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magazine

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CAN I OUTGROW
CELIAC DISEASE?

generationgf

magazine

A magazine that helps gluten-free children and teens stay healthy and happy.



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Thanks to mom Sammy R. for sending in photos of her daughter Raegen with gluten-free Valentines! They found these adorable, printed Valentine's Day cards and Raegen colored them in for her family and friends. Thanks for sharing the gluten-free LOVE this year, Sammy and Raegen!

If you have something you'd like to share in the next Generation GF magazine, email us at GenerationGF@gluten.org! Or you can mail a paper copy to us at: Generation GF c/o Gluten Intolerance Group 31214 124th AVE SE, Auburn, WA 98092

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to a new year with Generation GF magazine! You asked and we answered, and in this issue you'll find articles that are for gluten-free kids and teens, helping older children navigate their way through a gluten-free life. All our articles are still applicable to everyone living without gluten, we wanted to make sure that older children have an opportunity to learn too!

Summer camp season is quickly approaching, and we just wanted to thank everyone for their interest this year in our Generation GF gluten-free summer camp scholarships. We received many applications, and we are so thankful for the monetary donations we receive through the year that help us support campers every summer. If you want to help support a gluten-free camper, you can donate all year long to GIG Cares. We work with Washington's Camp Sealth, North Carolina's Camp Kanata, Pennsylvania's Camp NJY, and Texas' Camp Gilmont. GIG has staff on-site at Sealth and Kanata during Gluten-Free Week. Both NJY and Gilmont camps are GFFS-validated Gluten-Free Safe Spots, where kids can attend gluten-free camp any session during the summer. We hope all of you attending a Gluten-Free Camp have a safe and memorable camp experience!

Be sure to check out our What's New section where we highlight several events coming up this spring and summer season.

Have a fantastic gluten-free spring and thanks for reading Generation GF!

Erica
Community Relations Manager, GIG Cares





WHAT'S NEW

Fun things always happen with Generation GF!



2023 Generation GF Teen Summit

This year, join us at the Generation GF Teen Summit in beautiful Estes Park, Colorado at the base of the Rocky Mountains. The Generation GF Teen Summit 2023 will be June 26th-29th. This summit is designed for gluten-free teens with support from their families. Our goal is to instill confidence in teenagers as they enter the world as capable and self-assured gluten-free adults. This event is designed for gluten-free teens 13 years and older.

Each registration includes:

- Transportation in a private shuttle to and from Denver International Airport
- Lodging for three nights (check-in June 26th and check out June 29th) at The Ridgeline Hotel with two queen beds (up to 4 people)
- Gluten-free meals during your stay (additional intolerances can be accommodated)
- One daytime activity (choices include horseback riding, aerial courses, or a Jeep 4x4 tour)
- Education-focused sessions specifically designed for gluten-free teens

Please note that any teen participant registered must have an adult chaperone throughout the event.





MINICON 2023 – IT'S GREAT TO BE GLUTEN-FREE!

If you are in the Pacific Northwest, please join us at our 2023 MiniCon! On April 29th 2023, we'll be hosting a conference in Tacoma, WA. Held at the Historic 1625 Tacoma Place, this conference will feature a small gathering of gluten-free vendors and excellent speakers on the topic of gluten-free and celiac disease. A gluten-free buffet styled catered meal is included in the ticket price. Save the date for this event in Washington state this April.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Be a change-maker in the gluten-free community! There are many opportunities to volunteer with the Gluten Intolerance Group and GIG Cares. We have opportunities to mentor those who are new to gluten-free, opportunities to advocate for gluten-free within your community, and opportunities to fundraise for our GIG Cares Cutting Costs boxes for those facing gluten-free food insecurity. Contact us if you'd like to help!



HEAD TO [GIGCARES.ORG](https://giggares.org) TO LEARN MORE ABOUT ANY OF OUR UPCOMING EVENTS!



Get to Know a Generation GF Group:

Generation GF of the Tennessee Valley



courtesy of Lisa Altfest

Let's meet the Generation GF of the Tennessee Valley

We love seeing what each of our Generation GF support groups have been doing to spread awareness and grow community around gluten-free living.

Generation GF of the Tennessee Valley recently interviewed a celebrity baker – Lisa Altfest of A Real Sweet Thing blog. Does Lisa look familiar? Lisa has appeared on Hulu, Netflix, and The Food Network cooking competitions baking all gluten-free sweets!

How did this virtual event happen?
Alexandra Kemmet of Generation GF of

the Tennessee Valley support group saw Lisa competing on TV – and everything she was making was gluten-free! She wanted to share Lisa's story with the group. Alexandra reached out to Lisa on her Instagram and she arranged a Zoom meeting!

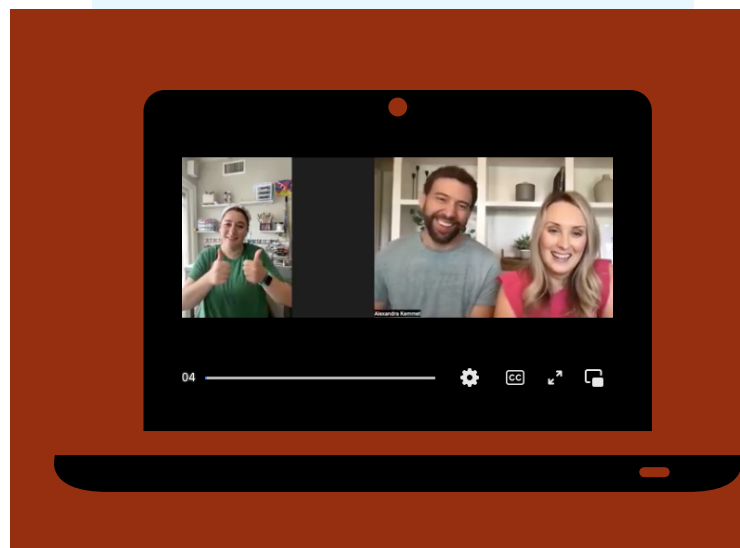
During the meeting, Lisa shared how she got started in baking, and that right before pastry school she found out she had celiac disease. She discusses her struggles with celiac disease, but also how she overcame being diagnosed to pursue her dream of being a pastry chef. She also shared what it is like being on TV as someone baking gluten-free.

