

The Compost

WILLIMANTIC
FOOD
CO•OP

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Spring 2011

**91 Valley Street
Willimantic, CT 06226
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willifoodcoop@snet.net

www.willimanticfood.coop

STORE HOURS:

Monday - Friday
9:00am - 8:00pm

Saturday
9:00am - 6:00pm

Sunday
10:00am - 5:00pm

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Co-op Scoop *Alice Rubin*

At last, Spring is here, and change is in the air. It sure has been one long winter. But here we are now, with the daffodils blooming and the trees beginning to bud. I hear the peepers at night, and am so glad that the weather has changed. The Co-op is in the midst of some change too. You may have noticed. You are in a hurry, go to grab the ever important chocolate bar, and lo and behold, the candy aisle now holds rice cakes. Not exactly what you were expecting. Well, that is going to be happening a lot. We are in the midst of moving around various parts of the grocery department, condensing some, expanding some – rearranging some. Why? You might ask – so that we can expand our bulk department. Selling food in bulk is essential to the Co-op's mission on several levels. It serves our membership by allowing you to buy as little or as much as you would like, at a price reduced from its prepackaged price. It serves the environment by reducing packaging. It is one of the things that makes the Co-op different from other health food stores. We have tried to put up signs telling you where things have moved, but please ask if you can't find what you are looking for. You may have also noticed a new look to our produce department – that was some big change. A month after it was done, I am still hearing compliments. And while the visual change is certainly noticeable, there have also been changes made in the handling of the produce that will result in better quality and less labor. It is so easy to keep doing things the way you are used to, and so hard to get into new grooves. But once you do, well, it is a good thing. Please let us know how all of these changes are working for you. In the end our goal is to make shopping easier and your whole Co-op experience a better one.

The Co-op continues to do well financially. We recently paid off our loan with the Savings Institute, 4 years ahead of schedule. Our loan with the Co-op Fund of New England will be paid off at the end of this year. As the year progresses, we will be looking to pay off our Member Loans ahead of schedule as well. We lucked out with a health insurance increase of only 4%, not the 15% I had been expecting. And we continue to see savings on our electric bill from the work we had done a year or so ago. We have been able to invest money in our staff with training, and money into our store with new equipment – bulk bins, a new nut butter grinder. It feels good to have the resources we need to take care of our Co-op.

Board of Directors Meetings are held the first Thursday of the month at the the Covenant Soup Kitchen at 7 pm. Open to all members, with designated speak out time at the beginning of the meeting.

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Where's the Beef? Meat Buying Club Update

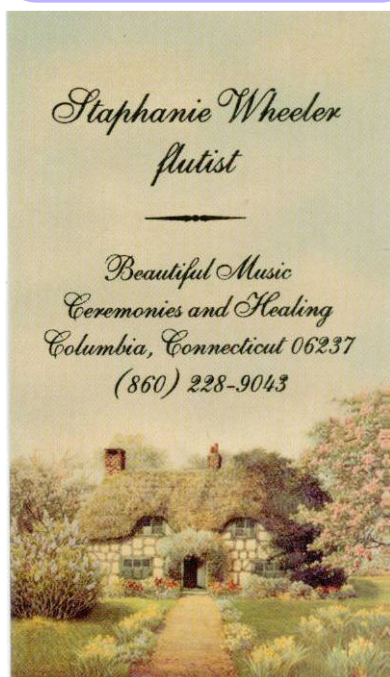
Remember that TV commercial in the 80's, with the little old lady, grumbling about "where's the beef?" She may well have been asking about the Co-op's meat buying club. My hope is that by the time you are reading this newsletter, you have had the opportunity to order some of the highest quality, locally raised meat that we could find. Or maybe you ordered some freshly caught Maine fish from the Port Clyde fishing collective. Then you will see that the wait has been worth it.

I am sorry it has taken so long. Our committee members have been very committed, but they, like me and most others, have too much on their plates. I would like to thank them: Jan Brown, Kristin Burello, Mike Feeney, Kathleen Jenkins and Lynn Stoddard. I very much appreciated working with you on this project. The amount of thought you all put into knowing where our food comes from – literally – will greatly benefit all of our Co-op's members. 🌱



Help GROW Windham to GREEN UP Willimantic and earn a working member discount!

