



The Compost

WILLIMANTIC

Vol. 36, Number 2

Fall 2014

FOOD

CO•OP

**91 Valley Street
Willimantic, CT 06226
860.456.3611**

info@willimanticfood.coop

www.willimanticfood.coop

STORE HOURS:

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

Sunday
9:00am - 6:00pm

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Co-op Scoop *Alice Rubin*

Yesterday was the Board's yearly retreat with our Cooperative Board Leader Development consultant Todd Wallace. It was a long and somewhat overwhelming day, filled with optimism and excitement. Our focus was, once again, expansion. We talked about expansion at our Board retreat last year, as well as at our Annual Meeting in April, and I am sure that many of you have heard something through the rumor mill.

You might be wondering why we are talking about expanding. We have only been in our current location for a little more than eight years—not very long considering the amount of time, energy and money that went into our beautiful store. And, it is a beautiful store that is serving our member-owners and shoppers quite well. And, staying here at least several more years is certainly possible. We can get more creative in the use of our backroom space. We can manage our inventory more closely. We can rent an office nearby to use for meetings. While none of these things are ideal, they are possible. What won't be possible are the additional services that we hear member-owners want – a café, a juice bar, prepared foods, a teaching kitchen, organic chicken feed, freshly ground flour...

We are trying to be proactive in this regard. There is no realistic way to expand in our current space, and an appropriate space – at least 11,000 square feet and excellent parking adjacent to the store – is not easy to come by in Willimantic. When we do find that space, owning the building seems to make good sense. The Co-op is committed to Willimantic – let's invest in it.

So, we are starting the process now by identifying potential properties, making a list of needs, and considering the input we have received from our member-owners in terms of desires. We have started to do some financial forecasting to see what we will need to come up with in terms of cash, and where that might come from. We are dreaming big.

We will keep you in the loop as things develop. We hope that you will understand when we cannot speak as freely as we would like – specifics of real estate transactions often need to be kept confidential to protect our bargaining position. Any ideas or input you have regarding this issue would be most welcome. As member-owners, we need to know what your vision of the coop is a few years down the road. You can email me at alice.rubin@willimanticfood.coop or talk to me anytime in person or by phone. Or, contact any Board member; their contact info is posted in the store to the left of the coffee pots, as well as on our website, www.willimanticfood.coop.

In the meantime, things continue to go well at the Co-op. The staff are working hard and many loose ends are getting tied up, making the

Willimantic Food Co-op

General Manager

Alice Rubin

Management Team

Penny Barton-Zuckerman

Financial Manager

Kristin Fortier

Front End Manager

Mark Giangrave

Produce Manager

Bruce Oscar

Facilities Manager

Steve Scanlon

Grocery Manager

Patty Smith

Operations Manager

Staff

Sasha Bajjo-Fournier

Jason Borga

Jonathan Campo

Susan Chasin

John Clark

Chris Demorit

Chris Dubis

Chad Dunnack

Avery Gratton

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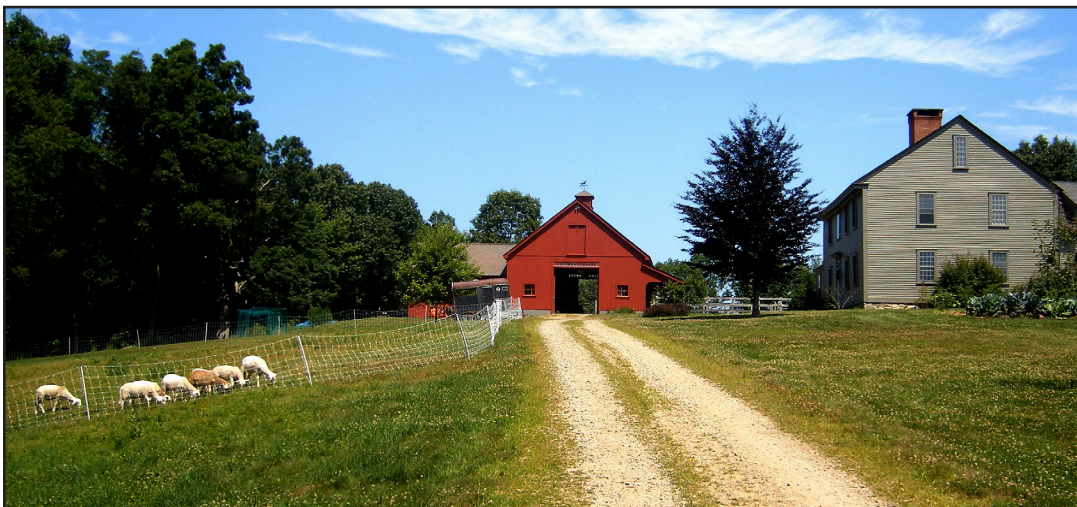
Co-op as efficient as possible. We are all making efforts to look forward, not just maintaining what we have. Some of these projects include –