“It’s so special for kids to see someone say gluten-free and celiac on TV...to see someone on a big stage not being held back,” Alexandra adds. “She was very genuine and passionate about still being able to reach her goals.”

What a great lesson for every gluten-free kid and teen! You don’t have to let celiac disease – or any other health issue – hold you back from your dreams!

Thank you to Alexandra Kemmet of Generation GF of the Tennessee Valley for sharing this cool virtual event! The Generation GF of the Tennessee Valley has about 50 members and would love to have more members! Join their Facebook group page today – just search for “Generation GF of the Tennessee Valley” and request to join!

courtesy of Lisa Altfest



QUESTIONS?

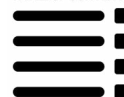
If you have any questions about Generation GF of the Tennessee Valley, please contact generationgf.tnvalley@gluten.org!



Lisa Altfest of *A Real Sweet Thing* can be found at arealsweetthing.com and [@arealsweetthing](https://www.instagram.com/arealsweetthing) on Instagram.



Find a Generation GF Support Group near you using the map in the back of this magazine.



ASK THE DIETITIAN

By Lola O'Rourke, RD

Question: I just started cooking and a lot of recipes use spice to bring out the flavor of each recipe. But I'm confused – are all spices gluten-free? Do I have to read the labels of spices too?

Answer: That's a great question! First, great job on understanding that spices can really make a recipe! Seasoning can easily turn a basic meal into something magical. I'm so happy that you're experimenting with spices. But I can also understand why you might be a little nervous.

When spices are sold just by themselves like a bottle of cinnamon or turmeric, they're typically naturally gluten-free. However, just like many things that are produced, there is some risk of cross-contact with gluten. Always read the ingredients to make sure that the only thing inside is the spice itself. But since there is still some risk of cross-contact, we recommend choosing spices labeled gluten-free, or certified gluten-free.

Now, a blend of spices, or a seasoning mix – like taco seasoning or meatloaf seasoning can

be tricky. These can include things like wheat flour inside. Labels on this type of blended spices are really important to read all the way through. Just like the regular spices, the safest bet would be to always choose spices labeled gluten-free, or certified gluten-free.

Some of our favorites to keep on hand to easily add pizzazz to lots of different foods are cinnamon, garlic powder, and if you like some heat, chili powder too!

Adding to your next bowl of popcorn is one delicious and simple way to use spices! A little cinnamon and a pinch of sugar; or a little garlic powder and chili powder with a little salt will give your next bowl a fun new twist.





CAN I OUTGROW CELIAC DISEASE?

You might have heard that some kids with food allergies can grow out of their food allergies as they get older.

“I know that food allergies are different than celiac disease, but can I still grow out of it? Is there a chance I can eat gluten again when I grow up?”

Unfortunately, you can’t just grow out of celiac disease. I know that might be hard to hear. But here is some good news. With a gluten-free diet, you can get back to normal!

