

The Plainfield Co-op Newsletter

Winter 2017-18

Winter Comforts



Hours: 7 days a week 9AM-8PM

Phone: 454-8579 **Website:** www.PlainfieldCoop.com

Email: info@plainfieldcoop.com

Management Collective



Anji Domino
Chloe Budnick
Cris Carnes
Dawn Fancher
Jeannine DeWald
Karen Starr
Kathleen Hayes
Margie Yoder

Regular Staff

Annie Reed
Eben Markova-Gold
Jezebel Crow
Kayla Pelloni
Laura Conklin
Stella James
Stephanie Panagopoulos

Substitutes

Rosemond Wallstrom
Tim Llewelyn

Co-op Board Members

Jean Hamilton, President
jean.myung.hamilton@gmail.com
Giordano Checchi, Vice-President
gchecchi@sunomi.net
Bob Fancher, Treasurer, 454-7247,
bfancher@hollerithdesign.com
Sarah Phillips, Secretary, 476-8360,
sa_philli@yahoo.com
Peter Colman, 454-1010,
pete@vermontsalumi.com
Chris Jackson, kairos.chris@gmail.com
Alice White, 802-522-7936,
26.2ready2run@gmail.com

Committee Contacts

Building: Doni Cain, 454-1478,
QuillPigFarm@gmail.com
Newsletter: Glenda Bissex,
songboat@vtlink.net
Marketing & Outreach: Joseph Gainza,
jgainza@vtlink.net

Art & Photography

Cover art: Mary Azarian
Photos of new staff: Karen Starr
Photos of products: Gail Falk

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When your copy is submitted,
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Plainfield Co-op
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About This Newsletter



One of the little triumphs of newsletter committee meetings is finally arriving at a theme for the coming issue. (Occasionally we don't.) The theme for

this issue is "Winter Comforts;" they are what we need now, and what our Co-op helps us provide, with many foods, little gift items, and ways to contribute to our neighbors' comforts. When the Co-op was unable to continue financially supporting the Senior Center because of slow sales, we started a gift card for them, which anyone can contribute to now at the check-out counter. Basically, anyone can start a gift card for anyone or any organization. Of course they need to let the person or group know about it. When a fire or other disaster strikes a local family, there is often a collection box at the counter for them.

We welcome your contributions to the newsletter—art work, photos, letters, articles, questions, suggestions. Submissions are due to the editor by Feb. 15 for the Spring issue.

Sarah Albert, layout and design
(sarah@vtlink.net)

Glenda Bissex, editor
(songboat@vtlink.net)

Lorraine Checchi, advertising and distribution
(lchecchi@myfairpoint.net)

Gail Falk, staff writer
(gail,falk@gmail.com)

Debra Stoleroff, recipes
(debra@vtlink.net)

Karen Starr, staff liason (ravenbadger@gmail.com)

Eliza Cleary, Twinfield Community Service volunteer ◆

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,

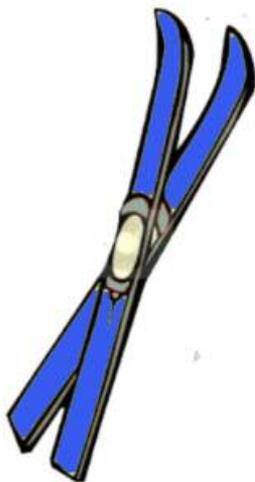
On these short, chilly days, my family often seeks comfort in the kitchen. We make hearty breakfasts, special pies, and holiday treats. *We're out of flour! The chickens didn't lay any eggs! No cream!!* Eureka! We can dash down to our convenient little co-op and be home before the pie is done. How lucky we are to have such a well-stocked neighborhood grocer.

I recently heard that over 60% of American households are Amazon Prime members, a staggering statistic that sends shivers down the spines of all bricks and mortar retailers. In the face of these statistics Vermont's independent retail environment is striking – right here in Plainfield we have two locally-owned restaurants, a hardware store, an assortment of specialty stores, and of course our food co-op! In celebrating these community assets, please join me in appreciating the business owners and managers who invest tremendous hard

work, ingenuity and passion into keeping these stores open for our benefit.

