

The Plainfield Co-op Newsletter

Fall 2017



Hours: 7 days a week 9AM–8PM

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Newsletter Advertising Rates

Ad size	Single issue	4 Consecutive issues (prepaid: 20% discount)
Full page	\$75	\$240
Half page	\$50	\$160
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Copy Deadline:

November 15 for the Fall issue

Ad copy should be submitted to:

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When your copy is submitted,
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Cris Carnes
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Electronic graphics files preferred, but we are able to work with any clear copy. For questions about ad copy, contact Sarah Albert, 802-476-0526 or sarah@vtlink.net



About This Newsletter



What to do with an abundance of apples? Seek no further—this newsletter is filled with ways to use apples. When you have had your fill of apples,

you can learn from these pages about what has been happening at your Co-op the past few months, and what the Board and Management Collective are looking ahead to. And what YOU can do to serve the Co-op. Though we are one small co-op, we are part of a larger movement that is deep-rooted and works for an economy and a society based on principles of cooperation. Be inspired by Giordano Checchi's vision of such a world.

You can view this newsletter, with illustrations in color, on the Co-op website: www.PlainfieldCoop.com.

We welcome your contributions—artwork and photos, letters, articles, and questions. Submissions are due to the editor by November 15 for the winter issue.

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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?

Contact Chris Carnes at libertyloungevt@gmail.com



Using the Community Center benefits The Plainfield Co-op

President's Report

by Jean Hamilton,

Oh the apple! It's lovely to see so many of the apple trees in their full and abundant expressions this season. This edition of the newsletter offers us an opportunity to celebrate the harvest and how the Plainfield Co-op strengthens our local communities around good food. My gratitude to all the members who have contributed their reflections to this season's newsletter.

This summer I have been excited to see the Co-op staff and members experimenting with and enhancing the ways our store serves the local community. A few highlights for me have been:

- Larger shopping carts to the front of the store. These shopping carts have made my stock up trips much easier, especially when I have my young daughter in tow.
- Exciting new local products like Setting Sun Tea from Plainfield's premier teahouse, Carrier Coffee from one of Vermont's hottest new micro-roaster, 100% beeswax candles from Sunbeam Candles (Ithaca, NY) and Green Mountain CBD capsules.
- Expanded ready to eat options: Hey everyone, we have a new deli cooler! On those days that I need to grab something on the run, I have been loving the expanded options from TWO DELI COOLERS including the knishes from Magic Spoon and the wraps and grain salads from our friends at Plainfield Hardware Deli (Chef Sarah Bishop). It's great to have such convenient and delicious options alongside all the other co-op offerings.

- Beautiful renovations to the community center: High fives all around to the crew that repainted and spruced up the community center. If you haven't had a chance, I encourage you all to head upstairs, check out the new paint job, enjoy the exhibit, and consider what kind of community events you might like to host.

Over the summer, it was nice to catch up with Cypress Ellen who was helping out while she was home from college. This summer we hired a new employee, Eben Markova-Gold, and welcomed Kathleen Hayes back, which is a great relief as she has already addressed countless maintenance concerns. Our Co-op staff are so awesome and I am sorry to say that long time staffer Kirsten Brosky is leaving the Co-op. While we will miss seeing her behind the counter, let's wish her the best of luck as she embarks on a new career path.

Are you wondering what is happening with the strategic plan? Well, we have been developing the roadmap for how to implement the various priorities of the plan, while working hard to keep normal Co-op operations humming along. The Expansion Finance committee has been particularly active in laying the groundwork for a potential expansion. This has included:

- Developing a plan to conduct a market feasibility study to help us understand the revenue potential in our current location compared with an alternative site (Route 2 in the village) to determine how much of a capital invest-

ment we can afford. This question emerged at the April Annual Meeting, and the market study will provide us with a variety of data points to inform our future discussions.

- We have been working hard to secure funding to support the initial round of planning and design for the building improvement project. Unfortunately, we did not receive a \$30,000 USDA Rural Business Development Grant that we submitted to support a market study and initial drawings of the expansion. We are now in communication with neighboring co-ops and supporters to help us cover the \$11,000 cost of the market study.
- The Board is moving forward with incorporating the community center as an independent 501(c)3 non-profit.

This status will allow us to pursue new funding opportunities that could support initiatives like installing an elevator, that otherwise may be inaccessible to the Co-op.