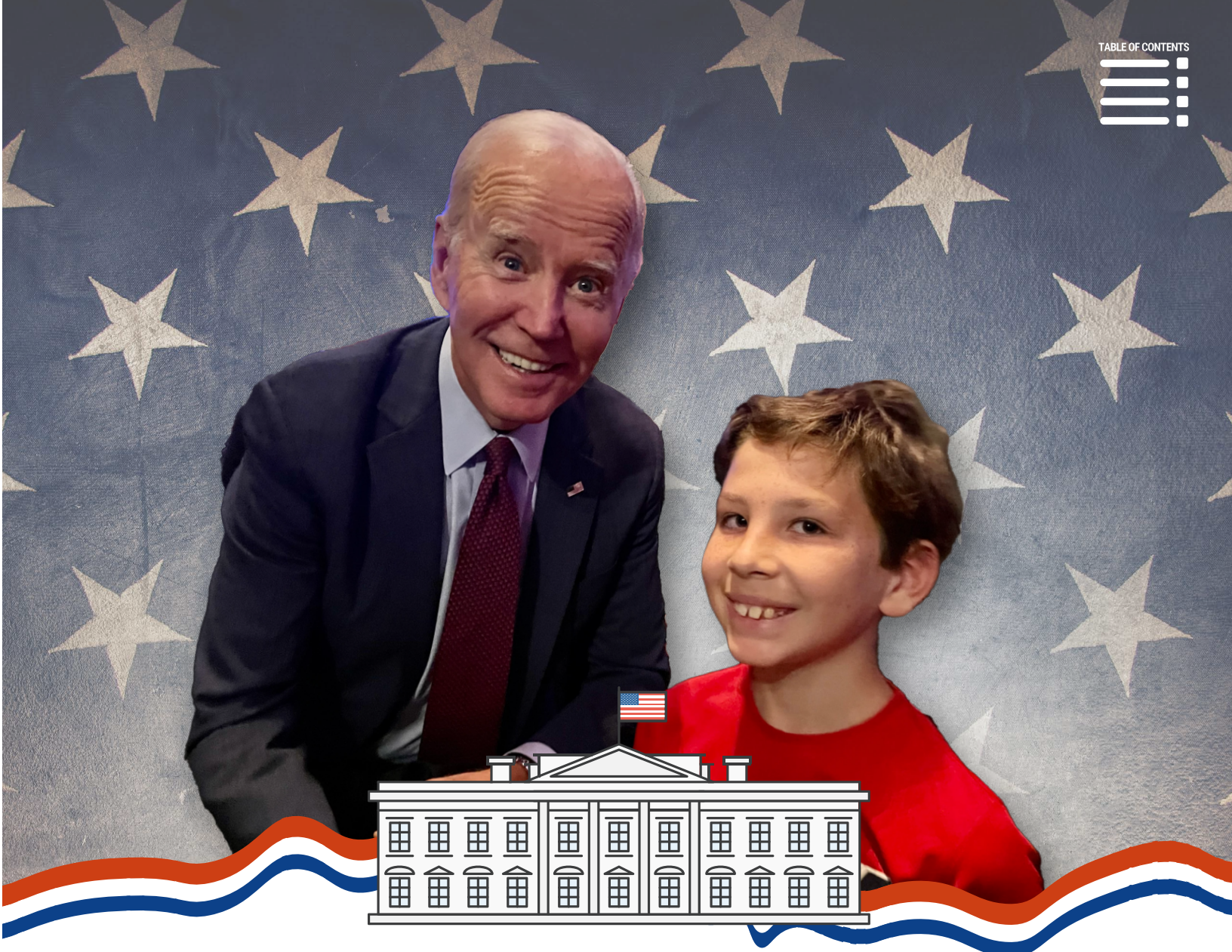
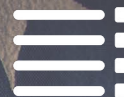
Celiac disease is one of the only autoimmune diseases that can be controlled by what you eat! Pretty cool, right? We just need to eat our special diet and we will be able to grow and thrive like everyone else! And thankfully, every year that you’re gluten-free, you gain more knowledge and practice being gluten-free. By the time you are an adult, you might not even remember what it was like before you were gluten-free.

Right now, there is no “cure” for celiac disease. Many great organizations and very smart doctors are working on research. One day in the future there might be a medication that someone can



“I know that food allergies are different than celiac disease, but can I still grow out of it? Is there a chance I can eat gluten again when I grow up?”

take. We don’t know what this medication can do yet because these experts are still working on research for it. This medication might allow you to eat gluten again without getting sick, or maybe it could help you with your symptoms if you accidentally get contaminated at a restaurant. We just don’t know what the future holds for a cure for celiac disease. But we do know that many people are working hard for people with celiac disease!



A Gluten-Free Visit to THE WHITE HOUSE

By Jax and Leslie Bari

This issue, we'd love to feature a family making a real difference for our gluten-free community! We hope this story inspires you to want to make a difference for your community too. Here's our interview with Jax (age 9) and Leslie Bari of *Gluten Free Finds!*

Erica: I'd love for everyone reading this article to get to know you more! I'd like to

know how Jax was diagnosed with celiac disease? How did you know something was wrong?

Leslie: After falling off the growth chart, Jax went to see an endocrinologist at age 5 for some blood tests. A few weeks later, we got a surprising phone call – Jax likely had celiac disease, something we didn't even

know they were testing for! Jax was also very anemic (that means low iron in the blood). We followed up with an endoscopy that revealed intestinal damage from gluten, and Jax began his gluten-free diet right before starting Kindergarten.

Erica: Wow! What a story! I'm so glad he was diagnosed. After you went gluten-free, what made you want to start a blog?

Leslie: We were trying so many different kinds of gluten-free pasta and chicken nuggets and cookies and other snacks to find the products that Jax liked best. We figured that our "research" might be helpful to someone else, so we thought we'd share the information in a blog. Then our blog Gluten Free Finds was born! Our mission is to find, try, and share the best gluten-free products. It has also grown into sharing our restaurant reviews, travel tips and gluten-free travel experiences.



Erica: I love your blog! I know it's a lot of hard work. Did Jax want to get involved in the blog when you started?

Leslie: Yes, he was a willing participant! It was fun for him to make videos and do product reviews! I tried to make it exciting for him. We spent a lot more time baking at home, especially once COVID-19 hit. I think it's so important for Jax to have life skills like gluten-free cooking and baking. Most importantly, Jax has found a sense of community – he knows he is not alone.

Erica: Lobbying is so cool! Can you tell me more about how that started?

Leslie: Eating without fear became Jax's mission, and that's why it's been a labor of love to advocate for important gluten-free issues. Once Jax was diagnosed, we started Celiac Journey (CeliacJourney.com), a patient advocacy organization to address our lived experience with celiac disease, and to share the needs of the celiac community. Some of our goals are getting



gluten labeled as a "major food allergen" on all packaged foods and increasing federal funding for research.

[Reader note: As of 2023, there are only 9 foods (Milk, Eggs, Fish, Crustacean Shellfish, Tree Nuts, Peanuts, Wheat, Soybeans & Sesame) that are considered a "major food allergen" according to the Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act of 2004 (FALCPA) - these are the foods that you will see on food ingredient lists in bold lettering, or at the end of the ingredient list like "contains milk."]

For many years the NIH (the National Institute of Health) only spent \$3 million a year on celiac disease research. That's just \$1 per American with celiac disease per year. That's not nearly enough to make a big difference. We think that with more funding, we can get closer to a cure.

Erica: I heard that Jax recently went to the White House and met President Biden? How did all of that happen?

