



**JUNE 2022**

# **IMPACT REPORT 2021**

**Transforming  
the food allergy  
landscape**





# FOOD ALLERGY CANADA

## Helping Canadians live safely and confidently with food allergy

We are a national charity and the country’s leading patient organization committed to educating, supporting, and advocating for the more than 3 million Canadians impacted by food allergy. We focus on improving daily quality of life by providing education and support needed to effectively navigate this medical condition, building informed and supportive communities, and acting as the national voice on key patient issues.



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# FOOD ALLERGY CANADA



## EDUCATION AND SUPPORT

**Empowering those impacted to live well**

We are the trusted provider of education and support for managing food allergy confidently. Through our educational programming, support services, and medically-reviewed resources, we help individuals and families living with the condition through life stages and events, while raising awareness of food allergy and educating the broader community.



## ADVOCACY

**The national voice for key patient issues**

As the national voice for the millions of Canadians affected by food allergy, we take actions to improve daily living. We elevate the food allergy condition and engage key stakeholders nationally and globally within government, industry, and other sectors to make meaningful changes for the food allergy community.



## RESEARCH

**Keeping a focus on patient-centred research that can be translated into action**

A research agenda that is rooted in patient engagement and focused on improving quality of life for Canadians with food allergy is critical. We ensure the patient voice is an integral part of the research process, and we translate the knowledge and insights gained from research into practical programming, resources, and tools.



# MESSAGES

## FROM OUR Executive Director



For more than 20 years, Food Allergy Canada has advocated on behalf of the food allergy community. Much of the work that we do is behind-the-scenes, engaging with government, industry, food manufacturers, educators, and more to help you and your families live safely and confidently with food allergy.

A great example is our initiative on food labelling to ensure access to accurate ingredient information, which we all rely on to make safe food choices. We heard from many of you about “may contain” statements appearing more often on food labels. The lack of clarity on these statements has prompted the question, *“Do I really need to avoid products with “may contain?”*

There is variability in when “may contain” statements are applied, given that they are voluntary and at the discretion of each manufacturer. It is a challenging situation, and both consumers and manufacturers are seeking answers.

Imagine a future with more safe food options, and clarity around “may contain” – resulting in fewer products with these statements, and if they do appear, being confident that they are based on a proper risk assessment.

Through our leadership, we have taken steps to begin to realize this future state. We have established making “may contain” meaningful as a priority among key stakeholders and have motivated a collective effort with food manufacturers, food scientists, healthcare, and regulators to address the situation. It’s a longer-term priority, but one that is underway with momentum building.

Learn more about this initiative, the many accomplishments you helped us achieve in 2021, and our extended initiatives within this impact report. With your support, we can continue to address key issues and make meaningful impacts.

Jennifer Gerdts

## FROM OUR Board Chair



It’s incredible to think that Food Allergy Canada has been transforming the way food allergy is managed and considered for over 20 years.

Although I only joined Food Allergy Canada’s board over four years ago, I was aware of the organization and its commitment to serving the food allergy community long before that. I was not aware, however, of how they worked behind the scenes to make it much easier to manage food allergy through their advocacy efforts with the government, industry, education sector and more. From being instrumental in making ingredient labels easy to understand by ensuring common names were used to helping to create first-of-its kind legislation to support students at risk of anaphylaxis, and more recently, playing a pivotal role in ensuring Canada had more than one auto-injector brand.

I am very proud of the accomplishments of this organization and excited to be a part of the future.

I encourage you to learn more through this impact report on how this organization made transformative change last year and continues its focus on helping Canadians with food allergy confidently manage their condition.

Bob Ellis



**2001**

**Anaphylaxis Canada is formed from the merging of two groups:**

The Anaphylaxis Network of Canada and The Anaphylaxis Foundation of Canada.

In 2015 Anaphylaxis Canada became Food Allergy Canada.



**2005**

**Ushered in Sabrina's Law**, ground-breaking legislation to protect students at risk of anaphylaxis



**2011**

Regulations passed to make it mandatory for priority food allergens to be listed in plain, simple language on prepackaged foods as **a result of our decades-long advocacy efforts**



**2014**

**Helped to make schools safer** by launching AllergyAware.ca to provide online anaphylaxis education to school personnel, with new courses added to educate child care staff and the public



**2014**

**Increased support and empowered youth to manage their food allergy more confidently** through the launch of our Allergy Pals/Allies mentorship program and monthly programs



**2015**

**Significantly improved quality of life, knowledge, and confidence in managing food allergy** for parents and individuals through our newly diagnosed handbook, as substantiated by research



**2017**

**Accelerated the opportunity for the prevention of food allergy** by increasing awareness and knowledge of evidence-based guidance on the early introduction of allergens through resources like Eat Early. Eat Often.



