

# The Plainfield Co-op

*Summer 2013*

## **KNOw** Anonymous Food

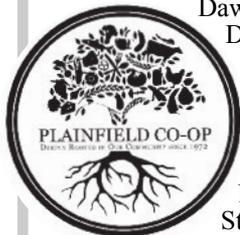


**Hours:** 7 days a week 9AM-8PM

**Phone:** 454-8579

**Website:** [www.PlainfieldCoop.com](http://www.PlainfieldCoop.com)

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- Fresh Organic Pies
- Dump Truck Hauling
- Horse Drawn Rides
- Firewood For Sale
- Massage Therapy

## About This Newsletter



As we come into the season when more local foods are available, the newsletter celebrates knowing where our food comes from. Sometimes knowing

may be a warning, sometimes labels don't give us full information. You can read here about GMOs and foods from afar, and be grateful you know who is growing what and how on local farms—and especially in your own garden.

Our cover art celebrates our gardens with a woodcut by local artist Wilaiwan Phonjan. Even if you haven't seen her art at Plainfield's Blinking Light Gallery, you probably have eaten her cooking at Wilaiwan's Kitchen in Montpelier.

Recipes using asparagus, rhubarb, and spinach celebrate local spring produce.

This newsletter is sent, either through the mail or electronically, to all Co-op members. After this issue, email notification about the newsletter will be sent only to those non-members who opt in <info@plainfieldcoop.com>. Of

course the newsletter will continue to be posted quarterly on the Co-op website [www.PlainfieldCoop.com](http://www.PlainfieldCoop.com), generally by the first day of June, September, December, and March.

We welcome your submissions of opinions, information, and artwork. Contact any of the Newsletter Committee members:

Glenda Bissex, co-ordinator (454-7895)  
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Karen Starr, staff liaison and writer (232-4646)  
Debra Stoleroff, editing and recipes (476-3154)  
Alan Taplow, advertising and distribution (454-4675) ♦

**The Co-op is doing some Spring cleaning of its email master list. If you are not a current member and would like to continue to receive email notices about the latest online edition of the newsletter, please be sure to let us know. We'd love to stay in touch! Email us at: [info@plainfieldcoop.com](mailto:info@plainfieldcoop.com) or reply to your latest email notification from the newsletter. Thanks!**

# Littlewood Farm



*Growing organic produce  
for the  
Plainfield Coop since 1988*



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End of Recreation Field Road, Plainfield

[www.littlewoodfarm.org](http://www.littlewoodfarm.org)\*454-8446\*[littlewoodfarm@gmail.com](mailto:littlewoodfarm@gmail.com)

# Shoes to Fill: The Co-op Board *by Chris Jackson*

The Co-op annual meeting in mid-fall may seem like a long way away. The board hasn't even set a date yet. However, it is crucial that we plan ahead now, especially when it comes to recruiting more board members.

I've written about being on the board in past articles. Basically, the board's role is to communicate the desires of the membership, in terms of the goals, mission, or ends, to the Management Collective, and then monitor the Collective in their interpretation and execution of the policies based on those ends. The board does this once a month at a meeting, which is often preceded by online discussion and review. Board members also participate in various committees. That's the job in a nutshell. We need members who are passionate about the Co-op, its health as a business, and its future in the community.

The next couple of years are going to be challenging and exciting for the Co-op as a whole. At the last annual meeting, the membership voted to adopt equity instead of a dues based system. This will go into effect in 2014. There is still much work to be done by the board and collective in educating the membership about what this means for them, and to finalize how this system is going to be implemented,

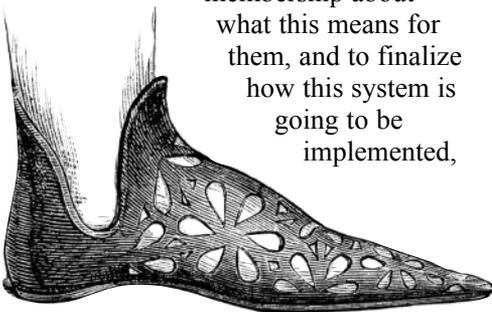
including what membership costs will be.