- Visiting local farms
- Reviewing our member-owner benefits package
- Updating our logo
- Reviewing our prices and pricing structure
- Setting up our new membership scan cards

All of us that work at the Co-op are working hard to run the Co-op well, and with you, the member-owners in mind. We are here working for you. 🌱

Alice Rubin is currently General Manager of the Willimantic Food Coop, and has worked here since 1984.

Co-op Tours Woodstock Sustainable Farms *Matthew Woodward*



Food is all about personal choice and preference. Cooperative members will agree that understanding where our food comes from is just as important as what we eat. We all connect with food daily, so finding ways to close the gap between consumer and farmer means easier access to local and sustainable food. Following the cooperative principle of education, we (as staff) seek to learn more about the products the Co-op carries so that we can all make better food choices. To put this principle into action we have started visiting our local farms to gain a hands-on sense of the farms that provide a good portion of what we carry here at the Co-op. The first, in what will hopefully be a series of farm tours, took place at Woodstock Sustainable Farms, further north of our quiet corner.

In mid-June we visited Woodstock in advance of moving our meat supply out into the freezer section of the store. The primary goal of the tour was to learn about their chicken raising process. We wanted to make sure their standards matched our own before we decided to carry their chicken. Along the way, we discovered an inspired, young-and-upcoming farm.

Woodstock Sustainable Farms raises their Jumbo Cornish X Rock chickens on thirteen acres of beautiful Connecticut farmland. Chicks spend their first three weeks inside the barn in a brooder box of wood shavings with free choice of grass

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Eden Foods & the Affordable Care Act

Alice Rubin

I've been contacted by several members asking about Eden Foods and their objection to a provision of the Affordable Care Act that requires companies, if they choose to offer health insurance to their employees, to include coverage of a wide array of contraceptive choices. On March 20, 2013, Eden Foods filed suit against Health & Human Services, which administers the Affordable Care Act, for the right to opt out of contraceptive coverage for its employees. Eden Foods is among roughly seventy companies who have filed court cases objecting to contraceptive coverage based on religious objections.

It has been my experience that our membership comes from very diverse backgrounds with very different values. We have found a (mostly) common ground based on food. I have chosen not to boycott Eden Foods, based on an unknown percentage of members who don't want to support a company for a specific reason. If enough members decide that they don't want to support a company and stop buying that product, sales will drop, and the Co-op will in turn, drop that product due to poor sales.

It seems a bit cumbersome, but that is all I have at the moment. Any ideas of different ways to handle these types of issues are welcome. ♣

Participate: Own, Use, Serve, Belong

Patricia Smith

How often do you shop at the Co-op? How well does the Co-op meet your needs? How do you help the Co-op meet the needs of other member-owners, shoppers, and the community? Have you ever attended a board meeting, annual meeting, or served on a committee? Do you come to the Birthday Party, Downtown Country Fair, or Film Nights? Have you purchased your entire share of equity at \$120? Do you feel a sense of well-being and belongingness when you spend time at the Co-op? What is your vision for the future of the Co-op?

As you ponder these questions, I encourage you to think about your answers in terms of your participation in the Co-op. Being a member-owner of the Willimantic Food Co-op offers you a unique opportunity to work in common purpose with

others to meet a set of economic, social, and cultural needs. Identifying common needs and figuring out how to meet them were the impetus for the formation of the Co-op in the first place, and the ability to adapt to an evolving world and marketplace has kept the Co-op going and growing for thirty-four years. What does the future hold for the Willimantic Food Co-op? The only certain answer is that the continuation of this organization depends upon the dedicated participation of its member-owners, staff, shoppers, and community members. We are all stakeholders in the Co-op, and our participation is the driving force in its success.

