

Careers Industries, Greater Grain make holiday meal planning easier

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Executive director

Thanksgiving holiday meal planning is challenging in its own right, but for those with special dietary needs or restrictions, Thanksgiving and the ensuing holiday season can leave one feeling less than merry. Thankfully, Careers Industries' specialty grocery, Greater Grain Gluten-Free Goods, is our community's go-to resource for help preparing holiday meals with ingredients that are sourced locally, organic and gluten-free.

Thanksgiving is probably the most challenging day of the year for those wanting to eat gluten-free or suffer from gluten insensitivity. Gluten is a protein found in all foods and products containing wheat, barley and rye. Whether it's the turkey, gravy, stuffing, bread crumb-topped casseroles, rolls or pies, typically there are few

escapes for those looking to avoid gluten and an upset stomach.

"Next to dining out, the holiday meal probably instills the most anxiety in someone on a gluten-free or other restricted diet," writes Deanna Attai, M.D. "Avoiding the obvious sources like stuffing, pies and other desserts is one thing, but gluten can lurk in vegetable dishes and casseroles in the form of added broth or bread, packaged sauces and salad dressings, gravy due to packaged broth and flour, and in the turkey itself, as some "self-basting" varieties have a gluten-containing basting liquid."

Greater Grain is Racine's only gluten-free food store with more than 800 items. Proceeds from the grocery help support the nonprofit Careers Industries and our mission of providing work, care and community for adults with intellectual



Stephanie Flad is a retail and customer service trainee at Greater Grain Gluten-Free Goods. The specialty grocery, an affiliate program of Careers Industries, has stocked up on Thanksgiving products suitable for a variety of dietary restrictions.

and developmental disabilities. Recognizing the unique challenges holiday dining creates, Greater Grain has ordered a large selection of gluten-free gravies, breads, shortening, soups, stuffing and pie mixes, and other products and ingredients. But don't delay — some supplies did sell out last year.

Additionally, most all of Greater Grain's meats are sourced from Wisconsin farms, including our organic turkeys. Order yours before Nov. 11. We also carry Pederson's Natural Farms Uncured Spiral Hams — all natural, no preservatives and no growth hormones. In fact, all of our beef products,

ground chuck, steaks, roasts and more are 100 percent grass-fed and free of any antibiotics. We also carry organic bison. Our whole chickens and boneless chicken breasts are also pasture-raised and free of all antibiotics.

Meal planners with the best intentions of providing some gluten-free options also need to be mindful of how to avoid cross-contamination when serving. Even if some of the dishes are gluten-free, it's easy for someone to casually use the same serving utensil for gluten and gluten-free dishes alike. When serving buffet style, place gluten-free dishes on a separate area of the table or a different serving area entirely. Make sure each and every dish has its own serving utensils.

There are a variety of tasty gluten-free recipes for all your Thanksgiving favorites. Stop by Greater



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Grain and we'll share with you our top choices. We're just to the west of Careers Industries in the Westgate Mall at 4811 Washington Ave.

All of us at Careers Industries and Greater Grain look forward to hosting the next RAMAC YPR Business Blender from 5-8 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 21. You can network, win raffle prizes and stock up on all your Thanksgiving needs with your special RAMAC VIP discount. Register with Jasmine Reed at (262) 638-6637, or email jasmine.reed@goracine.org.