Other issues involve the physical future of the store. The building has its challenges, and we will, as a community, need to look at keeping the Co-op viable into the future by exploring many options, including more renovations, moving, satellite stores and others. This is a sensitive subject, but one that is necessary when operating any kind of business.

Please consider joining the board, or recommending somebody who you think will make a good fit. Anyone interested can call me at 802-595-3623. Ideally we will have several people running for the seats available.

On a similar, yet sadder note, Les Snow has resigned from the board in May. Les has served on the board for several years. He was instrumental in implementing the policy governance system we now use, and more recently, the move toward equity. His deep financial knowledge has been crucial in monitoring the economic health of the Co-op, and his eye for detail has filled in several potential leaks which could be disastrous for any business. Most importantly, Les shared his gifts and passions in the service of our community. He truly is an inspiration.

As a result of Les's departure, there is an immediate opening on the board. We are particularly looking for someone who has financial background to fill the very large treasurer's shoes. If anyone is interested, please contact me. ♦



# Cooperative Principles: Voluntary and Open Membership

by Joseph Gainza

“A cooperative is a voluntary organization, open to all people able to use its services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.” This cooperative principle number one, like the other six adopted by the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) in 1995, traces its roots to the first modern cooperative founded in Rochdale, England in 1844.

In the words of the ICA: “co-operatives are values-based enterprises. The co-operative has the greatest degree of participatory governance of any of the major enterprise models. Because of this member engagement, co-operatives reflect the values of the community.” In order to insure that the values of the community are reflected in co-op policies and practices, it is essential that all members of the community are eligible to become member/owners of the co-op.

But member/owners do more than simply join an existing co-op, they help create it. More than any other enterprise model, co-ops depend on voluntary relationships to be successful. A co-op is also a process, not simply an institution.

Voluntary and open membership is conducive to participation at any level that cooperative member/owners can commit to. This places a responsibility on the co-op to remain open to new possibilities of participation and engagement and to be willing to

innovate. The co-op board, which represents the member/owners, must continually seek out their opinions, concerns and creative ideas. The co-op must actively seek to engage member/owners in the business and celebrations of their cooperative. For their part, the member/owners are obligated to keep informed about the operation of their cooperative and find ways they can contribute to its improvement.

With the institution of equity shares at the last annual meeting of the Plainfield Food Co-op, the member/owners have indicated their desire to strengthen their connection to, and involvement with their co-op. As we move toward full implementation of the equity model, due to begin on January 1, 2014, we expect to see greater involvement of member/owners.

Co-operative enterprises are part of an emerging “generative economy” which aims, in the words of Marjorie Kelly, “to meet human needs and create conditions in which life can thrive.” The Plainfield Food Co-operative invites every member/owner to lend a hand in establishing this generative economy. ♦



# How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Server

by Mike Peabody

There's this idea, it seems, that the point-of-sale is this giant, pulsating electro-brain, constantly uploading and downloading member data. That's sort of correct. Really, though, it's a little grey box, about the size of a cheap dictionary, that routes through to the registers, not being at all malevolent. Essentially, the only way for identity theft to occur is for actual theft to occur, as in physically removing the hardware from the office. It isn't really connected to the Internet, it doesn't attach to a phone line, and it doesn't have any wireless capability. One of the perks of the system's technical simplicity is the same as its drawbacks: It just isn't tied in to anything besides itself.

First, I'd like to change the phrase, "tracking member sales" to "recording member sales." To say that we are "tracking" anyone has this predatory overtone and it isn't an accurate picture, anyway. Your Co-op isn't following you or your buying patterns on an individual level for the purpose of nailing down the demographics. We are, however, retaining data about our sales for figuring out seasonal trends, product inventory, and patronage. If we buy smarter,

everyone benefits. It's part of why we got the point-of-sale in the first place.

Equity is another big reason for needing point-of-sale. If you only have

to worry about one payment to the Co-op, per year, then a system more sophisticated than our old registers isn't completely necessary. But when we are talking about equity installments with a minimum balance to remain current and the option to pay off more during the year, the Co-op needs something with more adaptability. If it's decided that a member partially invested but with no paid equity current is or isn't in good standing, then we need more technical ability to see a payment history. Could we do it with a clipboard? Sure. Would it be reliable or easy to use? No, not for a store of our size. And without being able to record an individual member's yearly sales, we don't have a good method of calculating patronage.

