

Thank you for this opportunity to express my views regarding ways to improve the lives of people living with food allergies. My fifteen year old son has an anaphylactic allergy to tree nuts. We have always encouraged him to see the world with our family and have had to make incredible efforts to keep him safe whilst travelling in Canada and abroad in Asia and Europe.

I believe airlines should not serve packaged nuts on board. There are simply other snacks that do not spread their oils as easily and pose such a deadly threat to people.

In addition, if taking a flight where food is served, there should be a simple allergy-friendly alternative available (like a salad or piece of fruit or something processed with the ingredients available) No flight has ever been able to offer him a meal. On long Air Canada flights (to Shanghai and Frankfurt) we have to pack several meals that can be eaten while on board. It is not easy to keep these cool and consumable from the time of departing our house, through check-in and a twelve hour flight. (Then, there is the new job of finding a meal once we have landed.)

Our country should be accessible to those with food allergies. It is a disability that cannot be easily seen or understood. Food is a necessity of life. If people are in the business of providing food they should be responsible for knowing what they are serving.

The best trip we ever took was on the train system in Austria. Due to strict allergy rules in many EU countries, and an enlightened attitude toward allergies, there were many options and much excellent information available despite language barriers. Canada can be like this, too. It should be like this, too. Safe access to food is a fundamental right. Please look to Austria and German for a starting point regarding allergies and travel and thank you for endeavoring to ease this burden for the millions of Canadians, and our visitors, with food allergies.

Anita Smith-Kelly