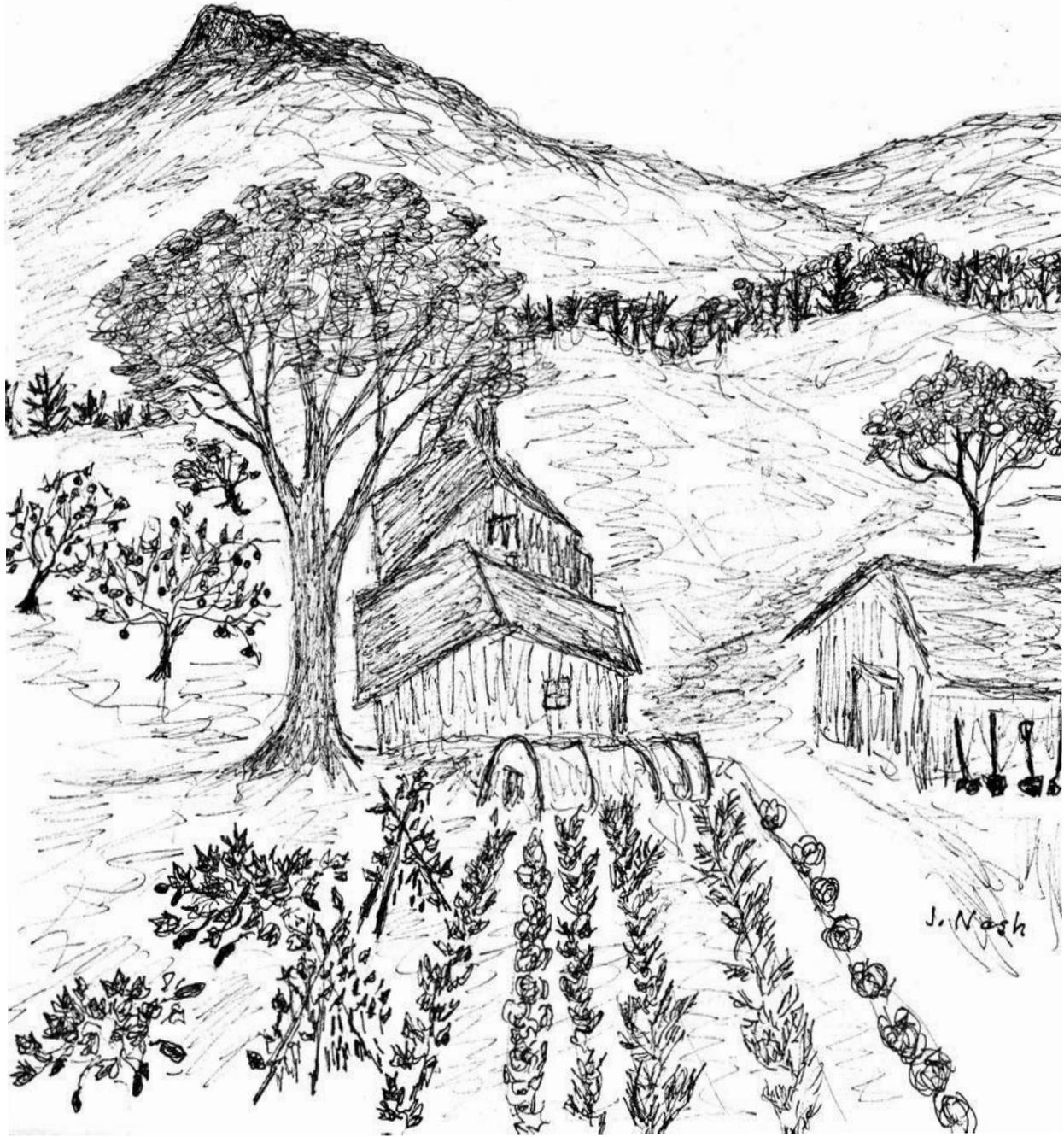


The Plainfield Co-op

The Food We Eat

Spring 2011



Hours: Monday-Saturday 9a.m.-8p.m. Sunday 9a.m.-6p.m.
Phone: 454-8579 **Website:** www.PlainfieldCoop.com



Collective Management

Doni Cain
 Jeannine DeWald
 Nancy Ellen
 Dawn Fancher
 Aaron James
 Mike Peabody
 Jessi Robinson
 Dorothy Wallace
 Jonna Wissert
 Margie Yoder

Regular Staff

Kristin Brosky
 Alanna Dorf
 Janice Lloyd
 Jill Frink Thompson

Substitutes

Rebecca Armell
 Kate Darakjy
 Chris Jackson
 Jim Malloy

Co-op Board Members

Chris Jackson, President
Gail Falk, Vice-President
Les Snow, Treasurer 426-3800H,
 229-1888W. lsnow@fairpoint.net
Rebecca Armell, Secretary
 426-3034.
rebeccaarmell@rocketmail.com
Mike Peabody 454-0195
Joseph Gainza 454-8550
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Committee Contacts

Building: Sam Clark (479-5793)
Finance: Les Snow (426-3800)
Newsletter: Glenda Bissex (454-7895)
Equity Action Team (EAT):
 Les Snow (426-3800)
Fundraising: Rebecca Armell (426-3034)
Community Center:
 Doni Cain (454-1478)

Newsletter Advertising Specifications

RATES		
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Half Page	\$50	\$160
Quarter Page	\$25	\$80

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 Send check made out to **Plainfield Co-op** when your copy is submitted
 Ad copy and payment should be submitted to:

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About This Newsletter

Of course the Co-op is primarily about FOOD, but we pause here to take a broader and deeper look at our food sources, from several perspectives. Also to update you on the work of the Board, the committees and store staff--the often invisible network that together with you, dear reader, keep our Co-op living and growing.

We thank local artist Jerrie Nash for her cover design and drawings that grace some of the newsletter pages. We encourage other local artists of any age to contact us about using their work.

The Newsletter Committee:

Glenda Bissex, co-ordinator and editor

Doug Davenport, design & layout

Joseph Gainza, Board Liaison and editing

Debra Stoleroff, editing

Alan Taplow, advertising and distribution

Co-op Board Update

by Chris Jackson

This is my first time writing in this section of the newsletter. You may remember me from writing for the Collective, and now I have the daunting task of writing this update that Brian has done so well over the last couple of years.

Since the Annual Meeting in November, the largely new board has jumped right into their work with a great deal of enthusiasm for working towards the future of the Co-op. Gail Falk, Joseph Gainza, Sue Chickering and I hope to bring our diverse backgrounds and passions to the board, which includes the veterans Les Snow, Rebecca Armell, and Mike Peabody. Les has been again elected as board Treasurer where his knowledge has been invaluable. Rebecca will continue to do her excellent work as Secretary. As approved by the members at the November annual meeting, the Board established which new members would serve which term lengths: Sue will serve 2 years, Gail 4 years, and Joseph and I will serve for 3.

