



ask the celiac expert

with Shelley Case, RD

Q What is teff and how can I use it in a gluten-free diet?

A Teff, a major cereal crop of Ethiopia, is the smallest of all grains in the world. About 100 to 150 teff grains equal the size of one wheat kernel. Teff grains range in colour from milky white to almost black. White, red and brown varieties are the most common types found in Ethiopia, while brown and ivory teff is grown in the United States.

Teff is more nutritious than major cereal grains such as wheat and corn for several reasons. For one, its small size means the germ and bran account for a higher proportion of the seed compared to other grains. Also, the entire whole-grain teff seed is used, unlike wheat or rice, where the outer coating (bran) is often removed. Teff is rich in calcium, iron, magnesium, thi-

amin and zinc. It's also a good source of fibre, protein and other B vitamins.

Teff has a nutty, mild, molasses-like flavour and can be purchased as a grain or flour. Teff flour is used to make Ethiopian *injera*, a sourdough-style flatbread that is chewy and moist. In some North American restaurants, *injera* is made with a combination of teff flour and wheat or barley flour which is NOT gluten-free. *Injera* is tradi-

tionally eaten with *wot*, a spicy sauce or stew made of chicken, beef or lamb; or from spicy ground lentils and peas.

Shelley Case is a consulting dietitian and author, whose revised and expanded edition of Gluten-Free Diet: A Comprehensive Resource Guide is now available. See Glutenfreediet.ca. Shelley Case is on the advisory boards of the Canadian Celiac Association, the Celiac Disease Foundation and the Gluten-Free Intolerance Group. Send your question to: editor@allergicliving.com

USING TEFF IS NOT TOUGH

TYPE OF TEFF	USED AS OR IN	HOW TO DO IT
Whole-grain seed	Side dish instead of rice or potatoes, or in a vegetarian burger with seeds, beans or tofu, and seasonings	Add ½ cup teff grain to 2 cups of boiling water. Cover and simmer 15-20 minutes or until water is absorbed. Stir occasionally.
Whole-grain seed	Thickener for soups and stews	Add uncooked teff grain to your soup pot 30 minutes before serving or add cooked teff (see above) to the pot 10 minutes before serving.
Whole grain seed	Hot breakfast cereal	Cook as above, and add brown sugar or honey, nuts, raisins and cinnamon. Or, add 1 tbsp teff grain when cooking cream of brown or white rice.
Flour	Baked products, especially dark breads and cakes (e.g. chocolate cake, brownies, gingerbread), muffins and cookies	Combine with other gluten-free flours. Use 25-50 per cent teff in a total flour blend.
Flour	Pancakes	Use 100 per cent teff flour, or a combination of teff and other gluten-free flours.
Flour	Ethiopian Flat Bread, <i>injera</i>	See Shelley's recipe for gluten-free <i>injera</i> at: Allergicliving.com – click on Columns