From my position on the Board, I can attest that managing a small grocery in rural Vermont is not easy. While the store's financial position has been stronger this year than last (thanks for shopping at the Co-op!), we are continually faced with challenges of which investments to prioritize (e.g. expand the building, buy new coolers, change the layout, increase staff compensation, increase community programming, etc.). Here are some of the top priority issues that we are working on:

- The Expansion Finance Committee contracted a marketing consultant who will conduct a market feasibility study in early 2018 with the goal of measuring revenue impacts of an expansion or relocation to help us make informed decisions about our strategic capital investments. Our researcher is an expert in the natural food and co-op retail and comes recommended from many of our sister co-ops around the state.
- The Membership Committee is developing a strong foundation of membership engagement, with an emphasis on the member worker program. There are many opportunities for members to make our store even better through just a couple hours of work. Member workers get the benefit of a store discount *and* the satisfaction of being right in the middle of com-



munity in the making. Check out the working member program at plainfieldcoop.com/membership.

- The Management Collective has been evaluating its management model and this fall engaged the Board to jointly review the model to identify opportunities to improve efficiency, communication, and professional development. The goal of this committee is to make actionable recommendations to be trialed in the spring of 2018.

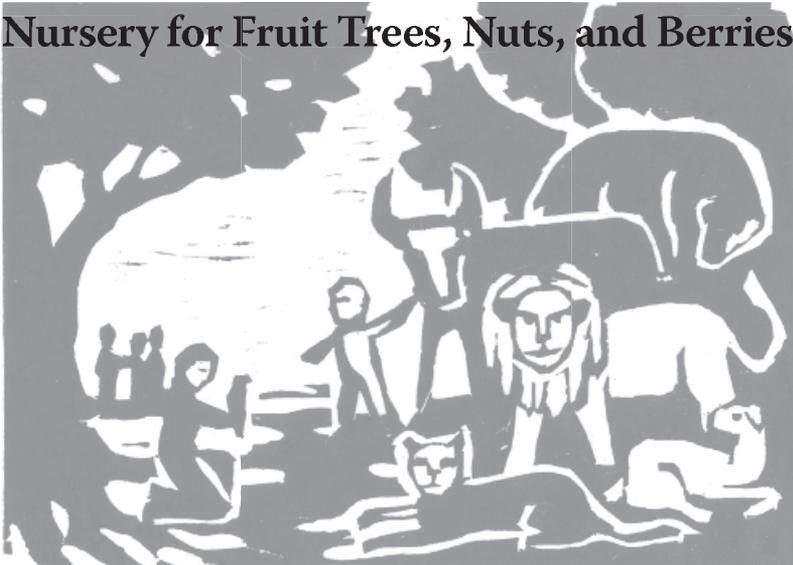
On that note: THANK YOU PLAINFIELD CO-OP MANAGERS AND STAFF FOR ALL YOU GIVE TO OUR STORE. We are lucky to have such a dedicated and lively crew keeping things

running. Since the last newsletter we have had a couple of new folks join the team including Stephanie Panagopoulos and Tim Llewelyn. Welcome! Some of our buyers are taking on new departments: Chloe is now the buyer for Frozen, Refrigerated, Meat/Fish as well as continuing to buy for Deli, Cheese, and Bakery. Laura is a brand new buyer and has taken up Beer/Wine. Jeannine is now the buyer for Herbs/Tea and Coffee as well as continuing to buy for Grocery and Bulk. And there are a few members of our team who are moving on to new adventures. Our thanks to Matt, Nancy, Dorothy, and Charlotte. We will miss you!

Wishing you all a cozy winter and see you at the Co-op! ♦

EAST HILL TREE FARM

Nursery for Fruit Trees, Nuts, and Berries



3499 East Hill Rd. Plainfield, VT

Check: www.easthilltreefarm.com

Treasurer's Report

by Bob Fancher, Treasurer

2017 Third Quarter. The third quarter had more great results for the Co-op. Q3 Sales were 3.6% higher than Q3 2016 and Year-to-date Sales were 5.3% higher than 2016. Year-to-date Gross Profit was up 3.4% from last year. Year-to-date Expenses were down 5.1% from last year which is also good news. These all lead to a big impact on the bottom line – net profit year-to-date is \$17,783. In 2016 at this time it was -\$6,789.

