



Newsletter of the NL Chapter of the CCA

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Lisa (L) & Nancy at the Calgary meeting banquet

President's Message

I see yet another magnificent iceberg in the harbour – we have been blessed with many of these this year, which makes me wonder if they are the reason that summer is slow to shine on us??

Every summer, the Canadian Celiac Association (CCA) holds their National conference and this year's in Calgary, AB, was my first one. It was great and I learned about the CCA and how it has tackled many problems of the last years. The professionalism and perseverance of the staff is remarkable. (There will be a separate report of the conference).

One of the topics at the presidents' meeting was about volunteers and volunteerism. Volunteers are one of the best resources that any organization and community can have. The continuum of volunteerism varies from being available for a single event up to holding a position within the organization. All are important and provide benefits for both the individual and the organization.

Volunteers report feelings of satisfaction and happiness with a sense of "giving back" to the community or organization. In many cases volunteering can lead to the development of such skills as leadership, event planning, education, community partnership and capacity building.

Volunteers have allowed the CCA to accomplish, among other things: the National Gluten-free Certification Program; the Gluten-free Food Awareness Program for food workers and establishments; and gluten-related changes to the Food Labelling law.

Have you ever considered volunteering with the local chapter or National organization? There is a possibility that the National Celiac Association Conference will be held in June 2016 in St. John's, NL, and if that goes ahead we'll need every volunteer we can get. But at any time, your local chapter can always use a little more help. Please contact me if you are interested.

Have a wonderful gluten-free summer (when it arrives).

Lisa Dooley, President
glutenfreenuggets@outlook.com

Medical Expense Tax Credit for Celiac Disease

Although prices for gluten-free foods have dropped lately, recent figures still put them at 162% more expensive than “regular” food. As such, for the next tax year you may want to think about the Medical Expense Tax Credit.

Following much work on the part of the Canadian Celiac Association, especially by Quintin Wight who chaired the National Tax Committee for years, Canadians with celiac disease are able to use this option to try to recoup at least some of those expenses.

This credit lets you claim the “incremental cost” of gluten-free food on your taxes. That is, the difference in cost between a “regular” product and the gluten-free alternative. For example, if you pay \$1.99 for a loaf of whole wheat bread and \$5.99 for a loaf of gluten-free bread, the incremental cost is \$4.

As you’re probably thinking, making the claim does require quite a bit of work. What you’ll want to do is keep a record (a spreadsheet works well) identifying the cost of the specialty gluten-free products you buy and the cost of the comparable gluten-containing item. You have to keep the receipts from all of your

purchases of specialty gluten-free foods.

The tax credit can be claimed for specific gluten-free products, usually baked goods such as breads, cookies, cakes, etc., and for “intermediate items”, used to make GF products for their use, such as rice flour and GF spices. Fruits, vegetables, rice, meat, dairy products, even candy/chocolate and such would not count because they are, or should be, naturally gluten-free.

You do not need to send any supporting documents with your return, but you do need to keep them available in case the CRA asks to see them. These documents are: a letter from a medical professional confirming that you have celiac disease; a receipt to support the cost of each GF item purchased; and a summary of each GF item purchased during the 12-month period.

My (MD) interpretation of this is that you should keep a receipt for each of the GF items you buy regularly, and then document over the year each purchase of those items (see example below). The alternative is to keep all of the receipts.

However, Quintin told me in an email that although this is OK with the CRA it has not been authorized by Treasury Board, so it would be good practice to keep EVERY receipt, in case of an audit, which is probably unlikely unless your claim is excessive).

Based on an article by Mark Johnson, Ottawa January 2014 newsletter with additional text by Mervyn Dean

The relevant CRA website page is <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/ndvdlst/tpcs/ncm-tx/rtrn/cmpltng/ddctns/lns300-350/330/clc-eng.html>

Example from CRA web page

1. Item: bread
2. Number of items purchased in year when you send in the claim: 52
3. Average cost of non-GF product: \$3.49
4. Average cost of GF product: \$6.99
5. Incremental cost (line 4 minus line 3): $\$6.99 - \$3.49 = \$3.50$
6. Amount to claim (line 5 multiplied by line 2): $\$3.50 \times 52 = \182.00

Giggles Fun Dough

After two years of research Cheryl McKinnon of Victoria, BC, has co-developed a “play dough” that is free of gluten, dairy, nuts, corn, soy, artificial colours, dyes, perfumes and preservatives. At present there is no Atlantic retailer but Cheryl says that the dough can be purchased from a couple of websites: (www.gigglesfundough.com or www.well.ca). However, although the web prices are below retail ones shipping charges apply.

Mervyn Dean

What is....Amaranth?