Back in the spring, several board members and I attended the "Cooperative Café" in Keene, NH, a day-long workshop put on by the Cooperative Development Services consulting group (CDS), hosted by Monadnock Food Co-op, and attended by staff and board members from food co-ops all over New England and New York. At this workshop we were introduced to a new context in which to consider current and potential participation in our own co-ops.

...the continuation of this organization depends upon the dedicated participation of its member-owners, staff, shoppers, and community members. We are all stakeholders in the Co-op, and our participation is the driving force in its success...



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What's GROWing in Windham? *Sally Milius*

Come by the Willimantic Farmers' Market on a Saturday morning, and you'll have the chance to see our community's newest farmers – the "Squash Squad", selling the produce they've grown in gardens all around town. They are part of GROW Windham's year-round youth program, the Windham Youth CORE, through which high school students develop leadership and community-building skills while promoting access to healthy food throughout the community.

The Youth CORE is in its second year, expanding in all directions, thanks to the dedication of GROW Windham's CT Food Justice Youth Corps VISTA Service Members, James Boyle and Ricardo Alavez. They've brought on ECSU and UConn interns to support the program, which enables us to double enrollment and expand programming. Members are diverse, from five area high schools, with a wide range of skills and interests that they cultivate in the program. In addition to growing produce for donation and to sell at the Willimantic Farmers' Market, members mentor K-4 kids from the Town of Windham Summer Camp in the Lauter Park Community Garden, develop recipes to include with the produce they sell, and participate in outreach projects throughout the community. During the school year, the Youth CORE works all over town in a variety of projects that support the Covenant Soup Kitchen, the No-Freeze Hospitality Center, local community members, and the Windham Public Schools.

GROW Windham's programming in the Windham Public Schools goes far beyond the involvement of the Windham Youth CORE. Thanks to the

incredible efforts of Kate Callahan, our FoodCorps Service Member, over the past two years we have established classroom and afterschool programming in all of the five district elementary schools, involving over 500 students in long-term, food- and garden-based programming. Kate has collaborated with 13 classroom teachers to develop instructional units that have been so effective, they will be highlighted in the new curriculum that they are writing for the district, and she has been asked by the schools to stay on next year to keep working her magic. She will be supported by Bernadette Brandt, our new FoodCorps Service Member, who will be supporting all of our programs.

Finally, GROW Windham has branched out into the community as well, supporting events and projects to promote and celebrate healthy food. We sponsored a Rice and Beans Community Cookoff last winter, to choose a recipe for the Windham Public Schools. Millie Ortiz, a local chef, won, with her grandmother's sofrito recipe. In addition, in collaboration with the Willimantic Housing Authority, we have piloted a "satellite farmers' market" at the Ashton Towers Housing Complex, where local youth deliver produce from the market to seniors with limited mobility.

Behind all of these projects is the support of the Coop. The Coop was a founding member of GROW Windham, and has supported the program throughout its development. The Coop helps out directly with financial support: for the VISTA cost share, for ingredients for instruction and recipe development. The Coop also provides logistical support, connecting us with resources, supporting the planning of community events, and teaching program members to wash the market produce and store it in the Coop cooler.

For more information about GROW Windham, or to support our programs, please contact us at info@growwindham.org, or (860) 423-4534 x328. 🌱

Sally Milius is a former high school teacher who decided four years ago that school gardens are a lot more fun than classrooms, so she joined forces with the Co-op to found GROW Windham, a collaboration of community partners that promotes access to healthy food throughout the community.



What “Local, Unsprayed” Means to You

Markus Giangrave & Avery Gratton

If you have strolled through the produce department at the Co-op lately, you may have noticed an abundance of little yellow signs that read ‘local unsprayed,’ followed by a description of the produce item and the farm where it was grown. But, what does ‘local, unsprayed’ mean, anyhow? Why not simply label it ‘Organic,’ if that’s what it is?

The Co-op has used the term ‘local unsprayed’ for over twenty-five years. For us, it has always meant that the farm or grower has raised the fruits and veggies without the use of harmful chemicals, the important ones being synthetic insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, and fertilizers. These agents destroy many of the beneficial insects and microorganisms which help build healthy, biodynamic soil, and maintain plant vitality. Avoiding their use reduces soil erosion in addition to decreasing the amount of chemicals in groundwater.