Leslie: Jax's highlight of 2022 was meeting President Joe Biden at a rally for our local senator from PA. Jax explained to the President that he has celiac disease and shared his experience, talked food policy, and even traded challenge coins. Because the President made a statement about the high price of insulin, Jax told the President that insulin is to diabetics as gluten-free food is to people with celiac disease. The President even asked for his phone

number, and Jax said "I don't have one, but I can give you my dad's!"

As a follow up, we were invited to meet with staff from the White House Domestic Policy Council to share our lived experience with celiac disease!

Erica: That is so cool! I just love the photo of Jax with the president! The president definitely doesn't have my number! What were some key findings that you learned at the White House Conference on Hunger Nutrition and Health that you attended?

Leslie: It was such an honor to attend the conference and learn about so many people that are impacted by food and food insecurity in different ways. It was inspiring to meet so many people who work really hard to address hunger, nutrition, and health and especially those who work to reduce diet-related disease.

I think President Biden said it best in his opening remarks, "If a parent cannot feed a child, there's nothing else that matters for that parent." Unfortunately, what President Biden said was true for us.



We have lived with food insecurity. We have also lived with Jax getting really sick after eating at a restaurant because gluten isn't labeled as one of the 9 major food allergens.

Erica: You and your family have been so great about advocating for others with celiac disease. Thank you for doing that! Have you had any follow up meetings or lobbying efforts since then?

Leslie: In addition to our meeting at the White House, we had several meetings on Capitol Hill, and we also met with top FDA leadership to discuss our efforts to get gluten labeled as a major food allergen. Thankfully, Jax was supported by Dr. Virginia Stallings from the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) where Jax has been treated since 2018.

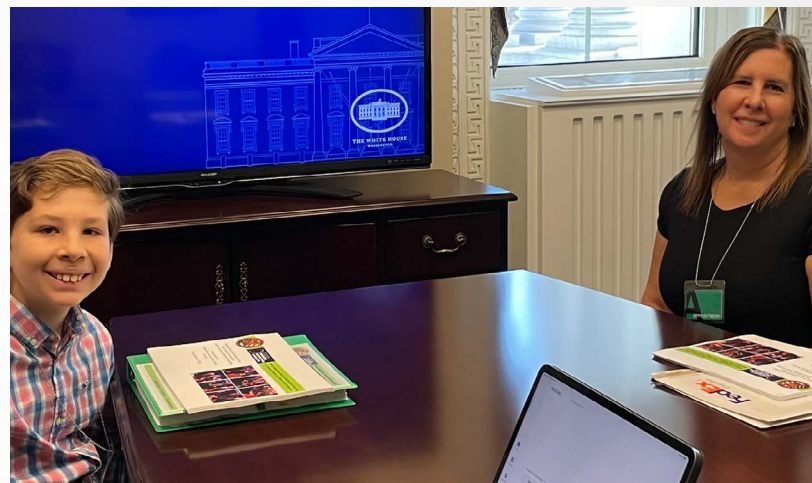
[Reader note: to read the letter, head to our online article!]

Erica: That's so impressive. I'm so thankful for kids like Jax starting so young in advocacy! He's a great model for younger kids looking to get involved. So, after that, what's next for you and Jax?

Leslie: We will continue blogging about the latest gluten-free products, and we will continue to push forward on our celiac disease advocacy efforts! We'd love to have others join us to help share the message that we need gluten labeled on all foods now.

Erica: Anything else you'd like to share with Generation GF?

Leslie: It's not easy to speak up, but as someone with celiac disease, you definitely need to learn to be an advocate at a young age. That can be in many situations like at a restaurant trying to figure out if a certain food is safe to eat, or in school having to explain your allergies to your friends. Don't be shy or embarrassed! If you open up to people, they will often surprise you and will want to learn more! Don't let food issues hold you back from eating out, from traveling, and from living life!



A big thank you to Leslie and Jax! We hope that this inspires you to start advocating for those who need to be gluten-free. We would love to see more younger people getting involved in lobbying and helping share the message that celiac disease needs more funding. But you can always start smaller by creating a blog, Instagram page, or start with your local community and help to make living life gluten-free easier!