Please remember you as members are welcome to attend all Board meetings to lend your voice and ideas. Also, our Co-op has a number of volunteer opportunities, all of which are rewarded with a working member discount. Working member opportunities include helping with store operational tasks as well as strategic planning and membership services committees. You are welcome to contact me (454-7874, Jean.myung.hamilton@gmail.com) or Chloe (454-8579, info@plainfield-coop.com) to learn more about volunteering. Now go eat some apples! ♦



A TASTE OF PLACE

Artisan cheeses that support our working landscape.

WWW.JASPERHILLFARM.COM

GREENSBORO, VT

ARTISAN CAVE AGED CHEESE

Treasurer's Report

by Bob Fancher, Treasurer

2017 Second Quarter. It was another great quarter at the Co-op. It is clear now that we are back on the road to financial health. Our Sales for January through June are 6% higher than 2016 and 3% over budget! These numbers alone show that we are healthy and growing. But, there are even more great numbers. Gross Profit is 7% over budget. Expenses are 4% under budget. And, our net profit is over \$20,000 just for the first 6 months!

The MC has done an outstanding job turning our financials around. They have worked hard to re-examine all the operating costs, especially wages. They have analyzed sales and have made changes to increase sales in every department of the store. And, they continue to make important changes in how we sell. Congratulations to them for a great job!

Results from July and August show the same trends, Sales are still running 3% over budget.

The payments to our suppliers are still running a little late. The MC is working

to get out the payments faster. Some suppliers are asking for payments in 7 or 14 days which is tight for us. We value our suppliers, especially the local producers, and we strive to get them paid on time.

Renovations and Expansion. We have heard from the US Department of Agriculture about our grant application for a formal feasibility study. Unfortunately, we did not get the grant. There were just too many requests and not enough money to go around.

We are already working on funding from other sources. Most grants require us to put in our own money to pay part of the cost. We pay for improvements like these partly from the equity payments we receive from our members. Just to remind you, members pay \$20 per year toward a full share worth \$180. It is OK to pay ahead if you are able. We would appreciate it.

As always, thanks to all our members for their continuing support. ♦

Fair Trade

For readers who don't know, a fair trade certification basically ensures that everyone involved in the production of a product is afforded fair wages, decent working conditions, and the methods for production are environmentally friendly. Generally, supply chains for fair trade products are more direct and cut out the go-betweens and brokers who absorb most of the profit. The higher standards for this business model empower the people who usually are afforded the smallest amount of profit for the vast majority of work, i.e., the

What's in Your Lunchbox?

It's back to school season. To get some tips on healthy, practical lunches and snacks, we talked to Lauren Cleary, mother of four school-aged children.

Lauren lives on the Cleary Family Farm with her husband John and her four children, who range from second grade to tenth grade. As the name implies, the farm on Gray Road is a family affair. The Clearys produce grass-fed, organic pork, beef, and eggs. Maintaining a working farm, jobs, and meeting the needs of four children is demanding, but Lauren still makes time to assure that her children have good, healthy food.

Lauren says she plans her dinner quantities to have enough leftovers for lunches the next day. She and the children pack lunches the night before school. This is “a big part of their responsibility,” she says. Besides dinner leftovers, the children may pack sliced cheeses and sausages (they like Trois Petits Cochons) and nuts or other healthy nibbles into lunch containers. Sometimes they take yogurt and granola. (Lauren makes granola from oats and nuts she buys in the Co-op's bulk section.)

After school, they always prepare a healthy snack. One of the regular snacks is a smoothie, made from yogurt, kale, bananas and other fruit, juice and Jill Frink's elderberry syrup. The other favorite snack is popcorn (made from the kernels sold in the Co-op's bulk section) sprinkled with nutritional yeast (also from the bulk section).

The Clearys have been members of Plainfield Co-op for about ten years, ever since they moved here from Burlington. Their daughter Eliza volunteers at the Co-op, putting labels and stamps on the newsletter. Lauren lists butter, bulk oats, and bulk popcorn as the staples she most often purchases at the Co-op. For her favorite product, she names Oil of Oregano. Lauren says, “I love it for warding off infections. Especially when the back-to-school sniffles begin, I start dosing everyone. And it is incredibly effective on cold sores.”

farmers and producers. By giving people decent wages, the economies of their local communities are able to re-invest in their communities and improve their local economies. Additionally, fair trade certification ensures that the people harvesting crops and raw materials or working in the fabrication of an item are not exposed to harmful chemicals that are detrimental to their health. Nor are they asked to wield machinery or hazardous material without appropriate protection and safety precautions.

