

a lifestyle resource from Food Equality Initiative

Free-From MAGAZINE



We won GOLD for best nonprofit magazine in Kansas City

YEAR IN REVIEW

A recap of 2021

HOLIDAY GATHERINGS

Tips for attending and hosting

SILENT CELIAC

A disease with no symptoms

EMILY'S FAREWELL

Emily Brown is saying goodbye - from FEI to FFM





LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

December is one of my favorite months of the year, but it can also be a tough one. The days are getting shorter while the nights are getting longer, and the temperatures drop lower and lower. But I always feel a breath of excitement in the air. This year, that excitement comes from my new friend with whom I get to share this winter and many others to come.



I adopted my feline friend, Buzz, last month and he has already brought so much joy into my life. While I go about the monotony of my daily routine, Buzz always has something to say about it. (He is a cat with a lot of opinions that he needs to express.) Whether he is walking right in front of where I intend to step, chewing on the plastic Christmas tree in the living room, or choosing to sleep on an old backpack under my bed instead of the nice, fluffy cat bed I bought specifically for him, he brings new life to my apartment. He forces me to live more in the moment; he pulls me out of the digital world and into the physical world. I thank him for the laughter and joy he brings me, even when he is getting up to trouble.

As we start this winter together, I hope you have something that brings you joy, no matter how small or trivial. We all deserve the opportunity to smile and feel appreciated. We, here at FEI, appreciate you so much. We thank you for reading these magazines, for donating your time and money to our cause, and for spreading the word about the struggles of people with food allergies and celiac disease. You are so important and we cannot thank you enough for all you have done. We wish you a merry holiday season. See you in 2022!

Sofia Gillespie
Editor in Chief,
Free-From Magazine

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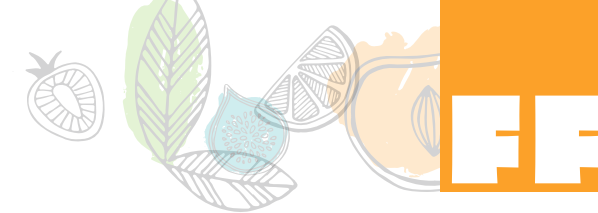
Can you find all the important words from FEI's year?

RECIPES*

Gristle & Gossip has got you covered for something sweet and something savory this holiday season

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*Disclaimer: The recipes included in the Free-From Magazine are suggestions. They may not be free-from all Top 9 allergens. Please read carefully and make any substitutions that are necessary for your diet. Consult your doctor if you have questions or concerns. NOTE: Cooking is a science experiment and some ingredient substitutions may not produce the same results.



BRAND SPOTLIGHT

Abe's: The Vegan Muffin

For Joseph (Abe's Dad) and Marty Koffman (Abe's favorite Uncle), creators of Abe's Vegan Muffins, making safe and yummy treats for kids with food allergies is profoundly personal.

The real Abe was born anaphylactic to peanuts, tree nuts, and sesame--he was also severely allergic to eggs, dairy, soy, and seeds. Abe, like so many other allergic kids, was isolated from friends and classmates during snack and lunch time because of his food allergies.

Tired of seeing Abe left out because of his food allergies, Abe's Dad and Uncle set out to create an everyday allergy-friendly treat not only Abe would love, but one that his family and friends would enjoy too.

Abe's Vegan Muffins were the first of its kind to enter the marketplace. Realizing there was an unmet need for items clearly marked as safe-for-school, Joseph and Marty coined "School-Friendly," an umbrella term meaning a product was all natural, and manufactured in a completely peanut, tree nut, dairy, egg, soy, pea protein, and sesame-free environment using non-GMO ingredients. At a time when food allergy

abe's[®]

THE VEGAN MUFFIN

labeling was less regulated, the Koffman brothers hoped the "School-Friendly" seal would make things a little easier for parents like themselves, who were forced to examine every product label to protect their children against edible danger.

Little did Marty and Joseph know, six years down the road Abe's Vegan Muffins would become the best-selling allergy-friendly and vegan bakery line in the USA. Marty and Joseph are thrilled stores like Ralph's and Whole Foods Market are using their "School-Friendly" term to call attention to "free-from" options available in-store. While there is still much progress to be made with regard to allergy awareness and access to safe foods, the Abe's founders believe that small wins like clear signage will help parents spend less time worrying about making sure their kids are happy and safe, and more time creating wonderful memories.

While mini muffins remain their core line, Abe's Dad and Uncle have since introduced pound cakes, brownies, individually wrapped One BIG Muffin, Celebration Cakes, Cornbread, and Coffee Cake. Abe's also has a selection of gluten-free, vegan muffins under the Abe's Mom's line. The products are available nationally at retailers including: Whole Foods, Safeway, The Fresh Market, Ralph's, The Grocery Outlet, HEB, and Mom's Organic Market, among others.



THE ZESTY CORNER

How to navigate a potluck with food allergies

Kortney Kwong Hing & Shahla Rashid

Click the image to listen to The Itch for more information about food allergies!



As exciting as it is that we can once again gather together at the table this holiday season, some old anxieties may be popping up as you need to navigate group meals and potlucks.

When things start feeling extra chaotic and uncomfortable, it's common to look for ways to regain a sense of safety and control. You might even turn to food to get this sense of control back by becoming rigid with restricting your intake. (This can be a common occurrence, as we also try not to overindulge in treats.) Or, you may find yourself skipping events to avoid eating altogether.

But that is no fun! The holidays should be a time to celebrate being together and to enjoy the culinary delights the season has to offer. If you find your schedule filling up with potlucks to attend, we have a few simple tips to help you feel less anxious about eating.