My first job is at a

DO-NUT SHOP

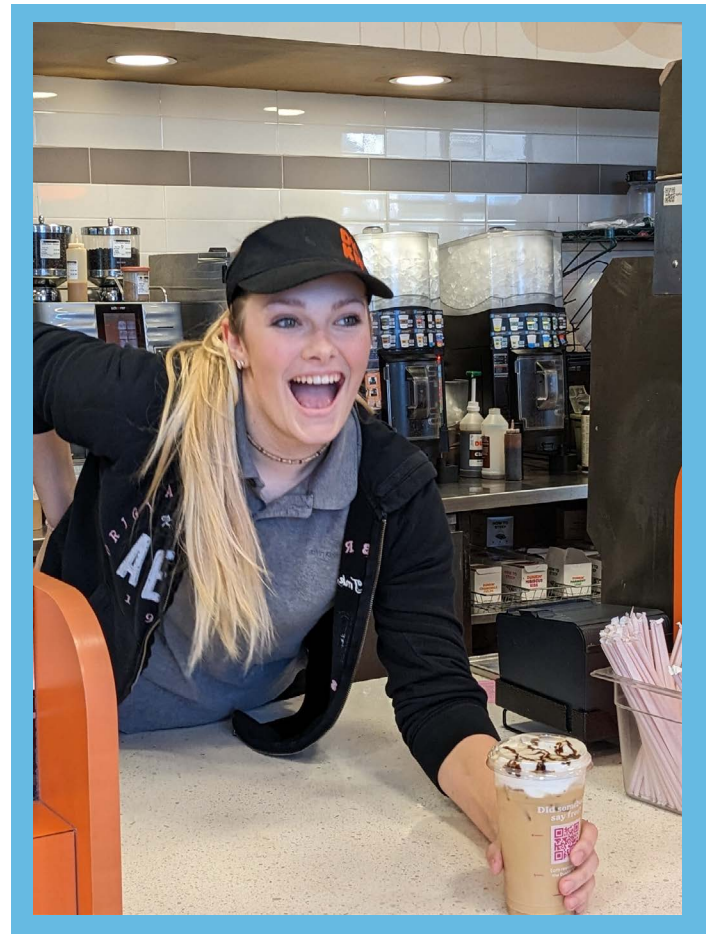
By Devyn Quinn

I found out I was gluten-free when I was 4 years old. My mom had me tested after a reaction to food, and ever since then I've been eating gluten-free. I am now 16 and I have my first job. And this isn't just any first job – my first job is at Dunkin' Donuts.

Being gluten-free and working at Dunkin' might scare most gluten-free teens, but I am really safe the whole time I am working. Most of the time, I am at the front of the shop making and serving drinks or at the drive-thru window delivering food.

There are times that I have to work in the food section with all the donuts and bread, but we are required to wear gloves because *who likes strangers touching your food anyways?* So, with the gloves on, I prepare whatever is needed and after that I usually wash my hands before moving back to where I normally am stationed. Luckily, at Dunkin' the donuts come frozen to be baked in the store, so there is no flour dust in the air.

I chose this job because I believe it's a fun and safe environment for me to work in. While there are some risks with any job with food, I feel safe dealing with it because of the rules we have in our store.

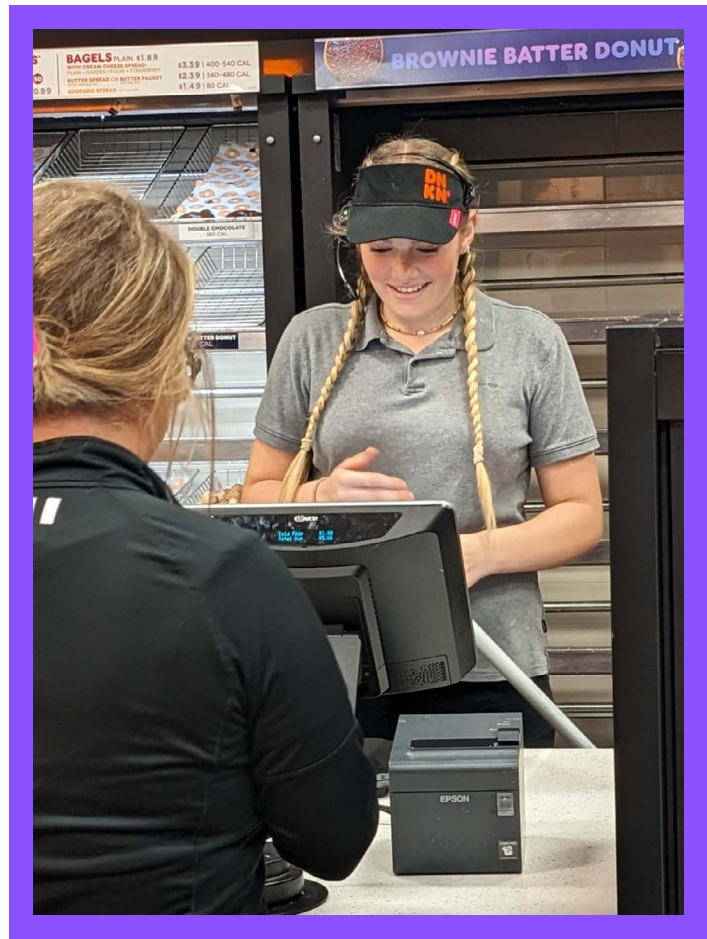


When I filled out my application, I hadn't said anything about me being gluten-free, but when I started working and talked to my manager about it, she was very understanding. We had a friendly conversation about what needs I have, and I reassured her that I will be ok working around the gluten.

Did you know that your employer must follow rules to keep each employee safe based on their individual needs? I can only imagine being an employer and having a staff member being diagnosed gluten-free and not knowing what I needed to do for them. I reassured my manager and let her know I'll be okay if I come into contact with gluten, and how I can wear gloves when handling the donuts, and then wash my hands.

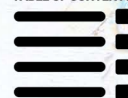
Before I started, my mom was definitely nervous about me getting sick because of all the gluten donuts around. She asked so many questions! I think as time has gone on, and I have been able to explain how things work in the food area of our kitchen, we both have calmed down and the anxiety has reduced to normal 'mom anxiety.'

Talking with my manager was a good opportunity to share the knowledge I have gained all these years being gluten-free.



I think some advice I would give to a teen starting a job is that it is normal to feel anxiety. Please talk to your employer about being gluten-free, and how they can help keep you safe. I know I felt much better once I talked to my manager about working around gluten. But I remember that the first time I had to go in and talk to my manager was scary!



A vibrant floral arrangement on the left side of the page, featuring purple and white flowers, including daisies and ranunculus, set against a light blue and white background with subtle floral patterns.

Make Passover Gluten-Free

by Erica Dermer and Jenny Levine Finke

Passover starts at sundown on April 5, 2023, and like other Jewish holidays, the holiday is filled with symbolic foods. For example, Jewish people don't eat leavened foods on Passover. Leavened food is made with yeast, or other rising agent like baking soda or baking powder. They eat unleavened bread products like crackers during Passover. Unfortunately for those who eat gluten-free, wheat flour is in some Passover food like matzah, an unleavened cracker made from wheat.