—*Quinn DiFalco, Peace and Justice Center Fair Trade Intern*

New Local Products

by Gail Falk

The Co-op is always on the lookout for new local products and vendors. Here are a few of our recently-added local products.

- The Co-op has started carrying beef from a new local farm right in Plainfield, **Hochschild Family Farm**. One of the farmers inquired about selling to the Co-op while shopping in the store. She emailed info to the meat buyer and answered questions. Her timing was good, as one of our other local beef suppliers, Greenfield, had raised prices considerably in the previous year and sales had accordingly fallen off. The Hochschild **beef** has sold well since its introduction and is a nice product at a very reasonable price.



- About 6-7 years ago **Ongyel** came in the store with a few beautiful products made by his family in Nepal. He was carrying a cardboard box full of

scarves, prayer flags, incense, winter hats and mittens. Ongyel became connected to Vermont after meeting a physician who was visiting Nepal from Burlington. After meeting Ongyel and his family and seeing the clothing and other hand crafts they were creating, the physician told Ongyel he would sponsor and support him to bring his family's products to Vermont. When the Co-op started buying Ongyel's items he was a bachelor and did not even have a web site. Now he has a wife, child, colorful web site and catalogs. He lives with his family in Burlington. It has been such a pleasure seeing his business grow from that cardboard box full of family crafts to **U.S. Sherpa International**.

- Thanks to our new deli coolers purchased used from a Plainfield resident, we've been able to add additional local products from long time vendor, **Magic Spoon Bakery**. We now carry their new product, **knishes**, weekly! Due to a customer request and for financial and environmental savings, we've moved from accepting the knishes as individually packaged, to receiving them in bulk. We have happily replaced our New York knishes with a local product, made by local hands and with local ingredients.





- When customers started asking for **CBD (Cannabidiol) oil** that was made by a local company, the Co-op located a manufacturer in Hardwick. **Green Mountain CBD** farms organically and uses organic oils. This is a product that would not be on our shelf had customers and word of mouth not brought it to our attention.



- The Co-op was recently approached by **Rogers Farmstead** in Berlin. In the past, they have sold eggs to us and we were very happy with their product, but they have since gotten out of the egg business and moved on to grains and dairy. They left us samples and a price list. We were impressed with their products and their prices, and also with how close

they are to us. Their organic dairy items (**creamtop milk and two types of yogurt**) took off immediately in the store, which is unusual for the dairy department, and we have received many favorable comments on them.

- Over the last year, we have increased the selection of **essential oils** from **AroMed**, a local company owned by Montpelier aromatherapist, Lauren Andrews. All these oils are organic or wild harvested with attention to sustainability, as well as quality. We're really pleased to be carrying this line of essential oils from a practicing aromatherapist, and we hope to schedule staff and community introductory workshops with Lauren later this summer.

- Jamie from **Yellow Arrow Farm** started bringing in a few **herb bundles** during the 2016 growing season...they had a bit extra in their home garden. As she and Anji experimented with what might sell, new items showed up weekly. The herb bundles were a hit, but so were the small packets of **edible flowers**. Jaime closed out the year with beautiful **fall bouquets**. The Plainfield Co-op is the only retail spot that Yellow Arrow Farm sells to, and now they are specifically planting items to sell at the Co-op in 2017. Jaime shares her excitement about growing for us every time she comes in to shop...and also by frequent gifts of edible nasturtiums that are offered free to customers during the growing season. A new farmer is born! ♦



Fall Management Report

by Karen Starr

Nationally, it has been a turbulent Summer, finishing up with flooding in Texas that left us in Vermont feeling fortunate, but also a little apprehensive about predictions of a future of increased rainfall for our little state. As it is, farmers struggled with both bounty and some deleterious effects of a very rainy growing season this year. The berry harvest was spectacular, but crops susceptible to mildews and in need of lots of sun had a harder time. The strawberry crop was an early casualty as production was way down. But overall, we've had a pretty comfortable year so far, escaping heat and wildfires as well as torrential rain and flooding. And now we are entering into what is a favorite season for many of us. Fall, for me, has always had the bitter sweetness of the passing Summer and the crisp awakensness of coming Winter.