We have been meeting the first Monday of every month and at different locations. As before, we receive reports from the Collective through the Coordinator Doni and his presentations of monitoring reports of the specified policies for that month. This is a new process for many of our Board members, but it provides a clear framework for us to evaluate the performance of the Collective management and how they are running the store.

The Board and the Staff Collective had a training in Policy Governance with Michael Healy from CDS Consulting Co-op which was crucial in helping us all understand the chain of responsibility and limitations in the governance structure.

...continued on page 4

...continued from page 3

As many of the members may know from past articles, under the policy governance system we have been following for the past couple of years, much of the board work that was done previously through various committees is now a responsibility of operations, meaning the Collective Management. This includes the Community Center, the Building Committee, and the newsletter. This, along with the monitoring process gives us a clear sense of our role and frees us up to do our work of representing you, the membership and working on the future of the Co-op and its role in our community.

One important initiative to meet this end is to go through the results of the last membership survey. Joseph and Gail have come up with some questions and the relevant sections of the survey that might provide some answers. We will be spending time at each meeting reviewing this. The Collective is also working on this ensuring the membership's operational needs are being heard. We hope this will give us a good understanding of the feelings of the membership. Gail is also working on a producer survey project so that we can also get input from the farmers and business people who provide the Co-op with food and other goods.

As always, every board meeting is open to the membership. We post agendas on the wall next to the front door along with past meeting minutes. Please let us know of any concerns, aspirations, or ideas you have for the Co-op. I can be reached through email at kairos.chris@gmail.com.

Finally, I can't thank enough Betsy Zeigler, George Longenecker, and Brian Tokar for all the hard, critical work they did through their terms on the board. Their contributions over the last few years have been invaluable and have put the Co-op in a great position in our community. ♦



Plainfield Community Center Report *by Jessi Robinson*

➔ **Community kitchen coming!**

After several years of a wonderful tenancy, Jill Frink Thompson has moved her doula and herbalism services out of the PCC space. We are now proud to announce at long last and after the wishes and dreams of many (including Randy) we will be renovating for a new community kitchen! This will enable us to host more events with FOOD—including, workshops, educational nutrition programs, potlucks, (the return of the ol' spaghetti supper!) and other such culinary events. Plumbing is already in place, and Doni has volunteered to build a countertop and put in a sink. Anyone with kitchen donations—specifically a stove, sink, dishwasher, countertop, pots, pans, utensils, kitchen supplies and building skills and materials please contact any member of the Community Center committee.

➔ **Community Center Committee.**

We would like to thank Jessi for the time she served as staff representative to the Community Center committee as she is moving on and Doni will be taking her place. Mike will remain our Board Representative and Jerome, Mary and Alexis welcome any new additions as well. Alexis will continue to field general questions @ 454-4662 and help facilitate our monthly meetings (1st Tuesdays @ 8:30am) and curate the gallery space.

➔ **The gallery.**

The gallery is free and open during Co-op hours when the space is not in use. We ask that only paying renters utilize the heater and *all* PCC visitors park on the street or at the park and ride (not in municipal or Co-op spaces.)

We would like to commend the Plainfield Historic Society for their amazing photographic exhibition, *Images of the Past*, held over through February by popular demand.

On Sunday, March 13 from 2 - 3PM we look forward to hosting *Vermont History Through Song* with Linda Radtke singing in a hooped skirt and Arthur Zorn accompanying on our grand piano. The Vermont Historical Society is helping us sponsor this event. (More details elsewhere in this newsletter.)

Upcoming in March the gallery will celebrate Cuba and the original beautiful works of *Moniello*. The opening event will include live Cuban music with drumming, dancing, song and of course Cuban culinary delights complimented by the VT Pie Girl Co.'s fresh baked pies.

Ethan Hubbard's generously donated photographic exhibition: *Our Co-op Is Our Community* continues as the lobby's permanent installation. Thank you Ethan!

...continued on page 6

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➔ **Classes & other events.**

Plainfield Annual Winter's Ball,
February 26, 8-midnight.

We are very happy to announce the return of the ever popular Tuesday night community yoga, now taught by Amy Leventhal and congratulate her on her sold out boot camp exercise classes. Get on her waiting list for Monday nights, 5:30-6:30 or Saturday mornings, 11-12:15.

We are also happy to announce that Lydia Russell has returned to the Community Center to teach Saprema Yoga, an Anusara inspired class on Friday mornings from 10:00-11:15. For more information call her at 229-6300 or check out the website www.saprema-yoga.com.

The Sacred Harp Shape Note Sing continues to meet the second Sunday of each month.

Village Harmony meets the second Wednesday of each month from 6:30-9:30.

➔ **Some additional working topics of the PCC committee** are:

- ➔ Handicapped accessibility
- ➔ Training in governance policy of the Co-op and consensus building.

- ➔ Outreach and advertising for the space.
- ➔ Cleaning and maintenance.
- ➔ Website and calendar updates.
- ➔ Kitchen renovation project
- ➔ Future fundraising for the piano repair and upkeep of the dance floor.
- ➔ Purchasing a sound system with the last of the PCC's savings account money. All future rental income and expenditures have moved directly to the Co-op's accounts, both separate line items in budget.

Thank you to everyone whose events and energy in our community make the Plainfield Community Center a welcoming and wonderful place to be. Space is still available for more renters and the reservation book is at the Co-op register.

The Plainfield Community Center
Committee

Doni Cain, Co-op staff liaison 454-1478

Mary Lane 454-1358

Jerome Lipani, cultural liaison 223-0734

Mike Peabody, board liaison 454-0195

Alexis Smith, gallery curator 454-4662

PLAINFIELD COMMUNITY CENTER

Space available for your:

Classes

Meetings

Parties

Workshops

Art Gallery Exhibitions & Special Events

\$9/hr. for Co-op Members, \$15/hr. for Non-Members

Events: \$35 for Members, \$50 for Non-Members

Scheduling Book at Co-op Register

More Information? Call Jessi 454-8579

Using the Community Center benefits The Plainfield Co-op



Total Body Strength, Power, and Conditioning Classes



For the past two years, I have been running Bootcamps and teaching Fitness Classes in the Plainfield Community Center. I just began teaching Yoga there two months ago. The turnout has been overwhelming, and in turn, my life has been full of happiness and fulfillment. The women that come to class are some of the most radiant, hard-working, and fun women I have ever known. My Bootcamp Classes are calorie scorching, heart pumping, strengthening, and a total blast. I design each class to be unique and different. The classes yield results such as a happier stronger soul and body, a leaner physique, and a healthier

state of mind. The classes are open to women of all levels, and everyone is guaranteed results. If you are a beginner and afraid to attend, I give private sessions to help you build a foundation of strength and knowledge of fitness. I help women get stronger. It is the best job I could imagine.

I feel so blessed to have a space as perfect as the Community Center, and a staff as supportive and helpful as the Plainfield Co-op. Thank you to all who make this possible for this community and for my life.

