

The Plainfield Co-op Newsletter

Winter 2015-16



*Rosamond Wallstrom and Dragon Domino carry the Co-op banner in the Old Home Day parade.
Photo credit: Bram Towbin*

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Fresh Organic Pies

Katuah Retreat

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About This Newsletter

This issue reflects the continuing and intensified efforts by the Co-op staff to support VERMONT farms and businesses—meat producers, cheese

makers, and bakers. It also reflects other dimensions of our LOCAL co-operative activities—with Twin Valley Senior Center, with other co-ops, and internally the Board and Management Collective working more closely together.

The new electronic sales flyer is the product of collaboration between the Media Committee and the staff. Special thanks to Bob Fancher for his design and technology skills, and to Chloe Budnick and Lorraine Checchi for pulling the flyer together. You get the latest specials and news in a timely manner, while the newsletter continues to report and reflect on broader, more long-term issues.

For the past couple of years, Twinfield student Erika Farnham helped us with mailing the print copies. She graduated last June but, happily, her sister Courtney has stepped up to help now

with mailing. Welcome and thank you, Courtney.

Most of the artwork in this issue is locally sourced--beasts with personality from the brush of E. Randall, photos of Plainfield Old Home Day from Bram Towbin's ubiquitous camera, and apple art from Twinfield and Cabot art students. Thanks to all of you for making the newsletter enjoyable to look at.

Each issue of this newsletter is the product of a brainstorming session with all the members of our committee. They are listed below with their particular responsibilities.

Glenda Bissex, co-ordinator (songboat@vtlink.net)

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LittleWood Farm
Plainfield, Vt.
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*Providing organic produce
to the community
since 1987*



Report from Our Very Active Board

by Gail Falk, President

The Board was sad to say farewell to two dedicated staff and MC members—Erica Brosserman and Mike Peabody. It has been a challenge for the MC to replace their many skills and contributions to the Co-op, and we wish them well in the next chapters of their lives.

Over the summer, the Board and the Management Collective met for two retreats. (The Management Collective/MC is the group of staff who share responsibility for making decisions about day-to-day operations of the store.) One of the topics at our retreat was communication between the MC and the Board. Both groups felt that they were not being well heard or understood by the other.

Under Policy Governance rules, the two groups communicate through a Link, a designated member of the MC. After much discussion, the Management Collective proposed a change to the Link position. Now, four different MC members will function as Link – taking turns as the primary Link – but all four being included in emails and written communications. The Board is pleased with this change. We think it will improve communications, and, indeed, it already has.

Three representatives of the Co-op attended a meeting of people interested in forming an organization for all of Vermont's cooperatives, tentatively being called "Cooperative Vermont." There were representatives from cooperatives in many sectors: electric co-ops, credit unions, food producers, and co-op groceries. The as-yet informal group is planning on a statewide meeting of Cooperatives in May 2016. After discussion, the group decided to focus on out-

reach and education, technical assistance, public policy and legislative advocacy on behalf of co-operatives.

The Board authorized two contributions this quarter recognizing that, in the midst of plenty, many individuals in our community still lack enough healthy food. We pitched in to work at the Harvest Dinner and contributed food to raise funds—\$1,200!—for the Twin Valley Senior Center (see article elsewhere in the newsletter). In addition we contributed half of the uncashed checks and unused register credits from the patronage refund to the Senior Center and half to the area Food Pantry (about \$500 in total).

We selected the members of the Strategic Planning Team, which will have its first meeting later in November. The Committee will be inviting input from neighbors, customers, staff, and vendors about how the Co-op should develop in the next five years. Issues we will be looking at include how and whether the Co-op should grow, issues about the building and the second floor, the Co-op's role in addressing food justice, and member involvement. The members of the Strategic Planning Team are Dawn Fancher, Petra Gates, Bob Fancher, Karla Haas Moskowitz, Michael Billigsley, Ryan Gillard, and Gail Falk.

Member involvement is an ongoing priority for the Board. We always look forward to hearing your thoughts and ideas. The traditional fall membership meeting is being changed to April so as to have complete financial numbers. The terms of a couple of our Board members are ending, and we will be looking for candidates to join the Board. ♦

Co-op Still Growing

by *Bob Faneher, Treasurer*

We have received the third quarter results for 2015 and they show that the Co-op is still doing well financially and still growing. The Sales for the first 9 months of the year have increased 3.28% over 2014. Adjusted for inflation, that increase changes to 1.25%, which still shows us growing this year. On the flip side, our suppliers' prices to us are rising faster than our sales. As a result, our Gross Margin (Sales – Cost of Goods) is slipping a little. We are still making our target of 33%, but we will be watching this in the future.

