Food Allergy Advocate, Disney World Pioneer Endorses AllergyEats

*Respected Food Allergy Educator, Chef & Author Praises
AllergyEats, the Most Comprehensive Source for Finding Allergy-Friendly Restaurants*

BOSTON, MA (February 14, 2012) – Food allergy advocate Joel Schaefer, CCC, CHT, an author, chef and educator with Allergy Chefs, Inc. has endorsed AllergyEats (www.allergyeats.com), the most comprehensive source for finding food allergy-friendly restaurants. Schaefer knows first-hand how important it is for restaurants to become more allergy-friendly. As the former Culinary Development and Special Dietary Needs Manager at Walt Disney World, he spearheaded Disney World's groundbreaking food allergy initiatives, ensuring that all of their restaurants could better accommodate food-allergic guests.

Schaefer specializes in culinary education and product development for food allergies and special diets. Throughout his career, from Disney to his current position at Allergy Chefs (www.allergychefs.com), Schaefer has made it his mission to educate the food service industry about food allergies. AllergyEats is similarly focused on promoting food allergy education, training and food handling protocols among restaurants, as well as helping food-allergic diners find the most accommodating establishments.

"The great thing about AllergyEats is that it's building more awareness about dining out with food allergies on such a large scale. The site is a wonderful way for consumers to find accommodating restaurants and share information, tips and ideas about food allergies and sensitivities. I highly recommend AllergyEats to both consumers and colleagues in the restaurant business," said Schaefer.

"As someone who advocates for increased allergy training and education myself, I'm pleased to receive an endorsement from Chef Schaefer, who shares a similar mission and vision," said Paul Antico, Founder of AllergyEats, food allergy advocate and father of three food-allergic children. "Together, we're striving to make it safer for food-allergic people to eat out - one meal at a time."

Schaefer compiled his extensive experience and knowledge to write a book, *Serving People with Food Allergies: Kitchen Management & Menu Creation*. The book explains the basics of food allergies and special diets and also covers training and recipe development.

Schaefer, whose motto is "keep the food simple to keep the guests safe," is pleased to see the restaurant industry making huge strides in accommodating guests with food allergies. He's also grateful for a growing national resource like AllergyEats, which helps the food-allergy community make more informed decisions about where to eat out and provides a helpful forum for tips, advice and information sharing.

"There's been a big push in the food service industry recently, as more restaurants are implementing gluten free menus, providing allergen information and becoming more knowledgeable about food allergies and special diets," Schaefer explained.

Even with the progress made in the past few years, he acknowledges that it can still be hit-or-miss to find restaurants that are accommodating and trained around food allergies. Therefore, he strongly

believes that AllergyEats is a valuable resource for the food allergy community - as well as the restaurant community.

"AllergyEats shows restaurants the value of becoming more allergy friendly - that it's a revenue driver," Schaefer added. "It's not just the food-allergic guest dining out. It's the food-allergic guest and three or four of their friends or family members going out for a meal, and they're going to visit the restaurant that can accommodate the food-allergic member of their party."

Schaefer, who got his start as a chef at Disney World, always had a special interest in food allergies due to his own dairy sensitivity.   As Walt Disney World's Culinary Development and Special Dietary Needs Manager, Chef Joel streamlined the organization's food allergy protocols. When he took on this role in 2003, Disney was already accommodating food allergies and special diets, but each restaurant handled the issue differently. Schaefer created a more consistent system, ensuring that every Disney restaurant could successfully serve food-allergic guests according to a specific company protocol. Now, Schaefer is excited about the new AllergyEats Disney World microsite (www.allergyeats.com/disney), which he thinks is extremely helpful for food-allergic families visiting the area.

AllergyEats provides valuable, peer-based ratings and feedback about how well (or poorly) restaurants accommodate food-allergic customers, so the food allergy community can make more informed decisions about where to dine (and which establishments to avoid.) AllergyEats features more than 600,000 restaurants nationwide that users can rate, as well as restaurants' menus (including gluten-free menus), allergen lists, nutrition information, certifications, web links, directions and more.

Most restaurant review sites include information about establishments' food, ambiance or service, but AllergyEats is singularly focused on food allergies, with peer reviews spotlighting where people with food allergies or intolerances have more comfortably eaten and where they've encountered challenges.

AllergyEats features a new, free AllergyEats app (available at iTunes and the Android store), providing access to important information about restaurants' peer ratings, feedback, menus and other information while on-the-go. And the new AllergyEats Disney World microsite (www.allergyeats.com/disney) focuses on the allergy-friendliness of the restaurants in and around the popular theme parks and greater Orlando area.

AllergyEats has been endorsed by highly-respected food, health and allergy organizations and individuals, including the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, Gluten Intolerance Group, Massachusetts Restaurant Association, Chef Ming Tsai and more.   For more information, please go to www.AllergyEats.com.

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