**2018-20**

**Led the effort to secure a temporary second supplier of epinephrine auto-injectors** during a crucial shortage period and to get permanent suppliers in Canada (ALLERJECT®, Emerade™)



**2019**

**Launched the National Food Allergy Action Plan** to prioritize food allergy with key stakeholders, including the federal government

**2021**

**Food Allergy Canada turns 20!**



While much has been accomplished, our work is far from done. You can help us #MakeFoodAllergyCount by supporting our efforts on changing the food allergy picture. Together, we can make real and lasting impact.

# MAKING AN IMPACT IN 2021

Help us continue driving change in 2022 and beyond

## Education & support needed to effectively navigate food allergy

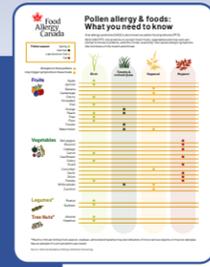
**16**  
Instagram Live sessions for youth



**32**  
small group sessions for newly diagnosed families

**1** Know it. Treat it. campaign to remove fear & instill confidence around treatment

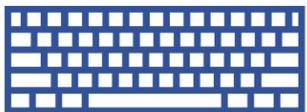
**1** patient resource on oral allergy/pollen food syndrome



**6** Know it. Treat it. videos on anaphylaxis education

**11** educational webinars

603k



visits to our website providing education, driving awareness & offering support

**30,300**  
families, youth, and adults better supported

**10** educational newsletters to keep you informed

**46k+**  
families, individuals, healthcare providers & educators reached every month

**19**  
youth online mentorship groups



**1** Facebook Live session for families

**1** guide to support families

**200k+**

AllergyAware.ca online course completions to date, ensuring teachers and school staff are more educated on food allergy and anaphylaxis

**Building informed & supportive communities**

**726k**  
views of our Food Allergy Awareness Month & Halloween campaigns to build awareness & educate on the condition

**3000+**  
healthcare professionals educated on anaphylaxis management & treatment



## National voice on key patient issues

Helped to #MakeFoodAllergyCount

**550**  
Canadians engaged with their MPs through our #FoodAllergyVotes election campaign

**189**  
ridings reached!  
(more than half of all ridings across Canada)

**2** consultations advocating for access to ingredient information in non-food products

**2** ongoing long-term initiatives:  
National Food Allergy Action Plan and access to accurate ingredient information

**4** key events related to COVID-19 vaccines and food allergy, ensuring:

- you have the credible information you need
- your safety remained a priority
- your interests were represented



# 2021 MILESTONES ACHIEVED



## Empowered Canadians to recognize and treat anaphylaxis

Helped take the fear out of anaphylaxis and instill confidence around treatment with our Know it. Treat it. campaign, webinars, and educational content on anaphylaxis management, including real life stories from the community



## Provided access to experts and educated on COVID-19 vaccines and food allergy

With our webinar series and panel of experts, almost 13,000 Canadians received the credible information needed to make informed decisions around COVID-19 vaccines for individuals, family members, and patients with food allergy



## Fostered community awareness and support

Created safer school, childcare, and community settings through the more than 200,000 AllergyAware.ca course completions since launch, ensuring Canadians are more educated on food allergy and anaphylaxis management



## Advocated on making "may contain" meaningful

Initiated collaborations with academia, the food manufacturing industry, government, and other key stakeholders to address ingredient labelling gaps, particularly those involving precautionary allergen labelling ("may contain" statements), in Canada and globally



## Increased confidence on managing food allergy

Through our small-group mentorship and educational programs and resources, over 30,000 families and youth were inspired to manage food allergy with greater confidence upon diagnosis, during childhood and other critical life stages



# MAKING A REAL IMPACT

## Taking the fear out of anaphylaxis: Know it. Treat it.



At age 11, our daughter Makayla finds it important that she takes on the responsibility of sharing that she has food allergies with others. It's important to me that she has the confidence to advocate for herself. She knows about the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis, and how to be treat a reaction if one happens. The Know it. Treat it. campaign was great as it was a conversation starter for us, and it provided an opportunity to let more people know about anaphylaxis as it's not always understood. **Makayla was happy to share her story and we both feel that hearing the stories of others helps everyone learn more.**

- Michelle C.