In other Expenses (wages, utilities, maintenance, insurance, etc.), there was a 6.0% increase over the first nine months of 2014. This is due to increases in staff wages, which we have neglected for too long. It is a goal of the Co-op to provide a 'livable wage' for our staff members. Our thanks to everybody on the staff for their great work. Other than wages, all other Expenses have not increased over 2014.

Here are some other quick financial stats from the third quarter results. The Current Ratio (Current Assets divided by Current Liabilities) is 2.3. The target is

greater than 1.3. The Debt To Equity Ratio is currently 0.26. The target is to be lower than 1.5.

The Management Collective has been working hard to get our suppliers (especially our local suppliers) paid on time. They have made great progress so far. For the third quarter, the suppliers were paid within 15 days of the due date, 98.7% of the time.

A great big Thank You! to our members. Your Equity payments (the equity payments replaced the old membership dues) are making a huge difference in our Co-op building. The Equity payments are restricted and can only be spent on improvements to the building and equipment. You may have already seen some of those improvements – the new ramp on the front of the building; the refurbished children's play area and the snow arrestors on the roof. And, there have been other improvements that you can't see – supports under the floor near the coolers; upgrade of some of the older wiring throughout the building and a new phone system. And more projects are in the planning stage. All of these and more have been done with the Equity payments from our members. If you are a member, Thank You. If you would like to become a member, ask at the register or go to our website at PlainfieldCoop.com

The Plainfield Co-op is still growing and healthy. As always, thanks to all our members and other customers for their continuing support. ♦



Economic Justice and the Plainfield Co-op

by Joseph Gainza

“Economic justice” is a general term which can mean many things, but basically it refers to a distribution of, and access to the necessary elements of a dignified life: food, shelter, health care, adequate income, meaningful relationships. The list can be enlarged (I would include art), but the underlying value of economic justice is that every person, by the very fact of being alive, has an inviolate right to these necessities; this is the moral dimension of economic justice.

The Co-op, on its own cannot guarantee economic justice for its members or the larger community. That will take the establishment of just systems, locally and nationally. But we can put in place some of the necessary preconditions for the establishment of justice.

One of the ends (goals) of the Co-op is to support the local economy by serving as an outlet for local producers and growers. Keeping money in local circulation for longer periods of time builds the local economy and enables local businesses and other employers to pay wages which enable people and families to have greater access to the necessities of life. While seeking to keep the cost of the products it sells low, the Co-op is willing to pay farmers and other producers a fair price for their labor and cost of doing business. Our “Fair Trade” products help provide a better living for producers in other parts of the world which usually experience exploitation at the hands of the global economy. Unlike many chain “supermarkets” the Co-op does not force small producers to accept the lowest price possible while still staying in business.

The Co-op is committed to a livable wage for all its staff. We are not there yet, but each year the Co-op moves a step closer. Our bottom line can be said to be economic justice, for the staff/workers and the for the owner/members who see a “return on investment” in the form of equity dividends, based on their expenditures at the store, not on the number of shares they can own or control.

The fact that we have member/owners, rather than shareholders, is a crucial step toward economic justice. Shareholders in a traditional capitalist business can acquire enough stock to control the business and influence wage levels, products sold, working conditions and other aspects of the business; their power comes from the amount of wealth they have accumulated. In our co-op, each member/owner has only one share and therefore one vote. Every member/owner is equally responsible for the success of the Co-op, and the more they buy, the larger their dividend at the end of the year.

The Plainfield Co-op is managed by a worker collective, the Management Collective or MC. Under our policy governance model, the MC is responsible for all operational decisions; the board oversees policy and adherence by the MC to the goals the board establishes as representatives of the member/owners who elect them.

These practices of economic democracy are the greatest guarantee that the Co-op will continue to operate in a manner that lays the foundation for economic justice. ◆

Aware of What We Eat: Meat and Animal Products

by Karen Starr

I eat meat. I have even raised and slaughtered animals in the past, yet for many years I was a vegetarian. Taking life for me has always been a serious and harrowing responsibility, one that is present for me whether I'm eating chicken from the co-op display case or an animal I've personally slaughtered. Equally important to me are the living conditions of the animals that become or produce my food. Unfortunately, the situation on most of America's "farms" these days is enough to make anyone with even a minimum of awareness rage and weep. Instead of respectful, caring relationships with farm animals, industrial agricultural subjects them to horrifying lives of torment. No consideration is given to animals as living creatures capable of feeling. Instead, profit above all is the driving force. The industry knows that if people know what they are up to there will be hell to pay. They are counting on the lure of cheap meat to make us look the other way. The truth is, as a country, we eat too much meat and would be better off eating a lot less. I, for one, have made

the decision to look more closely at where my meat comes from and to pay more and eat less.