Community and School vegetable gardens are sprouting up all over Willimantic this season. Join us to help maintain them, and earn produce from the gardens, as well as a working member discount at the Co-op. Workdays are tentatively scheduled for 9-11am Saturdays, with potential weekday hours as well, depending on participation. If interested, please contact Sally Milius at shmilius@gmail.com or (860) 336-9005.



GMO Labelling Robert Burns

The national outcry against Monsanto this year has sparked hundreds of protests, capped by the Millions against Monsanto rally, rejecting transgenic (GMO) crops internationally. For more informations please go to <http://organicconsumers.org/monsanto/index.cfm>.

In Connecticut, Diana Urban has introduced HB 5868 to require the labeling of all GMO food products sold in the state. Unfortunately, due to lack of constituent support, it lies dormant in the Health Committee. In 2012 we need to rally HARD to support this bill. Representative Urban has assured us she will resubmit the bill. The bill is currently supported by CT NOFA and Alliance for Bio-Integrity. During the United Council of Churches Environmental seminar, Steven Drucker of Alliance for Bio-Integrity and myself, will present a seminar to Connecticut clergy to urge their congregations to support the bill for religious reasons. We hope that by 2012 we should have massive constituent support for this bill. Monsanto will bring out ALL their big guns to oppose the labeling of their GMO food. We urge you to get in touch with your legislators, make them aware of this bill and the history of Monsanto. We, the consumer, have the right to know what our food is! 🌱

Robert Burns (<http://aikifarms.com/>) is a farmer activist, a market master, who relishes the golden opportunity to engage in struggle against the oppression of farmers and humanity...

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2010 Treasurer's Report *Joanne Todd*

The Co-op had net income of \$24,225 in 2010. Budgeted net income was (\$12,188), so net income was better than expected and exceeded budget by \$36,413. This performance is good, although it is a small amount of overall sales. Net income is only 0.7% of sales, so the Co-op is close to break even. This means that pricing, inventory and expenses have to be closely managed to achieve a small margin. The Co-op returns as much as possible to members by pricing as low as possible while offering good products and serving the Co-op community. The net income of \$24,225 increased retained earnings by 15% to \$182,522. Retained earnings are helpful to have in case there is a loss in the future. It's like saving for a rainy day.

The Co-op's cash balance of \$351,191 is strong and loans to members and others are being paid as agreed. These loans are mostly related to the move to the current location. After paying loans, the Co-op has excess cash. The Co-op made some investment in store improvements in 2010 including freezers and in the produce area. New bulk bins will be installed this spring. The Board of Directors is looking at the Co-op's strategic direction. We want to identify and pursue the best projects that use these resources to benefit the members and achieve the Co-op's mission. ♻️

Willimantic Food Coop's Income Statement

December 31, 2010	
Net Income (Loss)	
Packaged Grocery	785,110
Produce	608,243
Bulk	575,219
Refrigerated Grocery	391,322
HABA	384,968
Other	594,801
Total Sales:	3,339,663
Cost of Goods Sold	
Packaged Grocery	506,647
Produce	424,390
Bulk	378,674
Refrigerated Grocery	300,722
HABA	225,469
Other	342,124
Total Cost of Goods Sold:	2,178,026
Total Gross Profit (Loss):	1,161,637
OVERHEAD EXPENSES	
Salary, Wages & Benefits	736,826
Discounts-Workers	95,310
Rent	50,091
Depreciation	45,043
Utilities	39,016
Other Expenses	178,343
Total OVERHEAD EXPENSES:	1,144,629
Total Operating Income (Loss):	17,008
Total Other Income:	13,532
Total Other Expenses:	6,315
Total Net Income (Loss):	24,225