4 tips for a stress-free buffet or potluck-style gatherings

- 1. Ask to bring a dish.** Contact the host ahead of time to go over the menu. If something safe is lacking, offer to bring that as your contribution to the gathering. This is a great opportunity to showcase how delicious and easy cooking for your set of allergens can be. If anything, at least you know one dish is safe for you!
- 2. Serve yourself first and reduce stress.** When you get the 'dig in' directive, take this as an opportunity to serve yourself early before serving utensils get mixed around and cross-contact occurs.
- 3. Separate the safe food** and put your mind at ease. Ask the host if they can separate the allergy-safe food from the rest of the spread to reduce the risk of cross-contact.
- 4. Ask for all food to be labelled with common allergens.** Additionally, ask for packaging to be saved so you can read labels before spooning it onto your plate.

If you are feeling uncomfortable about eating at a potluck or in a new environment, you can always bring your own food or eat ahead of time. We suggest always bringing a little treat so you do not feel deprived or left out.

Remember, the holiday season is about sharing time together, so simply attending a gathering is special. Taking part in the food is a huge step so make sure to check in with what you are comfortable with and take care of yourself.

This article was adapted from the [original](#), written by [Alida Iacobellis](#), Registered Dietitian, on www.thezestfull.com.

GLUTEN-FREE SURVIVAL TIPS for Holiday Entertaining

Cherie Gough

Pass the gluten-free rolls and pumpkin pie this holiday season, even if you're new to eating gluten-free.

With planning and a few tips and tricks, a delicious, gluten-free meal is possible. After several years of learning to cook for my daughter with celiac disease, I've mastered the keys to serving safe, delicious gluten-free meals. Read on to learn my secrets and take away your worries.

Good News: Most of your Menu is Naturally Gluten Free

As long as it's not pre-seasoned, glazed, or in sauce, these items on your menu are all naturally gluten free: meat and seafood, vegetables and fruits, including most cranberry sauce, potatoes, and rice. Our family's holiday meals usually include a roast served with roasted potatoes and vegetables, gluten-free stuffing, and for dessert, a crumble instead of pie.

Make muffins or cupcakes which retain moisture better than a full-sized cake or loaf.

Local Bakeries Worth the Trip

The trickiest part to enjoying gluten-free foods at the holidays can be desserts. You'll want a gluten-free replacement for baked goods. If you have a reliable gluten-free baker in town, support their local business if you can. Pre-order to get your favorite flavors.

Grocery Store Grab & Go Items:

Sometimes when you're busy, you just need to skip the lines, the traffic, or the cooking. These delicious gluten-free options were recently spotted at grocers and will do the trick when the holiday rush kicks in. Always carefully read and look for the gluten-free label. Many items made by the same brand contain wheat.

Aldi -

Cheddar biscuits. Mix in shredded cheese to make this \ no-fail seasonal item even better.

Sprouts -

Do you love traditional green bean casserole? You'll find Sprout's own brand gluten-free French fried onions and Pacific Foods' cream of mushroom soup. They also carry ready-to-use Imagine Foods gravy.

Trader Joe's -

Pumpkin muffin mix. My daughter says it makes the best gluten-free muffins hands down. I'm happy to find TJ's turkey gravy clearly labeled gluten-free this year. Gluten-free pie crust in the frozen section is only available this time of year. You'll find stuffing at TJs. It's easy, but skip it. It cooks up salty and mushy. Make your own from cornbread. Trader Joe's gluten-free cornbread mix is an easy find.



Various Chain Grocers -

Daiya Pumpkin Cheesecake - Need dessert for just one or two? Dress up this yummy dairy-free dessert with a stencil and powdered sugar.

Sneaky Places where Gluten Hides

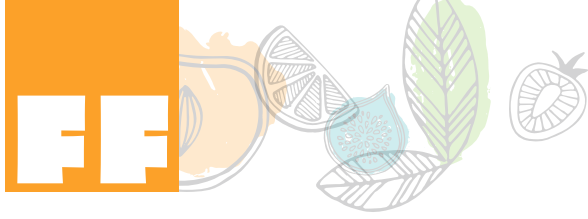
It seems gluten is found everywhere, in so many products, even those you don't suspect. While preparing your meal, rely on these brands and tips.*

- Broth: Sprouts and Trader Joe's brands, Pacific Foods, Imagine Foods.
- Seasonings: McCormick's.
- Salad dressing: Look online for a recipe and whip up your own easy vinaigrette with ingredients you have on hand like olive oil, vinegar, lemon juice, and spices.
- Beer: Serve wine or cider instead.
- Sprinkles: Betty Crocker's are mostly gluten free and are all labeled clearly.
- Seasoned packaged chips: Popchips, Kettle Brand chips, and Tostitos and Mission brand tortilla chips are all gluten free.

**Things change. Always read labels to be sure a brand's formula or method of preparation is safe.*

All About Gravy - You got this!

"Regular" gravy can easily be made gluten free by using cornstarch (most brands are gluten-free) or potato starch. Use half the amount the recipe calls for. Whisk the starch-water mixture in with the hot broth continuously until thickened, taking care not to boil if you're using potato starch. My favorite way to thicken gravy is to whisk in spoonfuls of mashed potatoes until it reaches the desired consistency.



Gluten-Free Baking Tips

- Think small. Make muffins or cupcakes which retain moisture better than a full-sized cake or loaf.
- Let your batter rest for 20 minutes before baking to allow dry ingredients to absorb moisture.
- Easy as pie is not so easy when baking gluten free. If you can tolerate oats, try a crumble instead. Use what you have on hand as a filling. My favorite fillings are apple mixed with frozen berries or peach. Be sure to make the topping using gluten-free oats. I make a 9-inch crumble topping by mixing together this easy-to-remember ratio: 1/2 cup of each - gluten-free oats, gluten-free flour, brown sugar, and 1 stick melted butter. You'll find Bob's Red Mill brand at most grocers, and Trader Joe's carries their own brand.
- Try a good mix: Trader Joe's Pumpkin Muffin mix makes some of the best muffins from a mix ever. Sticky Fingers gluten-free scones bake up just as delicious as their original blends.
- No time to bake? Gluten-free Oreos taste just like the original. Melt some white chocolate and add colorful sprinkles.