It is probably safe to predict that 2017 will be a much better year than 2016, with a positive net profit. The dip we had last year is behind us thanks to the tremendous effort of the Management Collective (MC).

Looking at the individual departments, we saw Sales increases in most departments. Our two largest departments had substantial gains over 2016 – Groceries, +4.9% and Produce, +9.7%. The fastest growing department was Deli with an amazing 72.6% growth over last year.

The reduction in operating Expenses is mostly in the Wages category. This was due to two factors. First, the number of

hours was reduced from 2016 as the MC implemented new efficiency changes. Second, we lost some MC members and the remaining MC members took on their management duties. This left room for new, non-MC staff to cover the registers.

The MC continues to implement other changes in the store. You may have noticed the new, larger Deli cooler that Chloe has been filling with some great selections. And, there are more ongoing changes on how shelf space is distributed among the various departments.

• **Renovations and Expansion.** Jean Hamilton, our new Board President, is leading us forward with our plans to provide a better shopping experience for our customers and promote growth in the coming years. Currently, we are eagerly anticipating the results of a professional market survey that will provide us with the data we need to plan our future.

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

Financial Summary

	Q1-Q3 2017	Q1-Q3 2016	% change
Sales	\$880,687	\$836,557	+5.3%
Gross Profit	\$291,793	\$282,142	+3.4%
Expenses	\$274,997	\$289,656	-5.1%
Net Profit	\$17,783	-\$6,789	+361.9%

Who Is Nutty Steph?

by Gail Falk

Since the days when she delivered home-made granola on roller blades around Montpelier, Jaquelyn Rieke has become one of Central Vermont's most innovative and well-known food entrepreneurs. Back then, in 2003, the former math teacher went by her given first name Stephanie. Rieke named her company "Nutty Steph's" so customers would think about the extra nuts when they saw her granola.

In time, she says, she wanted to take herself seriously and she wanted the public to think of her as a serious businesswoman, not someone nutty. Rather than changing the name of her company, which by then was well known throughout Vermont, Rieke gave the name

"Stephanie" to her company, and adopted her middle name "Jaquelyn" as her own legal name

On a recent afternoon, standing behind a counter piled high with little cardboard boxes for her newest product, chocolate-dipped maple candy, Rieke said, "I really appreciate working with the Plainfield Co-op. You've been a strong customer for ten years". We were at Nutty Steph's outlet store and production hub in Middlesex.

"Nutty Steph's and Plainfield Co-op both make choices and provide opportunities to reinvent the paradigm of the food economy," she said. "We share a provocative pushback on the inertia of capitalism. Also, I feel a lot of solidarity because of the Co-op's size. Nutty Steph's has also made choices that have kept us small. And," she added, "now that I live in Marshfield, Plainfield is my home-town co-op."

Rieke has been thinking intensely about how and why she is in business since she started Nutty Steph's 14 years ago with her signature product, Vermont Granola. From the beginning, she says, she was "driven to aesthetic perfection," and determined that she would make "only both really delicious and satisfying products." She is always thinking about the "smell, look, and taste."

One aspect is that "We are obsessive about the suppliers of our ingredients, both in terms of their quality and freshness but also their business values.

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“Every supplier we have we think of as an investment we’re making – a karmic stock market.” Nutty Steph’s sources its maple syrup from Butternut Mountain Farms, dairy from Kimball Brook Farm, maple sugar from End of the Road farm in Jericho, and oats from Maine Grains, in Skowhegan, Maine, which rolls Maine-grown organic oats.

Because oats are the central ingredient of granola, her connection to Maine Grains is critical. “They dry stone mill their oats in a way that preserves the nutrients. They roll oats for us on order and get them to us fresh, and we bake the oats while they are fresh.”

Nutty Steph’s granola is made with organic oats, syrup and sunflower oil, but the nuts are not organic. Using organic nuts, says, Rieke, would “put us at a cost threshold beyond what people are willing to pay, or else we would have had to use less nuts.” But, she adds, ‘Nutty’ is our name and also a priority of our taste.”