Statement of Financial Condition

Assets	
Cash and Equivalents	351,191
Accounts Receivable	20,327
Inventory	204,104
Prepaid expenses	4,355
Total Current Assets:	579,977
Fixed Assets	
Leasehold Improvements	429,481
Equipment/Fixtures	177,015
Other	547
Total Fixed Assets:	607,043
Other Assets	15,479
Total Assets:	1,202,499
Liabilities and Owner's Equity	
Accounts Payable	66,267
Accrued Expenses	55,780
Member Loans - Long Term	224,350
Other Loans	91,342
Total Liabilities	437,739
Owner's Equity	
Paid in Member Equity	578,581
Donated Member Equity	3,657
Retained Earnings	182,522
Total Owner's Equity:	764,760
Total Liabilities and Owner's Equity:	1,202,499

Spring Plantings *Angela H. Fichter*

The seeds have arrived! Now to check our garden maps to see what we planted where last year, so as to avoid planting any vegetable in the same spot its type was planted last year. A quick walk around the garden shows that the quackgrass, with its long rope-like roots, has been active, and is reaching in from the lawn and sprouting up in the garden beds. It's easier to pull it up now when the soil is moist, than in summer, but other tasks call for our attention too. The lawn is littered with branches and sticks felled by the heavy snow this winter.

Spring plants amaze me with their vigor. In summer so many flowers, vegetables, and trees put on a grand show. Their vigor is apparent. But when it comes to sheer strength I wonder at the snowdrops. When the snow depth in our yard had finally decreased to several inches, there were the snow drops, peeking up over the top of the snow, in full bloom. They push their way up through frozen ground. In spring the vegetable and flower seeds we plant only have to germinate and push their way up through warm, loose, friable soil. It makes you wonder if the snowdrops have some type of anti-freeze.

I don't know what's more work in vegetable garden planting: preparing the soil, or actually planting the seeds. Both tasks require a lot of bending over. If you use a rototiller, you still have to bend over to pull and toss out the rock crop that frost heaves up each year, and transport the rocks away from the bed. When you plant, you are either bending over or squatting. And you do this when your back hasn't yet recovered from the weeding and removal of sticks from the lawn. So why do we love gardening so much? Because nothing else puts you in such direct contact with nature as gardening does. Touching the soil and the weeds, and sniffing the air for distinctive spring odors, while listening to birds as they court, is enlivening. This sensory contact stimulates and soothes at the same time. Waiting for the germination of the seeds you planted and checking your perennial plants to see which ones have survived the winter



and are putting forth leaves gives you a relationship to living beings other than your own species.

When you garden you learn you are part of nature, not lord of it. In particular, the organic method of gardening tries to grow food and flowers without the synthetic, systemic poisons that kill all bugs they contact. By learning how to fertilize plants and deter and destroy bugs with organic methods, we keep our place in nature in balance. 🌱



Sheila Herbert moves on...home to New London!

Kristin Fortier

As many of you know one of our long time employees Sheila Herbert has not been seen around the co-op lately. Sheila worked at Willimantic Food Co-op for 10 years and she will be dearly missed. But the good news is you can now find her cooperating down at the Fiddleheads Co-op in New London, CT! Originally from New Jersey, Sheila has called New London, home for the past 12 years. She began volunteering at Fiddleheads in 2006, and has served on the Board of Directors. I went down to see how she was getting along without us and check out our sister co-op, one of the proud few storefront co-ops in CT!



Sheila greeted us at the registers at the front of the store. Immediately, I noticed that the registers were from our old Meadow Street location! I tried to remember how to ring up things as we caught up and she had to help me! No bar code swiping packages here! Another great acquisition Sheila brought with her from the Willi Co-op was our old grocery carts, which they purchased from us when we got our new carts. They looked right at home!

At three years old, Fiddleheads Cooperative is seeing a lot of progress and they have been expanding within the store,

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adding more grocery and bulk items to their inventory. They have about 1300 members! Up until recently they have been staffed entirely



with volunteer staff, which just amazes me! Sheila is one of just two co-op employees. Fiddleheads originally started out as a Saturday Farmers Market to build up funds and customer base, before slowly moving into produce, bulk and packaged grocery items. The Farmer's Market, with about 25 vendors, still happens on Saturdays. They've also expanded their hours which are Monday- Saturday 9am-6:30pm.

Sheila gave me a tour around the co-op and I got to meet many of their volunteer staff. Sheila proudly shared that she brought an important piece of knowledge with her to Fiddleheads from our Willi Co-op- the case deal! This is one way to offer customers great savings when the store purchases larger amounts of the product! Another big insight borrowed from the Willi Co-op is the idea of keeping our back stock low which maximizes sales.