Apples have begun to arrive at the store from local growers, a crop that the West

Coast is still unable to match in quality and variety. That means fresh cider cannot be far behind! Also, new potatoes, Fall crops of local snow peas and arugula, lettuces and plums! Town and church dinners are scheduled to capture income from leaf peepers and generally celebrate another year of local harvest. This time of year I am particularly mindful of migrating birds and make a point of wishing all I see a safe journey to their Winter ranges. As folks finish stacking their wood and begin buttoning up for winter, many are looking forward to a little bit slower pace punctuated by clearing snow from driveways and stoking the wood stove.

The store is doing a little better financially than last year at this time, but the last half of the year is historically the most critical for us. We want to really thank all of you, members as well as shoppers,

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We started repainting the Community Center!! The rest will be completed in stages over the next few months, but's looking amazing already! Be in touch with Chloe at the store if you are interested in lending a hand. Big thanks to the following folks: Alexis (shout out for getting donations, getting the project rolling, and putting in lots of hours), Cris, Chloe, JessieMae, Deb, Jason, Buffy, Kathleen, Katie, Paul, Adrienne. And thanks to Sherman Williams in Montpelier for paint donations.

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who have made a point of spending some of your precious food dollars to support us!! It's made all the difference in the world. If you could keep the Coop in mind as you begin planning and shopping for the upcoming Winter holidays, your additional patronage could really push us over the top to be in good shape for the new year. As always, please be in touch with us about products you'd like to see on our shelves, and don't forget members get an extra price break on most special orders.

We now have a larger grab and go cooler! Let Chloe know if there are deli things you like to see on those shelves. The Rhapsody egg rolls and Magic Spoon knish continue to be the local favorites...we try hard to never, ever be

out of stock on those! Please let us know of any other local vendors you'd like us to feature. When you get a minute, check out the new paint job in the Community Center! We plan to keep going on the rest of the upstairs rooms--painting, cleaning, all the projects. Send any offers of help to Chloe (454-8579, info@plainfieldcoop.com). Looking for member work? We are looking for folks who'd like to help out some of the strategic planning groups, specifically the 'food insecurity' and 'membership' work groups. Please be in touch with Chloe if you are interested. Stay tuned in future newsletters for more info about changes in the works for the Management Collective structure, special member sales, and updates on our strategic planning goals. Have a great Fall everyone!! It's always great to see you whenever you stop in! ♦

What is (IPM) Integrated Pest Management?

"A well-defined Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a program that should be based on prevention, monitoring, and control which offers the opportunity to eliminate or drastically reduce the use of pesticides, and to minimize the toxicity of and exposure to any products which are used. IPM does this by utilizing a variety of methods and techniques, including cultural, biological and structural strategies to control a multitude of pest problems.

IPM is a term that is used loosely with many different definitions and methods of implementation. IPM can mean virtually anything the practitioner wants it to mean. Beware of chemical dependent programs masquerading as IPM.

Those who argue that IPM requires the ability to spray pesticides immediately after identifying a pest problem are not describing IPM. Conventional pest control tends to ignore the causes of pest infestations and instead rely on routine, scheduled pesticide applications. Pesticides are often temporary fixes, ineffective over the long term.

Non-toxic and least toxic control products are a major growth area and new materials and devices are increasingly available in the marketplace."

Taken from: *Beyond Pesticides*

<http://www.beyondpesticides.org/resources/safety-source-on-pesticide-providers/what-is-integrated-pest-management>

Co-ops: A Bigger Picture, Part 2

by *Giordano Checchi*

A Board member shares his inspiring vision of a society guided by cooperative principles

Our system is not doing enough in education at the primary level, and this affects the ability to learn more as a human being grows into adulthood. Imagine a co-op school, where teachers and university professors can teach to first graders as well as to graduate students. Where teachers can continue to learn from those that know more, e.g. a university professor of physics can easily and wonderfully explain the secrets of science to first graders, and first graders' teachers can learn how to teach while listening to the professor talking to the first graders. An education system where farmers, foresters, naturalists, botanists, philosophers, musicians, journalists, comedians, mathematicians, can all teach to first graders, by literally taking them out of the school building to show our young their own wonders. Primary school is where we need to concentrate our efforts if we want a better society in our future. And primary schools need to be run by the whole community for the whole community, to transfer the enthusiasm of life to the minds of our young people. Think of the wealth of knowledge our old people have and how that could be transferred to the very young ones. Think of the impact grandparents have on the mind of their grand offspring. Our present system is far from doing that, enchained by rules and regulations that have nothing to do with learning. A co-op school can revolutionize the way our kids learn, our students

can be fed at lunch by food prepared by a co-op cafeteria, and the enthusiasm can flow freely, because everyone involved will have a vested interest in what she or he is doing. Students included. A State University is already a form of co-op, or very close to it. One more change and the VSU can become the Vermont Co-op University.