Play it Safe: A Word about Cross-Contact

Parties and gatherings are tricky for those with wheat allergies or celiac disease. Set up your party for success by keeping gluten-free items separate. Here's how I keep my kiddo safe from cross-contact when preparing food and eating with a group.

When cooking -

If guests help in the kitchen, remind them to follow these guidelines, too. I like to work side-by-side with family to show them how to keep things safe.

- Wipe down countertops, and rinse utensils, pans, and baking dishes before getting started.
- Prepare gluten-free dishes first.
- Set aside one counter or tabletop that is only for gluten-free foods.

When serving -

- Serve those who must eat gluten-free first to avoid cross contact.
- If serving buffet-style, designate one counter for gluten-free only foods.
- Provide a designated serving spoon for each dish.
- Prepackaged, individual sized chips won't get contaminated by everyone dipping their hands in. Or, set aside a bag of chips just for gluten-free family members.

Enjoy your meal! With proper planning and knowledge, you can break bread with all your guests and feel at ease.



ABOUT CHERIE

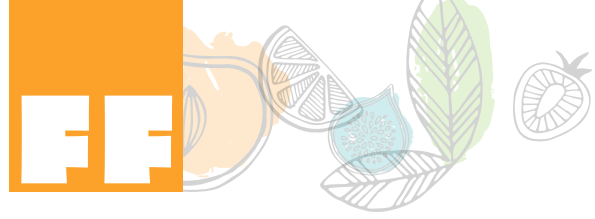
Cherie Gough is a freelance writer based in San Diego. She is passionate about food equity, outdoor adventure, gardening, and education. Her daughter's diagnosis of celiac disease prompted her to pursue food writing and share simple solutions for eating, cooking, and traveling with food allergies and celiac. Find her at cheriegough.com and on Instagram @[cgoughwrites](https://www.instagram.com/cgoughwrites).



SILENT CELIAC

An Interview with John Holt

Sarah Guthrie



When Fox 4-Kansas City news anchor John Holt was diagnosed with celiac disease in 2004,

He realized he was one of the millions of people who have the disease but don't know it. **Medical professionals estimate that more than 3 million individuals** in the US have celiac disease, but about 83% are either undiagnosed or misdiagnosed. In individuals who do not show symptoms, the disease is referred to as **Silent Celiac or Asymptomatic Celiac.**

"I had no symptoms, but, after several annual physicals, my doctor noticed that my iron levels were declining," said John. "He ordered blood work, a colonoscopy, and an endoscopy."



The tests revealed that John had celiac disease, something that neither he nor his wife, Suzy, were familiar with.

"I'll never forget the conversation," John said. "My doctor told me there is no cure and then he starts going over all the dos and don'ts and I said – 'Time out – can I have red wine?'"

They laughed and John was relieved that red wine does not contain gluten, but it taught him that he needed to educate himself about how to live with celiac disease.

Even though John continues to be asymptomatic – he does not exhibit any of the classic digestive symptoms of celiac disease such as diarrhea, nausea, abdominal pain – he learned that his body is still affected by gluten. Repeated exposure to gluten damages the tiny, hair-like projections (villi) that line the small intestine causing poor nutrient absorption. It can also lead to cancer and other diseases.

"If I had a piece of bread or a beer, I would not get sick," John said, "but I knew that over time my immune system would break down."

Based on these facts, John and Suzy both decided to go gluten free, but that was easier said than done. First, they had to become aware of what was in the foods they liked, so they learned to read labels. In 2004, there weren't a lot of gluten-free options at grocery stores other than Whole Foods, which was typically more expensive.

Then they had to figure out how to go out to eat. "There weren't any menu items that were labeled gluten free. When we'd ask if there was gluten in the dish, the server's eyes would glaze over," he said. "They had no idea. So, we've learned how to adapt certain items like salads – just ask them to take the croutons out – and I know to ask if a soup is thickened with flour or cream."

But around 2010, the availability of gluten-free products began to change as **celebrities began adopting gluten-free diets.** Other consumers began adopting gluten-free diets too. The gluten-free food and beverage industry grew substantially and the Holts found that suddenly there was much greater availability of gluten-free products at a multitude of grocery stores.

Dining out became easier too. "Now there are gluten-free menus and servers know how to find out if a dish contains gluten," said John.

John says that the taste and texture of gluten-free food has gotten so much better over the 17 years since he was diagnosed. He remembers bread falling apart when he tried to make a sandwich, but now he can't tell the difference.

General awareness about celiac disease and the need for special diets has increased too. Recently John and Suzy were the event chairs at the University of Kansas' Rock Chalk Ball. He was concerned about the menu, but the event planners told him that rather than provide special meals for a few people, they would just have a completely gluten-free menu. No one would know!

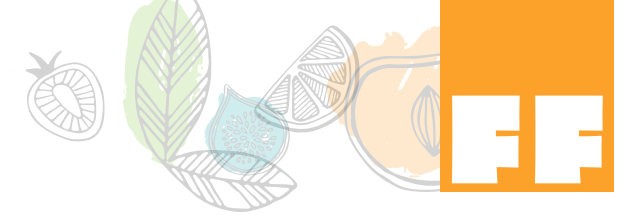
John was relieved that red wine does not contain gluten, but it taught him that he needed to educate himself about how to live with celiac disease.

More recently, John learned that celiac disease can run in families. His grandson, Mark, has celiac disease too.

Unlike John, who continues to show no symptoms, Mark is very sensitive. His family has to be careful about cross contact, and his mother packs food specifically for Mark when the family goes out to eat.

"His symptoms are almost textbook," says John. "But he's a good sport about it."