I asked Sheila what she missed most about the Willi Co-op and she replied that she missed her coworkers and that it had been one of the best places she has worked in her lifetime. She enjoyed offering wellness support to customers as she has a background in nutrition. She also found being a buyer lots of fun. She'll miss the atmosphere, conversations, and interactions with the Willi Co-op Members. On the other side of things, she will not miss the 45 min commute each way!

We wish Sheila all the best! Stop into Fiddleheads next time your in the New London area, visit Sheila and her beautiful co-op! 🌿

Winky's Food Review *Winky Gordon*

LmnopQrstUvwxyz. This issue's food choices are based on an alphabet whim. I was at a gathering recently and found that the food contributions I brought both began with QU. How QUEer. While munching and talking, I joked that in my next review I would use only foods that had QU in them, and the challenge was on. QUick – how many foods can you think of with QU in them? By the time this goes to press, one of my picks, kumQUats, will be gone, so look for them next year.

The stars of this issue's review are: QUorn's meatless, soy-free 'cheese burgers,' \$6.29/8.4 oz. package; black QUinoa \$ 4.15/lb; and kumQUats

Until today, I had not tasted any of the QUorn products. To be honest, the name made me suspicious. Found in the frozen foods cooler, QUorn makes 'chicken' nuggets, 'turkey' burgers and a few other vegetarian meat-like products. The 'cheese burgers' have a long list of ingredients, starting with "mycoprotien." Which is what, you may ask? *Fusarium venanatum* is a fungus produced and harvested in a complex process, described in depth on the QUorn website. The result is a protein-rich food produced in the United Kingdom, originally in response to predicted world-wide protein shortages. I found the 'cheese burgers' to be a fine fast meal with a pleasant smokey flavor. It was a little hard to detect the cheese part, however. Ask Donna Nicolino for her hot tips on creative ways to use QUorn products.

Occasionally I am a culinary genius, modestly speaking of course. Motivated by my pursuit of QU foods, I added kumQUats to a curried QUinoa dish I recently made from the *Moosewood Restaurant New Classics* cook book, with excellent results. Odd combination, yes, but good. I used black QUinoa for the above dish.

There is much to be said about the benefits of QUinoa, not the least of which is how lovely it looks, both raw and cooked. The black QUinoa is especially beautiful and, uncooked, looks like little jewels or beads. Although referred to and used as a type of grain, QUinoa is the seed of the Goosefoot plant, native to South America. According

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to Chet Day's Health and Beyond Online web site, Quinoa is both high in protein, and has an "almost perfect balance of all 8 amino acids." It is fairly quick cooking (about 15-20 minutes), has a nutty taste and is a satisfying combination of crunchy and chewy textures. It can be used in both sweet and savory dishes and will probably appeal to children because of its curly-cue tail when cooked.

While you are likely to know that kumQUats are native to China, you may not know that their name means "gold orange," and that there are several kinds grown in the USA. These cheerful looking little fruits are oval in shape and contain elements of both sour and sweet. It is the fruit itself that is sharp, sour; the skin is where the sweetness lies. For my QUinoa Surprise dish, I sliced and then finely chopped the kumQUats and added just a handful to the pot. The result was an occasional citrus note amongst the curry, onions, beans, and QUinoa. Notice: biting directly into the fruit is not recommended (unless you really like to pucker up). The kumQUat growers' web site lists recipes for dishes ranging from kumQUat pie to flavoring for chicken.

That's all I've got for this issue, fellow Co-ops. It's my QU story and I'm stickin' to it. Cheers! 🌱

Quinoa Snap Pea Salad

1/2 pound sugar snap peas
1 1/2 cups quinoa, rinsed and drained
1/4 cup plus 1 tbl extra-virgin olive oil
3 tble rice vinegar
Salt and freshly ground pepper
1/2 cup salted roasted pumpkin seeds
1/2 cup minced chives



In a small saucepan of boiling salted water, simmer the peas until bright green and crisp-tender, about 1 minute. Drain and pat dry when cool. Cut the peas on the diagonal into 1-inch pieces.