For a hair-raising tour of the meat industry I highly recommend a 2013 Rolling Stone article "In the Belly of the Beast" which examines the work of undercover activists to expose the industry's treatment of animals. Instead of making changes, the industry has pushed through Ag Gag laws in a number of states making it a criminal offense to go undercover to expose cruel and inhumane treatment. From the article:

"You're a typical milk cow in America, and this is your life: You are raised, like pigs, on a concrete slab in a stall barely bigger than your body. There, you never touch grass or see sun till the day you're herded to slaughter. A cocktail of drugs, combined with breeding decisions, has grossly distended the size of your udder such that you'd trip over it if allowed to graze, which of course you're not. Your hooves have rotted black from standing in your own shit, your teats are scarred, swollen and leaking pus—infected by mastitis—and you're sick to the verge of total collapse from giving nearly 22,000 pounds of milk a year. (That's more than double what your forebears produced just 40 years ago.) By the time they've used you up (typically at four years of age), your bones are so brittle that they often snap beneath you and leave you unable to get off the ground on your own power."



Credit: Elinor Randall

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"You are a typical egg-laying chicken in America, and this is your life: You're trapped in a cage with six to eight hens, each given less than a square foot of space to roost and sleep in. The cages rise five high and run thousands long in a warehouse without windows or skylights. You see and smell nothing from the moment of your birth but the shit coming down through the open slats of the battery cages above you. It coats your feathers and becomes a second skin; by the time you're plucked from your cage for slaughter, your bones and wings breaking in the grasp of harried workers, you look less like a hen than an oil-spill duck, blackened by years of droppings. Your eyes tear constantly from the fumes of your own urine, you wheeze and gasp like a retired miner, and you're beset every second of the waking day by mice and plaguelike clouds of flies."

"The hour before her end is usually the only time a pig sees a government rep; from the moment she's born, she's on her own, spending four or five years in a tiny crate and kept perpetually pregnant and made sick from breathing in her

own waste while fed food packed with growth-promoting drugs, and sometimes even garbage. (The word "garbage" isn't proverbial: Mixed in with the grain can be an assortment of trash, including ground glass from light bulbs, used syringes and the crushed testicles of their young.)"

There is no possible justification for such treatment of animals and the industry works very hard to keep the ugly details of its practices from the public. Yes, a few contractors are prosecuted every year, but basically business as usual continues. Then there are the ecological costs of industrial meat production. Consider the "amount of factory-farm animal waste generated in the U.S. each year: 500 million tons." Or register the fact that "26% of the Earth's total land mass is used for animal grazing contributing to the pollution of 35,000 miles of river across 22 U.S. states by farm-animal excrement."

<http://www.rollingstone.com/feature/belly-beast-meat-factory-farms-animal-activists#ixzz3qxj5sRSs>

So what is to be done? Probably, one of the best things we can all do is support good local farmers. Being able to see first-hand how animals are housed and cared for is huge. Patronizing local producers means paying more, which is really hard on many of our budgets. I know it is on mine. But eating less meat and other animal products and using what we do buy more wisely can make it work. And sometimes buying directly from the farm can make products a little more affordable. We also need to push the feds, as well as state and local governments, to support responsible and humane local agricultural infrastructure.



Credit: Elinor Randall

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There is no point replicating practices and conditions that mean miserable lives for animals (as well as workers.) Perhaps getting involved in Community Supported Agricultural (CSA) projects can bring down costs a bit as well. But quality, cruelty free meat by its nature will always carry a premium price. And maybe that's as it should be. After all the cost to the animal is a profound one.

Another tactic being used to counter the excesses of the industrial meat, egg, and dairy industry is "humane" labeling and certification schemes. These can be helpful or deceiving depending on the integrity of certification. Sadly, buying organic is not enough to keep animal cruelty off your plate, although it is a start. But before we look at a couple of certification programs, let's examine a few often used and frequently meaningless assurance labels from the food industry. These include: natural, humanely raised, cage free, no animal by-products fed, vegetarian fed, no hormones/antibiotics used. What these stand alone labels all have in common is a lack of verification and legal definition. They are basically designed to make consumers feel good about their purchase. The three labels below have the highest ratings for clearly defined and transparent standards and certified verification of farm practices.

Animal Welfare Approved (AWA): "audits, certifies and supports family farmers who raise their animals according to the highest welfare standards, outdoors on pasture or range. AWA has the most rigorous standards for farm animal welfare currently in use by any United States organization and is the most highly regarded food label when it comes to

animal welfare, pasture-based farming and sustainability. All AWA standards, policies and procedures are available on the AWA website, making it one of the most transparent certifications available. To accomplish the goals of the AWA program, the standards and audit process address every aspect of each species' life-cycle needs from birth to death—AWA is one of only two labels that require audited high-welfare slaughter practices and is the only label that requires pasture access for all animals."