Much Love, **Amy Christine Leventhal, PT**

For more information, contact Amy:

amyleventh@yahoo.com

802-598-5876 ♦

Vermont History Through Song

March 13, 2:00 - 3:00 P.M. Plainfield Community Center

From the earliest published song, 'Green Mountain Farmer' (1798), through 1850 temperance ballads, Civil War era songs, to songs about Vermonters Calvin Coolidge, Thomas Dewey, and Jim Fiske, singer and researcher Linda Radtke joined by pianist Arthur Zorn bring Vermont history to life with engaging commentary about the songs found in the Vermont Historical Society's collection of sheet music.

Dressed in period costume, Ms. Radtke takes listeners through state history, using the songs Vermonters published in their communities.

Linda Radtke, mezzo-soprano, has served as the principal alto soloist for the Mozart Festival and the Gilbert and Sullivan Players with the Oriana Singers, and is a founding member of Robert DeCormier's professional vocal ensemble, Counterpoint. ♦



photo by Glenn Moody Studios

Collective Management Report

by Doni Cain

Two people joined our Collective Management team this winter: Jonna Wissert and Dawn Fancher. Jonna is our new health and beauty aid (HABA) buyer and Dawn has taken over the membership database. They will both be taking on more responsibility as needs come up in the store.

Jessi and I are switching many of our operational responsibilities. Jessi will be taking over much of the coordinating of the collective, and I will be taking over the Community Center. Jessi will be responsible for: general organization of staff, communicating between our vendors and account, human resources, organizing working members, and overseeing special projects at the Co-op. I will be taking over the management of the Community Center and I will continue my responsibilities as the link to the board.

The buyers for the Co-op switch from time to time and we would like members to know who is doing what at the Co-op. Jeannine is our main grocery buyer accompanied by Margie, who also does a large portion of the taxable grocery. Nancy is buying most perishables, frozen food, and beer

and wine. Dorothy is our bulk herbs and teas buyer as well as boxed teas. Mike is the produce manager. Janice is our cheese buyer and Aaron is the weekend manager.

We believe the new management structure creates a positive work ethic among the staff and further reflects a more welcoming atmosphere to the Co-op and our community. This is because the responsibility for operating the Co-op falls equally on all Collective Managers and we work together to make it happen. We encourage all staff members to become Collective Managers; out of the fourteen regular staff members at the Co-op, ten are on the Management team.

One of the goals of both the management and the board is to increase the wages of all staff members up to a livable wage. Last year we reorganized our pay scale to equalize wages among staff and put systems into place that would insure all staff would receive annual increases based on cost of living. We have two different base wages: one for Regular Staff and one for Collective Managers. Everyone receives an extra \$.25 for every year they have worked



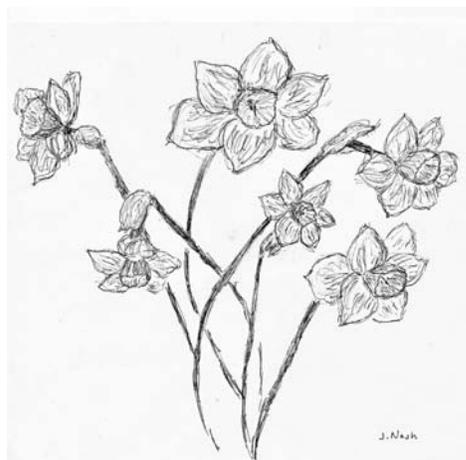
Dan Dolan and Hazel: Co-op members since 1983/1993



Janice Lloyd: Co-op member since 2006

at the Co-op (there is cap on non-collective staff wages). We are in the process of raising the base pay for both non-collective staff and Collective Managers by 5%. This will not bring wages up to a livable wage, but it is an important step in that direction.

We are all excited about the direction that collective management is taking our Co-op. Following the examples of other successful collective management structures ranging from People's Food Co-op in Portland, Oregon to Buffalo Mountain Co-op in Hardwick, we're confident that this new foundation will continue to become stronger as we develop our own model to fit the community's needs. After all, isn't that what a co-operative is all about? ♦



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PRODUCE MANAGER'S REPORT

by Mike Peabody



When I learned the theme of this newsletter, I was initially pleased, feeling that I could easily write about eating and food since I sell food for a living. That's not entirely accurate. It turns out, my thinking is more like, "The Food We Buy." Frankly, I sometimes forget I'm selling *food*. I mean, I handle more potatoes in a week than I ever eat and that goes for pretty much everything else in the department. I mostly consider whether or not things look good, or their price points, or some other detail that has little to do with the product actually being edible. I think that this distancing is just the usual wear-and-tear of job repetition; I'm sure DMV employees forget that they are putting the power of life and death into people's hands, every day. And some of what I buy to sell is, essentially, fluff, since things like boxed clementines and cantaloupes are tasty but not especially necessary for survival. They sell, though, maybe because they are physical reminders of our ability to live a little closer to our dreams of opulence and security.

We survived the fourth quarter, intact, and the numbers look all right to me. October was sort of a nothing month, with no major feasting holidays and people still eating out of their root cellars.

Still, it was better than September in terms of sales. November was a little strange, since I bought so much in the last week of the month that a reasonable turnover was almost impossible. Much of it was root crops, which were bought in large volumes and took longer to sell. But they sold down in the first weeks of December so it worked out, eventually. I was very pleased to be able to continue to buy and sell local produce so late into the year, and with such distinct offerings. Owl Hill's arugula and Alan LePage's head lettuce were marathon crops, selling past the beginning of the snowstorms. I actually thought for a moment that local greens might go until Christmas but, sadly, the freezing rain made supply too inconsistent and with the winter markets starting up, the prices became difficult for me to handle. Overall, 2010 was a good year for the Plainfield Co-op's produce department and Vermont produce in general. It was a trial by fire for me, never having done anything quite like this job before. But I learned a lot in my first year and I hope to repeat my successes and rebound from my mistakes.

One thing that has been a little strange with this year's local produce, based on what I remember from last February, when I started the job, is how quickly supply is now running out on me. For example, I was selling Dwight Miller's Honeycrisp apples and Lee

Blackwell's squash, one year ago. Both of those things are long gone for me already. In fact, it's new relationships with new distributors like Deep Root Organics and Food Works that have kept us in local food for almost the last month and a half. From my perspective, the success of the winter markets, the loss of Pete's Greens, and a growing season which saw some produce ripening almost two weeks ahead of time have all contributed to a "clipped" winter season for many wholesale crops.

During the growing season, it's easy to want to eat things that are green and extravagant-looking and forget that they are essential as well as nice to see. But here, in the upshot of the world's turning our hemisphere back toward the sun, we must put aside such frivolity and focus again on that central task: eating enough to stay alive and well. Does that pile of carrots tickle your fancy like the summer tomato? Probably not. That doesn't mean you won't eat it because you need it. Let's not forget that sometimes, just because you have to do something, doesn't mean you can't enjoy doing it, just a little bit.