In a small saucepan, combine the quinoa with 2 cups of water and bring to a boil. Cover and cook over low heat until all of the water has evaporated and the quinoa is tender, about 15 minutes. Uncover and fluff the quinoa, and let cool to room temperature.

In a bowl, combine the oil and vinegar and season with salt and pepper. Add the peas to the quinoa with the pumpkin seeds, chives and dressing; stir. Season with salt and pepper and serve at room temperature or lightly chilled. Enjoy! 🌱

Ricotta Ice Cream Shandra

15 oz fresh or whole milk ricotta
3/4 cup whole milk
1/3 cup heavy cream
1 tsp lemon zest
1/2 tsp vanilla
Pinch of sea salt
Sweeten to taste ~1/4 cup sugar or honey
1 tbl bourbon (optional)



Blend all the ingredients together. Chill for at least one hour. Pour into ice cream maker and follow manufacturer's instructions.

Serve with fresh berries!

(Caution: Using less sweetener or substituting low fat milk will produce ice cream the freezes rock hard. If you don't have an ice cream maker go here <http://www.davidlebovitz.com/2007/07/making-ice-cream-1/>) 🌱

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Helen's HABA Review *Helen Scanlon*

Lotions...

Wonderful, awesome, soothing lotions. Good for the skin and good for the senses—lotions offer instant relief for tired, dry skin.

Not all lotions are created equal, however. Don't just skip through the drug store aisles and blindly pluck a no-name cheapie off the shelf. No, no. Check your ingredients. Look for a tester and—well—test it. A lotion should disappear into your skin and leave it moist and freshened. It should last through at least a couple of hand washings. It should not leave a heavy, greasy residue on your skin. But, it shouldn't just make a cameo appearance and fade away into the sunset, either. Oh, picky picky! Yes, I am!

And, it should smell nice! I've used some expensive lotions that quite frankly, smell horrible. If you are going to slather your skin in some wonderfulness, the lotion needs to have a lovely, uplifting fragrance. It should not make you run for the clothespin. Is that too much to ask?

So, finding a lotion that delivers the all-too-rare one-two punch of effectiveness AND olfactory brilliance is reason to celebrate. May I present to you **Griffin Remedy Body**



Lotion? Yes? This lotion has it all! Let me explain: it has a light, airy, almost whipped texture that is perfect for hardworking hands. It sinks right in and nestles into the scales of rough skin and gets to work immediately. And then, the scent...Grapefruit. This is good enough to stand alone as a fragrance. Double your value,

here: get a hardworking lotion with the added bonus of a clean, citrus scent—someone at Griffin Remedy loves you.

It's also available in spicy, earthy Frankincense scent. Oh wow, it's really, really *good*. Griffin Remedy Lotions feature powerful omega-3 oils, vitamin A, vitamin E, almond oil, lavender extract and rose oil—oh, heavenly--need I go on? Get both, use often.

Next, I tried **Desert Essence Lip Rescue with Shea Butter**. Hello! It Did. Not. Budge. Not even through lunch and a Morning Glory muffin. It hydrated and worked and hydrated and worked some more. I was getting concerned that maybe it was getting tired and needed a nap or something. Nope. It just kept going. Thanks, Desert Essence! Talk about getting your money's worth. Love it!

And now, a supplement: **New Chapter Organics Perfect Energy Whole Food Multi-Vitamin**. I wanted to try it because I needed help in the energy department: Monday morning I am Tigger. I am very grateful that Cari threw a bottle of this at me.

True story, folks: The Friday of my first week on New

Organics Perfect Energy, I actually HAD ENERGY. I'm a believer! I was smiling and walking with purpose—I had to remind myself it was Friday—I was so used to being completely drained from the week. But I wasn't. Happy day! Eeyore had become Dorothy skipping down the Yellow Brick Road. Egads!

Oh, and you can take it on an empty stomach because it's derived from whole food sources. Nice.

Many thanks to Cari for stocking these wonderful items. All winners!

Happy Spring!

Until next time-- remember to actually *use* the good stuff, don't let it just sit in a cabinet all lonely and unappreciated! Every day is a special occasion. 🌿

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