Certified Humane Raised and Handled: "assures consumers that the producer meets our standards and applies them to animals from birth through slaughter. Cages, crates and tie stalls are among the forbidden practices, and animals must be free to do what comes naturally. For example, chickens are able to flap their wings and dust bathe, and pigs have the space to move around and root. Certified Humane is a third party accreditation that requires that ruminants have continual outdoor access, defines space requirements and bird and animal management, and has rigorous auditing to its published standards. One of only two certifications that require audited high-welfare slaughter practices (along with Animal Welfare Approved). For more information and a comparison of the different welfare standards of various animal welfare certification programs, see Certified Humane's Comprehensive Standards Comparison Chart at www.certifiedhumane.org"

Organic/Certified Organic, USDA definition: All products sold as "organic" must meet the USDA National Organic Program production and handling standards. Certification is mandatory for

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farmers selling more than \$5,000 of organic products per year, and is verified by an accredited certifying agency. In general, organic production limits the use of chemicals, pesticides, hormones, antibiotics, and other inputs. However, it does not strictly define production practices related to space per animal or outdoor access requirements—for example, confinement areas are permitted to fatten organic beef cattle—that can have sig-

nificant welfare implications for animals. For information about the National organic program and use of the term “organic” on labels, refer to factsheets from the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service on labels and standards."

<http://animalwelfareapproved.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Food-Labels-Exposed-AGW-10-2015-ONLINE.pdf>

For more detailed information about anything in this essay, please refer to the resource list. ♦

Some Selected Resources on Factory Meat Farming

http://www.humanesociety.org/issues/confinement_farm/facts/gestation_crates.html

"On U.S. factory farms, sows are kept in row after row after row of gestation crates throughout their pregnancies, they're also among the most abused. The 2-foot-wide cages are so narrow, the animals cannot even turn around. They chew on the bars, wave their heads incessantly back and forth, or lie on the pavement in an apparent state of dejection. Nearly immobilized, the pigs spend months staring ahead, waiting to be fed, likely going out of their minds."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TMYTm2Wla6Q>

The Great Crate Challenge: street education on gestation crates.

<http://www.rollingstone.com/feature/belly-beast-meat-factory-farms-animal-activists>

In the Belly of the Beast: Excellent article about conditions exposed by animal rights activists.

http://www.humanesociety.org/issues/confinement_farm/facts/meat_dairy_labels.html

A brief guide to labels and animal welfare

from The Humane Society of the United States

<http://www.globalanimalpartnership.org/>
"A non-profit alliance of producers, retailers, animal advocates and scientists dedicated to improving farm animal welfare through the 5-Step® Animal Welfare Rating Program. We facilitate continuous improvement in animal agriculture across the USA, Canada, and Australia through our 5-Step animal welfare standards and third-party certification. We are committed to informing and empowering consumers and recognizing and rewarding farmers and ranchers for raising their animals in a welfare-friendly way."

<http://animalwelfareapproved.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Food-Labels-Exposed-AGW-10-2015-ONLINE.pdf>

"To help make sense of the bewildering range of food claims and terms, Animal Welfare Approved has produced Food Labels Exposed, a comprehensive guide that provides clear and factual definitions for the most commonly used claims and terms for the production, marketing and labeling of meat, dairy, eggs and other farmed products." ♦

Local meat producers: "Know your farmer. Know your meat."

by Glenda Bissex

"Society is closing a circle and returning to a radical concept: nature has the best ideas. In the long run, nature's models are the only ones that are truly sustainable ecologically and economically.

Raising grazing animals on grass, especially if they are herded in a natural manner, is a model that works unquestionably for the health of the land, its people, and its animals."

Courtney White, Executive Director, The Quivira Coalition

The World Health Organization has recently released a report on meat, stating that processed meat is definitely carcinogenic, and red meats probably so. The research does not distinguished between factory farmed meat (see Karen Starr's article on page 7/) and meat from animals raised respectfully on small family farms, free to move and graze on untreated vegetation and drink uncontaminated water. Animal bodies are mostly like human bodies; they are not healthy when stressfully confined, inactive, routinely dosed with antibiotics and growth hormones, and

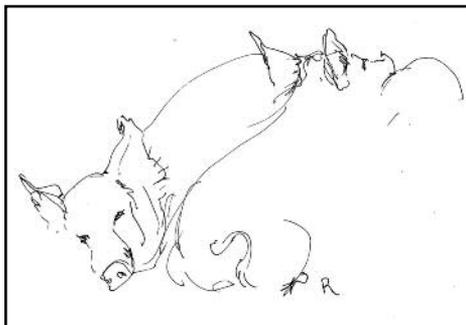
fed a diet of pesticide contaminated food. Fortunately the lives of animals on our small, local farms are much different--and so is their meat.

