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# THE COMPOST

Vol. 38, Number 3 Holidays 2016

## STORE HOURS

Monday - Saturday  
9:00am - 8:00pm  
Sunday  
9:00am - 6:00pm

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## Co-op Scoop Alice Rubin

**This building buying thing is quite an adventure.** Thanks to our Board, Staff, and many incredibly talented and committed members, the work has been spread around. Just the same, I have gotten a crash course in all sorts of things – environmental issues being the biggest learning curve and our major stumbling block. The rumor has always been that this particular property – the one we want to purchase – is “contaminated”, a regular “brownfield”. Its history as a lumber and coal yard certainly leads you to believe this possibility. Our Phase I Environmental Study cleared up many issues. Are there buried gas tanks? No. Are there other contaminants? Yes. There is all sorts of yucky stuff in Willimantic. Our rich history of mills left all kinds of things behind and urban fill has topped it all off. We are working with GEI, an Environmental consulting firm out of Glastonbury to be as sure as we can that we are buying a ‘clean’ site. There is still work to do, but slowly we are untangling the mess of laws and who is responsible for what.

And then there is the building. It contains asbestos and lead paint as you might imagine. But the plan is to gut the building, so all of that will be removed. The more we learn about this particular property, the more we learn about our town and what it takes to be part of it. It is very exciting to think that this blighted property will soon be something that is once again beautiful and useful. It is very exciting to be investing in our community and making an impact that is larger than the Co-op itself. Imagine what the intersection of Church and Valley will look like when we are finished!

In addition to this layer of the process of buying a building, is the layer of the Member-Owners’ participation in making this decision. The membership had to approve of the purchase. That makes sense. It is the member’s money that is being invested. It is at the member’s risk that we are purchasing the property. As we began to communicate the need for this decision, we heard many times that you, the Member-Owners of the Co-op wanted to vote. You cared about what happens. But not everyone could be at the Co-op on Sunday night to vote. We hadn’t planned on absentee ballots. It is a lot of work to get the information out, to plan how the votes will be kept secret, to ensure that only eligible Member-Owners voted. But we got the message, and figured it out. And in the end, it was well worth the time and effort. Over 10% of our membership voted! That is what I call a good turnout. The tally of the vote to purchase the 87 Church Street property showed the strong support from the membership: 706 for, 34 against. I feel like we are all in this together, as it should be. A big thank you to all who asked questions and those of you who voted. This is the Co-op difference at work.

So, what’s next? There’s still a lot of work to be done to actually make the purchase. More environmental testing and cleanup. Quotes to get on renovations. Plans to make the building what we want. What do we want? There are some basics that we need. Offices and storage space need to be part of the plan. And let’s not forget about our store – what should we do with our new found space? As we move forward with the project to renovate the 87 Church St

*continued on page 7*

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Alice Rubin

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Mark Giangrave  
*Produce Manager*  
Bruce Oscar  
*Facilities Manager*  
Steve Scanlon  
*Grocery Manager*  
Patty Smith  
*Operations Manager*  
Sasha Bajjo-Fournier  
*Front-end Manager*

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Susan Chasin  
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**Newsletter**  
Amy Kalisher  
Sasha Bajjo-Fournier  
Alice Rubin

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## **Frontier Cooperative: Where do our spices come from?**

• • • • • **Avery Gratton** • • • • •

In September, I attended a VIP Education event hosted by Frontier Cooperative in Iowa. If Frontier sounds familiar, you have likely shopped in our bulk spices, herbs, and tea sections. We carry over 170 Frontier products in bulk allowing you to purchase as much or as little as you want! This event not only taught me a lot about Frontier Co-op and their products but helped develop a stronger relationship, just as the sixth cooperative principle states, cooperation between cooperatives.

Frontier Co-op was founded in 1976 just four years before our own. Their mission statement, "Nourish the people and the planet. Always be fair," is something, I think, on which we can all agree. Their humble beginnings started with Rick Stewart and his wife, Colleen, selling one- pound bags of herbs to natural food co-ops from their cabin in the Midwest. They have grown to 44,000 members and 500 employees and are celebrating their 40th Anniversary! Last year Frontier reached over \$147 million in net sales and returned a net income of about 15% to their members! They support small farms, fair trade businesses, social responsibility, and sustainable practices. They build relationships with the farms and farmers to allow them not only to survive, but to flourish and provide us with products as varied as Korintje cinnamon from Indonesia and vanilla beans from Madagascar.

It was an awe-inspiring experience touring their facilities, seeing first-hand all the steps that go into providing high quality spices, herbs, and teas. Every raw product that is sent to Frontier goes through several tests and processes to ensure the purest product. They are then steam sterilized (to eliminate potential pathogens while maintaining aroma and flavor), dried, and put into large drums. Next, they go through more quality assurance testing and are finally sealed into one pound bags or jars to ship out to stores all over the country. Why are these steps so important? Simply put, adulteration is common in the spice and herb market. Many companies adulterate their products. Whether it's sawdust mixed into ground spices, turmeric with high levels of lead, or dyed strands added to saffron deny customers of the flavor of such a culinary wonder. One company in India was forced to destroy 900 tons of pepper for mineral oil contamination. Frontier is willing to put in the hard work and extra testing to ensure a high quality product, which is why I support them so strongly at our store and I hope you will too.