Students educated in this way will grow into adults with the principles we live for well imprinted in their minds. They will become the future society of farmers, scientists, industry and commerce workers, philosophers, historians, and politicians that will determine their own future.

The new system, the system that can provide a sustainable future for the entire planet is the co-op system. Different from arrogant capitalism, different from despotic communism. The system can work well with a private enterprise, with a small business, and actually integrate them within a new way to do business. A system where profit is just one of the values, together with a long list of other more important ethical values that go from supporting the local community, to supporting those that are less fortunate, to contributing to and shaping the forms of government, and fundamentally fostering respect for all human beings regardless of their gender, race, religion or non-religion, culture, place of birth, individual life, preferences, opinions, age, health, and more. A system where money is only a unit of

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measure of other values, not a value in itself.

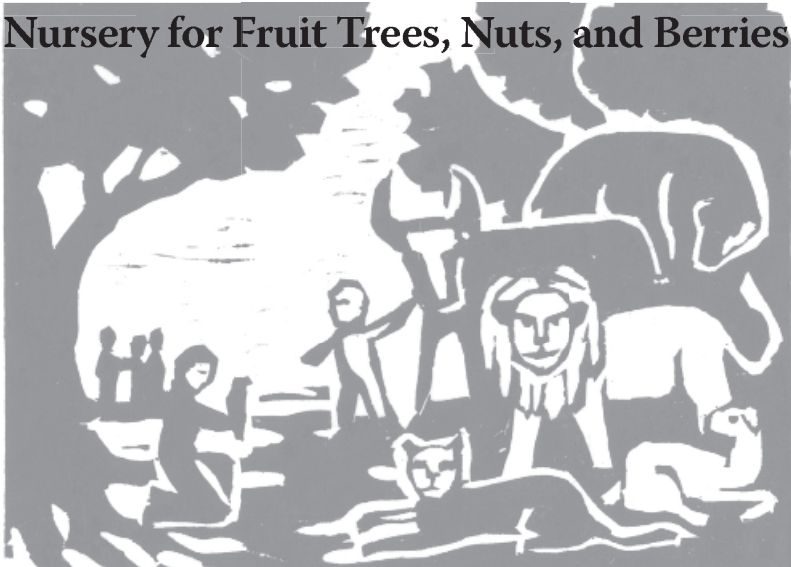
Utopic? Not at all. Allow me to talk about my early years, when I grew up playing on the ruins of the city where I was born. I was the only child of parents that aged waiting for the end of WWII before conceiving a child they did not want to be born in the middle of a horrific war. When the war was over, people lacked everything essential, and to re-organize they started from their own communities. Co-ops started to sprout everywhere. After moving from one temporary housing to another, my family eventually moved to an apartment in a building built by a co-op. Our

family doctor was a member of the health care co-op our family was a member of. The bank my parents used to keep their meager savings in was a co-op. The distribution in the city of produce and meats from far away farmers was run by a co-op of the same farmers, and the list can continue. That co-op system grew into something that still is alive and prospering today, with food co-ops, banks and insurance co-ops. After WWII also the private initiative returned to prosper, but the presence of co-ops helped a more just growth, keeping prices in check, and later discouraging the formation of arrogant mergers of giant corporations. ♦

Stay tuned for Giordano's concluding vision in the next Co-op newsletter.

EAST HILL TREE FARM

Nursery for Fruit Trees, Nuts, and Berries



3499 East Hill Rd. Plainfield, VT
Check: www.easthilltreefarm.com

Hard Cider

by Gail Falk

Have you wondered about those design-er cans and bottles of cider that have been finding a place recently in our beer cooler and on the wine shelves? It's not the sweet apple cider you may remember from Hallowe'en parties of old. Together with craft beer, hard cider is the fastest growing segment of the alcoholic beverage market.