One thing that has not changed is the expense of gluten-free food. The Holts say they are blessed to be able to absorb the extra cost of gluten-free foods which can be 200-1000% higher than conventional food. They recognize that not everyone can afford it; that is where Food Equality Initiative steps in.



"The work Food Equality Initiative is doing to support those who can't afford to absorb the higher costs is amazing. And frankly, could prove to be a life saver in the long run for many of these families."

When getting your annual check-up, John recommends:

- Get your blood work done. Make sure they check your iron levels. That's how I discovered that I have celiac disease.

For anyone diagnosed with celiac disease, John recommends:

- Take your diagnosis seriously. Learn to read labels. You will be surprised at the items that contain gluten.
- Consider having the family go gluten free. My wife chose to go gluten free too because she did not want to take a chance with cross-contact and she did not want to have to make separate meals.



ABOUT SARAH

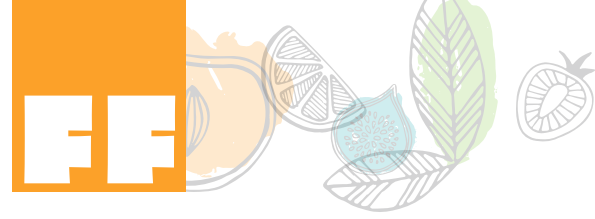
Sarah Guthrie is an award-winning writer and seasoned development professional. She began volunteering for FEI in 2019, where she helps with fundraising and communications. Sarah is also a dedicated food allergy mom.

YEAR-IN-REVIEW:

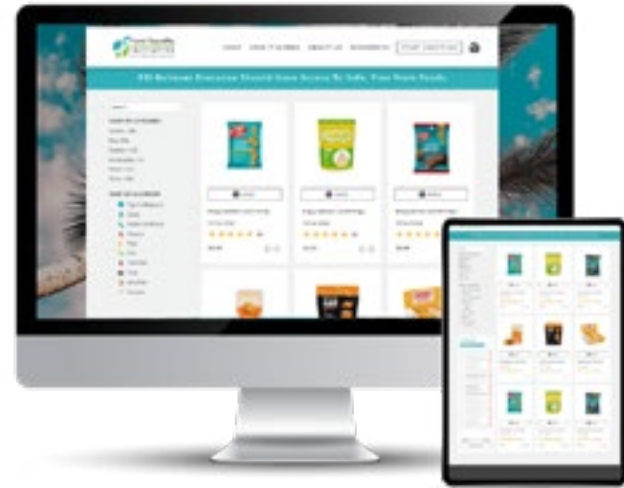
2021

Sofia Gillespie





We made it through another ground-breaking year at Food Equality Initiative.



As each month goes by, we learn more and more, opening ourselves up for more opportunities to spread the news about Food is Medicine and serve people this food/medicine that they need to live healthy lives. Let me take you through some highlights from each of the months of 2021.

January

2021 started with a bang! We launched our new website for clients to self-select free-from food products to be delivered directly to their door. With \$155 to spend on an ever-growing selection of items on a self-managed online platform, we were finally positioned to start expanding our services nationwide. What an exciting time!



February

FEI Founder Emily Brown and Director of Operations Erin Martinez worked on an abstract that was accepted by the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology for the poster presentation at their annual conference, held Feb. 26-March 1. “Addressing food insecurities in clients with food allergies in underserved communities with a prescription food program” was prepared in collaboration with Kansas University Medical Center.

And, Emily Brown joined former NFL running back, best-selling author and TV personality Rashad Jennings for an episode of his Big IDEA. [The episode has garnered 193K views since its debut on Feb. 4!](#) The conversation covered how food allergic individuals in under-resourced communities often lack access to safe, nutritious foods due to the absence of grocery stores. And, how federal nutrition programs such as SNAP fail to meet needs of food insecure individuals with food allergies. Emily remarked, “the research shows that low-income families with food allergies are paying 2.5 times more for emergency care partially because they don’t have access to safe foods, and also don’t have access to epinephrine and specialty care.”

March

Food Equality Initiative attended the National Anti-Hunger Policy Conference, a 3-day event held online by the [Food Research & Action Center](#) and [Feeding America](#), in cooperation with the National Child and Adult Care Food Program

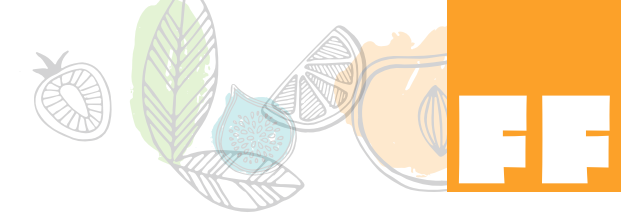
Forum. The conference draws anti-hunger and anti-poverty advocates; federal, state and local government officials; child advocates; representatives of food banks and food rescue organizations; sponsoring organizations and nutrition and anti-obesity groups.

Also in March, Emily Brown and Erin Martinez worked together on another paper with the Northwestern CFAAR team to write and publish research in the Social Work and Health Care Journal. The article is titled [Addressing the social needs of individuals with food allergy and celiac disease during COVID-19: A new practice model for sustained social care](#) and shares how FEI changed in 2020 to be able to meet the needs of those we serve.



April

On April 14th, the FASTER Act was signed into law! Sesame is now the 9th legally protected food allergy. Emily traveled to Washington D.C. and FEI signed multiple petitions with the Food Allergy Collaborative to lobby for this Act to become law. Now that it is passed, food manufacturers have until January 1, 2023 to ensure that they treat sesame like other top allergens; they will need to list sesame as an ingredient on food labels, in plain language. (Under current labeling regulations, manufacturers do not have to label sesame, and it can hide behind vague terms such as “natural flavors” or “spices,” leaving the estimated [1.5 million Americans living with a sesame allergy at risk.](#)) This is the first time since 2006 that a new allergen has been added to the Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act (FALCPA).