As it is, Nutty Steph’s granola as well as her chocolate are at the higher end of the cost curve for similar products at Plainfield Co-op. This is something Rieke is aware of and that she has given a lot of thought. She points out that in the 1950’s, Americans spent 30% of their budget on food, but foods have since been artificially cheapened so that now Americans spend only 10% of their budget on food. “In fact,” she says “a natural balance of food resources and humans would have us spend 30% of our income on food. I want to give people a reason to imagine that their food is worth more.”

Nutty Steph’s has done just that. “Back

in 2003 we went into bulk bins at \$4.99 a pound. Stores were resistant. A lot of granolas were priced at \$1.99. But I persuaded buyers to give it a chance and let people taste our granola. For a long time, we were the front-runner granola in Vermont. We pushed the bar up in terms of the quality that people want.”

Besides taste, Nutty Steph’s has pushed up the bar on freshness. “We don’t use a distributor,” explains Rieke, and most of the product goes to independent and natural groceries in Vermont. “This allows products to be really, really fresh – made within one to two weeks of when it goes into the store.”

From granola, Nutty Steph’s branched out into Magic Chunks, cubes of granola covered in chocolate. And from there, it was a short hop to chocolate bars. Plainfield Co-op carries several Nutty Steph’s chocolate bars, including the wildly popular Revolution bar, that features a photo of Bernie Sanders on the label.

The Revolution bar is an example, says Rieke, of the advantages of staying small and nimble. “Modern capitalism,” she says, “tends to total simplification, but we remain open to complex thinking as a means of opening frontiers. When Bernie ran, we were small enough that we could very quickly develop the Bernie bar, spread it far and wide, and, at the same time open up our store in the evenings for phone banking, where we gave free chocolate to people who came and were doing calling.

Another way Nutty Steph’s stays nimble and ethical is by hand-packaging products. “I’m always asking, “Could this be non-trash?”” she says. “Can we feed people without creating trash?” Bulk

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bins are one answer to this question. Hand-packaging, while it does not eliminate trash, is another. Hand-sealing granola bags, rather than machine-sealing, uses 33% less packaging material and makes it possible to create new products quickly. “Plus our staff are interacting with the product, not a machine – it is more soothing,” says Rieke. Hand-packaging has allowed Nutty Steph’s to maintain stable jobs for community members with developmental disabilities. In fact, the company’s longest-tenured employee is Grace Kirpan, who lives in Moretown, and works with the support of a job coach. Rieke acknowledges that her business still uses a lot of packaging material,

but she repeats, with feeling, “I am always asking the question.”

Currently Nutty Steph’s is working to transition from cane sugar to maple as the primary sweetener for chocolates as well as granola, leading to two new products, maple pistachio toffee and dark chocolate-dipped maple leaf candy, which you can now find at Plainfield Co-op.

“Unite in joy,” is our new tagline, says Rieke, with a wide smile. “We donate 100 times a year to different organizations. In Plainfield, we’ve given chocolate for training anti-nuclear workers. But that’s advertising too. Getting into people’s mouths is our best way of advertising!” ♦

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Fall Management Report

by Karen Starr

It's that crazy time of year in the Northeast when we've been sandwiched between getting ready for Winter and preparing for the holidays. Soon relatives and friends will descend, but up to the last minute many of us were stacking the last of the firewood and doing final insulating of basements and windows. Now there are pies to make and gifts to buy for whichever holidays we celebrate. And this year has been a particularly odd one with power outages and thunderstorms producing snow in November! Hermit Thrush and Blue Birds just barely headed south before the arrival of the first Snowy Owl from the Arctic.

At the Co-op, we've had our own flurry of change and activity. Nancy Ellen, our most longstanding manager is moving on to other things. Another venerable manager, Dorothy Wallace, has also chosen to retire from the store. Kristin Brosky, who has been with us for ages as well, recently formally bowed out of sign making and other various marketing support. They are all impossible to replace and we

miss them terribly already, but we send them off with our blessings, love, gratitude, and all the best wishes in the world! Matt Borg, though he has not been with us for very long, will also be missed immensely as he steps off on other adventures. Steadfast substitute Charlotte Domino has also bid us adieu. Best of luck to them as well! In their stead, several staff and managers have stepped up to carry on in their departments and duties.