People who follow a strict gluten-free diet must adapt many recipes to ensure they're kosher for Passover and gluten-free. Those who are gluten-free can make a matzah

with gluten-free oat flour. Besides matzah, there are many naturally gluten-free things to eat during Passover!

We spoke with one of our favorite bloggers, Jenny Levine Finke from *Good For You Gluten Free*, about her favorite Passover foods and how she enjoys Passover foods all while keeping a strict gluten-free diet.

Erica: Jenny, thank you so much for talking to Generation GF magazine! I'm thankful you're here to share more about Passover. When and why did you go gluten-free, and how did that change how you celebrated Jewish holidays?

Jenny: Thanks for chatting with me, Erica. I was diagnosed with celiac disease shortly after the Passover holiday in 2012. When Passover ended, my husband and I ate a lot of gluten-filled take-out pizza and beer. The next day, I went to my doctor for my regular yearly exam, where I complained to her about my painful bloating and embarrassing gas. I asked her if she could recommend a good gas medicine, and that's when she thought to test me for celiac disease. You know how the rest of this story goes.

Missing out on holiday foods can be emotional for people with celiac disease. I'm unable to take part in many of the mitzvahs (religious duties or commandments) that involve food.

On Passover, Jews are commanded to eat matzah made from one of the five grains mentioned in the Torah: wheat, rye, barley, spelt, and oats. Of course, the only grain that can be made gluten-free is oats. It's difficult to find gluten-free oat matzah, and if I do, it comes with a big price tag. I usually make gluten-free oat matzah from scratch, even though it's not technically kosher for Passover.

My Jewish ancestors have been eating these symbolic foods for 3,000+ years, and I want to take part in the tradition. That's why every year, I take the time to make traditional foods that are gluten-free and safe for me to eat. It's extra work, but it's important to me and my family, and that makes it worth it in the end.



Erica: Thanks again for sharing one of your Passover recipes with us. On your blog, you write that you love making charoset. I also love charoset. Tell our readers what charoset is and why it is one of your favorite Passover foods.

Jenny: Charoset is a sweet concoction of apples, wine (or grape juice), walnuts, and cinnamon. All the ingredients used to make it are naturally gluten-free.

Jewish people enjoy foods with symbolism so they can bridge the physical world with the spiritual world. Charoset is one of those symbolic foods. It looks like the mortar (clay and straw) that the Jewish people used to build bricks when they were slaves in the land of Egypt. While the charoset looks like mud, it tastes sweet and delicious. It's almost exclusively enjoyed during a Passover seder, although I eat leftover charoset throughout the week-long celebration.

Erica: This recipe that you're sharing with us says to use a food processor. If you don't have one, what do you recommend?

Jenny: A food processor will make the process go much easier, and you can ask an adult to help you. If you don't have a food processor, you can shred the apples by hand using a cheese grater.



Erica: Thank you again for allowing us to change your Passover charoset recipe a little to make it kid-friendly! You can find Jenny's awesome gluten-free recipes at GoodForYouGlutenFree.com! I'm so excited to try this recipe. Thank you again Jenny!





Easy Gluten-Free Charoset Recipe

Ingredients

2 ½ lbs. sweet apples
(see notes)

1 ½ cups walnuts shelled,
about 12 ounces

2-3 tsp ground cinnamon
(to taste)

¾ cup Kosher for Passover
grape juice (to taste)

Makes about 12 one-half
cup servings



Directions

1. Peel and core the apples. Ask an adult to help you cut the apples. Be careful!
2. Shred the apples either using a food processor with the shredding disc attachment or by hand with a cheese grater. Either way, ask an adult to help you because both tools are sharp. Set aside the shredded apples in a large bowl.
3. Crush the walnuts into tiny pieces one of two ways:
 - Pulse the walnuts 4-6 times in your food processor (fitted with the stainless steel blade) until they're finely chopped. Be careful not to overmix the walnuts or you'll wind up with walnut butter!
 - Alternatively, you can add the walnuts to a large zip-top bag and roll your rolling pin over the nuts, crushing them into small bits. Add the crushed walnuts to the apple mixture.
4. Add the cinnamon and grape juice to the apple mixture and mix well, by hand. The apples will soak up the grape juice, so don't be stingy if your mixture looks dry. Simply add more. Taste the mixture and add more grape juice or cinnamon, if needed.



Notes about this recipe

Choosing the Right Apple: I've been making charoset for years, and my choice apple is Red Delicious. They're sweet and crispy, making them perfect for charoset. I've also made this recipe with Fuji and Honeycrisp apples with good results. Feel free to use your favorite apple to make charoset and enjoy experimenting in the kitchen.

Grape Juice: Be sure to use Kosher for Passover grape juice (labeled with a circle P) when making charoset for Passover. Kadem is a popular brand of kosher for Passover grape juice.

Make It Ahead: This recipe can be made 1-2 days prior to your Passover seder. Store it in a sealed container in your fridge until you're ready to serve it.

This recipe was adapted from the 2017 recipe and blog post titled "Passover Charoset Recipe Made Easy" on GoodForYouGlutenFree.com!



NO-BAKE VEGAN GLUTEN-FREE BIRD NEST COOKIES RECIPE

By Brianna Hesch

These easy no-bake cookies don't require any baking – no oven needed! They are made with peanut or sunflower seed butter and gluten-free oats. These cookies are fun to make and perfect for Easter and the Spring.