It helps to have reminders, touchstones that refer us back to the truth of our comestibles, so often lost among the advertising and the display. The discount rack really drives home for me the fact that I am plying a trade in food, not just a commodity. When the boxes come off the truck or out of the farmer's hands, my first and foremost thoughts are generally in

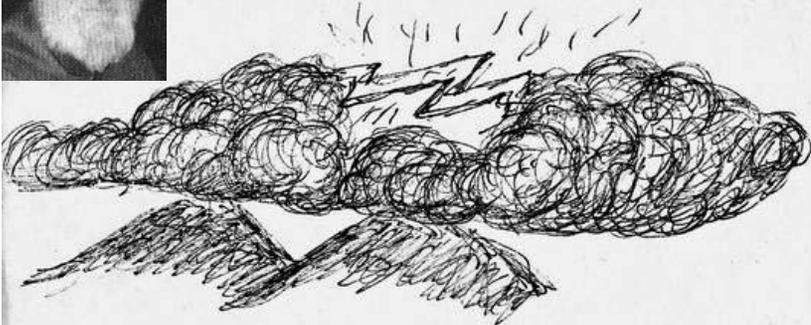
relation to the salability of the vegetables and their appearance. I don't usually think, "This looks like food for eating." It's like I'm seeing a mirage. Later, the only consideration worth having is if it is still good food for the money. By the time that same produce hits the discount rack, it's a simple question of whether or not a person would still eat it, as the hope that someone might buy it because it "looks good" has long since passed it over. Essentially, the "product" has been distilled down to "food." I don't even know where or when the transformation occurs. Is it when the kiwis get soft and wrinkly or is just reality settling in, reminding me that all that's been there has been food and nothing more? Blurring that line is my stock-in-trade; I'm not sure I'm the one who should answer those kinds of questions.

People ask me about my son so here is the low-down: The boy is fine and being a dad is nice, mostly. Ozias is effectively some kind of Co-op mascot, and his recent excursion into the workplace with me was well-received. We haven't had him on bottles since we got home from the hospital so for me, this is like a step forward and a step back, in a strange way. The baby is hitting his stride, in terms of development, though it seems like he just can't sit up soon enough. It reminds me of when I had hernia surgery and getting out of bed became a nightmarish chore; watching him is like a flashback to that point when my body seemed so useless and insufficient. ♦



Remembering Dennis Murphy

by Debra Stoleroff

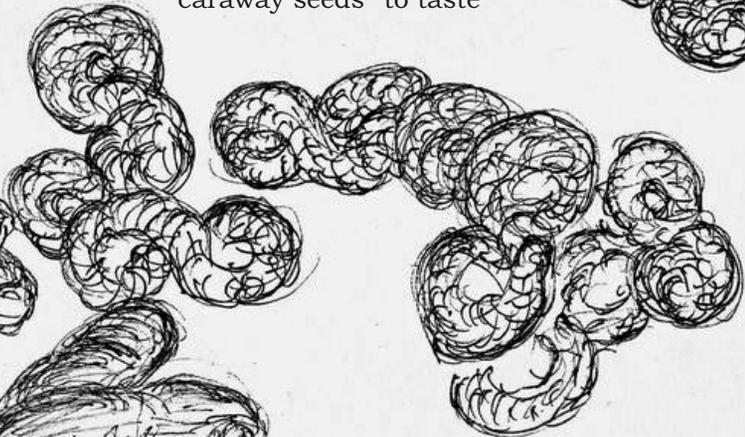
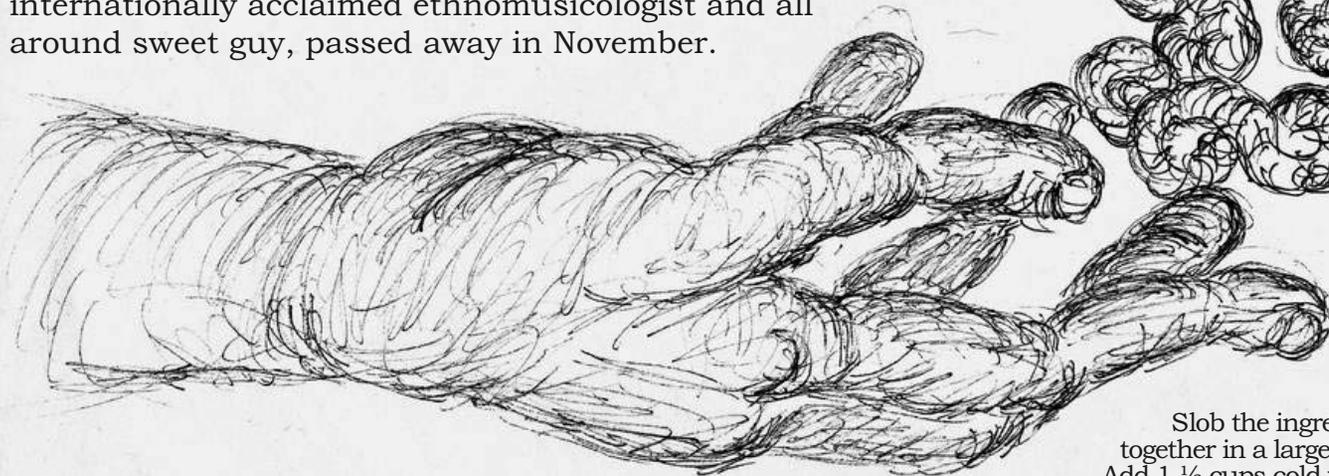
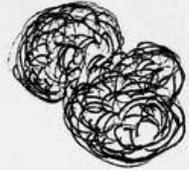


Dennis Murphy, long time Plainfield Co-op member, internationally acclaimed ethnomusicologist and all around sweet guy, passed away in November.

Dennis was a Goddard professor who brought the Village Gamelan not only to Plainfield, but is credited for bringing Indonesian village-style gamelan to the U.S. The Plainfield Village Gamelan practiced in our Plainfield Community Center for approximately 15 years. Dennis was a creator. He made weird, wonderful sounding instruments; composed soulful music filled with humor (in particular his cantata *A Perfect Day*); gave birth to the Thoomese language, music and food; and painted pictures filled with trees, animals and magic. We will miss Dennis' gentle presence. His energy will remain in our midst and we will remember him. ♦

Dennis Murphy's Thoomese "Pretzels"

4 cups white flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
4 tablespoons sesame seeds
sizeable dollop of salt or salt substitute
6 (or more) tablespoons dried onion flakes
optionally can also add garlic powder or granules, celery seeds and/or caraway seeds "to taste"



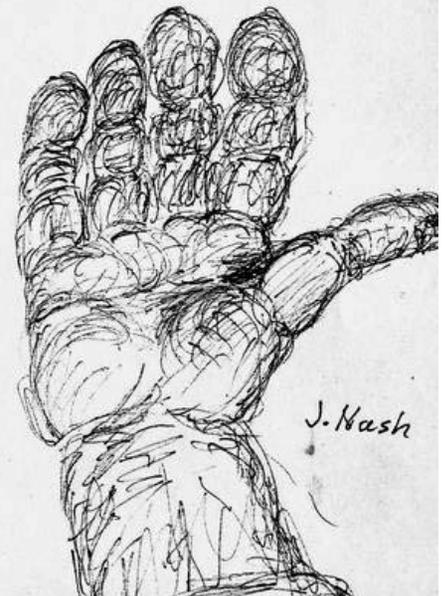
Slob the ingredients all together in a large bowl. Add 1 ½ cups cold water and stir like mad.