Chloe Budnick is now purchaser for Frozen, Refrigerated, Meat/Fish as well as continuing to buy for Deli, Cheese, and Bakery. Laura Conklin, who you may know as Produce staff, is the brand-new buyer for Beer and Wine. She will continue in Produce as well. Jeannine DeWald, our long time Grocery and Bulk buyer, will now also purchase for Herbs/Tea and Coffee. And then, we have some new floor staff! Eben Markova-Gold has been with us for three months and Stephanie Panagopoulos is brand-new, coming on board with 4 shifts. Tim Llewelyn is a new substitute and will be covering shifts as needed. We couldn't be happier with these new hires!

Along with staff changes and leave takings, the Management Collective has also for several months been considering possible redesign of the management structure. Recently we invited the Board of Directors to assist us in recommending a new operational model and implementation plan. To that end, a work group consisting of 2 Board members and 2 Collective members was formed to



Eben Markova-Gold

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Stephanie Panagopoulos

research and propose a new structure that will better facilitate management of the store to support both increased sales and more equitable pay and benefits for its employees. The Board will keep the membership updated as work on this progresses.

Coffee and chocolate are two pleasures of the season and we have plenty of both on our shelves. Chocolate is a perfect gift, regardless of what Winter holiday you celebrate. The Panama Dark from Equal Exchange is a staff favorite and the chocolate covered caramel bar from Champlain Chocolates is a big pleaser for all those caramel lovers in your life. We also have a wide selection of chocolate bars from Nutty Steph's, great for sending a bit of quirky Vermont to your out of state relatives or for the choco-holic in your household. And don't miss the specialty halvah from Halvah Heaven. It really is divine. The Five Spice and Orange Cardamom are my personal favorites. From Ahab's Revenge to Equal Exchange to the lighter Roasts

from Brave Coffee Roasters, there is a coffee for every holiday occasion and palate. Grind it in the store or when you get home.

We're kind of partial to our beer, wine, and hard cider offerings. We try to taste as much as we can before putting anything on the shelf. So, if it's there, chances are pretty good that some staff person, if not Laura herself, thought it was worth putting there. We try to buy as much as possible when it's on special, so we can keep prices down and selection up to date with the best that's available to us. Take home some cheese too, to go with that pie or to nosh on while everyone is hanging out! You can also find sweet, small treasures in the Body Care and Gift sections of the store. Molded Soaps and other bath time treats for both kids and adults; lip balms; kid's nail polish; bags, mittens, and hats from Sherpa; colored pencils, art paper, and incense are just some of the things we have for gift giving.

The Bulk and Spice/Herb Departments have everything you need for all your cooking and baking projects. Produce has a great selection of all the wonderful local root veggies and squashes we love to have on our plates this time of year and fresh cranberries for sauce. Or if you're overwhelmed with preparations grab a can of pumpkin or cranberry sauce off the shelf. No need to run into town if you have last minute needs. We got you covered! So, don't forget us in all your shopping at the big stores! Although this year was a little better than last, we still need your support so we can finish off the year in good shape. Stop in and say hi to new staff, grab a cup of coffee and a fresh donut, take a deep breath and relax before you start shopping. You're as good as home. ♦

Co-ops: A Bigger Picture, Part 3

by *Giordano Checchi*

In this final installment, a Board member completes his vision of a society guided by co-operative principles.

To conclude let me close the circle and go back to our little food co-op. How can we go from the point of where we are, to conquering the world with the co-op system? One step at a time, and leaving idealism aside for a moment, allow me to suggest a path for development. The world is changing, but we want our co-op to remain the cozy, welcoming place we know. Our members have spoken, we do not want to join in the idea that a co-op needs to be a supermarket, we do not want to become a retail place for mass produced consumer products. We can do it, yet to be able to survive we need to be profitable, to have some cash stashed aside for the rainy days, to have some capital to renovate, buy new showcases, refrigerators, to keep the building in good shape. We now have what we like but our operational costs are high and we want to keep our prices affordable to everyone. Large supermarket chains have already discovered concepts like “organ-

ic,” “non-GMO modified,” “locally sourced,” and are becoming mighty competitors to our little co-op.