The mailing address, as a part of your record, is not negotiable. Per our bylaws, we need to be able to mail you notice of member meetings within a certain timeframe. Members who neglect to leave a forwarding address basically absolve themselves of their right to vote in the Co-op and that's one thing. But if we don't offer every opportunity we can to allow members to stay in the loop or receive their due patronage, then we face repercussions when and if members miss out on those things. Email addresses, and other bits of data that tie back to individual members, are not essential but open up communication avenues a bit and help us have a stable database.

We're not going to sell your info to anyone. None of us even know how to do that. We don't want your phone number



so we can shill it out or cold-call you with promotions and other crap. For the most part, we just want a number on hand in the event that you leave something here and we need to be able to tell you about it. We might also use it if we need to call you about an error in your mailing address, or something similar, but it's not an advertising venue. No one working at the store enjoys calls from surveys and hucksters while we're eating dinner and we don't assume you would forgive your Co-op for the same intrusiveness.

We live in interesting times. While I don't blame anyone for not trusting that their personal information won't be used to pummel them with junk mail and commit identity theft, let's keep in mind that this is the Co-op and it belongs to the same people whose information it collects. Talk to your Board, first and foremost, and make sure they understand that you don't want your information

shared or sold, if it's a real concern of yours. Tell them to write policies that protect you should problems arise. If that doesn't get you somewhere you want to be, take it to a member meeting and get it carved into the bylaws. That is your right and your power as a Co-op member. I can promise you that I won't misuse your information, here and now; but if you want complete protection, make sure that your Co-op has it as a core principle and acts on it every day. ♦

**NOTICE: the Plainfield Co-op board is looking for someone to fill a vacant seat on the board who can take over the role of treasurer. Experience in financial management is a big plus. Please contact Chris Jackson at [kairos.chris@gmail.com](mailto:kairos.chris@gmail.com)**



# Why Do We Still Oppose GMOs? *by Brian Tokar*

Genetically engineered foods, or GMOs (genetically modified organisms), have been highly controversial all around the world ever since they were first introduced into our food supply back in 1996. Indeed researchers began to anticipate the problems with GMOs much earlier than that, when crop varieties containing previously impossible combinations of genetic traits only existed in the laboratories of companies like Monsanto.

Today, the issues around GMOs are much the same as they've always been: concerns about human health, genetic contamination of other crops and their wild relatives, deleterious effects on insects that are beneficial for agriculture, and increased use of chemical weed-killers that GMO varieties were invented to grow in synergy with. In each instance, the predictions of critical scientists have come to pass. While the evidence on human health effects remains controversial in some circles, every year brings new studies of the negative effects of GMOs on genetic regulation in living cells, as well as on the metabolism, growth, reproduction, and disease susceptibility of various laboratory animals.

The main difference today is that GMOs are grown on over 400 million acres worldwide, about 11 percent of the world's arable land. Nearly 90 percent of these crops are in 5 countries – the US, Canada, Argentina, Brazil and India, and an even larger proportion than that include artificially introduced genetic traits that are owned by a single

company, the agrochemical giant Monsanto. Monsanto is also now the world's largest seed company, having spent hundreds of millions of dollars since the late 1990s buying up major seed suppliers around the world. Indeed, what's most unprecedented about GMOs today may be the way in which this technology has driven unprecedented consolidation and corporate control over the world's food supplies. Most other major GMO producers are also among the global top ten of both seed and agrochemical producers.

Just as in 1996, the vast majority of GMO crops are engineered to do two things: to coexist with high doses of broad-spectrum chemical weed-killers like Monsanto's Roundup (84% of GMOs now in production), and to produce insecticidal toxins derived from Bt bacteria (*Bacillus thuringiensis*: 39% of GMOs). The numbers add up to more than 100% because many of the latest GMO varieties actually carry both of these engineered traits, often more than one of each type.

