

The First Allergy-Friendly Food Bank by Sybile Penhirin

At just 12 months of age, Emily Brown's daughter was diagnosed with allergies to peanuts, eggs, dairy, wheat and soy. Because allergy-friendly food can cost two to four times the price of regular food, Brown's family quickly became overwhelmed by its ever-increasing grocery budget.

Neither the federal nutrition program Women, Infant & Children (WIC) nor a local food pantry provided any financial relief to Brown since few of the available food products were safe for her daughter to eat. After meeting Amy Goode at a food-allergy support group, the two mothers launched the Food Equality Initiative, aiming to make food that's safe to those with allergies more affordable and accessible to those in need. In 2015, the inspirational duo opened Renewed Health, the country's very first allergy-friendly food pantry. In just a year, it's provided assistance to more than 70 clients and has distributed more than 12,350 pounds of allergy-friendly food.

Watch the video above to learn how the pantry provides a safety net to low- and middle-income people with food allergies or Celiac disease.