One activity that consumes a lot of time is purchasing. To purchase 100 lbs. of potatoes, or 10,000 lbs. of potatoes takes exactly the same time, all it takes are a couple of zeros more. On the other hand, our wonderful co-op offers an unbelievable variety of products and produce, somewhat of a miracle when one thinks about the effort it takes to line up so many products. Here is one idea. Let us join force with all the other co-ops in the region that want to sell what we sell and create a “purchasing co-op,” a buying group fully dedicated to buy local, dedicated to encourage local farmers, showing that indeed there is a good sustainable outlet for their produce, dairy, and meats. Dedicated to encourage local businesses that there is a sustainable outlet for their locally made soaps, locally roasted coffees, locally crafted beers. Dedicated to encourage suppliers to organize themselves as co-ops. Dedicated to convince these suppliers that there are many possible outlets for their products, not just one.

Great, yet we can think of something even bigger. Let us join forces with other co-ops to purchase insurance from an insurance co-op, to purchase our electrical power from a co-op, to keep our money in a co-op bank like the Raiffeisen co-op banking of Europe. Raiffeisen co-op banks provide their members not just banking services, but also reduced interest loans to buy a house, provide car



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insurance, house insurance, loans to farmers and small businesses for them to be strong and resilient, and provide for the less fortunate with humanitarian help. Each branch is local and independent, and very much focused on their own local community, but they all act based on the same principles, and enjoy the benefits of a centralized supply of services at low cost and high efficiency. Worth exploring this incredibly successful co-op.

In Vermont there is a shortage of medical doctors and dentists, particularly specialists who cannot pay back their loans to become a doctor with the income they can generate in Vermont. The sad result of an ill system that clearly does not work. Let us investigate the possibility of creating a health care co-op, definitely a much more daunting undertaking, yet not impossible when forces from many directions meet and correctly plan a different way to solve the sore issue of health care for everyone. Without the interference of the private insurance industry that certainly does not care about their insured, but cares about their profits. The health care co-op was mentioned during the initial period of the Obama administration in 2009. There are medical doctors who graduated from excellent medical schools in countries of this world where education does not have the skyrocketing cost of our country: Europe, Mexico, India, Cuba, just to mention a few. Let's investigate if we can bring them here and organize them in a sort of autonomous co-op providing for all of us. High cost of pharmaceuticals? Let us make generic drugs here in

Vermont, creating a co-op that purchases the basic ingredients from places in the world that make those drugs at affordable costs. The co-op can combine them into pills, or creams, or liquids that are made in the USA and distributed directly through the co-op system, cutting out those that are in the middle and contribute to keeping the prices high. Do we need to move the goods between one co-op and another, from the farming co-op to the retail co-op, from one co-op to another? Let us form a transport co-op, with the ability to provide combined transports and logistics that locally mimic what the monopoly of UPS and FedEx does in the whole country. One single transport can carry to our co-op every day all that we need for that day or that week, saving fuel and being more friendly to the environment.

To make a picture like the one depicted above work well and efficiently, cutting time and costs, software and communications are of extremely high importance. Great, let's start a software co-op with all the other co-ops. A group that will develop the exact software we will need to operate efficiently, to keep that network of co-ops well oiled, without too much in paperwork or phone calls. Ordering, logistics, accounting, reporting, recording are just a few of the functions that can help us do more and do it better, without losing view of our principles, of our local memberships, of our community, and remain what we are, while changing with the changes of the time. It will allow us to reach out to our community, to be a service to our community, but more than anything else, to do more than what we are doing today. Just think of a bigger picture. ♦

Coffee Seasons

by Matt Borg



Before moving to Plainfield and beginning his 2+ year stint at the Coop, Matt lived in Los Angeles where he worked as a coffee roaster and QC specialist (and part-time musician). He now co-owns Carrier Roasting Co. in Northfield, where he has purview over all things coffee related.

As time marches forward throughout the year, it's easy for Vermonters to feel the seasons. Not only do the weather and landscape change, but so do our diets. It is especially so at this time of year, as the ground turns to ice and our plates

turn to roasted meat, squash, and roots. We miss the days of summer and autumn, the freshness and variety of the locally available produce seeming so far gone, but we also revel in the tastes of winter while we have them, even if they're decidedly less diverse and exciting. The farmers in particular must understand this pattern if they're to plan adequately for income and survival.