There's nothing new about hard cider, which is made by fermenting pressed sweet cider. The Greeks and Romans grew apples and had mastered the art of

making cider when they invaded England in 55 BC and found hard cider being enjoyed there. For hundreds of years the Normandy region of France has been known for its ciders produced from particular apple varieties just the way other regions of France are known for their region-specific wines.

In America, Johnny Appleseed (John Chapman) planted apples trees all along the frontier with cider, not school lunches, in mind. Water was often unsafe, whereas fermented cider could be stored for the winter and was inhospitable to bacteria. "Up until Prohibition, an apple grown in America was far less likely to be eaten than to end up in a barrel of cider," wrote Michael Pollan in *The Botany of Desire*. "In rural areas cider took the place not

only of wine and beer but of coffee and tea, juice, and even water."

The growing popularity of beer plus Prohibition pretty much wiped out hard cider production in the United States in the early twentieth century, and most of us grew up thinking of cider as a sweet nonalcoholic fall drink.

But in the past decade hard cider has been making a comeback. It started here in Vermont in the 1990's when Proctor-based Woodchuck (now produced in Middlebury) started fermenting cider from Addison County apples, and distributing it in bottles that resembled beer bottles and in kegs. In the past ten years, the craft hard cider industry has exploded just like the craft beer business, with its epicenter in Vermont. Craft cider makers cater to consumers' interest in knowing where food is made and where it comes from. Unlike beer, hard cider is

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gluten free, so many people now stock up for parties with cans of hard cider for their gluten-free family and friends and then discover that they like cider as well as or better than beer. Like craft beer, craft ciders come in a variety of tastes and flavors, from full-bodied to delicate dry and semi-dry flavors likely to appeal to people who enjoy sour beers.

At our Co-op, the top sellers are **Citizen Cider** and **Shacksbury Cider**. **Citizen Cider**, which began in an Addison County barn in 2010, is now pressed at Happy Valley Orchard in Middlebury and fermented and distributed from a large modern facility on Pine Street in

South Burlington. Citizen Cider is made from apples grown in Vermont and New York. Citizen makes a point of telling consumers that it adds no sugar to its ciders. **Shacksbury** also originated in Addison County, in a Shoreham orchard, and is now fermented and canned or bottled in Vergennes. **Shacksbury's** owners have sought out forgotten apples strains with high acid and tannin content and have planted orchards with trees grafted from foraged lost varieties. Their line of Lost and Found is made from these vintage varieties. While **Shacksbury** primarily uses local apples, they also mix in apples from England and Basque Spain to achieve their signature dry and semi-dry flavors. ♦



Apple Varieties

Based on information on the Burr's Apple Orchard website.

Early Season:

- Ginger Gold** Flavorful, sweet and juicy.
- Paula Red** Tart and tasty. Great for eating. Makes good pies and sauce.
- Zestar** Very juicy and crisp when picked early. Good for eating, pies and sauce.

Mid-Season:

- Honeycrisp** A favorite eating apple, large and juicy with complex sweet/tart flavor. Also used for baking.
- Ida Red** Versatile apple with tangy flavor and firm texture
- Jonagold** Sweet and crisp. Excellent eating apple.
- Jonamac** A cross between Jonathan and McIntosh. Sweeter than McIntosh. Great for applesauce.
- Macoun** A great all around apple. Wonderful flavor and good for cooking.
- McIntosh** A Vermont classic, popular in America since 1811. Good for eating, cooking, and cider.

Late Season:

- Baldwin** Large red apple medium sweet, good for eating.
- Cortland** Very good in pies and salads.
- Empire** Great flavored crisp fresh eating apple.
- Fuji** Most popular apple in the world. Sweet and juicy. Tart when grown in Vermont.
- Gala** Sweet and tasty. Good for eating salads.
- Grimes** Similar to Golden Delicious but ripens later in the season.
- Golden Delicious** Tender skin, rich mild flavor when baked or cooked. Stays white longer than most other apples when cut.
- Liberty** Wonderful flavor that improves in storage.
- Northern Spy** Large fruits, good for baking and storage. ♦

Fruits of Our Labor Recipes

from Debra Stoleroff

I am not a lover of apples. Unlike most of the people I know I don't hanker for apple cider, sauce or pie. But years ago, when Andrea made apple cake for dessert at a dinner gathering, I had to ask her to share her recipe. It is delicious.