Amaranth, comparable to rice or maize and a staple in the diets of pre-Columbian Aztecs (who believed it had supernatural powers and incorporated it into their religious ceremonies) has been cultivated for 8,000 years. It is high in protein, particularly the amino acid lysine, which is limited in the true cereal grains, and also high in fibre. Other beneficial constituents include calcium, iron, potassium, phosphorus, and vitamins A and C. Nowadays it is not a mainstream food and much of the grain currently grown is sold in health food stores.

Hot Amaranth Cereal

Ingredients (per serving)

1/4 cup amaranth
 1/8 tsp salt
 1 cup water
 fresh or frozen blueberries
 agave nectar
 dash cinnamon

Method

Bring the amaranth, salt, and water to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes. Top with fresh or frozen blueberries (or any kind of berries or dried fruit), drizzle with agave nectar, and sprinkle with cinnamon.

Amaranth is not a true cereal grain, but is a relative of the pigweeds (a common wild plant also known as lamb's-quarters) and the ornamental flowers are known as cockscomb. It is a bushy plant that grows 5 to 7 feet, with broad leaves and a showy flower head of small, red or magenta, clover like flowers (picture). It is grown not only for its seeds, but for its leaves which can be cooked and eaten as greens.

In its raw form, amaranth grain cannot be digested by humans so it has to be cooked as a cereal, ground into flour, popped like popcorn, sprouted, or toasted. The seeds can be cooked with other whole grains, and can be added to stir-fries, soups or stews as a nutrient dense thickening agent. The flour can be made into any of a number of flat breads, pancakes and pastas.

To protect the fatty acids it contains from becoming rancid store Amaranth in a tightly sealed container, in a cool dry area. The seeds should be used within 3 to 6 months. Amaranth flour has a light, creamy colour, is finely textured, and when baked has a mildly sweet toasted flavour. Products high in Amaranth take slightly longer to bake and may require less liquid than with some other flours.

Adapted from Hamilton Chapter newsletter of March 14 by Mervyn Dean



Amaranth, Quinoa and Dark Chocolate Cake

Ingredients

4.5 oz dark chocolate, 70 % cocoa
 7 Tbsp butter, unsalted
 1/2 cup blond cane sugar
 3 Tbsp amaranth flour (1 oz)
 3 Tbsp quinoa flour (1 oz)
 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
 1/3 cup pecans, chopped coarsely (1 oz)
 3 eggs, separated
 Pinch of salt

Method

Preheat your oven to 350 F. Butter a 2 x 7 3/4 rectangular mould and line it with parchment

Is Farro Gluten Free? No.

Farro refers to the three ancient wheat varieties first cultivated in the Fertile Crescent (between the Tigris/Euphrates and Nile rivers) and still grown in Italy: farro piccolo (known in German as einkorn), farro medio (emmer), and faro grande (spelt). The imported Italian farro that is available in the USA is usually the emmer variety. It is said that these ancient grains have a lower level of protein, which means some individuals can eat it without any problem, but it is a wheat and so contains the gluten protein i.e it is not gluten free.

Many gourmet and health food stores are increasingly using farro in prepared dishes that are sold in the deli sections and in many cases not labeled as wheat....only as "farro." As it has a resemblance to brown rice (picture) it can be taken for rice when found in salads, vegetarian burgers and soups, with no "contains wheat" allergy warning.

paper. Melt the chocolate with the butter in a double-boiler (or a bowl placed on top of a pot full of simmering water).

Beat the egg yolks with the sugar and vanilla until light and white in colour. Add the chocolate preparation and mix until well incorporated. Next, add the nuts and the flours, and mix well until smooth in texture.

Add a pinch of salt to the whites and beat them until light and firm. Fold in the chocolate mixture, making sure that it stays light. Pour the batter into the mould and cook for around 45 minutes. When cooked the blade of a knife inserted into the middle of the cake should come out cleanly. Remove the cake and let it cool slightly before un-moulding. Let cool on a rack.

I once had a sales lady telling me that farro pasta is gluten free. I knew it wasn't, and tried to tell her, but she wouldn't listen. I just might have bought it in my early days after diagnosis.
 End of story: FARRO is NOT GLUTEN FREE

Adapted from an article by Lorraine Didrikson in the Vancouver Chapter Newsletter, February 2014

Note from editor: Several years ago I saw a Toronto "gluten-free" restaurant website that stated that their GF kitchen used only spelt flour in all their baking.



Brown Rice? No, Farro

Xanthan Gum & Guar Gum: A key to successful gluten-free baking

As you know, gluten in wheat flour is what makes dough elastic and stretchy. Gluten-free flours don't impart this property and so to mimic it need additional ingredients, usually xanthan or guar gum. Guar gum, a dietary fibre obtained from the endosperm of the Indian cluster bean has eight times the thickening ability of cornstarch. It improves viscosity and texture, acts as a binder and stabilizer, and retains moisture. Xanthan gum is produced from a specific strain of bacteria that act on carbohydrates. Just like guar gum, xanthan gum helps replicate the action of gluten and acts as a thickener, emulsifier and stabilizer. Both guar

gum and xanthan gum are used in gluten-free cooking. They can be used in salad dressings and sauces, as well as for baking breads, muffins, cookies and cakes. But be warned - use too much and the baked goods will have a heavy, gummy texture.