## Learning from experts during critical times



I've been managing my food allergy for about 70 years, it has been a very significant thing in my life, and I've experienced anaphylactic reactions. I'd heard the December 2020 news about the people with a history of severe allergic reactions who reacted to the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine. **Having a sesame allergy, I was somewhat nervous about getting vaccinated, but because I had watched a Food Allergy Canada webinar on COVID-19 vaccines and food allergy, I was up for it.** The webinar addressed all my questions and allayed my concerns. Afterwards, I felt better prepared for my vaccine appointment and I only experienced a sore arm after getting vaccinated, which happens to many.

- Celia D.



# MAKING A REAL IMPACT

## Credibility and access



As an allergist, I'm aware of the importance of patient education. When individuals with food allergy and their families are well-informed on the condition and how to manage it, they can live well with it. **Food Allergy Canada does a great job making sure information is based on science, understandable, practical, and consistent. They provide access to credible, medically-reviewed content. They bring the experts to patients for deeper learning.** As individuals are diagnosed with food allergy and pass-through life stages, various challenges can arise. To help address this, the organization provides ongoing opportunities to learn, so that the community can become more comfortable and build confidence in daily management and in the use of epinephrine for treating anaphylaxis. Food Allergy Canada helps families live confidently.

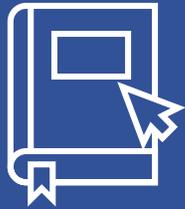
- Wade Watson, MD, MEd

## Leading on food allergen labelling



Improving allergen labelling on pre-packaged foods to meet the needs of consumers with food allergy is not the effort of one constituent but requires the engagement of multiple stakeholders, including food scientists, food manufacturers, regulators, and medical experts. **As a national voice for their community, Food Allergy Canada has shown leadership in bringing key stakeholders to the table on a complex issue and galvanizing them toward a unified action.** This capability has led to meaningful changes to make it easier for consumers to identify allergens in pre-packaged foods and now is tackling an effort to make "may contain" meaningful.

- Dr. Samuel Godefroy, Full Professor at the Department of Food Sciences, Faculty of Agriculture and Food Sciences / Institute of Nutrition and Functional Foods (INAF), Université Laval and former Director General of Health Canada's Food Directorate



# IMPACT THROUGH EDUCATION & SUPPORT



I got really sick at home after eating a new breakfast food that mom didn't know had dairy in it. I knew it was anaphylaxis because I had trouble breathing, my mouth and body were itchy, and my heart was beating really fast. I told my parents right away that I wasn't feeling well. They sat with me on the floor and dad held me while mom gave me the EpiPen.

I learned that even though the EpiPen hurts for a bit, I feel better afterwards.

Ethan I.  
St. Catharines, ON

**KNOW IT.  
TREAT IT.**  
anaphylaxis

## Anaphylaxis education Know it. Treat it.

Empowering Canadians to recognize and treat anaphylaxis

✦ [foodallergycanada.ca/KnowTreat](https://foodallergycanada.ca/KnowTreat)

For May's Food Allergy Awareness Month, we launched our Know it. Treat it. campaign focused on empowering Canadians on recognizing and treating anaphylaxis through real life stories and education. This initiative has raised greater awareness about the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis and epinephrine as the first-line treatment for it.

We received personal stories from individuals and families about their experiences which we're continuing to share on our website to help others. Through our campaign, webinars with expert guest speakers, and educational content and resources on anaphylaxis management, we have helped to take the fear out of anaphylaxis and instill calmness and confidence around treatment.



Thank you so much for continuing to educate people on anaphylaxis, and how to treat it with confidence and peace of mind.





## COVID-19 vaccine and food allergy education

Helping you make informed decisions around COVID-19 vaccines

✦ [foodallergycanada.ca/COVID19](https://foodallergycanada.ca/COVID19)

When questions were raised about the safety of COVID-19 vaccines for those with food allergy, we quickly turned to the experts to ensure you had the credible information you needed to make informed decisions. Assembling a panel of experts from Health Canada, allergy, and infectious disease, we delivered four webinars on this topic to provide information on an ongoing basis as the vaccination picture evolved and vaccine options became available for adults and children. These sessions helped to keep you informed, supported, and feel confident in making the best decisions for you and your families.