May

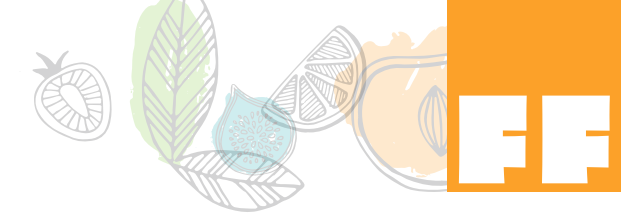
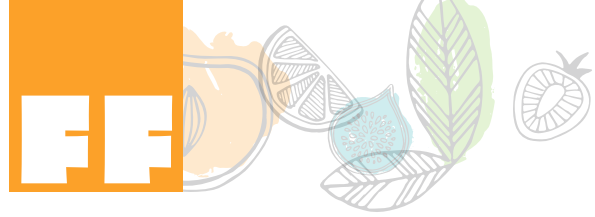
Throughout May, Food Allergy Awareness Month, FEI brought attention to the ongoing work of The Seven Percent Fund & Coalition. Founded in June of 2020, the Seven Percent Fund and Coalition seeks to reduce racial and economic disparities in healthcare and food allergy. The 14 Coalition founders [released a collaborative video](#) along with an open letter to industry colleagues which seek to highlight how existing racial and economic disparities contribute to an increase in health risks for those diagnosed with food allergies, celiac disease, and other diet-treated diseases.

June

We joined the craze and got a TikTok! A summer intern helped us run our account for the season. Unfortunately, she had to stop when school started, but we were cool for the summer. 😎 [Check out the videos here.](#)

On a more serious side, we held a one-year-later conversation of For the Health. Our panel discussion, FOR THE HEALTH, A YEAR LATER: A Conversation on Race and Food Allergy, premiered on Juneteenth. We reconvened the esteemed panelists who took part in our first Juneteenth For The Health webinar a year ago to reflect on progress made toward equity over the past 12 months, and also to offer insight into what is still needed to end racial and economic disparities in food allergy. If you missed it, you can catch the riveting hour-long conversation featuring notable Black voices in food allergy [on FEI's YouTube channel](#). Also, you can find a more [in-depth recap of this important discussion on our blog](#).





July

In July, Emily launched her new business: Free From Market (FFM), which took over the online shopping service. In splitting these roles of service management and client service, both organizations have the capacity to flourish. The public entity (FEI) regains the bandwidth to focus on education of food as medicine for clients and the public and continue advocating for social change on a regional and national level. As a private entity, FFM can raise greater funds through investors and retail sales to ensure goods are available for public service. Together, they are able to collect data to support research to work toward policy changes regarding the intersection of food insecurity and diet-treated illnesses.

Also, FEI is proud to announce that our esteemed CEO and Founder Emily Brown and our Medical Advisory Board's Dr. Bridgette Jones presented at the National Medical Association's (NMA) Food Allergy Symposium a *Discussion of Social Determinants/Racial Disparities in Food Allergy*. The [National Medical Association](#) is the nation's oldest and largest organization representing African American physicians

and health professionals in the United States. It was created in 1895 after a group of black doctors sought membership into the American Medical Association and were repeatedly denied admission due to the discriminatory policies of the nation. The 2021 Convention, themed Restoring Hope and Health Across the African Diaspora: Black Health and Wellness Matter, is acclaimed as the nation's foremost forum on medical science and African American health.

August

We started a new webinar series entitled, Food Laws: Transforming Lives through Policy. Our first conversation was [Intro to Changemaking](#) where we explored a few food laws, what they mean for individuals with restricted diets and food-related diseases, and how you can work to increase protections through policies and laws in your state. [Watch the webinar in full on our YouTube channel.](#)



The Seven Percent Fund & Coalition is growing! We've been joined by 7 new members. Now we are 21 members strong. Together, we're making great strides in reducing racial and economic disparities in food allergy and healthcare. [At our quarterly meeting](#), we discussed the Child Nutrition Reauthorization and how we could best support these two important pieces of legislation: The Summer Meals Act of 2021 and the Access to Healthy Food for Young Children Act.

In service news, our pilot client program with Stanford began in August. One major focus of the Stanford study is to measure the impact of FEI interventions on clients' finances, mental well-being, and overall physical health. Data like this will become more important as FEI continues to advocate for insurance coverage for medically-necessary foods to treat diet-treated illnesses.

September

September was a BIG month at Food Equality Initiative. We declared September 14th as [National Food is Medicine Day!](#) This is a day set aside to raise awareness of existing barriers to healthy, medically-necessary food access for under-resourced families and individuals. Learn more about these barriers and why it's important to address them at [FoodIsMedicineDay.org](#).

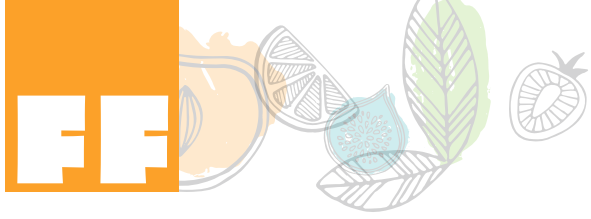
We also updated our Price Comparison Chart with 2021 figures. Free-from foods cost significantly more than conventional foods. How much more? Take gluten-free bread as an example. When price per ounce is compared, the price of gluten-free bread is 983% higher than the price of gluten-containing store brand bread. [We compiled this chart](#) from prices found during a recent trip to a Kansas City grocery store, illustrating the stark differences between the prices of free-from staple foods and conventional foods.

Chapter 2 in our Food Laws webinar series was [College Dining Plans](#), where we discussed what steps you should be taking and questions you should be asking when starting your college search with food allergies or celiac disease. [For an in-depth run-down](#) of the session equipped with the video itself, check out our blog.



