



# The Compost

**WILLIMANTIC**  
**FOOD**  
**CO•OP**

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**Spring/Summer 2013**

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**www.willimanticfood.coop**

## **STORE HOURS:**

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Saturday  
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Sunday  
10:00am - 5:00pm

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### **Co-op Scoop** *Alice Rubin, General Manager*

It seems like we are finally getting an old fashioned spring – mostly, at least. Not too hot too fast – not so cold that the fruit tree blossoms get frosted. I still do not know where the April showers went, but the May flowers benefited from the snow. The warmth of the sun is certainly welcome.

The Co-op continues with its success. Sales continue to grow and with it the staff. 2013's record profit has allowed us to increase our staffing, partly just to keep the food flowing, partly to make our operations stronger, and partly to step up our level of customer service. We have added another full time position (with a 78% of paid health insurance benefit), increased our starting rate of pay to \$9.00 per hour, and offered more training opportunities to staff.

Another investment has been our membership in the National Cooperative Grocers Association (NCGA). With that will come some visible changes at our co-op. A new sales flyer and signs are on tap for June, bringing with it some excellent sale deals. The flier is extensive, and contains some items that our co-op does not carry. We cannot carry everything that is advertised, and the sales flyer is created for co-ops across the country. But, as Cooperative Principle #4 speaks to Autonomy and Independence (cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members), our membership in NCGA does not change this. Our co-op is different than other co-ops, as it is a reflection of our members. And while not perfect, this new sales flyer has a lot to offer. We are able to get you any product on deal in the flyer as a preorder (a full case ordered and paid for in advance gets an additional 12% off of the advertised price). We also welcome feedback on products advertised that we do not currently carry, but you would like us to. I am sure there will be some confusion as we make this change. Please let us know what does and does not work for you.

As our new pricing from United Naturals kicks in – another NCGA benefit – we will be taking a good look at how our prices compare to other food stores in our area. We are in the process of forming a committee to look at creating a competitively-priced Market Basket of basic foods that will make the Co-op more affordable to everyone in our community, and are looking for ways to offer Memberships to those who cannot afford to join. I am very excited about this project; it has been a long time coming and I am glad to finally have the financial freedom to make these changes.

## **Willimantic Food Co-op**

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Alice Rubin

**Assistant Manager**  
Bruce Oscar

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Sasha Bajjo-Fournier  
Jonathan Campo  
Susan Chasin  
John Clark  
Chris Demoritz  
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Alice Rubin

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Our staff continues to be in flux – Mariclare is leaving us for a summer of adventure. Hopefully she will return to the area in the fall. Her role as Floor Coordinator will be taken on by Yani, one of our newer front-end staff. There is also some change in the Management Team, with Bruce switching to Facilities Manager. Also known as Mr. Fix It, it is a hat he has always worn well (don't worry, he will still be the Cheese Guy). Also, Patty is stepping up to Assistant Manager. Patty has taken on some of my responsibilities and brought a much needed sense of order to the running of our store.

Lastly, I would like to thank everyone who came to our Annual Meeting - the food was delicious and Poor Old Shine played some fantastic music. Kathleen's talk about expansion was very important. Our growth is great and our financial success means we are better able to serve our community. The catch is that we are out-growing our space. I have been looking longingly at the abandoned property across the street – the old Willi Lumber and Coal building and yard for the last year or two. The Board of Directors did a walk through, and while many aspects are ideal, it is a huge project. I mean huge. Are we ready for this? I do not know. We will be working on getting more information on the resources required for such a project in the coming months. We will also be looking at ways to get input from the members on just how the Co-op should look at expansion. Are there other places we could move? Should we open another store? There are lots of possibilities, which is always a good thing. ¶

### **Board of Directors Update** *Bryan O'Hara*

Our Annual Meeting has just passed and was a well attended, fun event. Members came and asked questions and expressed their concerns to the Board for which we are grateful. We plan on a review and responses to them in a future article. The Annual Meeting is our most direct place for communication between the Board and the general membership; please try to attend this meeting in the future. At the meeting were the standard Board presentations about our activities as well as the re-election of Board Members. Thanks to Kathleen, our Board President, for running such a successful meeting. Oh, and the band, Poor Old Shine, was excellent: great old-time tunes for everyone's enjoyment.