These local farms practice farming the way growers had for centuries—before the agrichemical revolution in the United States. Their prime concern is building healthy soils which will yield flourishing crops. What began as a grassroots movement among small farmers to grow without chemical inputs gradually built to a national movement, to the point where a set of standards were established in legislation, and a label created to denote this way of farming, termed “Organic.”

The Organic label has since risen to a global scale with growers from Hawaii to New Zealand maintaining organic certification. This process comes with annual fees, farm inspections, and unending documentation on the part of the farmers, to record farm inputs and harvests.

A number of our local providers are certified organic, while others are not. For some, the demands of certification in time and fees are not cost effective for their businesses. Others do not feel that the federal organic standards jibe with their farm philosophy. We applaud those growers in our area who maintain organic certification, like Wayne Hansen, who has owned and operated the longest running organically certified farm in Connecticut, Wayne’s Organic Garden. We also work closely with growers

BASICS Update *Patricia Smith*

We now have BASICS items in three departments: Refrigerated, Bulk, and Supplements. The purpose of the BASICS program is to offer every-day, essential foods and other necessities at the lowest possible prices. There are currently close to one hundred items in the store designated as BASICS, and more are being added all the time. The program also has a new look, designed by Co-op member Amy Kalisher. Keep an eye out for the new graphic and signs, signaling where you can save money on high-quality staples for your fridge and pantry.

BASICS items are priced at an extremely low price point. In the dairy case, most BASICS are being sold at cost or just above. Because of this, we’ve decided that no additional discounts (senior or working member) will apply to dairy BASICS. At this time, all other BASICS items are still eligible for those discounts. Coupons and sale prices always apply to all BASICS items.

I also want to remind you that the BASICS program is just the first step in a much bigger plan to develop a new pricing structure for the whole store, the goals of which are:

- to improve our overall price perception and increase our competitiveness in the marketplace
- to better meet the ends (mission) of the Co-op: “...to provide nutritious, local, high quality, affordable foods and other products.”
- to allow us to explore ways to offer a needs-based “Food For All” discount to qualifying members.

And, your input is always welcome! 🌱

Patty Smith and is the Co-op’s Operations Manager. (See her full bio on page 8.) She can be reached via email at: patty.smith@willimanticfood.coop.



New BASICS graphic

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"I really enjoyed how the tour created a personal connection with farmers Will and Laura and it was nice to put a face to the people who supply the products we carry. It was great to hear about their willingness to grow and learn with us. Not to mention taking in the farm's beautiful landscape!" — *Saige*

clippings and conventional grain. From the barn they move to rotational pastures in pens 10' x 12' with room to roam inside electric poultry netting that deters predators. The pens and netting are moved twice daily to provide a fresh patch of grass. The chickens do not receive nitrates, steroids, antibiotics, or growth hormones. They do, however, get love from "chicken lady" Laura, care from farmer Will, and protection from a friendly polar bear sized dog named Shep.

The farm sits on conservation land under the care of the Wyndham Land Trust. The wooded land, complete with hiking trails, is interspersed with three large fields that pasture goats, lambs, cows, and laying hens in a rotation system.

The farm also grows several crops, from onions and potatoes, to kale and broccoli. Like any good farm, they make sure there is never a dull moment with a number of projects including a new Biochar system, and a promising Farm-to-Fork-at-Work program. Biochar is a charcoal-like product created from superheated (but not burned) wood that becomes a potent organic fertilizer. The Farm-to-Fork-at-Work is their home-cooked meal delivery service



"I enjoyed how thorough Will and Laura were in describing every step of raising their chickens. Baby chicks were warm, cozy, and clean. Laura mentioned how much they were loved, they even take care to never swear in front of the chicks! The fields where the grown chickens grazed were lush and green, good eating for sure."

— *Kristin*

that brings their farm's fresh food to the employees of nearby workplaces.

As of this writing, Woodstock Sustainable Farms supplies the Co-op with conventional whole frozen chickens, but we expect this to be a growing relationship. We are working with them in hopes of procuring chicken that has been fed certified organic grain. We hope to carry their pastured eggs and prepared meals if and when possible. By sharing knowledge and contacts, we are creating a stronger network of local farms and businesses. From here we strive to grow with Woodstock Sustainable Farms, as well as all the other local farms that provide us with farm fresh food. The information gained from these tours will give everyone a better look into local food at the Co-op in order to foster a more informed and engaged community. 🌱

Matthew Woodward is the Grocery Coordinator at the Co-op. He's been at the Co-op for nearly three years and is responsible for all the aisle resets that keep you on your toes.