“

**After these sessions, I feel so much more informed and have a clearer understanding of the benefits and risks of the vaccines for people with food allergy.**

”



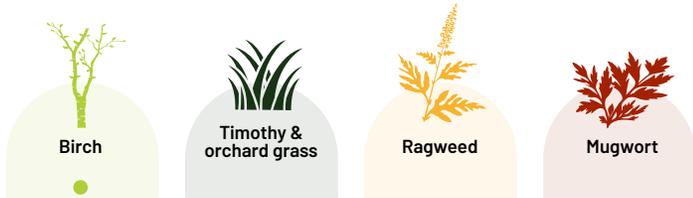


# Pollen allergy & foods

Oral allergy syndrome (OAS) is also known as pollen food syndrome (PFS). With OAS/PFS, the proteins in certain fresh fruits, vegetables and tree nuts are similar to those in pollens, and this "cross-reactivity" can cause allergic symptoms like itchiness of the mouth and throat. Learn more at [foodallergycanada.ca/oas-pfs](http://foodallergycanada.ca/oas-pfs).

Pollen season	Spring	Summer	Late Summer-Fall	Fall
	●	●	●	●

Allergies to these pollens →  
may trigger symptoms to these foods ↓



**Fruits** Apple

## Expanding knowledge of related conditions

Increasing understanding of different types of food allergy

- ✦ [foodallergycanada.ca/EoE](http://foodallergycanada.ca/EoE)
- [foodallergycanada.ca/FPIES](http://foodallergycanada.ca/FPIES)
- [foodallergycanada.ca/PFAS](http://foodallergycanada.ca/PFAS)
- [foodallergycanada.ca/foodintolerances](http://foodallergycanada.ca/foodintolerances)

In response to requests for information on different types of food allergy, we created new educational programming, content, and resources. We held webinars with expert guest speakers on oral allergy syndrome (OAS)/pollen food allergy syndrome (PFAS) and cow's milk protein allergy (CMPA); the recording of the PFAS webinar has had more than 3,000 viewings alone. We also created new PFAS and eosinophilic esophagitis (EoE) sections on our website with resources to raise awareness of these conditions and to help individuals, caregivers, and healthcare professionals better understand them and how they can be managed.



### Cow's milk protein allergy in babies: what is it and how to manage it



Webinar with Dr. Julia Upton and Ahuva Magder  
November 17, 2021



HOME • CAMPAIGN • WHAT IS EOSINOPHILIC ESOPHAGITIS (EOE)?

## What is Eosinophilic Esophagitis (EoE)?

“

The PFAS webinar helped me better understand this type of food allergy. It gave me the information I needed and provided me with questions to address with an allergist. I've already booked my appointment!

”



# IMPACT THROUGH ADVOCACY



## Advocating for access to ingredient information in non-food products

Ensuring the food allergy community is represented in consultations on natural health products and cosmetic products

 [foodallergycanada.ca/advocacy](https://foodallergycanada.ca/advocacy)

In September 2021, Health Canada held two consultations on allergen labelling, one on cosmetic products and the other on natural health products, like vitamins and minerals, herbal remedies, homeopathic medicines, traditional medicines, and probiotics. We participated in these sessions and engaged our community to support the proposed changes to the labelling, specifically around allergen labelling. Additionally, we advocated for additional changes to address outstanding gaps. By voicing the need for greater clarity and transparency on ingredient information in non-food products, we can help ensure that all Canadians can make informed choices.



# Shining a spotlight on the underutilization of epinephrine

Highlighting barriers to pre-hospital use of epinephrine

[foodallergycanada.ca/UseEpi](https://foodallergycanada.ca/UseEpi)

Although epinephrine is recognized as first-line treatment for anaphylaxis, it remains underutilized. A 2021 study, co-authored by Food Allergy Canada and members of our Healthcare Advisory Board, reported on the low use of epinephrine before going to the hospital (also referred to as “in community settings”) and what can be done to change the current picture. We are sharing insights from this study to help us advocate with key stakeholders on increasing the use of epinephrine to treat anaphylaxis, a goal shared by individuals with food allergy, their families, and healthcare professionals.