The Board is continuing to examine expansion ideas and opportunities. With the continued success in selling large volumes of products, the storefront is getting a little cramped, and some form of expansion definitely seems appropriate. The Board is very carefully and cautiously approaching this issue and laying the groundwork to make something possible.

Another area of Board work that is presently being examined is the structure of Board, staff, and membership relations.



Various models of structure are being worked with and examined, and hopefully progress here will allow the Co-op to function more effectively. As a reminder, the Board would like to hear from you, either at the monthly meetings or through our 'Notes to the Board' clipboard at the coffee area in the Co-op.

501C3 status is still being examined and slow, steady movement here seems to be happening. This may involve a more educational, community oriented wing of the Co-op, definitely a potential future bright spot for our Co-op.

Other, more mundane activities of course are always on the Board Agenda and of course the agenda is always completely overflowing, so thank you all for your patience, and for making our Co-op what it is.

### **Co-operation Among Cooperatives: Stronger Together** *Patty Smith*

Can you name the Seven Cooperative Principles, the guidelines co-ops use as a framework to help us achieve our individual missions? Here they are:

- Voluntary and open membership
- Democratic member control
- Member economic participation
- Autonomy and independence
- Education, training and information
- Co-operation among cooperatives
- Concern for community

These principles inform how we govern ourselves and do business here at the Willimantic Food Co-op (WFC), and they guide co-ops of all sizes, across all sectors, around the world. Co-ops are working hard to spread the message that co-ops are good for people and that they make good business sense. The global cooperative movement is huge, with close to **one billion** individual co-op members worldwide. In the U.S. alone, there are nearly 30,000 co-ops with 305.6 million individual members. The [International](#)

[Cooperative Alliance \(ICA\)](#) estimates that one in four Americans is a member of at least one co-op.<sup>1</sup> Did you know you were part of such a large community of fellow co-operators? It is clear from these statistics that co-ops are in a position to have a significant, positive impact on our world, socially, economically, and environmentally.

The potential for that impact increases exponentially when co-ops actively practice the sixth cooperative principle: co-operation among cooperatives. WFC is doing this more and more each year. Many of the products on our shelves come from co-ops: coffee, chocolate, and bananas from Equal Exchange, body care products from Co-op 108, and dairy products from Organic Valley, to name a few. In addition to purchasing from co-ops, WFC is a member of several other co-ops, some of whom are also our vendors (Fedco and Frontier), and some of whom provide business services, support, increased purchasing power, and peer-to-peer networking opportunities.

Organizations whose entire memberships are made up of other co-ops are called "secondary" co-ops. These organizations are created to provide support and resources to individual cooperatives. Some serve food co-ops specifically, and some serve any organization operating as a co-op, whether it be a credit union, energy cooperative, or cooperative farm. One of these secondary co-ops we belong to is called The Neighboring Food Co-ops Association ([www.nfca.coop](http://www.nfca.coop)). NFCA is a regional cooperative based in Vermont, made up of 30 food co-ops who are "working together toward a shared vision of a thriving regional economy, rooted in a healthy, just and sustainable food system and a vibrant community of cooperative enterprise." Our membership with NFCA provides us



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with invaluable opportunities to network and share resources with other regional food co-ops, while contributing to the strength of the co-op movement throughout New England and beyond. Another co-op we belong to, the Cooperative Grocers Network ([www.cgn.coop](http://www.cgn.coop)) is national organization that hosts an online community of North American food co-ops. This gives the board of directors, management, and staff of WFC access to discussion groups, consulting services, and an enormous library of documents that we reference to improve our daily operations and long-term visioning to better serve our membership.