Which of our foods are genetically engineered? It's still 4 main crops: soybeans, corn, canola, and cotton. A few other GMO varieties have been approved for sale ("deregulated" in the USDA's lingo), but most have never been grown commercially. Those that have been marketed include a summer squash variety, Hawaiian papaya, and herbicide-tolerant sugar beets, which have been challenged in court because

*continued on page 10*

# Vermont's GMO Food Labeling Bill Makes History

*By Andrea Stander, Director of Rural Vermont  
and member of the VT Right to Know GMOs Coalition*

**A VICTORY:** On May 10th the Vermont GMO Food Labeling Bill passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 99-42. Although it is a great disappointment to everyone that the bill will not become law this year, it does make Vermont the first state in the country to move a GMO Food Labeling bill through one chamber of its legislature. Given the powerful forces arrayed against labeling GMO food, this is a great victory.

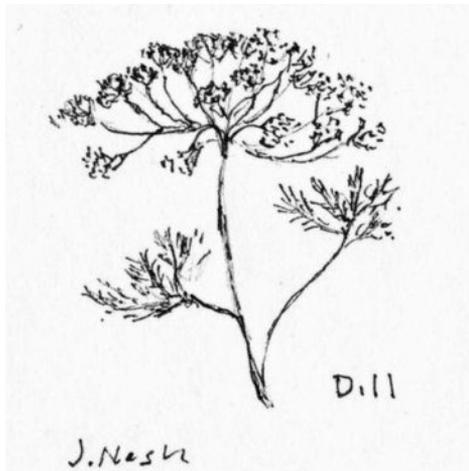
All Representatives from our area voted FOR the bill: Ancel, Hooper, Kitzmiller, Toll, Peltz, and Davis. Please thank them! Tony Klein, who has always supported labeling, was unavoidably absent from the voting. To find out more about the campaign to label genetically engineered food visit the VT Right to Know GMOs website.

**BACKGROUND:** Since January of 2012, Vermont's GMO Food Labeling

bill has been working its way through the legislative process. The bill would require, with some exceptions, that food sold in Vermont that has been genetically engineered be labeled as such. In spite of support from over 90% of Vermonters, the bill has moved at a glacial pace and been met with resistance even from those who support the idea of labeling genetically engineered food. This resistance has largely centered on the risk of Vermont being sued by some front group of the corporate bio-tech industry and having to defend the labeling law in a protracted and expensive legal action. This fear may be justified but many activists and supportive lawmakers have expressed dismay at the prospect of Vermont's legislative process being compromised by threats of lawsuits from corporate special interests.

In the 2012 legislative session, Vermont's GMO Food Labeling bill received weeks of testimony and careful work by the House Agriculture Committee but then languished in the House Judiciary Committee as the clock ran out on the session. In January 2013, which was the beginning of a new legislative biennium, the VT Right to Know Coalition worked to reintroduce the GMO Food Labeling bill. This time, the bill was introduced in both the House and Senate with co-sponsorship by one third of the lawmakers in each chamber (50 in the House and 11 in the Senate.) This huge increase in co-spon-

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they can easily contaminate other beet and chard crops through cross-pollination (50% of refined sugar comes from beets rather than sugarcane). The main problem for co-op shoppers is the prevalence of corn- and soy-derived ingredients in such a high proportion of processed foods. Organic foods are certified to be free of GMO ingredients, but no such limitation—and no standards of enforcement—apply to foods that are simply labeled as “natural.”

Organizations such as the Center for Food Safety and Institute for Responsible Technology have produced detailed shopping guides (available online) that clarify which brands of various products are reliably GMO free, but mandatory labeling of GMOs is the only way we can be sure. That is why people here in Vermont and in many other states are once again moving forward to require labeling of genetically engineered foods. Hopefully by this time next year, Vermont will be one of several states that finally have a strong GMO labeling law on the books. ♦

sorship reflected the strong organizing work of the VT Right to Know Coalition which is a partnership among NOFA-VT, Rural Vermont, VPIRG and Cedar Circle Farm in East Thetford.

During the 2013 legislative session, the House Agriculture Committee again took the lead on fine tuning the bill. This effort was greatly aided by extensive legal research and testimony by the VT Environmental and Natural Resources Law Clinic at the Vermont Law School led by Laura Murphy and her team of dedicated law students. The ENRLC was formally representing VPIRG as their client but collaborated extensively with the entire VT Right to Know Coalition. The bill was also supported by regional grassroots organizing meetings, strong support from Ben & Jerry’s (which announced their intention to be GMO-free by the end of 2013) and extraordinary commitment by activists from all over the state.