# HELP ADDRESS THE USE OF EPINEPHRINE

## ANAPHYLAXIS

is a serious allergic reaction that is rapid in onset and potentially life-threatening



## EPINEPHRINE

is first-line treatment for anaphylaxis – not antihistamines, like Benadryl®



## PROMPT USE OF EPINEPHRINE MATTERS

- First **30 minutes** of a food-related reaction are **critical**
- Delay in use of epinephrine is associated with biphasic (secondary) reactions

**30 minutes!**

**FOOD** accounts for **80%** of reactions in children



## TODAY'S REALITY: PRE-HOSPITAL USE OF EPINEPHRINE IS LOW

### REASONS WHY USE IS LOW:

#### NO DEVICE

- Not prescribed
- Not carrying
- Not filling the script

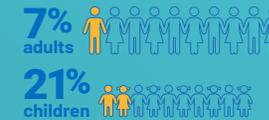


#### NOT USING THE DEVICE

- Lack of understanding and confidence in recognizing signs/symptoms and when to use
- Used less in schools than at home to treat anaphylaxis



### EPINEPHRINE USE PRIOR TO HOSPITAL:



### DID YOU KNOW?

One study in Canada showed **EMS usage of epi to treat anaphylaxis** is only



*Work with us to help address the underutilization of epinephrine in community settings.*

## HOW DO WE CHANGE THE PICTURE?



### INCREASE ACCESS

to epinephrine auto-injectors in schools, childcare centres, and public places like food courts



### Support STOCK EPINEPHRINE AUTO-INJECTORS

being available (devices not prescribed to anyone and can be used in an emergency)



Increase use of epinephrine through **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING**, making sure people carry their device and know when and how to use it



Use **POLICY** to drive consistent education on food allergy management in school and childcare settings



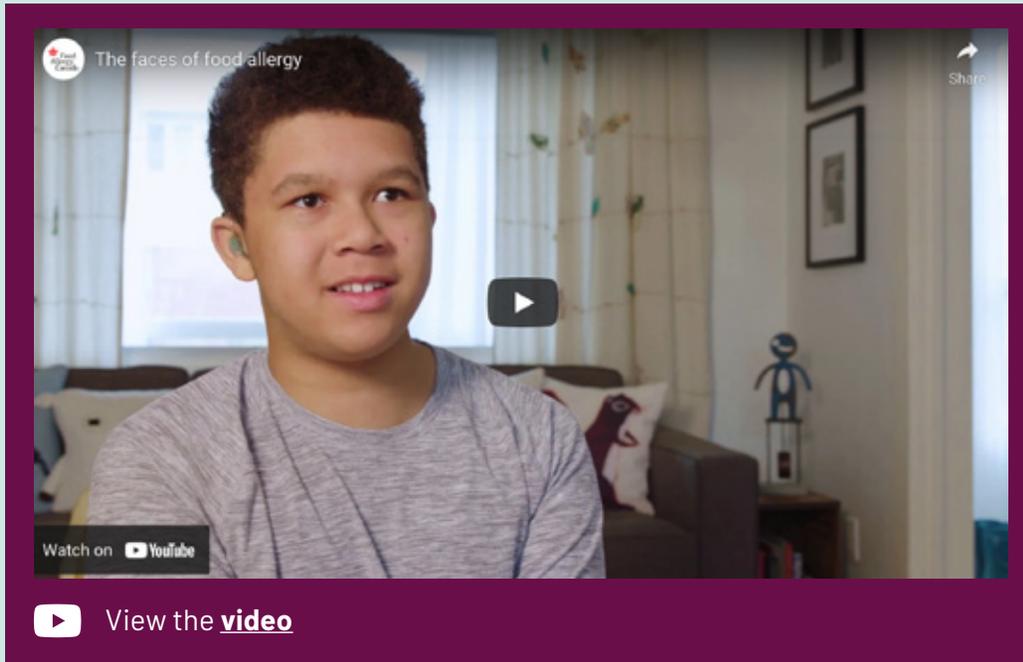
### DID YOU KNOW?

When policies are put in place, it increases the number of people trained and educated on the condition



### ALLERGYAWARE.CA

has free online courses that schools and other settings can use



## Making food allergy a priority with government

Having your voice heard through our #FoodAllergyVotes campaign

 [foodallergycanada.ca/nationalplan](https://foodallergycanada.ca/nationalplan)

We reached out to our community to #MakeFoodAllergyCount during the federal election in September 2021 and you acted. More than 500 people sent their federal candidates a letter, reaching 189 ridings nationally – that’s more than half the ridings in Canada! By doing so, you helped to create space for food allergy, opening the door for us to continue engaging with government, and seeking support of the [National Food Allergy Action Plan](#). With our collective and continuous efforts, we can create meaningful change for individuals and families living with food allergy.