The latest cooperative organization we have joined is called the [National Cooperative Grocers Association](http://www.ncga.coop) (NCGA). NCGA is a business services cooperative created and governed by managers of food co-ops with the goal of “unify[ing] natural food co-ops in order to optimize operational and marketing resources, strengthen purchasing power, and ultimately offer more value to natural food co-op owners and shoppers everywhere.”<sup>22</sup> Basically, this means that NCGA helps food co-ops better compete with the huge natural foods chains by negotiating deals with large national suppliers (mainly United Natural Foods) on our behalf, to get us better pricing on goods and services. In addition to cost of goods, NCGA also negotiates savings on credit card processing fees and other operational expenses, such as packaging materials and computer hardware and software.

These savings will allow us to gradually explore more competitive everyday pricing for our members and community shoppers. In the meantime, we will be starting a new bi-monthly sales program, called Co+op Deals. This is a promotional program through NCGA that will offer deeper discounts than we can currently offer on more items that you want to buy. The flyers (starting in June), will be headed with the NCGA logos, *Stronger Together* and *Co-op Deals*, and will feature products in all categories - most of which we regularly carry. Any products listed on the flyer that we do not carry can be special ordered at the sale price while the sale is on. For the first few months we will be experimenting with ways to integrate our current sale

flyer program with the new Co+op Deals program, so we appreciate your patience while we figure it all out. Your feedback is always welcome, too!

Aside from the financial benefits, our new cooperative relationship with NCGA promises other great things for our co-op. In addition to strengthening the purchasing power of member food co-ops, NCGA helps to amplify our collective voice in support of social and environmental causes that are important to us, such as Non-GMOs, the Farm Bill, and fair trade standards. NCGA currently represents 134 retail food co-ops nationally which operate 170 stores in 36 states with combined annual sales of \$1.5 billion. This does not come close to the revenue or presence of chains like Whole Foods and Trader Joe’s, but it certainly improves the visibility and potential of food co-ops as a force to be reckoned with. Representatives from each of these member co-ops gather throughout the year in various settings to work together, identifying common goals, figuring out solutions to common problems, and sharing lessons learned in the areas of governance (boards of directors), operations (management and staff), and membership (you!). NCGA is staffed by a crew of experienced and creative people, each of whom is a specialist in one or more areas of the retail food cooperative model, from member services to produce to IT to finance.



The United Nations declared 2012 the International Year of Cooperatives, and now the [International Cooperative Alliance](http://www.internationalcooperativealliance.org) has drawn up a [Blueprint for a Cooperative Decade](http://www.internationalcooperativealliance.org/blueprint). The vision of the Blueprint is for the cooperative business model to become by 2020 (from the ICA’s website):

- The acknowledged leader in economic, social and environmental sustainability
- The model preferred by people
- The fastest growing form of enterprise

It is exciting to be a part of such a widespread movement with potential for making a huge positive impact in the world, while at the same time improving

our very own beloved Co-op. “Think globally, act locally” is a mantra that so many of us have plastered across our car bumpers and our personal philosophies since it was coined decades ago. In my experience, belonging to a food co-op is one of the best demonstrations of that idea. The Willimantic Food Co-op is a beautiful and unique representative of a larger cooperative movement, and we hope to keep on co-operating for decades to come.

1. For more co-op statistics check out these websites:  
<http://ica.coop/>  
<http://strongertogether.coop/food-coops/co-op-faqs-and-facts/>  
<http://nfca.coop/>
2. <https://www.ncga.coop/about>

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### Winky's Food Review *Winky Gordon*

Preparing for this Food Review has been like being a detective reading the gossip columns; there is just so much to sift through. I will try not to forget the foods themselves, as I report what I have learned about the various definitions, and controversy over the term “Fair Trade.” The items reviewed are: Equal Exchange’s Panama Extra Dark chocolate bar (\$3.79 /3.5 oz. bar); Taza Chocolate’s Chocolate Mexicano (\$4.69 /2.7 oz package of 2 discs); Honest Tea’s Black Forest Berry (\$1.79/16 fl. oz. bottle); Teeccino’s French Roast Organic herbal coffee ( \$4.99/ 10 tea bags)

“Fair Trade.” Everyone is for fair trade, aren’t they? There is probably no one who would claim that they are for unfair trade. Even Starbucks has a line of coffees that are fair trade. So what does Fair Trade actually mean? Depends on who is saying it! Equal Exchange (a cooperative out of West Bridgewater, MA) maintains that only those products that provide social, economic, and environmental benefits to *small* farmers can be accurately identified as fair trade. They contend that it is inaccurate to apply the term to plantation growers, who have an unfair advantage over small farms. Equal Exchange, as a trading organization, engages in fair trade. Their business is structured around the principles of fair trade, it’s not just about a specific product.