Dump dough onto floured board and knead 'til pliable, adding more water or flour to get a stiff dough.

Roll out some of the dough to about ¼ inch thickness. Cut into strips by pressing down straight with a broad-bladed knife.

Roll, twist, etc. each piece to a desired shape.

Bake at 450 for 19 minutes. Dump onto baking racks to cool.



Plainfield Co-op Building Committee, Winter Report



by **Sam Clark**

We are gearing up for the renovation of the "back of the store". This involves a new, bigger and more efficient walk-in, major repairs, improved work centers, improved windows and doors, and better shelving. We are aiming for a spring project, though the actual timing will depend on when we can get the new cooler delivered.

The changes will make the space more pleasant, but just as important, make it a lot easier for staff to work back there.

Most of the work stations back there have been improvised over the years, and are not that efficient or comfortable. We have a new layout, that will improve work flow. Enormous amounts of food of different kinds come through that back door, get broken down, processed, repacked, stored, or shelved somewhere in the store. We think the new scheme will make all of this work easier and more efficient. There should be some energy savings, also, particularly with a new cooler.

Floor plans for the renovation can be seen at the store.

The fundraising committee has raised a lot of money, thanks to the generosity of members and also vendors. We have available



about \$27,000. This is a very ambitious project to do with this modest budget.

To do it will take a major volunteer effort. We are hoping that members will be able to pitch in on this as they did on the front of the store. That project was a lot of fun, and really transformed the Co-op. This one will be just as demanding, just as much fun, and will result in just as much of a transformation of the Co-op. It will really set us up in good shape for the years to come (though, we can think of other projects, too, but that's another story...).





Carrie Biggam: Co-op member since 1974

Though the planning is still taking shape, there are some major areas of work. We'll be organizing teams of people for each. For example: demolition ~ putting the new prefab cooler together and installing it ~ carpentry – including major repairs ~ painting ~ framing a new office and setting it up ~ cabinet making (building new work centers) ~ providing vitles and daycare for the workers ~ plumbing ~ planning

If you can help in any of these areas, please get in touch with us, as we put together our team.

We need a plumber. There will be a drain in the cooler, a mop sink, and a veggie prep sink in the new veggie area. We need to find someone to mastermind this aspect of the project. If you are interested in that, please get in touch with us.

Stuff we need: a mop sink, or a big laundry tub we can modify ~ a regular kitchen sink and faucet

~ good light fixtures ~ lateral file in good shape ~ a really nice used 30" door, with a piece of glass in it, for the office.....more to come, this is just a start

Ongoing Planning: The committee and staff have continued to develop our basic layout. We're now going to be refining it. This includes designing each of the specific work areas, figuring out wiring and plumbing, determining the cooler specs, and also planning the complicated logistics of how to do a major project with minimum disruption to the store.

We definitely need more members for the Building Committee to help keep this work going forward. Join us.

To Volunteer for the project, or the committee, see:

Sam Clark, 479 4018,
samclark@sover.net
Mike Peabody, at the store ◆



Strafford Organic Creamery

53 Rock Bottom Road,

Strafford, VT 05072

(802) 765-4180

info@straffordcreamery.com

http://www.straffordcreamery.com

Delivery to the Plainfield Co-op every Friday

Enormous thanks to our Co-op community! Together we have raised many thousands of dollars and made fantastic improvements to our building. We only need \$3500 to reach our \$95,000 goal and complete the long awaited back of store renovations this Spring. Please join us for the Winter Ball on February 26th to celebrate our community and all that we do!

A Heartfelt Thanks to the Multitude of Folks for Contributing to the Co-op's Building Campaign. Here are some recent additions to the list of contributors published in the Winter newsletter:

Alexandra Thayer and
Ed Hutchinson
Bramble and Berry Farm
Adelaide and Brian Tyrol
Nicola C.A. Morris and
Barbara Johnson

Lynette Combs
Cynthia Ross
Jane and Peter Youngbaer
Greg and Sarah Hooker
Pie in the Sky Enterprises
Jeff and Melinde Kantor

Stephanie Kaplan and Randy Koch
Ellen Selkowitz
Cindy Wyckoff
Baron and Janet Wormser
Marge Christie
Blackwell Roots Farm

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- Laundry Soap

- Pet Shampoo
- Yoga Mat Cleaners
- Aromatherapy Misters
- Discount Factory Outlet and Soap Museum



VERMONT SOAP ORGANICS

Exchange St., Middlebury, VT 05753 802-388-4302 www.vermontsoap.com

(Instead of commenting on the specifics of the Co-op's current finances, in this issue of the newsletter I thought I would give an overview of how the Board monitors the Co-op's finances
–Les Snow, Treasurer)

The Co-op Board of Directors has the overall responsibility for the activities of the Co-op, acting on behalf of the Co-op members. An important part of that responsibility is a fiduciary one—to care for the finances and legal requirements of the Co-op. How does the Co-op Board make sure it is fulfilling the financial aspect of its fiduciary responsibility? I thought you'd never ask!

The governance model the Board uses involves these steps for all policies, including finance-related policies:

1. Establish expectations through written policies
2. Assign responsibility
3. Monitor for compliance with the policies

Steps 1 and 2 are accomplished in the Board's Policy Governance policies. Among other things, the policies clarify the results for which the Co-op exists and the limitations on the means the Management Collective may use to create those results. Specifically for the finances, there are policies defining what actions and conditions are not acceptable:

- ◆ The Business Planning and Financial Budgeting policy defines limitations when developing the Co-op's financial plans
- ◆ The Asset Protection policy defines what is not acceptable when managing the Co-op's assets
- ◆ The Financial Condition and Activities policy outlines financial situations and activities that should be avoided when managing the Co-op.

Step 3 (monitoring for compliance with the policies) involves an initial step of the Collective providing its written interpretation of each policy. Assuming the Board agrees the interpretations are reasonable, the Collective then provides periodic monitoring reports with data showing compliance with the policies. If there is noncompliance with a policy, the Collective provides an action plan for future compliance. The planning and asset protection policies are currently monitored annually, and the financial condition and activities policy is currently monitored quarterly.