# #FoodAllergyVotes





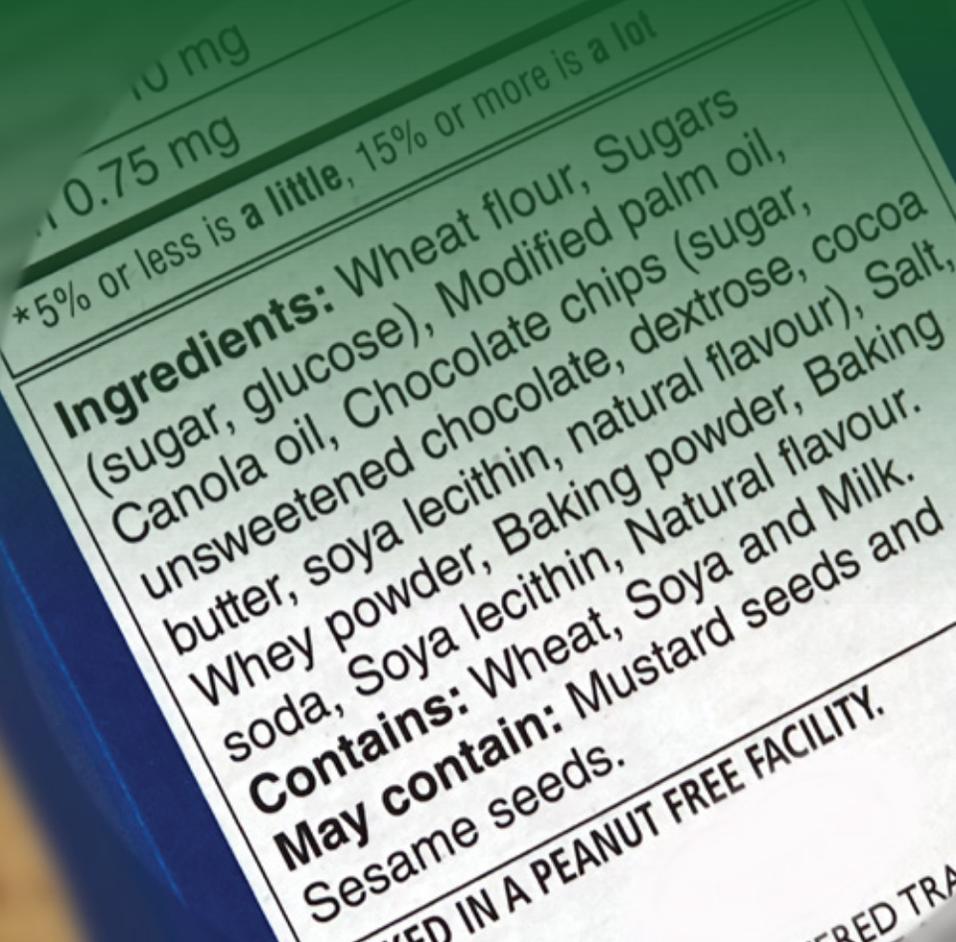
# IMPACT THROUGH LONG-TERM ADVOCACY INITIATIVES

## Access to accurate ingredient information

The proliferation in the use of precautionary allergen labelling (“may contain” statements) and the confusion on interpreting what it means have impacted food options for those with food allergy and others who buy food on their behalf.

In 2021, we sought to understand your perspectives and what “may contain” labelling meant to you. With your input, we continued to work with Université Laval, Health Canada, and 16 food manufacturers on the development of food industry guidelines, which will be published in 2022. These guidelines provide food manufacturers best practice recommendations on the management of allergens in their facilities including a risk-based approach for the application of precautionary allergen labelling (“may contain” statements) all in an effort to make may contain meaningful.

By continuing our collaborations with key stakeholders, including academia, the food manufacturing industry, government, and others, we are moving forward on making “may contain” meaningful. Through such efforts, we can help to ensure safe food choices for all Canadians.