There is, however, a specific product of theirs that

I am testifying about: Equal Exchange’s Panama Extra Dark (80% cacao content) chocolate bar. Eating good chocolate is a sort of religious experience and it certainly makes one a happier person. People around you might even say it makes you a nicer person. This is the real stuff, no fluff here. Milk chocolate lovers beware – this is not for you. It is made with organic chocolate liquor, organic raw cane sugar, organic cocoa butter, and organic ground vanilla beans. The inside of the wrapper lets you know just where these ingredients came from and features a photo of some of the farmers who grew the cacao. Chocolate this dark might put hair on my chest, but who cares? It is strong, dark, and good looking.



Contrast the above with Taza Chocolate and be surprised, and further educated. What is remarkable to me is how much more intense this chocolate is than the Panama Extra Dark, even though it is 70% dark, vs. 80%. I attribute this to the absence of cacao butter and vanilla. The two ingredients: organic cacao beans, organic cane sugar. It is kind of gritty, bumping up the intensity factor. This chocolate means to put hair on your chest. The first time I bought it, I used it for making kick butt hot chocolate. This time, I just ate it, loving every gritty bite. Here is an important warning, though: it is a really bad idea to eat strong, dark chocolate at night time, unless you do not want to sleep. We carry several other flavors, including chili and cinnamon.

The Taza people are in Somerville, MA, where they have a chocolate factory. Their packaging has the logo Direct Trade, their own certification system. Their mission is to develop “direct, sustainable and equitable



relationships with producers of high quality products,” and to buy only from suppliers with “fair and humane work practices.” They pay high rates to suppliers of certified organic products who engage in “sustainable practices.” (There is another word I am suspicious of – sustainable. It gets thrown around way too often, by sometimes questionable sources.) So they have their own version of fair trade, with their own imprint. The Taza web site has lots of information, as does the one for Equal Exchange.

This next product, Honest Tea, comes with real bumner news: it is owned by Coca-Cola®, not exactly a beacon of fair trade. This is an example of how a subsidiary’s product can be labeled fair trade, regardless of the unfairness of the parent corporation. This says “sleazy” to me. And, perhaps not surprisingly, the certifier of Honest Tea’s fair trade credibility is Fair Trade USA, who left Fair Trade International and changed their definition of fair trade. In doing so, they included large scale plantations and decreased the participation of farmers in the organization’s governance. Equal Exchange’s site (which goes into depth about the split and its implications) reports that a motive for this change was to increase supply and ease of access to products. It acknowledges the challenges of working within strict parameters and the smaller pool of suppliers but maintains that Fair Trade USA’s standards are not fair.

All of that said, I like Honest Tea’s products. Me and Barack Obama. The Honest Tea web site states


that the White House refrigerator is stocked with Black Forest Berry and Green Dragon teas. One of the most attractive things about these teas is that they are, generally, not nearly as sweet as most similar products.

A 16 oz bottle of the Black Forest Berry has 16 grams of sugar, as opposed to 24+ in other teas. This is one I turn to when I am thirsty, want a treat, and do not want caffeine. It is made with purified water (which means what, exactly?), organic cane sugar, organic hibiscus, organic blackberry leaves, berry flavoring, organic blueberry powder and organic raspberry powder. Note that only one of the

seven ingredients – the hibiscus- is Fair Trade Certified, yet the product label implies that all ingredients are. And here is a note on marketing to your customer: our Honest Tea products come in glass bottles, while in convenience stores they are packaged in plastic. We carry several flavors, including Lori’s Lemon and Community Green. Despite its icky business ties, I recommend Honest Tea for a reasonably priced, not overly-sweet refreshing drink.