Unprocessed red meats for sale at the Co-op come from Maple Lane Farm in Cabot, Greenfield Highland Beef in Greensboro Bend and Plainfield, and Sugar Mountain Farm in West Topsham. Other local producers who sell meat directly from their farms include Hollister Hill Farm in Marshfield and the Cleary Family Farm in Plainfield. If you want to see how your meat is raised, you can go and visit them. Most of them have informative websites.

Although these local meats are more expensive per pound, they are leaner and have less waste so you may get an extra serving from a pound as well as more nutritional value.

Sugar Mountain Farm in West Topsham (sugarmtnfarm.com) provides our Co-op with a variety of pork products. "We are a small, family owned and operated farm in the mountains of Vermont. We breed and raise pigs humanely and naturally on pasture/hay plus dairy to produce our high quality pork, roasters for events and live weaner piglets for people who would like to raise their own.

"Pigs really do eat grass, clover and other forages – they thrive living out on pasture. Pastured does not mean that is all they eat but rather where they live



Credit: Elinor Randall

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Local Meat, *continued from page 11*

and that in our case what they eat mostly comes from pasture – We do not buy or feed commercial hog feeds. In fact, pasture in its various forms (fresh forages, hay, pumpkins from our summer gardens, etc) makes up about 80% of what our pigs eat.

"What all this means for you is that you know that with our pork you are eating delicious real Vermonters, raised outdoors on pasture, pigs who have been here for many, many generations rather than animals imported from far away confinement operations and then passed off as local. Know your farmer. Know your pork."

Sugar Mountain has just begun doing their own own-farm slaughtering and butchering, which is much better for the animals, the farmers, and the customers!

Ray Shatney and Janet Steward of Greenfield Highland Beef (greenfield-highlandbeef.com) in Greensboro Bend and Plainfield provide the Co-op with beef from their unique breed of cattle: "highland cattle--better for the body, better for the soul." Their humanely

raised, grass-fed and finished beef is low in cholesterol, high in Omega 3, free of chemical pesticides, free of antibiotics, free of artificial hormones, free of animal byproducts, and is USDA certified. You can also buy directly from their farms (call 454-7384). If you're driving up East Hill Rd. in Plainfield, you may notice some of these handsome, cinnamon-colored, long-haired cattle grazing in nearby fields.

Greenfield Highland Beef is a socially responsible business, donating a portion of every animal butchered to the Vermont Food Bank. Greenfield Highland Cows' hair is donated to the Matter of Trust program to help recovery efforts in the Gulf of Mexico.

Maple Lane Farm, operated by Paul and Christine Stecker and their family, high in the hills of Cabot, brings us certified organic beef. In the absence of a website, I phoned the farm and had a most friendly conversation with Paul Stecker. He was worried when the WHO report came out, but he said it hasn't affected his business., Maple Lane is a diversified small farm of 300 acres, producing organic milk and beef, as well as maple syrup. Their cows are grass-fed on pasture and hay; the beef cows are grain-finished. In 1995 they went broke farming conventionally and switched to organic, even before it brought a premium price. By being flexible (for example, discontinuing raising sheep when that wasn't profitable), the farm has been able to succeed. They're glad to hear that some young people now consider farming "cool;" it didn't used to be that way.

Bob and Lee Light of Hollister Hill Farm in Marshfield (HollisterHillFarm.com) sell directly from their immaculate. self-



Credit: Elinor Randall

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Local Meat, *continued from page 12*

serve farm store. "First opened in 2001, we started offering for sale our own naturally/organically raised Beefalo beef, pork, chickens, turkeys, eggs and maple syrup. All 100% anti-biotic and hormone-free products and produced right here at our farm. Our animals are raised with the utmost of care and respect. They have a happy, healthy life while they are here at Hollister Hill Farm." In 2009 the Lights bought four lovely Jersey cows and are now selling raw milk.

"Beefalo is a cross between domestic cows and the North American Bison. The meat is as tender and tasty as beef but contains less fat and cholesterol and more protein, calcium, iron, potassium and niacin."

John and Lauren Cleary and their four children operate the Cleary Family Farm (clearyfamilyfarm.com) on Gray Road in Plainfield, where they are

working to revive an old farm and bring the fields back into production. "We began our farming careers leasing land in Burlington's Intervale. We were eager to expand our operation and spent a number of years looking for our own farm. It was here in Plainfield that we found a farmstead dating back to 1860 with deep loam soils, 35 acres of pasture and a brand new barn, perfect for housing chickens and the rest of our livestock through the winter months."

The farm is a certified organic grazing operation that produces organic free range eggs and chickens, grass fed beef, pasture raised pork, and fresh milk. All products are available directly from the farm and at the Plainfield Farmers' Market.