Andrea Serota's Apple Cake

Combine:

1 egg
1/2 cup buttermilk or 1/2 cup yogurt/milk combo
4 TBL melted butter
1 tsp. vanilla

Combine:

1 1/2 cups flour
1/2 tsp. baking soda
3/4 cups sugar
1/2 tsp. salt



Add egg/milk mixture to the flour mixture and mix.

Add 1 1/2 cups coarsely chopped apples. Can also add raisins, walnuts, cinnamon, cloves or nutmeg as desired.

Bake at 350° for 45 minutes.

Topping: mix walnuts, brown sugar, cinnamon. Gently sprinkle on top of the cake as soon as you take it out of the oven. Use your taste preferences to determine the amounts.

Sweet, Salty, Crunchy, Zingy Apple and Celery Salad

From food52.com

2 cups celery, thinly sliced (on a bit of a diagonal)
1 sweet-tart apple, such as Braeburn or Pink Lady, cored & cut into small chunks
2 tablespoons (heaping) raisins
2 tablespoons capers
1 tablespoon fresh squeezed lemon juice
1 tablespoon good olive oil
2 tablespoons thinly sliced fresh mint
3 tablespoons (generous) crumbled ricotta salata (or other fresh, salty cheese)

1. If the raisins are dry, soak them for 10 minutes in a bit of apple juice or water. Then drain them.

2. Combine the celery, apple, raisins, and capers in a medium-large bowl. Drizzle with the lemon juice and olive oil and toss well to coat.

Throw in the sliced mint and the crumbled ricotta salata and toss again until everything is a lovely jumble. Let the salad sit for a few hours so the flavors can get to know each other a bit better. Serve!

Oven-baked Apple Butter

from Gail Falk

Some time every fall, I end up with too many apples. Either we picked too many and they are starting to soften, or someone has given us a boxful, or I have gone overboard in buying. When that happens, this is my go-to recipe. It is much easier than the stovetop method, and everyone thinks it's delicious. The following recipe is for 12 pounds of apples and makes about 5 quarts of apple butter; you can adjust it if you have more or less apples.

Start the same way you make applesauce. Cut apples into quarters. Don't peel; cut off the cores. Put in a big pot and nearly cover with water. Cook on low heat until the apples soften. Put the softened apples through a food mill or a strainer, trying to get every bit of apple pulp but as little water as possible. At this point you should have applesauce. Go ahead and eat some! Measure the amount of applesauce you have left.

Add to the applesauce one half cup of sugar for every cup of pulp.

Add to this:

Grated rind and juice of 2 lemons

3 tsp. cinnamon

½ tsp. cloves

½ tsp. allspice or nutmeg

Bring these ingredients to a boil.

Then remove from heat and

refrigerate overnight, or until well chilled.

Stir in one cup red wine. (it will now be a lovely color). Put about 2/3 of the mixture into a large oven-proof crock. Put the crock into a cold oven, and set the heat to 300 degrees. Bake until the puree shrinks. This will take 2 or 3 hours. Then add the rest of the puree, stir it in, and continue baking until the apple butter is thickened but still moist. During this time, you don't need to stir or do anything except get your jars clean and ready to fill.

To preserve the apple butter, ladle it into hot, sterilized jars leaving about a ½ inch from the top. Screw on lids and process in a boiling water bath for 10 minutes.



Suggestion Box

(selected Suggestions and Answers from the store)

Q: Could you get some non-dairy yogurt? There's a delicious "Greek" yogurt and there is Forager (lemon) that is wonderful.

A: We carry non-dairy yogurt when it is on sale; otherwise it is SO expensive. Keep an eye out!

Q: Serrano & jalapeno peppers, please! Great in curry.

A: We will try again. We carry them when they are in season locally. Otherwise we wind up spoiling lots because they get wrinkly.

Q: Is it possible to get the canned meads?

A: We tried stocking these, but they didn't sell well.

Q: Please try to get Nayonnaise.

A: We have Veganaise in the cooler. Maybe we're try Nayonnaise again in the future.

Q: Please get sweetened condensed coconut milk.

A: Okay. It has arrived!

Q: Can you carry other flavors of the BAI drinks, especially coconut and watermelon?

A: Yes, we have both flavors now.

Q: When are we going to get that hookah bar set up?

A: As soon as the caterpillar gets around to it.