I was first introduced to Teeccino years ago when looking for an acceptable coffee substitute. Back then, there was only one flavor and it was sold loose, like tea. Now you can buy Teeccino in *tee-bags*, making it super easy to use and to carry in your purse. It also comes in various flavors, including mocha and chocolate mint. The French Roast hits those “deep coffee notes,” satisfying the craving for low, dark flavor, and is complemented by milk and honey, if you are that






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kind of tea or coffee drinker. It contains the following organic ingredients: carob, barley, chicory, ramon nuts and “natural coffee flavor.”

The ramon nuts, from Guatemala, are high in potassium and are “produced in partnership with ForesTrade,” who have their own fair trade standards. ForesTrade was founded in 1996 and has headquarters in both Brattleboro, VT and the Netherlands. In support of rainforest preservation, and the use of organic farming, they sell “sustainably produced tropical spices, vanilla beans, essential oils, fair trade coffee.” Part of their mission is to work directly with farmers, to support cultural preservation, and community socio-economic development. Here is another form of doing fair trade business, but without certification from any outside organizations.

If you want more info on the nuances of “fair trade,” and who claims what, go to the website of the Fair Trade Resource Network. In the mean time, know that how you spend your food dollars has ramifications way beyond what you put in your mouth. It is a complex, ever-changing world, with so much beyond our control. One thing we can control, though, is how we behave towards the people in our lives. Think about what “fair” means to you and how you put it into action. Be fair and be well, Co-ops! 🌱



*We don't  
know  
what  
variety  
it is, but  
we do  
love it!*

## From the GROW Windham Garden Patch// What's GROWing in Windham? *Sally Milius*

Windham is a great place to collaborate. Each time we reach out to community partners with a new idea to promote access to healthy food, the response is the same: “How can we help?” In this supportive climate, it is no wonder that over the past year GROW Windham has been able to take root and branch out in new directions.

GROW Windham is a collaboration of community partners led by the Co-op that supports community food projects, community gardens, and youth engagement with the food system. We were excited this past year to be invited to join the Windham Regional Community Council as one of their programs. It is a great fit: WRCC started the Willimantic Farmers Market back in 1975, and has been actively helping Windham residents to help themselves in a wide range of capacities since then. WRCC has been an enormous source of support, providing fiscal sponsorship for grants, program infrastructure, and a home base for staff and supplies.

With that foundation, we have been able to engage staff and build new programs. You may have seen Kate Callahan around the Co-op in her purple “FoodCorps” t-shirt. She is our FoodCorps Service Member, and her job is to connect Windham kids with healthy food. She works in the schools and with community youth programs to maintain youth and school gardens, teach nutrition education, and source local food to the school cafeterias. She has been the driving force behind the expansion of our youth programming this year. The numbers are exciting: 650 kids – nearly



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20% of the youth in Windham -- participated in GROW Windham programs this past year. We are now working in all six of the Windham Public Schools, as well as multiple community-based youth programs, including Windham Youth Services' Positive Steps Program, the Village Heights Community Center, and the Town of Windham Summer Camp. The Coop has supported FoodCorps by contributing to the cash match required for the program, as well as donating ingredients for cooking instruction. Alice even convinced UNFI to provide a \$375 cash match for the Co-op's contribution!



To assist Kate and promote other community food projects, we have established programming for university students as well. UConn Allied Health and Sociology interns have worked with us on long-term projects this year, and at ECSU, we developed a service-learning component for their "Geography of Food" course -- instead of writing research papers, students served and reflected on projects supporting the WAIM Community Garden, the Covenant Soup Kitchen, the Willimantic Farmers Market, and GROW Windham youth programs. Along with providing support for the Windham food system, these connections have expanded learning opportunities for the university students as well. And as an added bonus, the Co-op has created a "thank you" voucher program that provides a \$10 voucher at the Co-op for students and community members who serve at least 10 hours in area community gardens.