The campaign will continue through the summer and fall to build the depth of support that will be needed to get the bill approved by the Senate in 2014 and sent to the Governor to become law. Please make your voice heard. ♦



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# A Short List of Resources about Genetically Modified Foods and How to Avoid Them

by Karen Starr

## Understanding GMOs (online videos)

*Genetic Roulette* (abridged 1-hr. version)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YDzZc-QFIwk&feature=youtu.be>

*Seeds of Deception* (short video)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YDzZc-QFIwk&feature=youtu.be>

Films about GMOs (directory)  
<http://gmo-awareness.com/resources/movies-to-watch-gmo-and-more/>

## Understanding GMOs (print)

*GMO Myths & Truths*  
[http://www.nongmoproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/GMO\\_Myths\\_and\\_Truths\\_1.31.pdf](http://www.nongmoproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/GMO_Myths_and_Truths_1.31.pdf)

*About GMOs*  
<http://www.nongmoshoppingguide.com/about-gmos.html>

## About Glyphosate (the major ingredient in herbicide Roundup) used in tandem with GMO corn, soy, alfalfa & other crops)

*GMOs, Glyphosate, & Tomorrow*  
<http://farmandranchfreedom.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/don-huber-may2011-acres.pdf>

*Interview with Dr Don Huber on GMOs and the Threat They Pose*  
[http://www.filmsforaction.org/watch/interview\\_with\\_dr\\_don\\_huber\\_on\\_gmos\\_and\\_the\\_threat\\_they\\_pose\\_to\\_us\\_agriculture/](http://www.filmsforaction.org/watch/interview_with_dr_don_huber_on_gmos_and_the_threat_they_pose_to_us_agriculture/)

Also section on glyphosate in the film *Genetic Roulette*

## Shopping Guides

*Non-GMO Shopping Guide*  
<http://www.nongmoshoppingguide.com/shopping-guide.html>

*True Food Shopper's Guide*  
<http://www.centerforfoodsafety.org/factsheets/1974/true-food-shoppers-guide-to-avoiding-gmos>

*Invisible GM Ingredients*  
<http://www.nongmoshoppingguide.com/brands/invisible-gm-ingredients.html>

## Organizations

Institute for Responsible Technology  
<http://www.responsibletechnology.org/>

GMO Awareness  
<http://gmo-awareness.com/>

Center for Food Safety  
<http://www.centerforfoodsafety.org/>

Canadian Biotechnology Action Network  
<http://www.cban.ca/>

GMO Watch  
<http://www.gmwatch.org/>

Non GMO Project  
<http://www.nongmoproject.org/> ◆

# That's Not C.O.O.L.: Knowing Where Your Next Meal Comes From

By Sarah Albert

In our globalized food system, getting information on where our food is grown or processed can be difficult or impossible. For many of us, food origin is a determining factor in our buying decisions: some people may boycott produce from a particular country for political reasons, while others avoid food products from a country because of its questionable sanitary and food safety practices. Localvores endeavor to eat only food produced within a reasonable distance of their home. There are a multitude of reasons for wanting to know the source of our food, but, more importantly, what do consumers have a right to know? Shouldn't we have labeling that enables consumers to make more informed decisions about their food choices?

Labeling laws in the U.S. underwent significant changes in the 20th century, requiring detailed ingredient and dietary information on packaging. However, mandatory country of origin labeling (COOL), has been slower in catching up, only being introduced in the last decade by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It requires retailers to give

customers information on the source of certain foods ("covered commodities") including various types of meat, fish and shellfish, along with fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables, many nuts, and ginseng. But if one of these has been either processed or mixed with another product, it's very often exempted from the labeling regulation: for example, mixed fruit or salad greens, trail mix or peanut butter. Some items excluded by COOL, however, are required by other international trade regulations to have country of origin stated on the packaging. Confusing??

Many of us think we've resolved the issue of where our produce comes from by buying from a natural foods store or food co-op, but that's a misconception. An article in *vtdigger* a few years ago stated "A surprising number of organic products available at co-ops and natural food stores in Vermont now come from China."<sup>1</sup>

A report from Food and Water Watch<sup>2</sup> noted that by 2008, food imports from China to this country had tripled over the previous decade. Buyers say that it's impossible to source all organic foods locally, or even domestically, and that reliance on large distributors means they have less control over the source. The USDA's organic program does not examine food coming into the country to ensure that food labeled organic actually is organic, and testing of products labeled organic is sporadic. Numerous

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instances of falsely labeled “organic” products from China and elsewhere have been reported.