When it comes to the Board's fiduciary responsibility, that's how we roll! If you would like to learn more, feel free to review the Board's policies (http://www.plainfieldcoop.com/Governance_Policies.html), contact any Board member, or join us at a Board meeting. ◆

Plainfield Co-op Financial Summary, 2006-2010

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010*
Sales	598,791	701,489	804,805	803,121	883,455
Cost of Goods Sold	412,284	511,709	547,849	545,612	600,990
Gross Profit	186,507	189,780	256,956	257,509	282,465
Operating Expenses	200,218	213,577	250,337	267,150	268,138
Net Operating Income	-13,711	-23,797	6,619	-9,641	14,327
Other Income/Expenses					
Other Income	16,107	21,708	14,821	14,285	12,256
Other Expenses	11,448	8,632	10,925	2,100	2,082
Net Other Income	4,659	13,076	3,896	12,185	10,174
Net Income	-9,052	-10,721	10,515	2,544	24,501

Plainfield Co-op Balance Sheets, 2006-2010

ASSETS	12/31/2006	12/31/2007	12/31/2008	12/31/2009	9/30/2010*
Current Assets					
Checking/Savings	22,830	4,187	41,982	23,359	45,002
Accounts Receivable	1,168	1,112	153	520	0
Other Current Assets	42,971	45,800	50,380	51,080	51,002
Total Current Assets	66,969	51,099	92,515	74,959	96,004
Fixed Assets	59,518	59,518	80,384	84,846	100,364
Accumulated Depreciation	-45,681	-45,681	-49,793	-49,793	-63,881
Cap. Imp. Deferred Revenue	0	0	0	-24,282	-15,851
Other Assets	0	0	0	44,095	26,239
TOTAL ASSETS	80,806	64,936	123,106	129,825	142,875
LIABILITIES & EQUITY					
Liabilities					
Current Liabilities					
Accounts Payable	22,137	35,797	37,623	46,527	48,558
Other Current Liabilities	16,391	-2,427	3,134	3,280	4,664
Total Current Liabilities	38,528	33,370	40,757	49,807	53,222
Long Term Liabilities	0	0	43,755	36,182	28,115
Total Liabilities	38,528	33,370	84,512	85,989	81,337
Equity					
Common Stock	5,972	5,972	5,972	5,972	5,972
Retained Earnings	45,358	36,306	22,107	35,320	30,967
Net Income	-9,052	-10,712	10,515	2,544	24,599
Total Equity	42,278	31,566	38,594	43,836	61,538
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	80,806	64,936	123,106	129,825	142,875

* Draft financial statements

12/31/2010 Plainfield Co-op, Financial Ratio Analysis

Ratio Name	Ratio Description	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010*	Benchmark Ratios		
										Low	Med	High
Debt to Equity	The lower the better. Total debt divided by total equity. Measures how much of the Co-op is owned by the members and how much is owned by the creditors. Banks like to see that the members have a significant share of the investment.	0.06	0.07	0.63	0.91	1.07	1.56	1.96	1.32	0.47	0.75	1.45
This important measure of solvency is back to an acceptable range as the CFNE loan is paid off and profitability is maintained												
Current Ratio	The higher the better. Current assets divided by current liabilities. It measures the Co-op's ability to meet its current debts in a timely manner. Note: Current assets include capital improvement funds.	16.80	14.89	2.26	1.74	1.52	3.47	1.50	1.80	1.3	1.69	2.4
This ratio is maintaining a healthy level (2008 was artificially high because renov. loan funds were waiting in bank acct.)												
Quick Ratio	The higher the better. The Quick Ratio is the Current Ratio with the inventory subtracted from current assets. This is a more rigorous measure of the Co-op's ability to meet its debts. It should be at least 1.	5.86	5.49	0.56	0.72	0.39	1.81	0.54	0.86	1		
The Co-op's cash position continues to improve. (Same note on 2008 was above.)												
Personnel as % of Sales	The lower the better (assuming employees are being properly compensated). Personnel cost divided by total sales. Indicates how much of the Co-op's sales revenue is needed to cover personnel cost.	19.8%	20.8%	24.1%	20.2%	19.8%	19.9%	21.5%	19.6%	19.9%	20.6%	21.7%
Inventory Turnover	The higher the better. The inventory turnover ratio measures the number of times the Co-op sells its inventory during the year. A high inventory turnover ratio indicated that product is selling well.	8.56	7.74	6.59	10.55	13.31	19.11	17.82	17.60	12.73	13.73	15.91
2010 rate shows healthy rate of sales relative to inventory level	The increase or decrease in gross sales compared to the previous year.	4.9%	8.9%	-3.9%	16.0%	21.0%	10.7%	-0.2%	10.0%			
Sales Growth	Sales have rebounded after no growth in 2009											
Gross Margin	The higher the better. The gross profit (gross sales minus the cost of goods sold) divided by gross sales.	30.6%	31.3%	29.6%	31.1%	29.6%	31.5%	32.1%	32.0%	33.0%	34.6%	36.6%
Gross Margin, a vital measuring stick, has reached a level close to that which will better assure financial strength.												
*2010 figures forecasted based on preliminary financial statements.												

Myth: potatoes are high in calories and low in nutrients.

Fact: The average baked potato contains about 100 calories. It's the butter and sour cream that make it high calorie. That naked potato provides these percentages of our minimum daily requirements: 50 % vitamin C, 11% niacin, 10% thiamin, 8% phosphorus, 5% iron, 5% protein, as well as being a significant source of potassium and magnesium.

Right about now potatoes are feeling the urge to sprout, so use some up in this economical, classic Irish dish for St. Patrick's (or any) day. ♦

FOOD CONSCIENCE QUESTIONS

Has this food been grown in a way that harms the earth by depleting the soil or polluting rivers and air?

Has this food been grown in a way that harms the farm workers, through exposure to chemicals or oppressive working conditions?

Has this food been grown in a way that harms those who consume it because of chemical residues?

Has this food been grown in a way that harms beneficial insects such as bees and butterflies?

Cabbage, potatoes and apples au gratin

from Constance

Bollen & Marlene

Blessing, *One Potato,*

Two Potato: A Cookbook



- **small green cabbage** 1, thinly sliced
- **large baking potatoes** 2, thinly sliced
- **apples** 2 to 3, peeled, cored, and thinly sliced
- **medium onion** 1, finely chopped
- **salt & pepper** to taste
- **butter** 3 to 4 tablespoons
- **cream** 1 cup
- **fine bread crumbs** 1/4 cup
- **Swiss cheese** 1/4 cup grated

- 1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- 2. Arrange a third of the cabbage, potatoes, apples, and onion in a large, buttered casserole. Season with salt and pepper and dot with butter. Continue layering, piling vegetables high in the center of the casserole. (The dish will be quite full but the vegetables will cook down.)
- 3. Pour in cream and cover casserole. Bake for 45 minutes or until just tender.
- 4. Sprinkle bread crumbs and cheese over the top and return casserole to the oven, uncovered, for 20 minutes or until top is browned and crusty.

• Serve with Irish soda bread (and corned beef). Serves 4-6

Potato Latkes

Ingredients:

1 pound potatoes
1/2 cup finely chopped onion
1 large egg, lightly beaten
1/4 cup flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 to 3/4 cup olive oil

Toppings: sour cream and applesauce



Preparation

Preheat oven to 250°F.