These community gardens not only provide opportunities for education and youth development, but also grow a lot of food for the area's neediest residents. GROW Windham supports the WAIM Community Garden in Lauter Park, that donates nearly 1000 pounds of produce each season to the Covenant Soup Kitchen and the ACCESS Food Bank. With support from the Rotary Club of Willimantic and the Town of Windham

Conservation, Open Space and Agriculture Commission (and a lot of Johnnie Walker's time and expertise!), we are building a new equipment shed and outdoor classroom over at the garden. This space will enable the garden to develop much more consistent and meaningful programming for both youth groups and the community. We are also supporting ECSU's new Community Education Garden by coordinating a program that connects Windham High School students with ECSU volunteers to maintain the garden together. Co-op members may earn working member discounts for hours spent helping to maintain these gardens.

In addition to FoodCorps and university connections, the Co-op is supporting GROW Windham to bring a VISTA volunteer to Windham next year as part of the Connecticut Youth Food Justice Corps VISTA Program. This is a new partnership with UConn Extension, the Hartford Food System, FRESH New London, CitySeed, the New Haven Food Policy Council, and Middletown's North End Action Team. This VISTA will work with students from Windham High School and ECSU to research community food needs and priorities, and then develop and implement projects to address them. The VISTA will also assist GROW Windham in the coordination of a local Community Food Advisory Council, comprised of local residents, who will help guide VISTA youth work as well as local food justice initiatives.

If you are interested in donating to or getting involved with any of GROW Windham's programs, please contact Sally Milius at [sally.milius@wrcinc.org](mailto:sally.milius@wrcinc.org). 🌱

**Helen's HABA Review** *Helen Scanlon*  
Happy spring, dear Co-op-ers!

I reviewed two brand-new products for this issue—Rainbow Light Allergy Rescue supplement, and Organic Essence Organic Shea Cream.



Let us start things off with Rainbow Light Allergy Rescue—as I know, some of you may be suffering under a dusting of tree pollen right now. It is a mighty fine supplement, meant to ease the discomfort of seasonal allergies. I will let their informative website speak---look at all the cool stuff Allergy Rescue has in it:

Vitamin C, Vitamin B-6, Vitamin B-5 and Magnesium are a power pack of vitamins and minerals that promote overall immune health when the body is run down by fighting off allergens. AllerEase Botanical Blend is Rainbow Light's own combination of five herbal ingredients that help soothe allergy symptoms:

Eyebright, also called Euphrasia, is an herbaceous flowering plant that has been used historically to support irritations affecting the eye. Eyebright is also used to reduce irritation commonly associated with airborne pollen.

Xanthium Fruit, also called Cocklebur Fruit, is not actually a fruit, but is a seed pod. It is edible and has a history of use in Chinese herbal medicine to promote the body's reaction to irritants that cause sinus congestion, nasal discharge and respiratory discomfort. It is also used *for headaches that may be caused by sinus congestion.*

*Peppermint Oil has been used to reduce sinus pain and pressure. It can also help soothe irritated mucus membranes and open nasal passages.*

*Stinging Nettle, a flowering plant, has a long history of providing respiratory support during allergy season. When the leaves are washed which removes the stinging needles, the leaves are edible and often are used to make a tea to help reduce common irritations of hay fever, specifically sneezing and itchy eyes.*

*Licorice is a sweet-tasting root that has been used in Chinese herbal medicine which can help soothe a sore throat that can occur in allergy sufferers during allergy season.*

*Quercetin is a plant derived flavonoid naturally*

*found in fruits, vegetables, black and green tea, and even some variations of honey. Studies show it may help nasal passages that are irritated and inflamed by airborne pollen.*

~ From [Rainbowlight.com](http://Rainbowlight.com)

Sounds kinda great, huh? Well, it is. I took this supplement and I felt great. It is not a quick fix or an allergy pill, but it designed to support your body's natural ability to fight off allergens. Remember, the products in HABA are not meant to cure or diagnose any disease or condition, so if your allergies are really severe, please consult your doctor.