Would most customers knowingly buy food products from China if they were labeled as such? Again, it’s a question of enabling consumers to make informed food choices. Our current labeling laws are inadequate, so what’s an origin-scrupulous consumer to do?

1. Avoid packaged or processed foods as much as possible, since they aren’t covered by regulations for country of origin labeling. Just because a product is packaged or distributed in the U.S. is no guarantee on the source of all the ingredients on the label, and it’s possible—if not likely—that many soup mixes or convenience foods contain Chinese ingredients.
2. Advocate for country of origin labeling on bulk bins. Happily, our co-op has new bulk bin labels with a prominent space for country of origin. In contrast, most of the bulk item bin labels at Hunger Mt. Co-op state that source information can be requested from a store worker. How many shop-

pers are likely to seek out a store employee and ask them to track down that information for one or more bulk items they’re considering? Frequently changing sources for various bulk products may offer a complication, but if we as consumers continue to ask for this information to be made available all the time, retailers should listen.

1. <http://vtdigger.org/2009/12/02/your-organic-food-made-in-china-part-1-why-you-should-give-a-hill-of-beans/>
2. <http://documents.foodandwaterwatch.org/doc/Poisonedfruit.pdf> ◆

*Editor's note:* “USDA and FDA inspectors are only examining 1%-2% of all the food that reaches U.S. ports. And what are they finding? A disproportionate number of serious problems with exports from China including adulteration with unapproved chemicals, dyes, pesticides and outright fraud (fake food)...In many ways Chinese imports undermine the foundational precepts that the organic movement was founded upon.”

—from the May newsletter of the Cornucopia Institute, an organic industry watchdog.

# DRAPER ELECTRIC

**John Draper**

Plainfield, VT |

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# Recipes from Debra Stoleroff

*I don't usually print submitted recipes but while searching for different ways to use spinach I came upon spinach harissa. "Interesting," thought I and set off on a search. I chose this recipe because the ingredients seemed like they would go well together (I love cilantro). So try it out, you may find the ingredients need to be adjusted, but maybe not.*

**Spinach and Cilantro Harissa** found on [Seasonsbesteats.wordpress.com](http://Seasonsbesteats.wordpress.com)

## Ingredients

2 C. fresh spinach, washed	1 T. lemon juice	1 t. cumin
1 C. fresh cilantro, washed	1 large clove garlic	½ t. salt
1 serrano chile, seeded	1 t. coriander	¼ C. olive oil

## Preparation

Place all ingredients in a food processor and pulse until smooth consistency. Store in plastic container in the fridge until ready to use. I actually double the recipe and freeze half for quick and delicious weeknight meals.

From Wikipedia: Harissa is a Tunisian hot chili sauce whose main ingredients are piri piri (type of chili pepper), serrano peppers and other hot chili peppers and spices and herbs such as garlic paste, coriander, red chili powder, caraway as well as some vegetable or olive oil.

*I engaged in a little bit of research to find out what foods harissa is traditionally eaten with to help newsletter readers who might not have heard of harissa. One answer on [seriouseats.com](http://seriouseats.com) blog comments "A better question is 'what will you NOT eat it on?' I have had to restrain myself from putting it on my raisin bran in the morning. I love it with bread, crackers, those thick yellow-gold tostitos, any kind of meat, on sandwiches, oooh, and it probably rocks with eggs (aha! A way to incorporate harissa into my breakfast!)". Indeed there are many recipes that incorporate harissa onto and into eggs.*

—Debra

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# Pasta with Asparagus and Sundried Tomatoes

By Debra Stoleroff

*Not sure why anyone would want to do anything to asparagus spears except steam or roast them. But, this pasta dish is attractive to the eye and tasty. Though I have given amounts, it is one of those dishes with ingredients I just measure 'by eye'. So play around with it according to your likes and dislikes.*

## Ingredients

8-12 oz pasta (your choice)

Veggies:

1 medium onion

3-5 garlic cloves

4-8 asparagus spears (depending on size)

½ cup sundried tomatoes (prepare ahead of time – soak in boiling water mixed with apple cider vinegar)

¼ cup pine nuts or walnuts

## Sauce

1 TBL flour or nutritional yeast

½ cup heavy cream (you can substitute with 2% milk)

½ stick unsalted butter, cut into pieces (you can substitute 1 TBL olive oil)

½ cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano

salt

pepper (black or chili pepper flakes)

## Preparation

Sauté the vegetables. First, the onions and garlic until the onions are clear. Add the asparagus and sauté until the asparagus is al dente. Drain the soaking sundried tomatoes and add them to the mix. Continue to sauté. Add the pine or walnuts. Set aside.

Cook pasta in a pasta pot of boiling salted water (2 tablespoons salt for 6 quarts water) until al dente. Reserve ½ cup cooking water, then drain pasta.

While cooking pasta, in a 12-inch heavy skillet over medium-low heat, combine flour and butter (or oil)—bring them to a simmer. Slowly add the cream (or milk) and stir until the sauce starts thickening. Add ¼ teaspoon salt and ½ teaspoon pepper (or some hot pepper flakes). If the sauce gets too thick add some of the reserved pasta water. Add cheese to sauce.

Toss the veggies with the pasta. Add the alfredo sauce to the pasta and stir.



# To Boycott or Not to Boycott...that is for you to decide

*By Annie Gaillard, Buffalo Mountain Co-op*

Organic Consumers Association, a watchdog organization for the organic industry, has called for a boycott on companies who donated money to defeat California's Genetically Modified Organism Labeling Law, aka prop. 37. Between Monsanto, other genetic engineering companies and many large food companies, they poured over \$46 million into an advertising campaign to convince consumers that it would be a bad idea to let people know if the foods that they eat contain GMOs. Some of those big grocery companies are the parent companies of mainstream organic brands. When I looked at which companies we carry here at Buffalo Mountain, I knew that we only carry a few. Muir Glen tomato products, Cascadian Farms frozen juices and potato products, Food Should Taste Good chips, are all owned by General Mills. They contributed \$1.2 million. R W Knudsen and Santa Cruz Organics juices are both owned by Smuckers, who contributed \$ 555,000.

The products that we carry from these companies are here because there are not many good alternatives to them at this time. There are no other organic frozen juices out there. Woodstock Farms has their own version of french fries and

Spud Puppies, but it is actually something called "private label" which means that United Naturals, our distributor, gets Cascadian Farms to put product into UNFI's Woodstock Farms bags. Same as a "Stop and Shop" brand or any chain store brand product. There are also very few juice brands out there and they are way more expensive than Knudsen/Santa Cruz. So we will probably continue to carry these products. HOWEVER, you, the consumer, can make your own decisions about what you want to buy. I would HIGHLY suggest, plead even, that if you DO choose to boycott, you write the company, or call their consumer hot line (usually on the label, but you can google them, too) and TELL them that you are boycotting and why. Our small store and the few cases that we sell will have a much lower impact than you directly letting them know they did the wrong thing.

Good luck—together we can reclaim our democracy from these corporate giants. We will NOT let them keep brainwashing us with their advertising. We will educate ourselves and become activists. They can not survive without OUR money! Vote with your dollars!

**NOTICE: The Plainfield Co-op board meets on the second Tuesday of every month, from 6 to 8 PM in the Community Center (above the store). All members are welcome to come to the meetings. The dates for the next few meetings are: June 11, July 9, Aug. 13, Sept. 10. Meeting agendas are posted at the Co-op a week before each meeting.**

## Rhubarb Upside-Down Cake

By Kate Jennings from *The Farmstead and La Laiterie at Farmstead, Providence*

### Ingredients

Rhubarb:  
¼ cup unsalted butter  
¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons  
brown sugar  
2 medium stalks rhubarb,  
washed and chopped  
3 tablespoons white sugar

### Method

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

In a small pot over medium heat, melt the butter and brown sugar, stirring until smooth. Toss the rhubarb with the white sugar. Spoon a layer of rhubarb onto the bottom of a 9x12 cake pan.

