but significantly ($P < 0.05$) higher than QP.

265 The weaker interaction between wheat proteins (mainly glutenins and gliadins) and quinoa proteins,
266 mostly albumins and globulins (Diaz *et al.*, 2013), might be the reason for the increased cooking
267 loss (Wang & Zhu, 2016). Moreover, the lowest absorption found for FQP might be due to a lower
268 amount of starch compared to WP, and to a weaker protein network compared to QP, caused by
269 proteolysis occurring during quinoa fermentation.

270

271 3.3. Chemical characterization

272 The higher amount of proteins and fibers of quinoa flour compared to semolina reflected in both the
273 fortified pasta, independently of fermentation (Table 2), in accordance with previous results
274 obtained on bread (Rizzello *et al.*, 2016a). Protein concentration increased (approx. 20%) when
275 quinoa flour was added to pasta and similar trend was found for dietary fiber and ash (Table 2).
276 Starch concentration was higher in WP and decreased in pasta containing quinoa flour (Table 2).
277 The proteolysis occurring during lactic acid bacteria fermentation caused the hydrolysis of the
278 native proteins and a significant increase of peptides and FAA concentration. The lowest peptide
279 amount was found for WP (1.9 ± 0.3 mg/g of pasta) and the values significantly ($P < 0.05$) increased
280 when quinoa flour was added (2.7 ± 0.3 and 7.1 ± 0.4 mg/g of pasta, respectively for QP and FQP).
281 The same trend was observed for total FAA concentration, having the highest value in FQP ($720 \pm$
282 20 mg/kg of pasta), which was up to 2-3 times higher than QP and WP (329 ± 10 mg/kg of pasta
283 and 228 ± 12 mg/kg of pasta, respectively). Compared to WP, the addition of quinoa flour caused
284 an increase of the concentration of almost all the individual FAA (Figure 2), especially Thr, Glu,
285 Cys, Arg, and Pro. In particular, the highest concentration of Ser, Pro, Arg, Glu, and Leu was found
286 in FQP (Figure 2). The concentration of Lys, the most limiting amino acid in wheat flour, was $4.6 \pm$
287 1.0 , 10.3 ± 3.0 , and 34.0 ± 2.7 mg/kg respectively in WP, QP, and FQP. Moreover, the use of
288 quinoa flour, significantly ($P < 0.05$) increased the amount of the functional γ -amino butyric acid
289 (GABA) from 10 ± 2 mg/kg (WP) to 28 ± 3 and 38 ± 2 mg/kg, respectively in QP and FQP (Figure
290 2). As determined through methanolic extraction, the total phenols concentration of QP was
291 significantly higher than WP; moreover, a further increase was found when fermented quinoa was
292 used (Table 2). As previously shown (Nionelli *et al.*, 2014; Rizzello, Coda, Mazzacane, Minervini,
293 & Gobbetti, 2012), acidification during sourdough fermentation improves the extraction of total
294 phenols, also as a consequence of the starters metabolic activity, able to hydrolyze complex
295 phenolic compounds and their glycosylated forms into the corresponding phenolic acids. The

296 increased solubilization of phenolics might be related to the highest antioxidant activity found in in
297 FQP (Table 2).

298

299 3.4. Textural properties

300 Overall, the structural characteristics of fortified pasta are considered of great importance because,
301 besides good sensorial attributes and low cooking loss, pasta of high quality must have low
302 breakage susceptibility and good cooking resistance (Chillo *et al.*, 2008).

303 The use of quinoa flour affected the TPA parameters (Table 2). WP had the lowest value of
304 hardness, corresponding to the force required to compress pasta between teeth, and the presence of
305 quinoa flour increased the hardness of ca 15% in QP and 11% in FQP. (Table 2). Resilience,
306 defined as the ability of pasta to regain its original shape after first compression, was similar for WP
307 and FQP, while it was significantly ($P<0.05$) lower in QP (Table 2). Fracturability was the lowest
308 for WP, while no differences were found between QP and FQP. Cohesiveness, corresponding to the
309 ability of the sample to resist to two different compressions, followed the same trend observed for
310 resilience.