Resource: *Pasture Perfect: The Far-Reaching Benefits of Choosing Meat, Eggs and Dairy Products from Grass-Fed Animals* by Jo Robinson. ♦



Grandma Esther's Stuffed Cabbage by Debra Stoleroff

My Grandma Esther was famous for her split pea soup, bagelech (kind of a baked blintz), pot roast and stuffed cabbage. Apparently stuffed cabbage was traditionally served for the holiday of Sukkot (the Jewish autumn harvest festival) but she made them regularly as an appetizer to her main course (usually roast chicken or a pot roast). When asking for a recipe, everyone said, "there isn't one", then proceeded to tell me how to make them. This recipe is a compilation of what I gathered from my relatives.

Ingredients:

Cabbage Rolls

- 1 large head green cabbage, about 2 to 2¼ pounds
- 2 pounds ground beef
- 2 eggs (not necessary, you can leave them out, but they do make the meat fluffier)
- 1 medium onion, grated or minced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- ½ cup raw long-grain white rice (yes, raw – it cooks within 2 hours in the oven)

Sauce

- 2 tablespoons butter or vegetable oil
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1 med. onion, chopped (medium dice)
- Two 15-ounce cans tomato sauce or whole tomatoes pulsed in a food processor with juice until pureed.
- Juice of one lemon or 2 tablespoons (or more to taste) apple cider vinegar
- ¼ to ¾ cup light brown sugar (Depending on amount of sweetness you prefer. Start with ¼ cup and taste sauce, adding if you like it sweeter. If you prefer it completely savory, add only 1 tablespoon brown sugar and the juice from half a lemon)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- ½ cup raisins
- Chopped parsley, for garnish

Directions:

1. Separate the cabbage leaves from the core (three different options)

a) Fill a large pot with water and bring it to a rolling boil. When the water comes to a boil, fill a large bowl with ice water. Cut out as much of the core as you can from the bottom of the cabbage, then drop the whole, cored head into the boiling water for 3 to 4 minutes. Once the leaves separate and are pliable, immediately remove and drop the blanched leaves that separated (keep the pot of water boiling) in the ice water. Once cooled down, remove and pat the leaves dry. Repeat with any leaves still attached to the head and not pliable, until you've gotten all the leaves off the head, and they are all soft and pliable.

b) OR, freeze the wrapped head of cabbage for a day then defrost. The leaves will peel off easily and be soft enough to roll.

c) OR, throw the whole, uncored head of cabbage into the boiling water. The leaves won't separate on their own, but should be easy to peel off.

2. Once cabbage leaves are separated, set aside about 16 of the largest leaves (these will be your cabbage rolls) and slice off any thick parts of the vein on each of them, being careful not to cut a hole in the leaves, so slice from the top. Chop some of the remaining cabbage leaves to make 1 cup of chopped cabbage, and reserve.

3. Mix the ground beef with the eggs, grated onion, garlic, salt, pepper, and rice.

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Stuffed Cabbage, *continued*

4. Divide this mixture into sixteen 2-ounce balls. Using moistened hands, form the balls into cylinders.
5. Place a cylinder of filling near the bottom of a cabbage leaf (if the vein in the leaf is really thick, shave it down with a knife before placing the beef on it, being careful not to cut through the leaf itself.).
6. Begin to roll it up, folding both sides over the filling, and finish rolling to enclose the filling, like an eggroll. Continue, filling and rolling all the cabbage leaves.
7. Place the cabbage rolls, seam side down, on a tray or baking sheet. Cover and refrigerate until ready to use.

Sauce

8. Over medium heat, melt the butter in

a heavy, nonreactive saucepan. Sauté the second onion until soft and golden. Add the garlic and sauté for 2 more minutes, then add the reserved 1 cup chopped cabbage and sauté for about 30 seconds to 1 minute more.

9. Add the tomato sauce, lemon juice, brown sugar, salt and pepper to taste, and stir to combine. Increase the heat until it comes to a boil, then lower it and simmer for 5 minutes. Add raisins.
10. Line the bottom of a 13 x 9 roasting pan or glass dish with a layer of sauce. Place cabbage rolls, seam side down, on top of sauce.
11. Top cabbage rolls with remaining sauce then cover the whole pan with tin foil.
12. Bake for 2 hours in a preheated 350F oven. ♦

Caroline Lieberman's Comforting Chicken (or Turkey) Soup

– adapted by her granddaughter, Debra Stoleroff

Chicken or Turkey carcass: boil until all the meat slides off; let broth cool; take meat off of the bones; if desired, skim off fat.