To make the cake batter, cream the butter and sugar. Add the egg and vanilla and mix until smooth. In a separate bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder, and ginger powder. Mix the dry ingredients and sour cream into the butter mixture in alternating additions just until fully incorporated.

Pour the cake batter on top of the rhubarb. Bake for 30 minutes or until the cake is golden and a wooden skewer inserted in the cake's center comes out clean. Remove from the oven and let cool for 20 minutes. Yield: 6 servings.

### Cake:

¼ cup unsalted butter, at room temperature  
½ cup brown sugar  
1 egg  
1½ teaspoon vanilla extract  
½ plus ⅓ cup flour  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1 teaspoon ginger powder  
¼ teaspoon salt  
½ cup sour cream



# Dance, Sing, Exercise, Listen, Watch: Community Center News

by Mike Peabody

It's been a busy spring for the Community Center. At the end of March, we got a fresh coat of paint on the walls. The gallery backing looks like new now, and the far wall—the big one we use as a screen for movies—got a nice, bright, even whitening that looks great under projection. We even got a new set of red velvet drapes to really tie the whole thing together.

The Very Special Arts production “I Am In Here” was excellent. Mark Utter is a fun and insightful filmmaker, with one great message after another about his modern autism community. Be sure to stop in and see the accompanying art exhibit of photos taken by the VSA artists.

Movie Nights are on hiatus while Doni, the guy who puts them on, builds a house. Also, with the sun staying up longer and longer, it's hard to start a film too late in the day but still dark enough to display well. Check back in the fall. I want to say a special “thank

you” to Doni for showing a particular favorite of mine, “Star Wars: The Director’s Cut-Uncut”, a fan revisioning of the 1977 film, made up in two-to-five second snippets from submissions of home movies, animations, and various visual media interpretations.

Ecstatic Dance (alternate Wednesday nights), Women’s Boot Camp (Monday evenings/Saturday mornings), and Shape Note Singing (second Sundays in the afternoon) are still going strong. We love them and, if you are thinking you might attend one or all of these ongoing affairs, please contact the Co-op for the people who organize them. They have all been reliable and fun renters who help make our space the unique venue it is for our community.

Project Charity, a Bible-based church group, has been meeting Wednesday nights and Sunday mornings. DM Prophet, the leader of this testimony, will be on a summer hiatus after June, returning in the fall.



The Grateful Dead Dances, which were previously private events, are now free and open to the public. The dancing starts at 8PM and it's a great time, I hear from people who go all the time. The dances generally fall biweekly each month, with the last one of May being on the 25th.

We had a couple of larger musical acts in April. Blackbird Raum, the California gypsy-punk-folk group, had a show in the early part of the month, along with several other bands. The last weekend, the Second Annual Snake Oil Medicine Show invited the Brass Balagan radical marching band to our Community Center. Both were well received, if a bit raucous, but at the least they've helped us envision how we want to have similar events in the future. We'd love to keep having live music in town; the trick is seeing to it that our friends and neighbors continue to be as excited about it as we are.

Karen, the Co-op's Outreach Coordinator, has been putting on "Workshops at the Co-op" on the last Sunday afternoon of each month. Already, she's had a tree-grafting seminar (with Co-op member and East Hill

Farm's Nicko Rubin) and a permaculture class for home gardeners, most recently. In the future, look forward to a trainings on how to attract native pollinator bees, using a "fire drill" to make fires outdoors, and a Plainfield village herb walk.

One last thing: We're planning on refinishing the floors in the not too distant future. While we can have a "screen and recover" (a much less intrusive, and cheaper, project) done to restore those gorgeous boards, it will still cost around \$1500 for the job. We would appreciate any and all donations made to help see the project through.

As always, check out the Community Center web calendar at [www.plainfield-coop.com](http://www.plainfield-coop.com) and the whiteboard in the entryway of the store. If you have an idea for a great, non-revenue generating community event but don't have the cash to lay out for a rental, talk to Mike at the Co-op about putting on a Sponsored Event. If it meets our criteria, you can use a really excellent space for free! You can also use Onion River Exchange timebank hours, in lieu of greenbacks, in an hour-for-hour trade. We'd love to have you. ♦

## 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 Mike Peabody 454-8579

*Using the Community Center benefits The Plainfield Co-op*



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