Winky's Food Review *Winky Gordon*

This month's food review features several Staff Picks: Organic Sunshine Burgers (\$5.79/package of 3), Delice de Bourgogne triple crème cheese (\$11.99/lb.), Lake Champlain Chocolates' salted caramel dark chocolate bar (\$3.99/ 3.25 oz. bar), (\$4.99/ 12 oz. bottle).

I am sitting at my desk, doing a bad thing, but it's good; I am eating and writing at the same time. I am chomping away on a barbecue flavored Sunshine Burger, Rita's Staff Pick. "Sautéed in coconut oil – the best," she says, although I sautéed it in lowly canola oil and it is plenty delicious. It's actually one of the best non-meat "burgers" I've had. It's made with the following organic ingredients: cooked brown rice, ground raw sunflower seeds, cooked pinto beans, rice syrup, onion, sea salt, black pepper, natural smoke flavor. It's not greasy, as is sometimes the case with veggie burgers. The outside crisps nicely in just a little time, contrasting with the otherwise soft texture. The combination of ingredients gives it a taste that has depth. And I actually like that barbecue thing, to my own surprise. You'll notice that this burger meets the gluten and soy free criteria and is vegan. We also carry garden herb and Southwest varieties of the Sunshine Burger.

Next on the list is Avery's most-decadent pick: the "It's better than butter" Delice de Bourgogne triple crème cheese from Fromagerie Lincet in the Burgundy region of France. This soft, not-very-stinky cheese is made from cow's milk and crème fraîche and has a 75% fat content – practically butter! It's tangy, salty, smooth all at once – a full on gustatory experience. It is rich, appealing, full bodied. If this cheese were a woman, she would be described as voluptuous. Get it and share it only with people you love.

About the Lake Champlain salted caramel dark chocolate Patty says, "OMG. Best. Chocolate. Ever." (Guess she liked it, eh?) I shared this and the next food with neighbors Joe and Mary Jo, to our mutual delight. What this chocolate lacks in cocoa content (only 57%; I like 75%+) it makes up for in the intensity of the caramel, which is enveloped in the

center. This is no wimpy, nice-for-your-kids caramel. This is hearty caramel that means to burn its sugar – it is dark and strong. The bar is made with chocolate liquor, sugar, cocoa butter, vanilla, heavy cream, sugar, rice syrup, water, salt, vanilla extract. Several ingredients are organic and "fair trade" certified. We agreed that this chocolate must be savored; to eat it mindlessly would be a culinary crime. It was beautifully paired with the Portuguese tawny port we drank. Check out the several other flavors, and sizes, of Lake Champlain chocolates that we carry.



"OMG. Best. Chocolate. Ever." — Patty

An interesting aside about Lake Champlain's Fair for Life certification: If you have been reading the notices around the Co-op, especially by the coffee bar, you are probably aware of the controversy surrounding the definition of "fair trade" – what practices it implies and who uses it. The Fair for Life certification examines chain of custody practices, from the initial materials used in making the product, through the trading of the product. It is an extensive application process with multiple criteria that must be met, although some of the language (e.g. "strives to") seems pretty watery to me. One of the most important characteristics of Fair for Life certification is that it accommodates plantation and estate growers, not just farmer owned, and endeavors that are "purchase contracted by private companies." The latter refers to products (such as Honest Tea) that are owned by larger businesses (such as Coca Cola). It's a pretty complicated world, and often not easy (or practical) to be a purist. The chocolate is damn good, whatever its certification.

The final product for review is the Appalachian Naturals' Ginger Miso salad dressing. Alice's endorsement of this product is clear: "The best." I will admit that I am not a big fan of bottled dressing; I'm pretty happy with my own. Although I ate and enjoyed it, I relied on Joe and Mary Jo for comments on this product. Here are some: "It is easy on the palate and throat...has no bite to it. It has a friendly, subtle taste, with a hint of the exotic. Smokey. For the mature palate." We all agreed that the list of clearly identifiable ingredients is a bonus (nothing we wondered about): non-GMO sunflower oil, water, ginger, organic miso, rice vinegar, sesame oil,

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2013 Treasurer's report *Joanne Todd*

The Willimantic Food Co-op had another high growth year in 2013. Sales grew 9.15% in 2013, after growing 12% in 2012. This is a lot of growth for our Co-op and continues to strain the capacity of our current location. The strength of 2013 sales led to another year of record-breaking net income -- \$159,251, which tops 2012 net income of \$149,224.