311 Overall, TPA demonstrated that quinoa flour increased the tenacity of pasta (hardness and
312 fracturability parameters); when fermented, the overall elasticity (resilience and cohesiveness) was
313 improved. The first effect was probably due to the increase of protein concentration; the second, to
314 the modification caused on the protein network by the proteolysis occurring during fermentation
315 (Rizzello *et al.*, *in press*). A moderate increase of the cohesiveness, considered as a good indicator
316 of how sample holds together upon cooking (Rizzello *et al.*, *in press*), was found in pasta containing
317 fermented quinoa flour compared to QP. As a consequence of quinoa flour addition, pasta color
318 showed a different profile. The lightness (L) of QP and FQP samples was lower ($P<0.05$) than WP
319 (Table 2). An opposite trend was found for ΔE^*_{ab} , being the highest for FQP (Table 2).

320 Pasta samples were also analyzed for sensory properties through a panel test (see Supplementary
321 Material) showing some peculiar traits conferred by quinoa flour. The sensory analysis revealed the

322 overall acceptability of FQP, and the improvement of some flavor and taste attributes compared to
323 QP.

324

325 *3.5. Nutritional characterization*

326 The IVPD gives information on the stability of protein hydrolysates, and on how they withstand to
327 digestive processes. The digestible protein fraction was used for the determination of the protein
328 quality indices. The addition of native quinoa flour decreased IPVD significantly ($P<0.05$) of
329 approx. 15% compared to WP (Table 3). Nevertheless, when quinoa flour was fermented, the IVPD
330 increased, compared to QP, and was slightly lower than WP. The increase of IVPD can be
331 attributed to proteolysis, as already reported for quinoa (Rizzello *et al.*, 2016a) and other protein
332 sources (Coda *et al.*, 2015; Rizzello *et al.*, 2010a; Rizzello, Montemurro, & Gobbetti, 2016b).

333 The quality of proteins is considered one of the most important attribute for defining the nutritional
334 characteristics of a food matrix. The amino acid composition has to be combined with protein
335 digestibility for a better prediction of the nutritive value (Rizzello *et al.*, 2014). Based on CS, the
336 sequence of limiting amino acids for WP and QSP was found to be Lys, His, and Leu, while Lys
337 Thr, and Val were the limiting amino acids for QP. Compared to WP, the addition of quinoa flour
338 caused significant ($P<0.05$) increase of some of the CS (e.g. Lys, Met, Trp), particularly after
339 fermentation, leading to the highest CS for FQP (Table 3).

340 Compared to WP, EAAI and BV were significantly ($P<0.05$) higher for FQP, while the values for
341 QP were intermediate. EAAI indicates the ratio of essential amino acids of the sample compared to
342 the reference, while BV estimates the nitrogen potentially retained by human body after
343 consumption. Also the PER, which reflects the capacity of a protein to support the body weight
344 gain, was the highest for FQP. Within the indices that are used to evaluate the nutritional value of
345 foods, NI combines qualitative and quantitative factors and it is considered a global predictor of the
346 protein quality (Curiel *et al.*, 2014). Since the protein bioavailability increased, the value of NI of
347 FQP was significantly ($P<0.05$) higher than WP (Table 3). Starch hydrolysis, determined

348 mimicking the *in vivo* digestion, represents a presumptive measure of the glycemic index (GI) in
349 healthy subjects (De Angelis *et al.*, 2009). Compared to white bread (WB), used as the analytical
350 control and corresponding to a HI = 100, the HI value of WP was 72.9% and significantly ($P < 0.05$)
351 lower value was found for QP (67.4%) and FQP (52.7%). As a consequence, the predicted GI value
352 of FQP was the lowest (Table 3). In general, GI depends on the food texture and particle size, type
353 of starch, degree of starch gelatinization, physical entrapment of starch molecules within food, food
354 processing and other ingredients (Petitot, Boyer, Minier, & Micard, 2010). Pasta containing quinoa
355 flour had a lower value of HI (and predicted GI) compared to control, probably due to the higher
356 concentration of dietary fibers and resistant starch, and a further decrease was found when the
357 fermented flour was used. This effect could be attributed to biological acidification, which is one of
358 the main factors that decreases starch hydrolysis rate and HI (De Angelis *et al.*, 2009).