Now, on to my little obsession: skin products! If you are looking for a real solution to dry skin, look no further than the co-op's HABA aisle. For real. Thanks to Cari, the HABA guru, I discovered something that is kinda magical: Organic Essence Organic Shea Cream. I tested the bright and sparkly-smelling lemongrass/mint. Just a pea-sized drop from the biodegradable jar and you will notice that even your sandpaper elbows will feel like the cheek of a laughing angel. Goodness, who writes this stuff? Me, when I try Organic Essence Shea Cream. Don't believe me? Try it and you will be writing sappy prose in no time at all.



I imagine this jar will last me for about a decade or so, because truly—only a wee bit gets the job done. And when the magic is all used up, throw the jar on the compost pile. No plastic here.

The lemongrass/mint is really nice, too. I cannot recommend this new product highly enough! Perfect for dry gardener's hands, and it smells like summer.

Until next time, remember to keep your feet on the ground and your hands in the jar of Organic

## **Bulk Update** *Jon Campo*

As I write this, the outlook for much of the 2013 crop season is mixed, which is still a nice change from the last few years. I'll start with the bad: the unofficial word I hear is that there is a serious bee problem out west (and everywhere else for that matter), so I would expect another scarce almond crop. I am now out of the raw organic almonds for the season, but we do have some raw conventional almonds in stock while they last. In other nut news, we are expecting more native pecans soon (the small ones). I think these will permanently replace the large southern pecans in the department as they just don't keep well once they are shelled. I think Markus will get them in produce in the fall. Also new are Cajun cashews from Teirra Farm, because you asked for them.



For the first time in years we are getting raw ahini in bulk. It comes from Lebanon, so it isn't cheap, but we do sell a lot of it in jars, and it is still cheaper in bulk. I just ordered a new Muesli from Wildtime Foods called 'Wildberry Muesli,' I think is really good. I love their 'Swiss Muesli' and apparently many of you do too; pretty soon we are going to have to start stocking it with shovels. We also have new trail mix from Grandy Oats called 'Super Raw Trail Mix' with coconut, goji berries, sunflower seeds, raisins, golden berries, and raw cacao nibs. All raw.

I cannot get basmati rice in consistently, and I do not think the grocery department can either, so it might be a while before we see that again. Also, I cannot get several of the dark chocolate-covered items that we have had for years. Some are discontinued (dark chocolate apricots, dark chocolate walnuts), and some are from a supplier that has had too many quality control issues- we just cannot deal with them anymore. Sorry. I have had a lot of requests for 'sprouting seeds' and some complaints from shoppers about our selection in

this area. The fact is that all our distributors have discontinued sprouting seeds. I wish I could get more. We ordered some in packages a few years ago when we could still get those, and it was a disaster. Nobody bought them. We threw them all out. The ironic thing is that I sprout more than anyone I have ever known. I have a quart of peas sprouted right now, in fact. Lentils, peas, mung beans and alfalfa are in a heavy rotation at my house. I guess I never knew enough to want to sprout fancy, hard to find things. I do know that there is an online store

called 'Sproutman.com' that will not return our phone calls or emails, but you can try them. Having said that, if you do want something you do not see in our bulk department, or better yet, if you are away and spot something in another store that you like, please do let us

know, and I will try to get it. I got a phone call a few weeks ago from a nice lady who read my last article and says her son will sell me some dry beans from his farm in New Hampshire. Good work and thanks! See you around the bulk aisle. 🌱



Colchester Bakery has delivered their last loaves of bread to the Willimantic Co-op. They have closed their bakery after 66 years in business. We are sad to see them go and will fondly recall the years of carrying their bread on our shelves. 🌱

## The Year of Quinoa Shandra Craig

2013 has been declared the international year of Quinoa by the United Nations <http://www.fao.org/quinoa-2013/en/>. What is Quinoa? Quinoa or quinoa (*Chenopodium quinoa*) is native to the Andes Mountains of Bolivia, Chile, and Peru. This crop (pronounced KEEN-WAH), has been called “vegetable caviar” or Inca rice, and has been eaten continuously for 5,000 years by people who live on the mountain plateaus and in the valleys of Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Chile. Quinoa means “mother grain” in the Inca language. It was a staple food of the Inca people and remains an important food crop for their descendants, the Quechua and Aymara peoples who live in rural regions.