Emily, Erin, and 2 FEI Representatives attended the Externally-Led: Patient-Focused Drug Development Meeting on September 9th in Washington D.C. They shared their personal experiences managing and treating food allergy with other patient advocates so that the FDA and drug development companies can better understand what it's like to live with food allergies and how patients are treating their condition. The insights gained in the meeting resulted in the production of a Voice of the Patient report which is available to drug development stakeholders. Read about what the representatives [Dawn](#) and [Nehgar](#) had to say.





As part of giving back during a time of natural disaster from Hurricane Ida, Food Equality Initiative (FEI), donated \$70,000 worth of food free-from major allergens and gluten to food pantries in New Orleans. FEI partnered with Smart Warehousing and [Code Ana](#) to pack and ship 24 pallets of allergen and gluten-free food donations to the Gulf Coast. [Second Harvest](#) in Louisiana received the free-from food and helped distribute it to families in need of safe foods who are recovering from the aftermath of Hurricane Ida. Watch local KC news coverage about the shipment on [FOX4kc here](#), and on [KSHB here](#).



October

Emily Brown visited Arkansas Children's Hospital to give pediatric Grand Rounds. She talked about Food Equality Initiative and why our services are vital in serving children diagnosed with food allergies and celiac disease. She also spoke at a conversation hosted by the Grain Foods Foundation about optimizing cereal choices under the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program.



November

Emily Brown and Sofia Gillespie, Education Coordinator, hosted a booth at the American College of Asthma, Allergy and Immunology's annual scientific meeting in New Orleans. They were able to speak with allergists across the nation about FEI's work, helping patients like their own access safe, healthy, and reliable food. After making some excellent new connections and planting the seed in future partners, they got to enjoy some of the wonderful sights and food of New Orleans.



FEI's client-focused [Free-From Magazine](#) won a prestigious [Philly Award from Nonprofit Connect](#). We are extremely excited to win the gold prize for best magazine/newsletter for small nonprofits in Kansas City in 2021. We are looking forward to making even more magazines in the new year!



We held our second annual Giving Tuesday Non-Event on November 30th.



December

Emily and Erin co-authored an abstract for a poster presentation with Dr. Julia Bracken submitted to a virtual conference this December. The conference is hosted by the North American Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology, and Nutrition. The presentation is entitled: Addressing food insecurity in pediatric celiac patients through a prescription food pantry, with data supported by FEI services.

And perhaps the biggest news of all is Emily's farewell from Food Equality Initiative. After founding and serving for 7 years, she is saying goodbye in order to say hello to new opportunities. We will certainly miss her leadership and vision. Read her farewell letter on the next page.

Applications for a new CEO of Food Equality Initiative will be available in 2022.





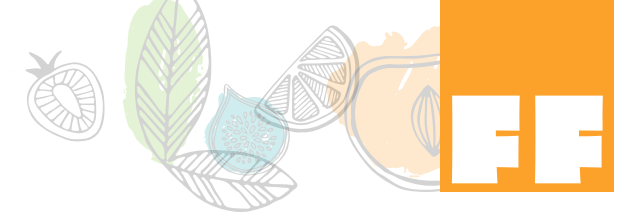
EMILY'S FAREWELL

Dear FEI Family Members and Friends,

With excitement and gratitude, I am reaching out to let you know our mission has taken a big step forward. On December 31, 2021, I'm officially stepping down as CEO of FEI to be the Founder and CEO of Free From Market (FFM) so that I can scale our shared work on a national level, and open the door to serving all health conditions where food is the standard of care.

In 2014, I set forth to provide people diagnosed with food allergy and celiac disease equal access to the foods they need to be healthy, regardless of race, geographic location, or economic status. Over the past seven years, FEI has significantly advanced this mission in the Kansas City metro.

FEI has served 327 people and raised \$2.8 million in both cash and in-kind revenue, been featured in local and national news, co-authored critical research with prominent national institutions, and increased coverage in the WIC program. We have so much to be proud of and none of it would have happened without your support, kindness, and the backing of my community.



FFM is a digital health platform where users can access the healthy foods they need and have it delivered right to their door. FFM grew out of FEI and is currently the platform we use to service our clients. It was built to address the immense demand for service FEI receives from outside of Kansas City.

I leave FEI in its strongest financial position and under the incredible leadership of our own Erin Martinez who has been by my side as Director of Operations. Erin will be at the helm as FEI's Board of Directors search for a new CEO who will continue FEI's rise to new heights.

I will remain an active member of the FEI community serving on the Research and Advocacy Committee. I will never stop advocating for FEI's important work.

With my gratitude,

Emily Brown

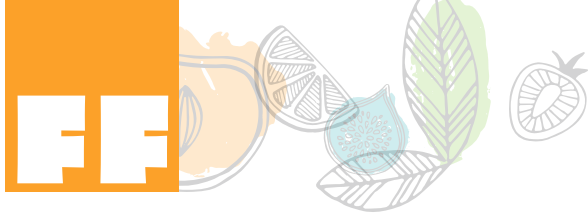


FEI Family Members and Friends,

I am excited to accept the great responsibility of the interim CEO position. Emily has been an incredible mentor, teaching me each day how to be a humble leader. I look forward to continuing FEI's mission and working to achieve our strategic plans in 2022.

With my gratitude,

Erin Martinez



THE 7% SCOOP

Thank you to active members

We would like to say a huge thank you to the members of the Seven Percent Coalition for their donations of time, finances, and free-from products over the past 2 years. We appreciate your dedication to making institutional change to address the economic and racial disparities in food allergies. Here's to continuing to bring more growth and changes in 2022!



SEVEN PERCENT FUND & COALITION PARTICIPANT

FOODiversity

Thank you



FOODiversity is fighting, alongside Food Equality Initiative, to improve the health and quality of lives for those at the intersection of food insecurity and food allergy and/or celiac disease.