Add necessary ingredients:

Onions: lots
Garlic: suited to your taste
Parsley: fresh or dried
Celery: suited to your taste – some people prefer to use celery seed because they don't like the texture of cooked celery
Carrots: suited to your taste
Salt and pepper: suited to your taste; can also substitute tamari for the salt
Sauté onions and garlic; add celery after 5 minutes; add to chicken broth
Turn up heat
Cut carrots (however you like); add to chicken broth
Add parsley, salt and/or tamari and pepper

Add optional ingredients:

Parsnips
Winter squash or pumpkin
Mushrooms (saute with onions and garlic)
Kale
Potatoes
Brussels sprouts
Any other vegetable you desire
Nutritional yeast
Bring to boil for a few minutes. Turn heat down and continue to cook until veggies are tender and flavors have melded.
Optional to add after soup is cooked: Cooked rice or cooked noodles (egg noodles or cappellini work best) ♦

Arrivals, Departures, and Musical Chairs

Anji Domino and Petra Gates are the new Produce Department managers. They have been doing a great job! Please let them know if there are new things you would like to have for sale or if you have any other suggestions!

Jonna Wissert is the new awesome Office Manager and Collective Coordinator stepping in for Mike Peabody who has moved on to other things. Best of luck to you, Mike!

Anji, Petra, and Jonna are also new Management Collective members.

Chloe Budnick is the new Cheese Buyer, and continues as buyer for the Bakery and Deli Departments. She is also the new Membership Co-ordinator.

Dawn Fancher is co-ordinating

finances, working closely with Jonna and the Finance Committee.

Matt Borg, Elan Mayo, and Rosemond Wallstrom are fairly new part time staff.

Jezebel Crow, Megan Conley, and Sage Domino are our new substitute staff.

In spite of a lot of shuffling around and new hires over the last couple of months, the Management Collective is more than happy with how things are working, now that the dust has more or less settled. The only exception to that is the sad news that Kathleen Hayes, our awesome maintenance person, has been recalled by the airline she previously flew for. We have our fingers crossed that she will return to us sooner rather than later. ♦



Adrienne Allison of the Communication Committee stands by the new Co-op promotional cart, which was dreamed up by that committee.

Co-ops cooperating

The Management Collective would like to acknowledge our appreciation for the ongoing cooperation and support we receive from the staff and management of our sister co-ops in the area, particularly Hunger Mountain and Buffalo Mountain. It is a pleasure to have them as colleagues as we work to remain resilient in the current challenging business climate. Alliances like these are one of the reasons Vermont is blessed with so many food co-ops! Pretty much anywhere you go, there's a co-op not so very far away. ♦

New Produce Co-Managers

Greetings Co-op members and Co-op Shoppers!

As the new Co-Managers of the Produce Department at the Plainfield Co-op we'd like to welcome you all to share your thoughts and ideas with us as we work toward the goal of reducing our reliance on products shipped from away and emphasizing more local fruits and vegetables. We are very happy to be working with you all to meet as broad a spectrum of needs as possible within that vision. Together we can support local agriculture and minimize the ecological impact of feeding ourselves, our families, and our community!

Team Produce – Anji Domino & Petra Gates



Anji Domino and Petra Gates, new Co-op Produce Department Co-Managers, playfully pose in front of the produce display. When you're in the store, notice the increased number and variety of local fruits and veggies. Way to go!

Changes in Cheese and Bakery

by Chloe Budnick

I am having a very (VERY) good time bringing so many delicious cheeses to the Co-op for your enjoyment! Do let me know if there is a cheese I should add. Some new offerings as of late: a tasty, nicely aged Manchego (I've been enjoying it on popcorn), Grafton Raw Milk Sage as well as their Cave Aged Raw Clothbound Cheddar (VT), various flavors of chevre from Willow Moon Farm in Plainfield (VT), cheese curds and smoked feta from Maplebrook (VT). Consider Bardwell Farm's tasty Dorset—on sale during November for \$13.99 from the usual \$20 (VT), Cambozola—a triple cream with blue,

and Shadagee Farmstead's Vermont Artisan Gouda (VT).

The Bakery Department continues to add new treats. . . seasonal pies from Champlain Orchards (VT) and Red Door Bakery (VT), VT Almond Macaroon Cookies from Sweet Crunch (VT), Allie's Heaven and Earth Florentines (VT), gluten free brownies and biscotti from The Happy Bite (VT), cider donuts from Joyce Fowler (VT), and possibly my favorite find—Squirrel's pizza crusts! We also carry Squirrel's crackers and bread (VT).