It is an annual species in the goosefoot family and is related to common lambsquarters (*Chenopodium album* L.), canahua (*C. pallidicaule* Aellen), and wormseed (*C. ambrosioides* L. *anthelminticum*). Possible hybrids between quinoa and common lambsquarters have been observed in Colorado. Quinoa is sometimes referred to as a “pseudocereal” because it is a broadleaf non-legume that is grown for grain unlike most cereal grains which are grassy plants.

It is highly nutritious. Eat one cup of quinoa (a single serving size), and

you’ll consume:

- 220 calories (70 percent carbs, 15 percent fat, 15 percent protein)
- 40 grams of carbohydrates (13 percent daily value)
- 8 grams of protein (16 percent of daily value)
- 3.5 grams of fat (5 percent daily value with no saturated fat)
- A glycemic load (blood sugar spike) of only 18 out of 250
- 5 grams of fiber (20 percent of daily value)
- 20 percent of daily value of folate (various forms of Vitamin B)
- 30 percent of magnesium daily value (beneficial for people with migraine headaches); 28 percent daily value of phosphorous; iron (15 percent); copper (18 percent); and manganese (almost 60 percent)



Quinoa is not without controversy. Several articles came out at the beginning of the year decrying western demand for the seed was out-pricing the crop from the diets of the Bolivian people that grow it. The rising demand for quinoa is indeed contributing to higher prices, which have tripled in the last six years.

This does have a huge impact on regional economies, food supply, and land usage. So what is the co-op consumer to do? Read up, and decide for yourself: informed choice is always a good place to start 🌱



## QUINOA-BLACK BEAN PATTIES

You can make all kinds of changes/substitutions to these patties; as long as you get to the right consistency in the end, they should cook up well and taste great.

Once cooled, the patties will keep for several days in the fridge and for 2-3 months in the freezer—so great when you need a healthy dinner but do not feel like cooking!

### Ingredients:

2 cups quinoa, cooked, which will yield about 2 ½ cups once cooked.

4 eggs, lightly beaten

1 cup cooked black beans

½ cup bread crumbs

½ cup minced onion

½ cup queso fresco, crumbled

¼ cup cilantro, chopped

2 cloves garlic, minced

1 tsp. cumin

1 tsp. baking powder

½ tsp. salt

olive oil

Saute the onion and garlic in a bit of olive oil until translucent. Set aside to cool. Combine the quinoa, eggs, beans, bread crumbs, cilantro, cumin, & salt. Mix well before adding the cooled onion and garlic. Allow the mixture to sit for a few minutes before gently adding in the cheese.

Your mixture should, at this point, be wet enough to clump together in your hands but dry enough to have some structure. If you need to, adjust the consistency by adding more bread crumbs or another egg. You can also use flour, water, or broth. Err on the moist side, as this will prevent your patties from becoming too dry when cooked.

You can cook the patties one of two ways—in the oven or in a skillet. The pan allows for more browning, but the oven makes it easier to cook a large batch.

For the oven, heat to 400°F. Form the patties to your desired size, making each one about 1-inch thick. Use a little olive oil to grease the baking sheet before sliding the patties into the oven. Bake for 15-20 minutes on one side, then flip and bake another 5 minutes to brown the other side.

In the skillet, heat some olive oil over medium heat. Add as many patties as you can fit and still be able to flip

them—cook for 8-10 minutes, or until the bottoms have browned. Flip the patties and cook for another 7-8 minutes on the other side.

Serve patties with some sliced avocado, sour cream, or your favorite fresh salsa. 🌿



Stop and enjoy the Co-op's front garden. Every year new annuals are planted, and the garden changes daily as new flowers bloom and plants mature.

Thank you to Alice Rubin, Bruce Oscar, and Dianne Virga for all their work!

The majority of roses in the front are Knock out hybrids. We don't know what exactly the peach variety is, but we do know that it smells amazing. Do stop and smell it while it blooms. 🌿