In a cooperative, what does this mean? You are an owner and your economic participation, both through your equity investment and shopping, has contributed to a successful, member-supported store. The Co-op is autonomous and locally owned--by you.

Making a strong net income also means that the Co-op is better able to carry out its mission and act on its values. Those values include being a good employer. The Co-op strives to pay a living wage to staff. In recognition of their role in the Co-op's success, staff also received bonuses of about three weeks' salary. The Co-op also demonstrated its con-

cern for community by supporting local charitable organizations with \$15,000 in donations.

Financial success also contributes to a sustainable Co-op. The Board of Directors is considering expansion options. When planning, it helps to know that our Co-op's financial resources and sales will sustain facility expenses which could include the purchase of a building.

At the end of 2013, total owner's equity was \$1,167,380, or 86% of assets, and cash was over \$500,000. With strong net income, cash position and a very solid equity balance, the Willimantic Food Co-op can move forward with confidence. 🌱

Joanne Todd grew up in Willimantic and lives in Scotland. She believes that the Food Coop is important to the Willimantic Community. She is privileged to serve on the Board and contribute to the coop's vitality. Joanne is President/CEO of Northeast Family Federal Credit Union, a member-owned financial cooperative where she began as a teller. She holds a BS in Accounting and a MBA from the University of Connecticut.

Willimantic Food Coop Statement of Financial Condition 12/31/2013				
	12/31/10	12/31/11	12/31/12	12/31/13
Assets				
Cash and Equivalents	351,191	151,001	301,432	510,800
Investment - Coop Fund of New England				50,000
Accounts Receivable	20,327	23,531	20,978	17,026
Inventory	204,104	211,819	231,460	224,553
Prepaid Expenses	4,355	4,684	8,165	8,415
Total Current Assets:	579,977	391,035	562,035	810,794
Fixed Assets				
Leasehold Improvements	429,481	413,964	395,939	379,764
Equipment/Fixtures	177,015	162,699	135,864	146,393
Other	547	200	-	
Total Fixed Assets:	607,043	576,863	531,803	526,157
Other Assets	15,479	17,249	18,340	23,828
Total Assets:	1,202,499	985,147	1,112,178	1,360,779
Liabilities and Owner's Equity				
Accounts Payable	66,267	75,275	86,102	98,539
Accrued Expenses	55,780	26,581	54,548	94,860
Member Loans - Long Term	224,350	91,000	-	-
Other Loans	91,342	1,631	-	-
Total Liabilities	437,739	194,487	140,650	193,399
Owner's Equity				
Paid in Member Equity	578,581	605,487	638,803	675,404
Donated Member Equity	3,657	3,657	3,657	3,657
Retained Earnings	182,522	181,516	329,068	488,319
Total Owner's Equity:	764,760	790,660	971,528	1,167,380
Total Liabilities and Owner's Equity:	1,202,499	985,147	1,112,178	1,360,779

The framework is designed to encourage and inspire co-op member-owners to actively engage in democratic business ownership while inspiring cooperative leadership and innovation. This approach is sometimes referred to as The Four Pillars of Participation:

Own—Use—Serve—Belong

Own. As member-owners, we have each made a financial investment in the Co-op in the form of equity. Because of this equal investment of capital, each of us has a say in the long-term strategic direction of the co-op. We are entitled to vote for the board of directors, attend annual meetings, and provide input about whether the Co-op is continuing to meet the needs of its member-owners.

Use. The Co-op exists to be used by its member-owners and others in the community. The store offers goods and services that members want, employment and volunteer opportunities, an outlet for local producers and vendors to sell their products, and a space for educational and community events. It is a

place to shop, work, gather, learn, and socialize. By using the Co-op in these ways, and offering feedback and ideas, we are participating daily in keeping the Co-op relevant to everyone who uses it.