# National Food Allergy Action Plan to Make Food Allergy Count

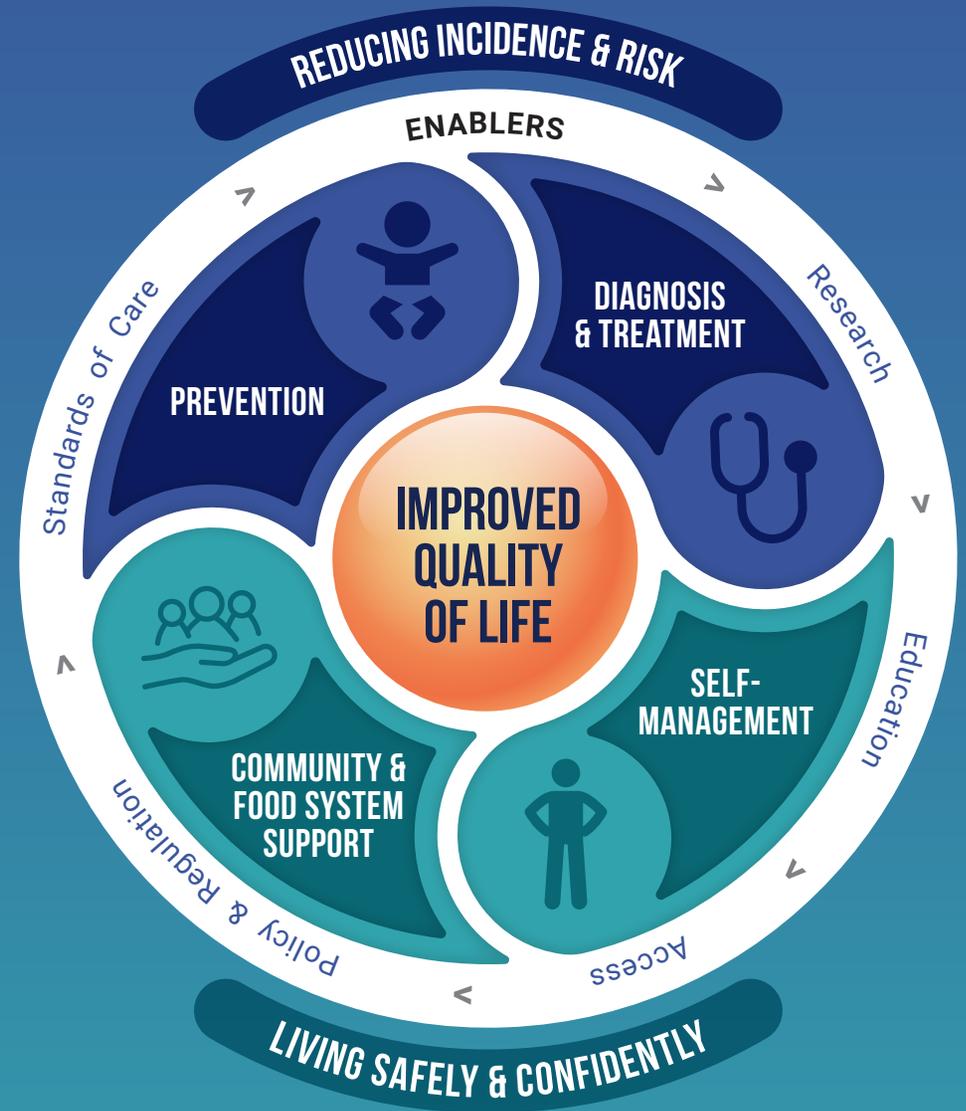
With no cure for food allergy and gaps in policy, industry practices, research commitments, and public understanding, a national plan is necessary, yet it remains unfunded.

We continued to spark the food allergy conversation with government through the National Food Allergy Action Plan in 2021 and connected with over 40 Members of Parliament from across the country and key staff in the Finance Committee and the Ministry of Health. We also submitted a 2022 federal budget request. Ultimately, our goal is to have a fully funded plan that, once executed, will reduce the impact of food allergy, and improve the quality of life for Canadians affected by this condition.

Get involved and advocate for the **National Food Allergy Action Plan**

Learn how you can **#MakeFoodAllergyCount**

[foodallergycanada.ca/nationalplan](http://foodallergycanada.ca/nationalplan)