Alternatives to guar or xanthan gum are ground flax seeds and chia seeds but are best restricted to the simpler gluten-free recipes such as cookies, which will then have a more chewy texture. Combine one tablespoon of ground flax seeds and chia seeds with two tablespoons of boiling water. Stir for a few minutes and add to the baking mixture.

From the Cuisine Soleil October newsletter; www.cuisinesoleil.com), adapted from the reprint in the Hamilton Peel Chapter Newsletter March 2014

Myth or Fact? Web Sources

Celiac Disease - Myths & Facts: This easy to understand PDF document, produced by the Canadian Celiac Association, covers many of the most common myths surrounding living with celiac disease.

<http://celiac.ca/pdfs/celiac%20disease%20myths%20and%20facts.pdf>

Celiac Disease: Myths and Facts: This is a brief (but dense) PDF article produced by Dr. Stefano Guandalini and Michelle Melin-Rogovin from the University of Chicago Celiac Disease Program (UCCDP). It takes a more clinical approach to the material than do the other documents given here.

http://theglutensyndrome.net/Celiac_Myths_FactsGuandalini_002799.pdf

Celiac Disease Myths Debunked: The US-based Celiac Disease Foundation has produced a "Fast Facts" document based on information

from the last International Celiac Disease Symposium, held in Chicago, IL, USA this past September. It is similar to the PDF from the Canadian Celiac Association (above) but takes on a different set of myths.

<http://celiac.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/fast-factsvi.pdf>

Celiac Disease: Top 10 Myths: This is one part of a brief but informative collection of articles that make up a larger newspaper supplement called Autoimmune Awareness. This particular supplement was produced by MediaPlanet for The Washington Post newspaper.

<http://sites.mediaplanet.com/autoimmune-awareness/celiac-disease-top-10-myths>

Adapted from Kitchener Waterloo Chapter Newsletter, March 2014

NL Chapter News

A barbecue was held on Saturday 24 May at North Bank Lodge in Pippy Park, St. John's. On a cool, overcast but dry day around 25 brave souls enjoyed gluten-free burgers and sausages, cooked by the

Chapter's grillmaster, Brian Culleton, and a variety of other GF eats that included potato salad, cookies, watermelon cake, water and soft drinks.

Upcoming Events

September 2014: A fundraising event is being considered for this month. Be ready for an announcement.

November 2014: Next Chapter meeting. Date to be announced.

Lisa and Nancy are planning more awareness classes for those newly diagnosed with celiac/gluten intolerance, or for anyone wanting a refresher. Dates will be announced when venues, etc. are confirmed.

The Last Word

Would you go to Calgary for a (long) weekend? I didn't think I would but that's what I ended up doing at the beginning of this month. I attended my second National CCA Conference while my wife spent time with her daughter and 15-month-old grandson. This latter was the main reason for going, of course, although I was pleased to be able to attend the conference. Originally we had planned a longer stay but a couple of weeks before we left there were several reasons for us to shorten the trip. I told my wife that Calgary is further away than Heathrow, England, and we'd never consider going to England for a weekend. She replied that she didn't have a daughter and grandson in England.

So I attended the conference, and in the conference supplement that will come out in the next couple of weeks (I hope) there will be a summary of the topics presented. For now I want to consider what goes into putting on a conference. A lot of work, obviously, that includes the basics such as finding a suitable GF-friendly venue, recruiting speakers, advertising, accommodation (special rates at hotels, for example), and recruiting exhibitors and sponsors. It would be a lot for a small chapter to take on, so when National Office asked if the NL Chapter was interested in hosting the 2016 conference they said they'd recruit speakers and exhibitors, and help with the promotion of the event.

That would still leave a lot of work for the Chapter to do. We would need volunteers to help with the planning and local logistics (meeting speakers at the airport and getting them to their hotel, and back), as well as with duties during the conference, such as manning the registration desk, liaising with the venue staff, etc. As Lisa has said in her message, volunteers are the backbone of an organization like ours, and if the National Conference does come to NL we'll need lots of them. I've volunteered, and been volunteered, for a lot of organizations in the past and continue to do so. It can be a lot of work at times, but also very rewarding and satisfying - editing this newsletter is a good example of both the work and the satisfaction. The Chapter can always make use of new volunteers so, wherever you live, if you can help in any way, large or small, on a regular basis or just with the conference (if it goes ahead) please tell Lisa.

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