A similar experience is had by those of us who survive off of the trade of coffee. It may not seem as obvious to a Vermonter that coffee is a seasonal product, but to the farmer, the exporter, the importer, the roaster, and even the barista, it's unavoidable. Coffee beans are the seeds of a tropical cherry-like

Treats to Serve with Coffee and Tea by Debra Stoleroff.

Basic Biscotti

Biscotti are delicious and fun to dunk in either coffee or tea. They also freeze easily. If you make this recipe you can freeze a few dozen to pull out for impromptu social moments. (I am no longer sure from whom or where I found this recipe. Apologies for not giving credit to the creator of the recipe.)

Ingredients: (makes 4-5 dozen biscotti)

2¾ cups all-purpose flour	1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 cup sugar	3 large eggs, or 1 large egg and 4 egg whites
2 teaspoons baking powder	cooking spray
¼ teaspoon salt	1 large egg white
4 teaspoons Canola oil	2 tablespoons cinnamon sugar

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray a heavy or cushioned cookie sheet with cooking spray.
2. Combine flour, sugar, baking powder and salt in a large mixing bowl.
3. Combine oil, vanilla and eggs and add to flour mixture. This may be done

fruit. The position of a particular growing region in relation to the equator determines the timing of its season. Like with our local produce, we generally experience an explosion of variety from late spring to fall as the northern hemisphere origins are in season. Fresh and vibrant coffee is constantly landing at ports from all over Central America and East Africa. While the coffees grown in the south can be equally exciting, there are fewer choices of origin and the frequency of new arrivals slows down, coming nearly to a halt from about February to April/May.

This poses challenges up and down the supply chain. The farmer must of course be the most prepared for this, and many farmers are wise to have diverse plantations with other crops interplanted with the coffee trees. Not only does this provide additional income throughout the

year, but it's good for quality too, as shade plants aid in coffee cherry development, and biodiversity improves the soil. The roasters we purchase our coffee from must stay on their toes as well. All of the various origins offer differing flavor profiles, as the varieties, altitude, and local terroir vary from place to place.

Companies like Dean's Beans, Vermont Coffee Company, and Equal Exchange all depend very heavily on a core group of flagship blends that many of us know and love. We expect a certain rich and robust taste from Dean's Beans Ring of Fire blend, and keeping it tasting consistent throughout the year is a tough job. As green coffee ages it dries out and its quality deteriorates, replacing all of the lovely origin flavors with paper, cardboard, and wood. For this reason they

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by hand or in an electric mixer, at low speed. Mix until the ingredients are well blended, but be careful not to overdo it or the biscotti will be tough.

Turn dough out onto lightly floured surface and knead lightly a few times.

4. Divide dough into thirds and form into 4 10" rolls (or 2 wider rolls to create extra long dipping biscotti). Place rolls 6" apart on a baking sheet coated with oil or cooking spray and flatten each roll slightly, to 1" in thickness.
5. Gently brush the tops of the rolls with the egg whites and sprinkle liberally with the cinnamon sugar.
6. Place in the pre-heated oven and bake for 30 minutes. Remove the baking sheet from the oven. Allow rolls to cool for five minutes.
7. Using a serrated knife, carefully cut each roll diagonally into 18 ½" slices.
8. Place dough slices, bottom-side down, on the baking sheet. Reduce the oven temperature to 325 degrees and bake 20 minutes more.
9. Cool completely on a wire rack to prevent biscotti from becoming soggy.

Biscotti Variations: It is always fun to add ingredients to your basic biscotti recipe. If you want to vary the recipe, do so in step 3 of this recipe. You can add any type of nuts or dried fruit. Mix the ingredients into the dough by hand until they are evenly distributed.

Caroline Lieberman's Comforting Chicken (or Turkey) Soup

– adapted by her granddaughter,
Debra Stoloroff

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

Carrots: to your taste

Celery: suited to your taste – some people prefer to use celery seed because they don't like the texture of cooked celery

Salt and pepper: to your taste; you can also substitute tamari for the salt

Sautee onions and garlic; add celery after 5 min.; add to chicken broth, turn up heat.