To make the cookies, you'll cook ingredients together on the stove top. *Make sure you have parental supervision if you are not trained to cook on the stove!* You'll cook sugar, oil, (cocoa powder, if using) and milk until it boils. After that, you will add peanut butter, vanilla, and oats. The mixture “sets up,” or becomes more solid, as it cools. It turns into fudgy, sweet, no-bake cookies that are so cute with bird “eggs” on top!

Here are some things you'll need to know about this recipe before you make it.

- The sugar type is important! Sugar comes in all different types. White sugar works the best for this recipe, but brown sugar will also work.
- You can use almost any cooking oil. I chose coconut oil, but avocado oil, canola oil, palm shortening, or vegetable oil should work just the same. If you only have butter on hand, use $\frac{1}{4}$ cup melted butter instead of 3 tablespoons of oil.
- If you can't have dairy milk, you can use any non-dairy milk you have on hand.

- If you can't eat gluten-free oats, you can use shredded coconut instead.
- If you want to try something a little more difficult, I used cocoa powder in some of my gluten-free Easter egg nest cookies. If you use cocoa powder, the ingredient amounts are a little different because the cocoa powder makes the cookie mixture thicker, and it will all come together and harden very quickly.
- This recipe works best if you don't use an all-natural sunflower seed butter or peanut butter (the kind where oil separates from the nut butter). If you have to store your peanut butter in the fridge to keep it from separating, this recipe may not work as well.
- Be sure to double check your oats are gluten-free! If you want fudgier cookies, use old fashioned gluten-free oats.
- For the candies you can use anything that looks like eggs – gummy eggs, jelly beans, candy coated chocolate eggs, and even bubble gum eggs. Pick whatever candy is safe for your allergies!
- You'll need parchment paper, wax paper, or silicone baking mats to scoop your cookies onto. Plastic wrap is okay, but not the easiest choice.
- You'll need a medium cookie scoop or two big spoons (like the kind you use for cereal) for scooping and shaping your bird nests. You may want to grease them with cooking spray or shortening before you start.



Vegan Gluten-Free “Bird Nest” Cookies

Makes: 1 1/2 dozen

Total Time: 40 minutes

Ingredients

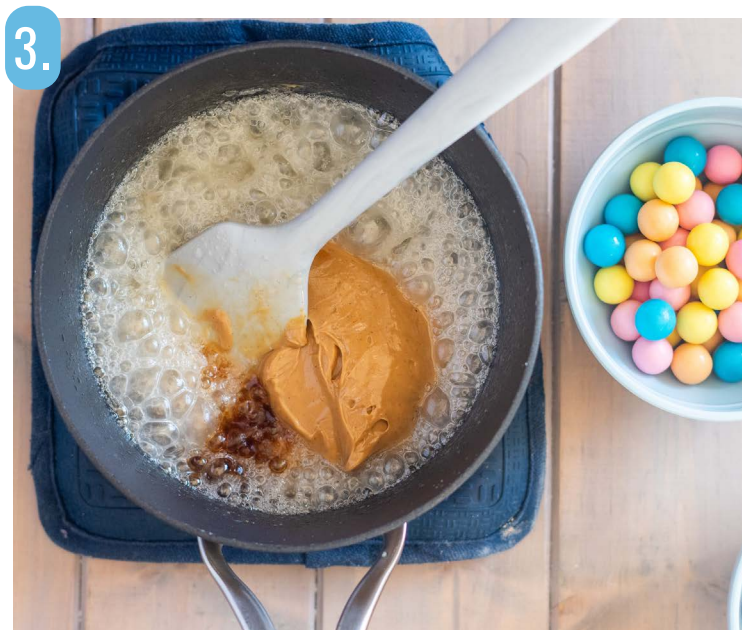
- 1 cup white sugar
- 3 tablespoons coconut oil
- 1/4 cup coconut milk
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup sunflower seed butter or peanut butter
- 1 3/4 cup gluten-free rolled oats
- 1/2 cup candy eggs, for decorating

Instructions

1. Line 2 baking sheets with your silicone baking mats, parchment paper, or wax paper.
2. With adult supervision, add your sugar, coconut oil, and coconut milk in a medium sauce pan. Stir occasionally until it starts to boil. Once it comes to a boil, continue to let it bubble for exactly 3 minutes while stirring occasionally. *(For fudgier cookies set the timer for 2 minutes 30 seconds).*
3. Remove from heat and add the sunflower seed or peanut butter and vanilla and keep stirring until it's smooth. If the mixture gets too thick, place it back on the stove over low heat for a minute. If the mixture looks separated, add a little bit more milk and stir over low heat until it is smooth.



4. Add the gluten-free oats and stir.
5. Working quickly, scoop the mixture onto your parchment or wax paper using a medium cookie scoop. Or you can use two spoons; scoop with one cereal spoon, and scrape using the other spoon.
6. Grease the back of your cookie scoop or spoon with some oil or cooking spray and use it to make a dent in each cookie to make a “nest” for your egg candies to lay in.
7. Quickly add candy eggs to decorate your bird nest cookies.
8. Let the cookies sit until they harden a little and become solid. If you are in a rush, you can also put the cookies in the fridge or freezer until they harden.



Extra credit: Learn how to make chocolate bird nests

For the coconut milk that is called for in the recipe, use $\frac{1}{4}$ cup plus 2 tablespoons of coconut milk, and add 2 tablespoons of cocoa powder to it. For the oats, use only $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups of gluten-free rolled oats (instead of $1\frac{3}{4}$ cup).