359

360 **4. Conclusions**

361 Addition of 20 g/100 g of quinoa flour to semolina was successful in improving the nutritional
362 characteristics of pasta without compromising the technological and sensory quality. This study
363 showed for the first time that fermentation with lactic acid bacteria was able to further enhance the
364 positive effect of quinoa. Pasta containing fermented quinoa flour presented a higher nutritional
365 profile compared to the other pasta, characterized by improved protein digestibility and quality,
366 high nutritional scores, low predicted glycemic index and high antioxidant potential. A simple and
367 low cost fermentation technology is a successful way to produce pasta with high nutritional
368 potential, suitable to be included in the future food habits development.

369

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Legends to figures

Fig. 1. Kinetics of water absorption of pasta at 25°C. WP, pasta made with durum wheat semolina (■); QP, quinoa pasta in which 20% of semolina was replaced by native quinoa flour (■); FQP, fermented quinoa pasta, in which the fermented quinoa dough was added to obtain the same percentage of replacement of semolina with quinoa flour (■). Data are the means of three independent analyses. ^{a-c}Values with different superscript letters within the same time, differ significantly ($P < 0.05$). Bars of standard deviations are also represented.

Fig. 2. Concentration of free amino acids and their derivatives (mg/kg) of pasta. WP, pasta made with durum wheat semolina (■); QP, quinoa pasta in which the 20% of semolina was replaced by native quinoa flour (■); FQP, fermented quinoa pasta, in which the fermented quinoa dough was added to obtain the same percentage of replacement of semolina with quinoa flour (■). Data are the means of three independent analyses. Three-letters amino acid code (IUPAC) is used. ^{a-c}Values with different superscript letters within the same amino acid, differ significantly ($P < 0.05$). Bars of standard deviations are also represented.

Table 1. Formulas for pasta making. All the doughs had a final DY of 130, corresponding to 23 g/100g water and 77 g/100g flours mixture. WP, reference pasta made using only wheat semolina; QP, quinoa pasta in which the 20% of semolina was replaced by native quinoa flour; FQP, fermented quinoa pasta, in which the fermented quinoa dough was added to obtain the same percentage of replacement of semolina with quinoa flour.

	WP	QP	FQP
Semolina (g/100g)	77	61.6	61.6
Quinoa flour (g/100g)	-	15.4	
Fermented quinoa dough* (g/100g)	-	-	24.64
Water (g/100g)	23	23	13.76

Fermented quinoa dough (DY 160) was fermented at 30°C for 16 h. *Lactobacillus rossiae* T0A16 and *L. plantarum* T6B10 were used as starters and inoculated at ca. log 7.0 cfu/g.

Table 2. Chemical, technological, textural characteristics and color analysis of pasta samples. WP, pasta made with durum wheat semolina; QP, quinoa pasta in which the 20% of semolina was replaced by native quinoa flour; FQP, fermented quinoa pasta, in which the fermented quinoa dough was added to obtain the same percentage of replacement of semolina with quinoa flour.

	WP	QP	FQP
<i>Chemical characteristics</i>			
Dry matter (g/100g)	91.56 ± 0.21	91.60 ± 0.19	91.58 ± 0.08
Proteins (g/100g)	10.27 ± 0.14 ^b	12.4 ± 0.13 ^a	12.3 ± 0.07 ^a
Lipids (g/100g)	0.60 ± 0.14 ^b	2.64 ± 0.12 ^a	2.62 ± 0.10 ^a
Starch (%)	75.71 ± 0.22 ^a	69.61 ± 0.15 ^b	69.21 ± 0.18 ^b
Total dietary fibers (g/100g)	3.10 ± 0.17 ^b	4.64 ± 0.15 ^a	4.62 ± 0.10 ^a
Ash (g/100g)	0.81 ± 0.12 ^b	1.08 ± 0.13 ^a	1.05 ± 0.15 ^a
Total phenols (mmol/kg)	2.21 ± 0.18 ^c	3.02 ± 0.21 ^b	4.06 ± 0.22 ^a
Antioxidant activity ¹	14 ± 1 ^c	26 ± 2 ^b	35 ± 2 ^a
<i>Technological characteristics</i>			
OCT (min)	8.7 ± 0.2 ^a	6.8 ± 0.2 ^b	7.0 ± 0.1 ^b
Water absorption (g/100g)	128.6 ± 3.7 ^b	135.3 ± 3.4 ^a	118.0 ± 4.5 ^c
Cooking loss (g of d.m./100g)	5.01 ± 0.11 ^c	6.01 ± 0.12 ^b	6.21 ± 0.04 ^a
<i>Textural characteristics</i>			
Hardness (N)	3.31 ± 0.06 ^c	3.80 ± 0.09 ^a	3.68 ± 0.05 ^b
Resilience	0.28 ± 0.04 ^a	0.22 ± 0.05 ^b	0.27 ± 0.04 ^a
Fracturability (N)	2.02 ± 0.24 ^b	2.32 ± 0.07 ^a	2.33 ± 0.09 ^a
Cohesiveness	0.59 ± 0.02 ^a	0.53 ± 0.01 ^b	0.60 ± 0.02 ^a
<i>Color analysis</i>			
L	66.10 ± 0.89 ^a	56.29 ± 4.24 ^b	50.69 ± 2.35 ^c
a	-3.18 ± 0.15 ^b	-1.14 ± 0.39 ^a	-1.48 ± 0.21 ^a
b	19.34 ± 0.51 ^a	16.48 ± 1.49 ^b	13.68 ± 1.03 ^c
Δe	30.08 ± 0.85 ^c	38.52 ± 4.24 ^b	44.49 ± 0.31 ^a