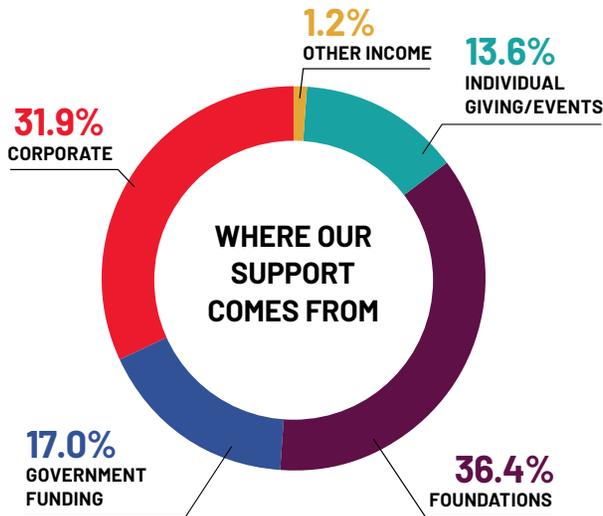


# DOLLARS DRIVING IMPACT

## OUR FINANCES: 2021

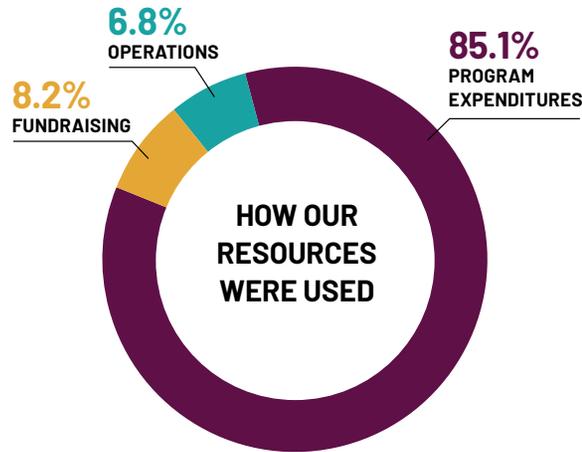
### Revenue

Total Revenue: **\$1.173M**



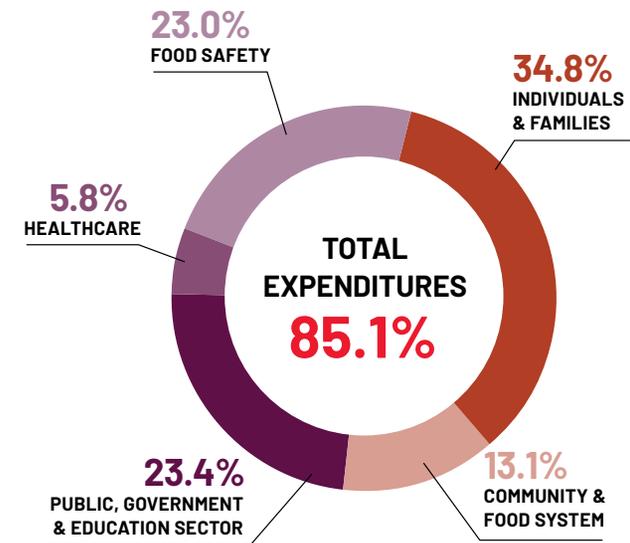
### Expenditures

Total Expenditures: **\$1.010M**



### Program Expenditures

Areas of work this funding supported:



- Education and support programming
- Awareness and engagement initiatives

### Programs Expenditure Ratio

Food Allergy Canada is committed to keeping administrative costs low and educational and support programming along with key stakeholder engagement high, enabling us to advocate effectively. The costs of fundraising and operations are at an average of 15 cents of each dollar raised, with the remaining 85 cents of every dollar going towards programming and awareness/engagement initiatives benefitting over 3 million Canadians affected by food allergy and their families.

### Download

- [Registered Charity Information Return - 2021](#)
- [Food Allergy Canada Detailed Financial Statements - 2021](#)



# THANK YOU: 2021 SUPPORTERS

## TRANSFORMATIVE SUPPORTERS

Walter and Maria  
Schroeder Foundation

Family and Friends  
of Sean Delaney

## FOUNDATION SUPPORTERS

The Bausch Foundation

The Charles Norcliff Baker  
& Thelma Scott Baker Foundation

TD Securities Underwriting Hope Foundation

Williams Wilson Sherport Foundation

## INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTERS

Thank you to the more than 553  
individuals and families who  
supported Food Allergy Canada  
in 2021.

## CORPORATE SUPPORTERS

Adapt Media

Bausch Health, Canada Inc. / Emerade™

Captivate Network

Dare Foods

kaléo / ALLERJECT®

Kellogg Canada

Nestlé Canada

Peanut Bureau of Canada

PepsiCo Canada

Pfizer Canada / EpiPen®

UB Media

VENDO Media

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CRA Charity Registration Number: 88720 8676 RR0001

Learn more at  
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