Serve. By using the Co-op in these various ways, we are also serving the organization. Some of us work as employees, operating the store in

exchange for a paycheck and other benefits of employment. Some do working-member hours in exchange for a discount at the register. Some serve as board members and on committees, or volunteer specialized expertise and talent when the needs arise. Some lend or donate money when the co-op has to raise

funds for an expansion project. And in a broader sense, we can serve the Co-op just by getting out there and telling its story.

Belong. Whatever our individual reasons for joining the Co-op are, and however frequently we are able to participate – the result is that, as a member-owner, you belong to a community and a business enterprise that is driven by shared values, thrives on member participation at all levels, and strives to enhance the well-being of its stakeholders and the community at-large. And, in turn, the Co-op belongs to us.

Participation looks different for everyone, and each person has his/her own level of interest and ability to participate in the Co-op. Whether you participate daily by shopping or working at the co-op, or choose only to attend the annual meeting or special events, the critical thing is that we, as stakeholders, participate in ways that are meaningful for us and the Co-op. In this way, we will continue to build a shared understanding of why the Co-op exists and how to keep the Co-op moving toward a successful and vibrant future. 🌱

Patty Smith has been a member of the Co-op for 17 years, and has been on staff since 2007. She has served as Point of Sale Coordinator, Assistant Bookkeeper, HR Representative and is currently the Operations Manager. She lives in Storrs, with husband Andy and daughter Emma.

The Four Pillars of Participation:

Own
Use
Serve
Belong



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Helen's Wellness Review *Helen Scanlon*

Weleda is the Celtic goddess of wisdom and healing, and it's also the name of a German company with the same philosophy.

Founded in 1921 by Dr. Rudolf Steiner, Weleda uses the Biodynamic principles of farming and earth stewardship. Beauty starts with the farmer, with the earth, as beauty is not "something created in a lab" (from weleda.com). No pesticides, no chemicals, nothing tested on animals--just pure, honest ingredients that started their lives as green shoots poking out of the dirt.

Pretty great, huh?

I had a chance to try out Weleda's One-Step cleanser and toner for this issue's review. The bright, citrus-y lotion features olive oil soap and a touch of witch hazel extract to brighten and refresh normal to combination skin. Apply it to your face and neck with a washcloth or large cotton pad, avoiding the eyes, and rinse off. The layers of makeup, dirt and grime come right off revealing clean, refined and perfectly toned skin.

Grime? On your face? Heck yes! Your face collects dust, dirt, and allergens all day long. It turns into a black film invisible to the naked eye until you sweep this stuff over your face. Look at the cotton pad or washcloth afterwards. Yup. It's there! But, alas—now it's gone, never to clog things up and plop a pimple the size of Alaska on your face, or give you—gack, the terror of terrors--blackheads. None of that business for me, thanks—and I would imagine these are not a few of your favorite things, either. Weleda has the simple solution with this one-step product.

I reviewed this product in the summertime when my skin gets clogged up with sweat and sunscreen. Breakouts galore. Then, this. Then, no more breakouts. Like magic. Or, should we say, it's the power of plants.

The olive oil soap complements the witch hazel perfectly: excess oil is wiped away, pores are unclogged (zits, begone!), but your skin remains soft.

Well, I'm sold. Give Weleda's One-Step cleanser and toner a try, and see what I mean.

Go to www.weleda.com to find out more.

Until next time, be well, and treat yourself. 🌿

Helen Scanlon is the author/illustrator of *My Horse, My Heart: The Morgan Horses of the University of Connecticut (for sale at the Co-op)*. She is married to the Co-op's Grocery guru, Steve. They live in Hampton with their three cats, Skeeter, Big Boy and Mousekowitz.

LOCAL UNSPRAYED, continued from page 5

who are not certified organic; over time, we have developed trusting relationships, in order to maintain a clear understanding of growing practices which we feel are safe and sustainable. We trust their practices and honor them.

The Co-op provides a place for local farms to sell their produce throughout the entire year, while at the same time offering the Co-op shoppers a place to buy fresh, local/regional produce. There is relationship between our staff, members, and these farmers – some staff even get their hands dirty on these farms!!! At the end of the day, our main concern is the safety of our food that we provide for our families. We trust our farmers to grow and provide food that is safe for the people who consume it, and the earth used to farm it.