Peel potatoes and coarsely grate by hand, transferring to a large bowl of cold water as grated.

Soak potatoes 1 to 2 minutes after last batch is added to water, then drain well in a colander. (Grating the potatoes, soaking them briefly in water, and then squeezing out the liquid keeps the batter from turning brown too quickly)

Spread grated potatoes and onion on a kitchen towel and roll up jelly-roll style. Twist towel tightly to wring out as much liquid as possible.

Transfer potato mixture to a bowl and stir in egg, then flour and salt.

Heat 1/4 cup oil in a 12-inch nonstick skillet over moderately high heat until hot but not smoking.

Working in batches of 4 latkes, spoon 2 tablespoons potato mixture per latke into skillet, spreading into 3-inch rounds with a fork.

Reduce heat to moderate and cook until undersides are browned, about 5 minutes.

Turn latkes over and cook until undersides are browned, about 5 minutes more.

Transfer to paper towels to drain and season with salt. Add more oil to skillet as needed. Keep latkes warm on a wire rack set in a shallow baking pan in oven.

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Some Thoughts on Our Evolving Local Food System

by Joey Klein of Littlewood Farm, Plainfield

Plainfield Co-op has had a commitment to provide local consumers with locally produced meats, grains and vegetables. The number of farms needed to meet the Co-op consumers' demand for local and organic products has grown over the years. Balancing supply and demand has been a challenge. When there is demand but no supply, consumers complain about California produce. When supply exceeds demand, growers become frustrated with the difficulty of selling perishable crops.

The capitalistic model would have producers competing to sell into a market by lowering prices until one producer, the most efficient, remains. Competition among agricultural producers leads to a decrease in farm numbers, and a decrease in the stability of the food supply. Things always go wrong unpredictably in natural systems such as food production, so redundancy is essential to assure a secure local supply. An example of this occurred in the local green cabbage supply, when two established producers lost crops to a soil borne disease. Fortunately, a third producer, working land newly brought into production, was able to meet the Co-op's needs. The sad loss of the storage barn and crops at Pete's Greens is another example of the need for multiple sources of production to insure stability in a local food system.

Responding to these challenges to expand the local food system, growers and co-op management have evolved a purchasing planning process that involves a high degree of co-operation. There is little benefit to the local economy or the stability of the local food supply when food prices are so low as to impoverish food producers. To avoid over-production for the anticipated market demand, Co-op management meets with farmers to plan production goals. Growers are assigned certain crops for certain time windows, based on their interest in that crop, and the proven ability of their land, equipment and skills to produce that crop in sufficient quantity and quality. This system is not perfect. Growers know if they are the primary producers of a crop, or the back up producer who will be growing this crop for other markets and can expect to have some surplus available. There is always something to grumble about, but a spirit of co-operation has prevailed over the years. The Vermont Foodbank Gleaning program has made quality local produce in surplus available to the low income and elderly.

Plainfield Co-op is unique in its welcome to new growers, helping these new enterprises enter the marketplace. Home gardeners who find themselves with bumper crops of fruit have also found a place on the produce display, making new varieties of local pears and apples available.

This trend should only continue as the number of permaculture home orchard plantings in our community increases.

As fossil fuel supplies decline and the climate destabilizes due to global warming, our local food supply will go from being a pleasant feature of our community to become a vital necessity. We need to patronize this system now, to build it up so it is ready when we really need it. The

Plainfield Co-op has played an important role in the evolution of this local food economy since its founding in 1972. California (and Montpelier) will seem a whole lot farther away when the price of fuel reaches \$5 or \$6 per gallon. A natural foods grocery store with abundant local organic produce will seem even more of a treasure than it does today. ♦



WE ARE WHAT WE EAT

Organic versus conventional foods

by Jenni Belotserkovsky

Not a day passes when there is not at least one food recallⁱ by the USDA (US Department of Agriculture), be it due to e-coli, salmonella or other contamination. The consumer of today is facing the challenges of an industrialized food culture with consequences completely unique to our society. More and more we are discovering that our ancestors have been right all along. We are what we eat has never been more true than in these days.

In a 2010 study published in the online magazine *Pediatrics*ⁱⁱ, scientists revealed that children whose urine contained commonly used pesticide residues had a higher prevalence of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). The pesticides in question (most commonly referred to as organophosphates) are the same chemical compounds as used in herbicides, insecticides, nerve gases and chemical war-

fare, as well as the weed killer RoundUp, produced by the corporation Monsanto. One articleⁱⁱⁱ on the website www.emedicine.medscape.com points out that the delayed long-term effects of organophosphate exposure include lethargy, confusion, irritability, psychosis and so forth. Another study concluded that rats who had been fed pesticide treated tomatoes developed lesions in their stomachs. In 2006 scientists objected to the introduction of controversial pesticides in the U.S. as they were found to cause neurological damage in fetuses, infants and children^{iv}. Despite these protests, the use of these pesticides was approved by the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency). Organophosphates are banned in the U.K., Sweden and Denmark. It is not a matter anymore of *if* pesticides and herbicides cause health problems, but to what degree they do so.

...continued on page 24

Let's examine for a moment the critics of the organic food movement. The conventional food industry wants the consumer to feel safe about chemically treated foods. For example, one article asks if organic food is worth the extra cost^v. We are even presented with a formula to calculate our maximum exposure number for two kinds of organophosphates and foods that contain traces of these pesticides. The result of this calculation is that the exposure is well below recommended levels. Looking closer at The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences that offers this formula, we discover an interesting fact. This institute contracts various laboratories to conduct their

researches. One of these labs (which had been contracted to examine the toxicity of selected chemicals for example), the Battelle Memorial Institute, not only works also for the EPA and Homeland Security, but also has a venture that partners with Dow Chemical. Dow Chemical is most likely the largest producer of herbicides and pesticides, which contain organophosphates. Let's recap, there's an institute that tells us that pesticide residues in our foods are all well below maximum levels. This institute gets their numbers from a lab that partners with Dow Chemical, a corporation that produces pesticides. Some could say that this possibly could create conflicts of interest....

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Ed Hutchinson: Co-op member since 1990

To avoid any pesticide contamination it would be therefore the safest to eat organic. However, many people already suffer under the current strain of the economy and the additional cost of eating organic can pose a great challenge for the consumer. There are ways that make it possible to at least reduce conventional foods in the diet. The Plainfield Co-op, for example, often seeks people to help out in exchange for a discount on purchases. The Co-op also offers slightly bruised vegetables/fruits for a lower price. The cheapest way to go is to grow your own. The Plainfield Co-op offers a great variety of seeds in the spring, and they also offer to trade seeds. If you do not have enough space for a garden, there are community gardens in Montpelier, or you could ask a neighbor to garden in their backyard in exchange for some of your produce.

