

Holiday Foods

November 2010

The theme of our meeting was Celebrating the Holidays Gluten Free. Emma talked about avoiding gluten when eating away from home. Some points were to offer to make part of the meal or bring a dish to pass and make sure you are first in line! (Or make your plate early and set it aside). She had many good ideas and you can read all of them on the attached document: “[Holiday Meals Away From Home](#)”. You can also make your entire meal at home earlier in the week and then take a microwaveable plate to the dinner to heat up there.

If you are having friends & family over to your house you have some more options. You can cook the main foods and then ask others to bring items such as cider, ice cream, flowers for the table, and condiments such as pickles, olives.

Remember: It is not what is on the table, but who is in the chair.

Thank you, Nancy Spears, for this reminder from her grandmother!

A great thought to keep in mind for all our holiday get-togethers. If there is a function where we know there will not be much – or anything – we can safely eat, we can eat before going or eat after. The important thing part of getting together is the people there.

Most fresh and frozen turkeys are gluten free, such as Meijer, Spartan brand. If you have any questions at all on the turkey you are purchasing, ask the meat manager at the grocery store or call the company direct. Meijer has a section at their website, Meijer.com, that is listed “Healthy Living”. There you can find a listing of gluten free foods available at Meijer. You do have to watch any turkeys that contain broth – gluten may be in the broth.

Some of our favorite holiday foods have cream of mushroom soup as an ingredient and now we have some ready-made choices: Progresso and Pacific are two brands that offer gluten-free canned mushroom soups - - again – be sure to read labels!

Pies are another item with a lot of questions. Pamela’s mix has a recipe for pie crust mix and there are good ready-made mixes out there such as Gluten Free Pantry Pie Crust Mix. Attached is a recipe for pie crust that was in the Grand Rapids Press some time back. Another option mentioned is from Kristy regarding a crustless pumpkin pie. She mentioned there is a recipe in the Holiday issue of Living Without and also on Jule’s Gluten Free website.

You can successfully bake pumpkin pie and also apple pies with no crust. Someone mentioned she bakes her crustless pumpkin pie in a loaf pan, then chills it thoroughly. It can then be sliced and placed on the serving plate with some whipped cream and makes a great desert.

A few great suggestions for pies were to use cookie crumbs as a crumb crust. Some mentioned were gingersnaps, arrowroot cookies, the mock “Oreo” cookies.

Just remember – you cannot safely eat the filling of a pie that was made with wheat flour. Just as you cannot safely eat the turkey from one that was roasted with stuffing made with wheat breads.

Thickener for gravies? You can use cornstarch, sweet rice flour or even your regular gluten-free flour mix.

You may want to check out a website for some great ideas:

www.pamelasproducts.com

www.julesglutenfree.com

www.liveglutenfreely.com

www.saffronsglutenfree.com

Nancy Spears mentioned that Pamela's also has a croissant recipe on their website!

Traveling around the holidays? Be sure to check to see what restaurants are on your route or at your destination that are gluten-free friendly. Someone mentioned the Burger King breakfast bowl which contains some potatoes, sausage, eggs. Uccello's Restaurant has a gluten-free menu which you can view online. (You can also sign up for coupons at Uccello's: www.uccellos.com). One Trick Pony also has a gluten free menu and they have said they use an online training program for training their employees to cook and serve safe gluten free meals.

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THANKSGIVING! Gluten-free turkeys are available at many local stores. Spartan brand, available at Family Fare and D & W - D & W fresh turkey is – Meijer has many varieties of turkeys gluten free – ask at the meat department or check their website. Butterball turkeys will state if they have wheat (you can call 1-800-Butterball for information too). Sam's Club carries Jennie-O turkeys and most of those are gluten free (go to www.jennieo.com for more info). Costco was not too clear on the gluten-free status of their turkeys, but they did say they are not injected with any flavorings, are steroid free. If you are a member of Costco and plan to purchase your turkey there, you will want to ask at the meat department and read the label carefully. Remember, some turkeys come with gravy packages – the gravy is NOT gluten free.

One thing to keep in mind though: If the turkey has been cooked with gluten stuffing inside it – it is not safe for us to eat that meat. Good gluten-free stuffing can be made with about any type of gluten-free bread. Nancy mentioned she cuts the bread into cubes, places it onto a baking sheet. Preheat your oven to 200 degrees – then turn the oven off when you put the sheet of bread cubes into it. Leave them in overnight and the bread cubes will be nice and toasted – just right to make your stuffing.

November 2008

We also discussed the Holidays and holiday baking. You can substitute gluten-free flour mix for the "regular wheat" flour in your favorite recipes, but you will need to add xanthan gum or guar gum, about ½ teaspoon per cup. There are some gluten-free flour blends out there that work well....

Check out the Land-O-Lakes website – they list two!(www.landolakes.com) Also being sent with this e-mail is a word document with Bette Hagman's basic gluten-free flour mix and also some baking hints on working with gluten-free flours. It was mentioned that for cakes it can help to add an extra egg (and to beat the whites and yolks separate) to make the cake lighter and fluffier. Cookies - - perhaps add a TINY BIT more xanthan gum. And check out one of the oriental markets to purchase some of the gluten-free flours – not as expensive as health foods stores, etc.

October 2008 Appetizers are a big part of the holidays, and Kraft Food website (www.kraftfoods.com) has some great recipes that are naturally gluten free. We sampled two of the Kraft Food dip recipes at the meeting ~ very good!

We had some great tasting crackers to go with the dips – the crackers were the “Crunchmaster Multi Grain Crackers” from Sam’s Club. They are listed as being multi-grain and gluten free right on the box. Also the Blue Diamond brand crackers are gluten free as many of you already know.