Enjoy these seriously good eats! ♦

Winter Menu

from Daniel Marcus and Amba Connors of Wild Bee Farm

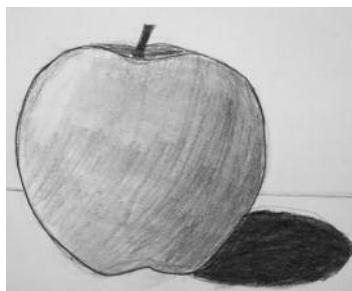
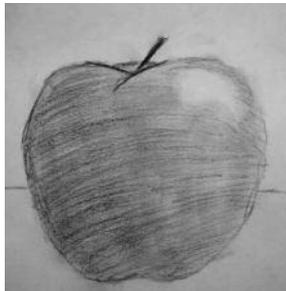
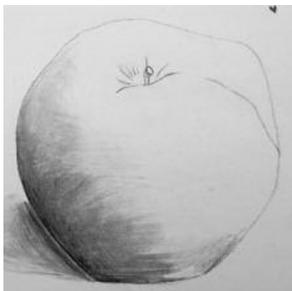
Squash, Carrot, Ginger & Almond Bisque

There was* a wonderful restaurant in Middletown Ct. called It's Only Natural, known far and wide as ION. It was started back in the days of hippie macrobiotic restaurants and in fact you could get really fine macro meals there. In our Michio Kushi days it was a joy to be spared the many hours of preparation that this type of food requires and sit down to a meal prepared by others. Like many marginally capitalized restaurants ION was not in the best part of town; it was in an old storefront and many's the meal we'd eat with homeless guys just outside the broad windows drinking from bottles in paper bags. The restaurant staff always fed them after closing. Anyhow, the food there was imaginative and delicious and 30 years ahead of it's time in terms of eating seasonally. (A fundamental rule of macrobiotics.) One of their finest soups was this rich and warming Autumn bisque that we found the recipe for in some magazine or other. Enjoy!

3 C. cooked winter squash
2 C. diced carrots
1 C diced onions
2 T. minced ginger
1 t. salt
2 bay Leaves
1/2 t. cinnamon
7 C. water
3 T. Tamari
5 T. almond butter
2 T. maple syrup
Pepper to taste

Heat oven to 350. Slice a medium winter squash (we use butternut or acorn) in half lengthwise. Place on a baking tray in a half inch of water. Cook until soft, about an hour. (Test with a fork.) Clean out seeds and measure out 3 cups. Bring the first 8 ingredients to a boil. Simmer for 10 minutes or until carrots are tender, yet still bright in color. Cool to room temperature. Remove Bay Leaves before blending. Add tamari, almond butter and maple syrup and blend until smooth. Reheat and serve with sliced almonds.

*As far as we know they're still in business; they moved to a much more posh location, broadened the menu and raised prices but the last time we were there the food was still fabulous.



Ginger Kale

Well, this is the Kale State after all. The problem is, we're always being offered kale year-round when it's really an Autumn vegetable. You go into a restaurant in June and, there, on your plate, is a bitter and tough mess o' kale. It's only after the first frost that this wonderful green comes into its own. The below freezing temperatures sweetens and renders the kale luscious and tender. This very simple and lovely recipe is usually made with garlic (and is wonderful that way) but ginger seems to bring out the flavor of the kale without overwhelming it. Eat More Kale.

- 1 bunch of Kale
- 1 T. ginger minced
- 2 T. olive oil

De-stem and chop a bunch of kale. In a medium pot, wilt the kale in a small amount of water. Drain thoroughly. Heat the oil in a large pan, add the ginger and kale and quickly sauté until kale is done. Add some tamari sauce for flavor.

Swedish Apple Pie

I won't say where we got this recipe (it's embarrassing) but it's really simple and really good. Like any pie it goes well with Stafford Vanilla Ice Cream or whipped cream. (And what doesn't?) It also makes a nice breakfast dish with your morning coffee or tea. Yes, it's a lot of butter but you need to eat hardy as we move into Winter. Besides, we'll work it off with all that snow shoveling. Right?

- 5 apples, peeled, cored and cut into slices.
- 1/2 C. raisins
- 1 t. cinnamon
- 1 C. sugar
- 12 T. butter (I told you it was a lot.)
- 1 C. whole wheat pastry flour
- 1 large egg
- pinch of salt
- 1/4 C. walnuts

Preheat oven to 350. Fill a large (10") pie dish with the sliced apples, the cinnamon and raisins. Scatter walnuts over the top. Melt butter in a saucepan. Remove from heat and whisk in sugar, flour, egg and salt. Pour over apples and bake until crust is golden brown, 45 minutes to an hour.

Senior Center Benefit Dinner Crowd Raises over \$1,200!

Recently the staff and volunteers of Twin Valley Senior Center and the Co-op pulled together a dinner to benefit the Senior Center. It was a huge success thanks to the wonderful support from kind businesses, friends, and neighbors. They include: MacAuley Food Service, The Vermont Food Bank, The Wayside Restaurant, Red Door Bakery, Littlewood Farm, Champlain Orchards, Hollister Hill Farm, Manghi's Bakery, Adam Woogmaster, Goddard College, Stanley & Joyce Fowler, and of course the blessed pie bakers, Plainfield Co-op, Maple Hill School, and our many volunteers and additional contributors. Big thank you out to everyone!! The Co-op is delighted to support the Center which has such an important place in the lives of elders in the community.

THANK YOU!!