The data are the means of three independent experiments ± standard deviations (n = 3).

¹The antioxidant activity was determined based on the scavenging activity towards DPPH radical after 10 min of reaction.

^{a-c} Values in the same row with different superscript letters differ significantly *($P < 0.05$)

Table 3. Nutritional characterization of pasta. WP, pasta made with durum wheat semolina; QP, quinoa pasta in which the 20% of semolina was replaced by native quinoa flour; FQP, fermented quinoa pasta, in which the fermented quinoa dough was added to obtain the same percentage of replacement of semolina with quinoa flour.

	WP	QP	QSP
<i>In vitro</i> digestibility (%)	42.1 ± 0.2 ^a	35.6 ± 0.2 ^c	40.4 ± 0.1 ^b
Chemical score (%)			
Histidine	64 ± 1 ^b	67 ± 1 ^b	74 ± 1 ^a
Isoleucine	89 ± 1 ^b	87 ± 2 ^b	120 ± 3 ^a
Leucine	69 ± 2 ^c	85 ± 3 ^b	89 ± 2 ^a
Lysine	29 ± 1 ^b	36 ± 2 ^a	391 ± 2 ^a
Cystine	292 ± 3 ^b	284 ± 3 ^b	316 ± 3 ^a
Methionine	74 ± 2 ^c	80 ± 1 ^b	89 ± 1 ^a
Phenylalanine + Tyrosine	182 ± 2 ^a	172 ± 2 ^b	187 ± 3 ^a
Threonine	72 ± 1 ^a	59 ± 1 ^b	76 ± 2 ^a
Valine	82 ± 1 ^b	64 ± 1 ^c	93 ± 2 ^a
Tryptophan	130 ± 4 ^c	145 ± 2 ^b	153 ± 1 ^a
Sequence of limiting EAA			
	Lysine	Lysine	Lysine
	Histidine	Threonine	Histidine
	Leucine	Valine	Threonine
Essential Amino Acid Index (EAAI)	44.5 ± 0.4 ^c	46.8 ± 0.3 ^b	50 ± 0.3 ^a
Biological Value (BV)	36.8 ± 0.3 ^c	39.60 ± 0.1 ^b	45.7 ± 0.2 ^a
Protein Efficiency Ratio (PER)	19.5 ± 0.2 ^c	20.65 ± 0.3 ^b	23.4 ± 0.3 ^a
Nutritional Index (NI)	1.27 ± 0.10 ^b	1.37 ± 0.13 ^b	2.61 ± 0.22 ^a
Hydrolysis Index (HI)	72.9 ± 0.5 ^a	67.4 ± 0.4 ^b	52.7 ± 0.3 ^c
Predicted Glycemic Index (pGI)	79.7 ± 0.8 ^a	76.7 ± 0.6 ^b	68.5 ± 0.5 ^c

^{a-c} Values in the same row with different superscript letters differ significantly *($P < 0.05$)

