

## **Why . . . Include Gluten Free Foods At the Holidays?**

The wonderful people in your life that need to follow a wheat-free-gluten-free diet are simply delighted when presented with delicious food they can safely enjoy. This alone is one great reason to provide glute- free options over the holidays.

“Gluten” is the umbrella term for the elastic proteins in wheat, barley, rye, spelt, durum, semolina, kamut, couscous and triticale. Celiac disease and gluten intolerance both mean that the individual diagnosed should not consume wheat or gluten. Also, many symptoms of autism are managed more effectively with a diet that shuns wheat and gluten. Wheat and gluten are contained in many prepared food items, even disguised as “natural flavoring,” so read the labels. Restaurants that make the food they serve on the premises know intimately what ingredients are being used and can share this information with you.

If you or someone you know needs to adhere to a diet that is wheat-free, it is reassuring to know that wheat-free-gluten-free food options are increasing in availability. The cookbooks on the subject are increasing in number and interest, the required ingredients are now readily available, prepared items are showing up in stores and restaurants are including items on their menus.

The following are a few suggestions to assist you in providing wheat-free-gluten-free food items during the holidays and beyond.

### **Making Your Own Gluten-Free Food Items**

There are many cookbooks currently on the market that address wheat-free-gluten-free cooking and baking. The holidays are a great time to experiment with a new and exciting recipe. The Peter White Public Library carries several cookbooks that were written by Bette Hagman which contain recipes for everyday eating and recipes that can be used for the holidays. Connie Sarros authored a cookbook, *Wheat-Free, Gluten-Free Cookbook for Kids and Busy Adults*. This book also has recipes for holiday treats and snack foods such as crackers and pretzels.

Aimee Sommers, of The Celiac Support Group of Marquette, has several recipe packets that she developed through experimentation. Of special interest for this time of the year is a packet that contains recipes for a Thanksgiving dinner and a ginger bread house. The recipe packets are available for purchase by contacting her at (906) 228-9139. If you are interested in converting a treasured family recipe into one that is wheat-free and gluten-free, Aimee invites you to contact her for assistance.

Many of the required ingredients mentioned in wheat-free-gluten-free recipe books were previously unobtainable but now can be purchased locally at Fountain of Health, The Marquette Food Co-op and Econo Foods.

### **Prepared Holiday Foods**

The Marquette Food Co-op carries a line of chocolate that is wheat-free-gluten-free. Fountain of Health carries many items including prepared items and mixes. Babycakes Muffin Company offers freshly baked wheat-free-gluten-free (W.F.G.F.) muffins and cookies daily. A full line of W.F.G.F. holiday desserts is being introduced in November and will be available through the holiday season.

*Kim Danielson is the creator of Babycakes, where customer recommendations rule. Creating delicious W.F.G. F. recipes for her customers is just one of her many passions. Babycakes is celebrating twenty years of providing the time-honored tradition of scratch baking and cooking for discriminating people.*