If you ever have any questions about food in our produce department, please speak to a staff member. We'd love to talk with you! 🌿

Mark (Markus) Giangrave is a 20-year Willimantic Food Co-op employee turned produce department manager dedicated to fostering an ever-stronger local agricultural community. Turn-ons include canoeing, fishing, and banjo. Turn-offs: humidity and mosquitoes.

Avery Gratton is a long-time produce enthusiast. Outside the co-op she enjoys the rewards of growing her own vegetables. She is determined to brew the perfect kombucha!

WINKY'S FOOD REVIEW, continued from page 5

xanthan gum. The label identifies the miso as being made locally, in Goshen MA. Surprisingly, this dressing is lower in fat than most of the other ones on the shelf. I would like to try this as a marinade for tofu or fish. Joe was even impressed with how the dressing flows out of the bottle, noting that it doesn't plug up the neck. (He had a lot to say about this product!)

That's it for now. See you soon, dear Co-ops, perhaps at the Downtown Country Fair? Eat well, and be kind to one another. 🌿

Winky Gordon has been a Co-op member since its incarnation as a Main Street store-front. She's so glad it's right down the road. Most of that time she has been a working member. As you probably know, she loves chocolate.

Have you heard about Kvass?

Sasha Bajjo-Fournier

Greetings fellow Willi Food Coop Members!

By now, you may be familiar with the high praise of fermented food products like kombucha, kimchi, and sauerkraut... but have you yet experienced the age-old wonder that is Kvass? There are two main kinds of this fermented beverage consumed on a regular basis by those who know and love its health benefits, and fortifying taste. Such a phrase may concern you, but rest assured, if you enjoy most fermented products,

you'll quickly fall in love with Kvass – just as I did! Grain Kvass originated in Russia during the Middle Ages, when Slavs began fermenting scraps of rye or wheat bread with water, salt, and some sort of yeast culture. Beet Kvass is traditional to the Ukraine, where beets, cabbage, and onions are added to homemade brine and fermented over a few days to a few weeks. With this Kvass, you get the myriad benefits beets have to offer, with the addition of naturally-grown probiotics (food enzymes), and b-vitamin rich yeast. Together, these amazing ingredients are known to aid the body by:

- Reducing inflammatory status in the body that can contribute to cardiovascular disease and diabetes.
- Cleansing and healing the liver by thinning out bile in the system.
- Promoting healthy stomach acid and juice production.
- Increasing the oxygen-carrying capacity of the blood.
- Promoting regularity and aiding digestion.

How does one make this fantastic Kvass? It's quite simple, actually! I scoured the internet for as many recipes as I could find to deduce the best tasting, and easiest Kvass to prepare. Many Beet Kvass enthusiasts note that adding whey to your brine is not necessary, though it may make your Kvass fer-

ment faster, and result in a more palatable flavor, if you are not as fond of fermented drinks. Using whey in your brine may also reduce the amount of salt you need to include. Another common practice is to use leftover brine from sauerkraut or kimchi. Some fermenters advise against using kombucha or water kefir, as your Kvass may get extra yeasty and slimy. So, without further ado, here's how to get started. Have fun, enjoy, and good health to you all!

Beet Kvass

2-quart glass jar

2-3 med beets,

chopped in 1" cubes

¼ cabbage, chopped

½ onion, chopped

2 Tablespoons sea salt

*Fresh or filtered water to cover
(not tap!)*

Place chopped onions, then cabbage in your glass jar. Top with beets. Add salt (you can add 1/8 cup whey in at this time if you wish to include it). Fill with fresh water, leaving an inch of air at the top of the jar. Close and leave in a cool, dark place for three to seven days. From here you can transfer your Kvass to the fridge where it can ferment longer and develop more flavor. You can also strain your Kvass into smaller containers, and reuse your beets two or three more times before starting over fresh. Don't forget to check your Kvass daily and release any excess carbonization that may build up in your jar as it ferments. Also, note that keeping your beets fully covered will prevent the growth of mold on the surface of your liquid besides the normal fermentation byproducts. 🌱



Beet Kvass made by Sasha

Beet Kvass made by Sasha

Sasha Bajjo-Fournier is a Floor Coordinator at the Coop. She enjoys gardening, and her current favorite Coop product is Dr. Bronner's Almond Soap- All One!

Sources:

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food

*free
admission*

games

music

*everyone
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