- homeless shelters
- physicians
- school systems
- social workers
- other community nonprofits and emergency food providers

What is FOODiversity?

At the core of FOODiversity's mission is bringing nationally-available programs and educational materials to local communities across the U.S.

By directing organizations to FEI, FAACT, FARE, and other proven food allergy and celiac disease resources, FOODiversity supports organizations as they implement sustainable solutions, for their patients or clients, to increase access to safe food. Through its grant program, FOODiversity also reinforces organizations' efforts with funding assistance.

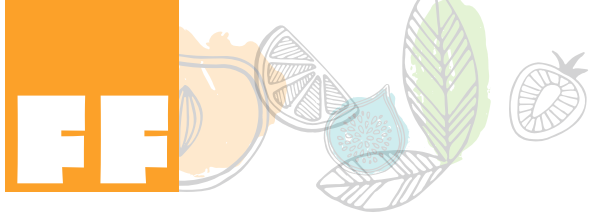
FOODiversity works directly with:

- backpack meal programs
- colleges
- dietitians
- food pantries
- healthcare systems

FOODiversity & Food Equality Initiative

The founding of FOODiversity was inspired by Food Equality Initiative's 2020 Juneteenth webinar, "A Conversation about Race and Food Allergy." Hearing about the lack of access to





safe food, quality healthcare, and food allergy information that Emily Brown described served as a “Call to Action” for Wendy Gordon Pake, FOODiversity Founder.

“I was already very interested in the issues surrounding FOODiversity’s mission (hence my signing up for the webinar). Emily, and the other panelists, made me realize the tremendous gap in access, so I put together the business plan for FOODiversity.”

FOODiversity is a combination of Food and Diversity

Our name reflects two key values of the organization: to feed people – per each person’s individualized diet needs - the exact foods necessary for good health.

FOODiversity joined FEI’s Seven Percent Fund & Coalition to learn and to make a difference; FOODiversity wished to add its voice to the collective voice of support for FEI’s mission.

FEI’s Mission: *Improve health and end hunger in individuals diagnosed with food allergies and celiac disease through access to safe and healthy food, nutrition education, and advocacy.*

A key strategy of FOODiversity is the marketing of FEI’s Direct-to-Client food delivery service. Examples might include:

- giving a presentation to a healthcare system’s “Food Insecurity Initiative” Working Group,
- creating a flier (about FEI) with a local food allergy support group for distribution among the group’s membership and at local allergists’ offices,
- or providing information about FEI to backpack programs and food pantries for them to share with their families who manage food allergies or celiac disease.

FOODiversity tracks success by the number of FEI-registered clients who say they “heard about FEI through FOODiversity.” FOODiversity considers its “FEI mission” accomplished when FEI accepts the referred individual as a client and they start to navigate the road to food security. To amplify its commitment to FEI’s mission, FOODiversity also assists in the funding of FEI services, most recently in the states of Alabama, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

FOODiversity is a recognized IRS 501(c)(3) organization, operating as Carolina FOODiversity in N.C. and S.C., and also assisting clients nationwide.

For additional information, connect with Wendy:
email: info@CarolinaFOODiversity.org or “Like/Follow”
[Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [LinkedIn](#)



Wendy Pake, founder of FOODiversity



THE TASTEMAKERS

Celiac Diagnosis By Anna Pencek FEI Teen Advisory Board

Hello! My name is Anna, and I have celiac disease.

I was diagnosed when I was two and a half. I didn’t have to struggle as much as others who were diagnosed when they were older, because I never knew what I was missing. I am now 16 years old, but the temptations to eat non gluten-free food are still there! If you are newly diagnosed, and you are struggling, I promise it will get easier. When I was diagnosed, my mom - who went to culinary school - had to relearn a lot of her cooking methods to be gluten free. At first it was not easy, but with time it got better and better.

An important part of your journey is to have a support system to help you when you feel sick or frustrated. It is a long journey with lots of struggles, you are going to need help! Trust me I know, it is embarrassing to ask for help and it makes you feel like a burden. But, most of the time, people are more than happy to help. You will never know unless you ask!


A way to ease the anxiety of asking for help is to have something planned out to say. For example, if you are in a restaurant, before the waiter asks what you are having, I say “Do you have any specialty gluten-free items, or a gluten-free menu?” I have been saying that exact same line ever since I could order on my own at a restaurant. It is second nature now.

The same goes for if you are going to a party-like function. I always text the host and say, “What food are you serving? I am gluten free, so I can bring myself something to eat if necessary!” Sometimes they respond that they could get something special for you, or simply suggest that you bring something for yourself. Either way works for me. Just do what is easier for you and makes you feel safe!

Also, ask professionals for help when you need it. When I was little, I saw a dietitian, and she was a lot of help. It’s especially important to get help from a professional when you are newly diagnosed.

The last tip I would share is: you have to learn to advocate for yourself! There are many apps, websites, and other resources that you can find that might be helpful. It may seem very difficult right now, but in the long run, your continued health will be worth it!

Name: _____ Date: _____

 Find and circle each of the words from the list below. Words may appear horizontally, vertically or diagonally, but forwards only.

A	S	C	Y	R	Y	A	D	I	S	P	A	R	I	T	I	E	S	N
V	W	A	R	Z	E	Z	G	W	S	C	D	E	E	Y	S	D	B	U
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magazine disparities presentation education hurricane
 webinar science allergy health faster tiktok hospital
 sesame advocate nutritious celiac research medicine
 laws snap diet food emily



RECIPES!

Gristle & Gossip has got you covered

ROASTED SWEET POTATO QUINOA SKILLET

Gristle & Gossip



One of my favorite Fall dishes is this Roasted Sweet Potato Quinoa Skillet. A delicious and healthy warm quinoa salad with sauteed kale and spinach, roasted sweet potatoes, perfectly seasoned quinoa, and dried cranberries. It's vegan, gluten-free, and perfect for work-week meal prep, a side dish, or a stand-alone weeknight meal!