Pesticide treated fruits that should be avoided, as they contain the greatest residue loads are: apples, strawberries, grapes and peaches. Vegetables that are particularly prone to pesticides are: potatoes, spinach, celery, and sweet peppers. Conventionally farmed vegetables and fruits that had the lowest pesticide residues were: asparagus, avocados, bananas, broccoli, cauliflower, mangoes, papayas and pineapples.

Many farms around Vermont offer CSA shares. These shares usually consist of a certain prepaid amount of vegetables/fruits, which you can pick up on a (bi-) weekly or monthly basis. This way you know where your produce comes from and can ask the farmer about his/her methods of production (organic/non-organic).

ⁱ More information about food recalls can be found under:

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fsis_Recalls/index.asp

ⁱⁱ Source retrieved: <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/abstract/125/6/e1270?max-toshow=&hits=10&RESULTFOR-MAT=&fulltext=pesticides+ADHD&searchid=1&FIRSTINDEX=0&sort-spec=relevance&resourcetype=HW CIT>

ⁱⁱⁱ Source retrieved from:

<http://emedicine.medscape.com/article/167726-overview>

^{iv} more on this protest:

http://www.peer.org/news/news_id.php?row_id=691

^v Retrieved from:

<http://ehp03.niehs.nih.gov/static/results.action?cx=008854324907477552116%3Aaiel6betrkm&cof=FORID%3A10&ie=UTF-8&q=les-son%3A+is+organic+worth+the+extra+cost%3F&sa.x=0&sa.y=0&sa=Search#1132> ◆



Amy Lester: Co-op member since 1990

Get Carried Away with Herbs and Spices

by Dorothy Wallace

Herbs and spices are good for your body, mind, and spirit. Not only do they add deliciousness, fragrance, and beauty to our food and beverages, they contain few calories yet plenty of nutrition in the form of antioxidants, essential oils, and vitamins that help us fight germs, toxins, and boost our immune levels. Almost all spices and herbs provide a range of nutrients from Vitamin A to zinc. Protective phytochemicals (plant compounds) contained in both fresh and dried herbs and spices include, for example: allicin, in garlic, for antiinflammatory and antimicrobial properties; curcumin, in turmeric, for cancer protection and arthritis relief; and gingerol, in ginger, for respite from pain or nausea. Often, we can tailor the remedy to availability and taste. For instance, for an upset stomach you can choose from cumin, dill, fennel, coriander, or mint.

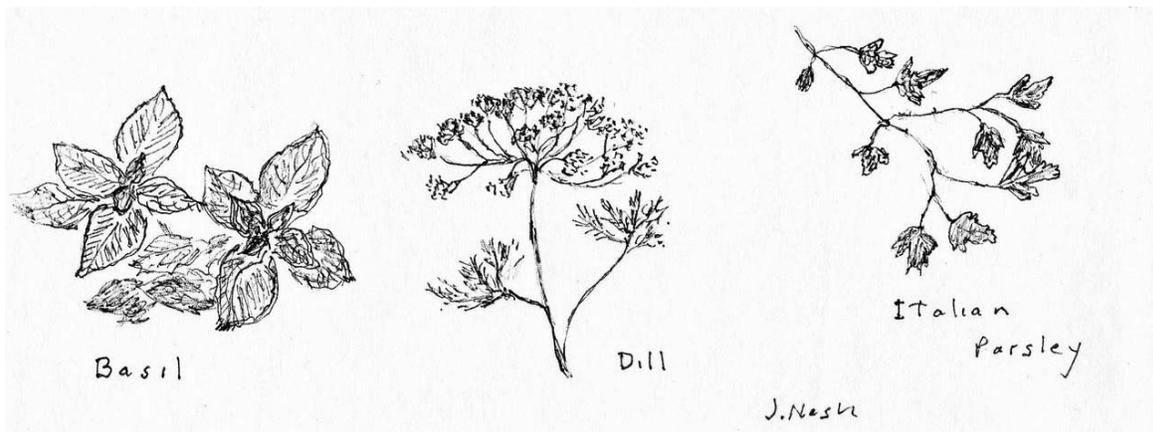
Besides being healthy, herbs and spices are a wonderful way to lift our spirits in the cold, short days of winter. If we can't travel, at

least we can bring the flavors and aromas of other, warmer, places to our tables. With all the cookbooks, internet sources, family recipes, and your own imagination and sense of adventure, the possibilities are endless. One great way to experiment is to try herbs and spices already blended together. Following is a list and brief description of the nine herb and spice blends available at the Co-op.

Chili powder: chili powder, cumin, oregano, coriander, garlic, silicon dioxide (anticaking agent), allspice, cloves. Essential to chili, of course. Also adds zest to quesadillas, tacos, burritos, bean dips, cornbread, and other Mexican and Tex-Mex dishes.

Curry powder: coriander, turmeric, mustard, cumin, fenugreek, paprika, cayenne, cardamom, nutmeg, cinnamon, cloves. Pungent heat for Asian recipes for soups, sauces, salads, tofu, chicken, beef, or vegetables.

Garam Masala: cardamom, cinnamon, cloves, cumin, black pepper, coriander. Dry-roasted blend of



spices without the hot chili flavor of curry. Brings a warm, Indian flair to rice, vegetables, tofu, or dal.

Gentle Masala: fennel, coriander, cumin, turmeric. This milder blend is created by local Ayurvedic practitioner, Ginna Bourisseau, specifically to aid digestion. Use like regular masala.

Italian Seasoning: oregano, marjoram, thyme, rosemary, basil, sage. Delizioso Italian flavor and aroma for pasta, pizza, salad dressings, and breads.

Poultry seasoning: sage, thyme, onion, black pepper, marjoram, celery seed, red pepper. Not just for chicken or Tofurky—sprinkle it into stuffing, gravy, soups, seafood, herb bread, and vegetables.

Pumpkin Pie Spice: cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, cloves. Bring back lovely harvest days with anything pumpkin or winter squash-based: pie, soup, muffins, breads, and cakes.

Taco Seasoning: chili powder, dehydrated onion, dehydrated garlic, yellow corn meal, cumin, tomato powder (tomatoes, guar gum), paprika, lemon peel, silicon dioxide (anticaking agent), oregano, cayenne pepper. South of the border flavor for hamburger or veggie burgers, rice, beans, dips, and breads.

Thai Seasoning: dehydrated garlic, dehydrated onion, tomato powder, lemon peel, coriander, citric acid, paprika, cayenne, basil, black pepper, silicon dioxide (anti-caking agent), cilantro, white pepper. Dare to experience this spicy, robust flavor in seafood, soups, and rice or noodle dishes. (Just be sure not to shake the jar. Dispense gently—it's a nose burner!)

Your Co-op carries around 150 bulk dried herbs, spices, and baking staples. These include sea veggies, sprouting seeds, almost 40 locally grown herbs, an amazing array of individual varieties, and the nine blends listed above. Stop in and pick up some today. Bon appetite and bon voyage! ♦



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