Make This DIY Gift: Allergy-Friendly Easter Gift Basket

By Brianna Hesch



Everybody should be able to enjoy holidays, even gluten-free! It might be a little hard to find a gluten-free Easter gift but it's easy to make a fun and gluten-free basket of Easter goodies for your friends and family!

Here are some ideas for a gluten-free and allergy-friendly Easter basket, filled with non-food items and allergy-friendly treats.

First, find a basket that puts a smile on your face! If something makes you smile, you can bet it will make your friends or family smile too!

You can even turn a blank brown paper shopping bag into an Easter gift basket. You can use colored pens and markers to draw your art on the bag. Once you're done with the design, fold the top of the shopping bag over several times, until it looks like a basket instead of a bag.



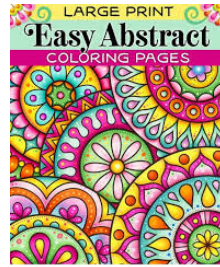
Next, pick a big item or two, and then pick some smaller things to go with it.

My favorite big items:





Stickers



Coloring books



Sidewalk chalk
(the big chalk eggs are the best, they don't break as quickly!)



New art supplies like crayons, markers, or colored pencils

THEN ADD SOME SMALLER TREATS AROUND YOUR BIG ITEM:

YOU CAN FILL ANY EMPTY SPACE WITH COLOR TISSUE PAPER, CRINKLE PAPER OR EVEN PLASTIC EASTER EGGS!
THIS GIFT IS FUN TO MAKE AND EVEN MORE FUN TO GIVE TO SOMEONE YOU LOVE!



Gluten-free playdough or Kinetic Sand



Small toys



Small gluten-free candies



Gluten-free gummy bears or natural fruit snacks



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Email the Generation GF group leader in your area for more information!

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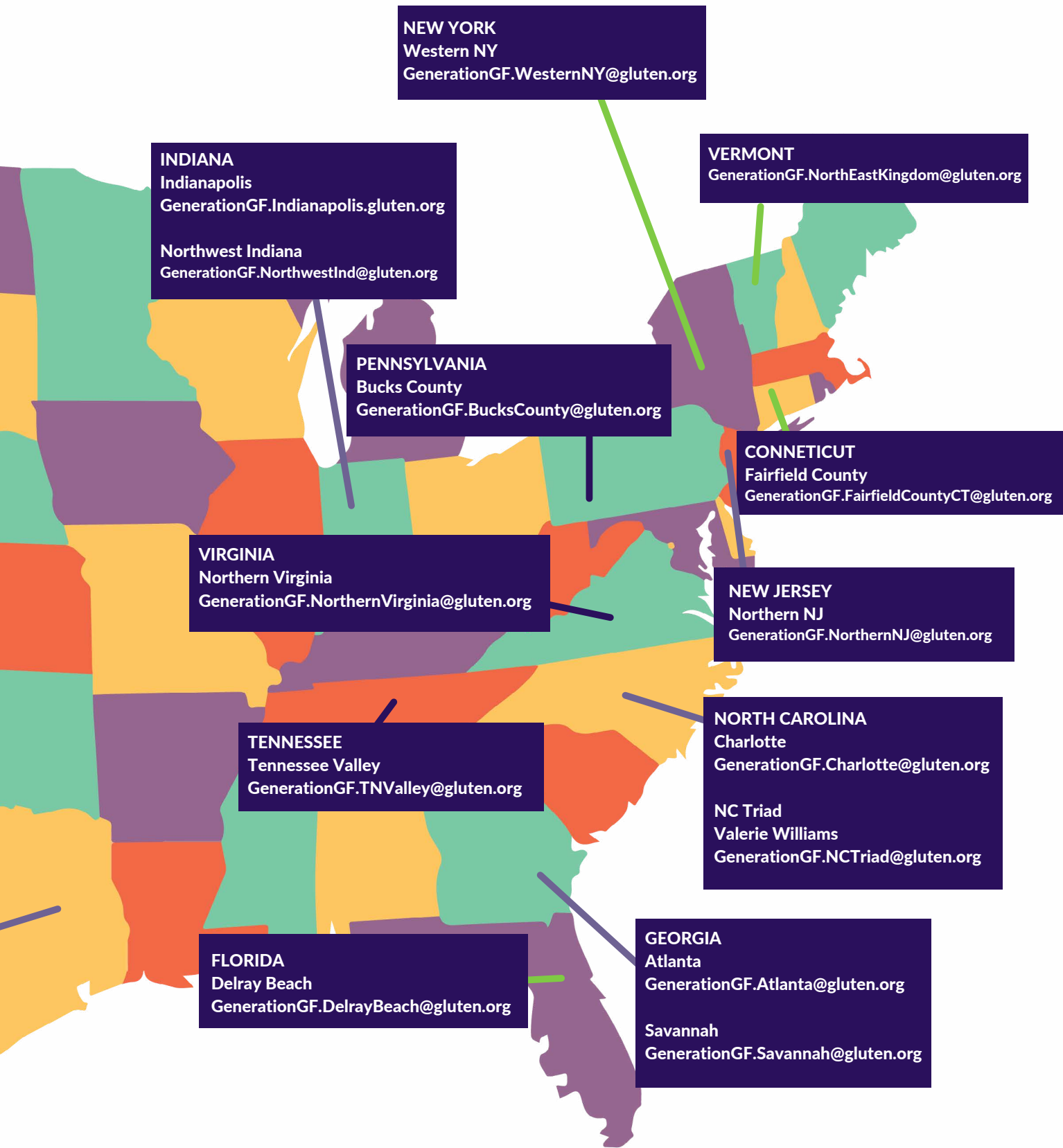
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