Cut carrots and 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 noodles (egg noodles or cappellini work best)



continued from previous page

can't just pick a few coffees for a blend and stick with it for a full year. Instead, they must always be testing new coffees, roasts, and blend percentages to maintain consistent and fresh flavor.

Carrier Roasting Co., Brave Coffee and Tea, and 802 Coffee have a different focus. While still offering blends, they tend to be more focused on Single Origin coffee. This is where you can really taste the variety and seasonality of coffee, and if the roaster's not careful, the staleness as it ages. These companies must take great care in planning their sourcing to take full advantage of what the seasons have to offer, and not go too long on any particular lot. This time of year you should start to see fresh coffees hitting the shelves from Peru, Colombia, Rwanda, Burundi, Bolivia, and Brazil.

As you sit by the fire this holiday season with a hot cup of joe, reflect just for a moment on the journey those beans took, the effort that was required by so many, and the commonalities you share with the coffee farmer in the highlands of Peru. Enjoy! ♦

Ginger Molasses Cookies:

I love ginger molasses cookies. I copied this from a handwritten recipe I found in my recipe book. I probably collected it from a college friend whose cookies (I felt) needed to be baked and shared with others.

Blend together and set aside:

1 cup sugar 1/4 cup molasses
3/4 cups shortening (butter preferred) 1 egg

Mix together:

2 cups flour 1/4-3/4 tsp. cinnamon
3/4 - 1 tsp. baking soda 1-2 tsp. ginger
1/2 tsp. salt 1/4- 1/2 tsp. cloves

Blend liquid ingredients into the dry ingredients (a baking rule I learned in 4H when I was growing up ☺).

Chill in the refrigerator for half to one hour

Roll into balls and then roll in sugar.

Bake on a lightly greased baking sheet at 375 degrees for 8-10 minutes.



Holiday Treats at the Co-op

We've filled up the Co-op with lots of new products for holiday cooking and gifts, many of them made by your neighbors and friends.

Vermont Cranberry Company Cranberries

Vermont-grown color and flavor for your holiday recipes / \$5.99 per box (from Fletcher)



1000 Stone Farm Winter Greens

Fresh greens throughout the winter! Baby kale, arugula, lettuce mix, spinach / priced by bag (grown in Brookfield)

Hochschild Family Farm Beef

Ground beef, steaks, roasts – fresh weekly. Want a six-pound roast special ordered? Ask Chloe. (from a farm right here in Plainfield)



Rogers Farmstead Chocolate Milk Pints

Local, organic, and yummy.

For December, 10% off all Rogers milk and yogurt (from a farm in Berlin)

La Panciata Stuffing Mix

Rosemary Garlic or Traditional Sage / \$3.99 per bag (made in Northfield)

Dwight Miller Organic Apple Cider

So good and a great price / \$3.75 per half gallon (made in Dummerston)

Sunbeam Beeswax Candles



Some candles have a 70 hour burn time! Produced in a solar-powered facility in Ithaca, NY

For cooking and baking without dairy (or just because you love the taste of coconut) we now have:

- Coconut whipping cream
- Sweetened condensed coconut milk
- Think easy dairy-free fudge
- Evaporated coconut milk

Try it for dairy-free pumpkin pie!

Lawson's Finest Liquids Sip of Sunshine IPA and Super Sessions #8

"Straight from the Green Mountains to your head." Brewed in Warren

Hermit Thrush Brewery

Belgian-inspired sour beers
(brewed in Brattleboro)



These beers and all our wines and hard cider are 10% off if you buy a case: not just for the holidays but all year long.

Suggestion Box

(selected Suggestions and Answers from the store)

Q. Can we get GT's Kombucha in Ginger as well as Original plain?

A. Yep, Ginger is back!

Q. I miss boxed tabouli.

A. We discontinued this because it went out of date.

Q. Please bring back creamy Vermont Peanut Butter. It's sooooo good!

A. We have tried to carry this several times in the past. Due to price, it did not sell well.

Q. I would like to be able to buy organic baby food and organic formula at the Co-op.

A. We are now carrying some baby food. Let us know what you think. Is there a specific brand? Dairy or non-dairy formula?

Q. We should have shredded water.

A. We carry Dehydrated water (just add water).