INGREDIENTS

2 cups Quinoa, rinsed
 2 bunches Kale, fresh, washed, and stems removed
 2 bunches Spinach, fresh, washed, and stems removed
 2 Sweet potatoes, medium-sized, peeled and chopped into 1/2 inch thick pieces
 3 Tbsp Olive oil
 4 cups Chicken broth or water
 1 Lemon
 1 Garlic clove, minced
 2 tsp Salt
 2 tsp Black pepper
 1 tsp Chili powder
 1 tsp Paprika
 1 tsp Garlic powder
 1 tsp Onion powder
 Dried cranberries, to top

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 375° F.
- Prep your potatoes. Thoroughly wash, peel, and chop sweet potatoes approximately 1/2 inch thick, and spread onto a foil-lined baking sheet.
- In a small bowl, mix together spices. Pour olive oil over potatoes and mix with hands until evenly coated. Sprinkle spice mixture over potatoes and evenly coat.
- Bake for 25 minutes. Shake the baking sheet at the 15-minute mark to prevent potatoes from sticking to foil.
- Prep quinoa. Rinse and drain 2 cups of quinoa. In a medium-sized pot, add rinsed quinoa and 4 cups of chicken broth (or water). Bring to a boil. Cover the pot and reduce heat to medium-low heat, so the liquid simmers for 15 minutes. Turn off heat, stir, and allow to sit for 5 more minutes—fluff with a fork.
- Prep your greens. Remove stems and thoroughly wash. Set aside in a colander.
- In a large, heavy skillet over medium heat, add 2 tablespoons of olive oil and fresh, chopped garlic. Cook for 3 minutes until fragrant.
- Add greens in batches. Alternating between spinach and kale. As greens begin to wilt, add fresh lemon juice and salt.
- Once greens are fully sauteed, add quinoa and roasted sweet potatoes. Mix well.
- Add dried cranberries and serve.

I love to add freshly sliced avocado and a couple of squirts of sriracha to mine! You can also add your favorite protein to fill it up.



VEGAN SPICED APPLE CINNAMON ROLL CAKE

Gristle & Gossip



This vegan spiced apple cinnamon roll cake is a fusion of my two favorite things: spiced apples and cinnamon rolls. If you're looking for an ooey-goey cake filled with soft spiced apples bathed in brown sugar and butter, you'll love this recipe. Your family will never guess that this insanely delicious cinnamon roll cake is free-from gluten, soy, egg, and dairy! It's the perfect holiday morning cake.

INGREDIENTS

Spiced Apple Filling

- 3 Apples, washed, peeled, cored, and chopped
- 1/3 cup Brown sugar, packed
- 2 Tbsp Butter, plant based (MELT or Earth Balance)
- 2 tsp Cornstarch
- 1 tsp Nutmeg (or allspice)
- 1 tsp Cinnamon
- 1 tsp Cardamom
- 1 tsp Vanilla extract

Cake Base

- 3 cup Flour, gluten free
- 1 cup Coconut sugar
- 1/4 tsp Salt
- 4 tsp Baking powder
- 1 1/2 cup Coconut milk (or other non-dairy milk)
- 2 Tbsp Flaxseed meal (equivalent to 2 flax eggs)
- 6 Tbsp Water
- 2 tsp Vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup Butter, plant based, melted

Cinnamon Topping

- 1 cup Butter, plant based
- 1 cup Brown sugar, packed
- 2 Tbsp Flour, gluten free
- 1 Tbsp Cinnamon

Cake Icing

- 1 cup Powdered sugar
- 5 Tbsp Coconut milk (or other non-dairy milk)
- 1 tsp Vanilla extract

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 350° F and prep 8 x 11 baking dish with non-stick cooking spray.

Spiced Apple Filling

- In a medium-sized pan, combine apples, butter, and brown sugar. Cook over medium-low heat until butter and sugar are melted. Then add cornstarch, cinnamon, cardamom, nutmeg (or allspice), and vanilla. Increase heat to medium and bring to a simmer for 3 minutes, constantly stirring. Remove from heat and allow apples to cool for 10 minutes. Set aside.

Cake Base

- In a large bowl, add dry ingredients, flaxseed meal, vanilla, water, and melted butter. Mix well. The cake base batter will be thick and sticky. Set aside.

Cinnamon Topping

- In the bowl of a stand mixer, cream together butter and brown sugar until creamy. Add in flour and cinnamon until well mixed. Set aside.

Cake Icing

- Mix all ingredients in a medium-sized bowl and stir until smooth. Set aside.

Cake Icing

- Pour cake batter into the base of your baking dish.
- Swirl half of the cinnamon cake topping over cake base batter with the back of a spoon or a

knife. This will ensure that the cake topping is mixed throughout the base of the cake.

- Pour cooked apples over the cinnamon roll cake topping.
- Top with remaining cinnamon roll cake topping and swirl once more with the back of a spoon or a knife. Make sure to get some of the cinnamon topping around the edge of the cake.
- Bake cake for 35 minutes. Remove from the oven and top warm cake with cake icing. Once the cake is removed from the oven, and prior to pouring the icing over the cake, create a few holes with a toothpick to ensure the icing seeps into the cake. Check the cake doneness of your cake by inserting a toothpick into the base of the cake. Bake for 5-7 more minutes, should the cake not be done.

NOTES

Leftovers can be covered and stored in the refrigerator for up to 4 days.

Spiced apple cinnamon roll cake is best if reheated in the oven at 300° degrees for 7 minutes.



*Disclaimer: The recipes included in the Free-From Magazine are suggestions. They may not be free-from all Top 9 allergens. Please read carefully and make any substitutions that are necessary for your diet. Consult your doctor if you have questions or concerns. NOTE: Cooking is a science experiment and some ingredient substitutions may not produce the same results.



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