These are just the highlights of my three days there; I could talk all day about Frontier and their products (I know my co-workers have already picked up a lot). I can't resist ending with a few more fun facts:

- Frontier established the Well Earth program to offer high-quality herbs and spices grown and processed in an ethical and sustainable manner. They support Well Earth partners in 13 countries.
- All tea varieties come from one species *Camellia Sinensis*. A single tea plant can produce up to 200 years! Most farms hand harvest their entire crop to produce a high quality tea. A pound of loose leaf tea brews 180 cups of tea!
- Ceylon Cinnamon blends best in coffee/tea because it's the least mucilaginous variety.
- African Sandalwood (*Osyris Lanceolata*) is at risk for extinction from overexploitation despite legal protection. Frontier owns the essential oil brand *Aura Cacia*. They only work and trade with sandalwood farmers that use a model of sustainable and ethical harvesting to support the preservation of the threatened species.
- During October's fair trade month, the Willimantic Food Co-op sold nearly \$8,000 in bulk spices, herbs, nuts, and tea! Thanks to you! 🌱



## A Wonderful Time to Give Thanks

Sasha Bajjo

### Greetings Coopers!

I feel so grateful to be a part of our Coop: our store and community is growing together and moving forward towards the better future we desire for the coming generations. With the Coop expanding, there will be more room for us to supply your daily necessities, the ability to install new services you have been asking for, and more jobs to spread around and build up our community financially. Thank you for participating in this process with us; we appreciate your questions, ideas, and support. It is truly encouraging to see the faces of long-time members who are the anchors and flag-bearers of our Coop and our conscious living movement. Your continued presence in our store has such value, and is a huge part of our ability to successfully reach new shoppers. I love to see Coop members helping new shoppers find their way around the store and sharing knowledge and experience of our products. You are one of the reasons why our Coop is so awesome. Thank You!

So far this fall, I have enjoyed local apples, organic pomegranates and seckle pears, and now there are organic persimmons in the Produce department. Talk about savouring the season! When the air turns chill, I start making oatmeal, and pouring steamed milk over my granola. Our Bulk department has a tasty new granola in with cardamom and pistachio, and it pairs quite nicely with a cup of Ben's Beans coffee. What's more cozy than curling up on the couch with a yummy hunk of cheese and some crackers or crisps? Bruce has our cheese cooler stocked with an amazing variety of local, organic, and imported cheeses that are sure to please you and your family- try the Fig and Honey fromage. I recently made use of our organic chicken stock, in the Grocery aisle with soups (my happy place haha), to prepare a stir fry of noodles, cabbage, carrots, green beans, and loads of hardboiled quail eggs. If you haven't sampled our locally sourced quail eggs yet, get thee to them on the double! You will be made so happy. I love pulling boxes of joy out of our Frozen cooler doors on my way to the check out lanes. Rita has a way of finding the foods you know and love, but thought you couldn't eat anymore when you became a serious Cooper: I'm talking about breakfast sandwiches, meat-free, soy-free, gluten-free burritos that are absolutely incredible, and of course, pizza! I know I don't even have to mention the icecream... When the commercial hustle and bustle starts bearing down on you this winter, just come to the Coop and we'll help you stay grounded. Thanks for reading and shopping Coop! We love you. 🥕

## Annual Meeting *Bryan O'Hara*

The Annual Meeting of the Co-op's membership is in April and that is when elections for the board of directors occur. The Board of Directors is how the membership oversees the operations of the Co-op. This entails assuring that the purposes of the Co-op are properly carried out through strategic planning and working with the co-operative's management. We have monthly Board meetings and numerous subcommittees which require our attention. Though the Board of Directors has been relatively stable for a number of years we are interested in knowing if any member would like to volunteer for a position. Member Directors are nominated by the Board for election or may be nominated by a petition of any ten Members. Please consider if you'd like to take on the responsibilities of being a Director and if so contact Kathleen Krider 860-933-9271 to discuss our work.

Thank you,  
Bryan 🥕



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Delamatta Farm, Coventry  
The Hen Next Door, Hebron  
Hillside Exotics, Brooklyn  
Joe's Eggs, Hanover  
KD Crop Farms, Chaplin  
Kenny's Eggs, Coventry  
Kindred Crossing, North Franklin

Ledgecrest Farms, Columbia  
Mayapple Farm, Willington  
Mountain Fresh Farm, Willimantic  
Olde Murphy Farm, Columbia  
Pax Pond Farm, Columbia  
Pet-Law Farm, Ashford  
Rare Ark Farm, Lebanon  
Silver Bear Farm, Lebanon  
Still River Farm, Coventry  
Sweet Acre Farm, Lebanon  
Sweet Farm, Brooklyn  
TAP Farm, Sterling  
Woods House Farm, Mansfield  
Sunny Patch Farm, Pomfret

### Local Milk

Baldwin Brook, Canterbury  
Mountain Dairy, Mansfield  
Farmers Cow, Eastern CT

### Local Cheese

Cato Corner, Colchester  
Mystic Cheese, Lebanon  
Beltane Farm, Lebanon

### Local Produce

Himmelstein Homestead, Lebanon  
Sweet Acre Farm, Lebanon  
Tobacco Road Farm, Lebanon  
Cloverleigh Farm, Mansfield  
Provider Farm, Salem  
New England Green, Tolland  
High Hill Orchard, Meriden  
Blue Bird Hill Farm, Lebanon  
Crocker Farm, Ashford

### Local Meat

Kindred Crossing, Franklin  
Cobblestone Farm, Mansfield  
Gourmavian Farm, Bolton  
Green Valley Farm, Eastford  
Local Honey and Maple Syrup  
A & Z Apiary, Hampton  
Alba Flower Apiaries, Granby  
Bats of Bedlam, Chaplin  
Fat Stone Farm, Lyme  
Bowers Sugar House, Hebron

### Local Wellness

Pam Brundage, Pomfret  
Treefort Naturals, Colchester  
Herb Garden Naturals, Stony Creek  
Livermedic, East Hampton

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## Helen's Wellness Review

Helen Scanlon

New items, new items, so many new items! Lucky me, I get to review them and share them with you, dear Co-ops!

For this issue of The Compost, it's all about aromatherapy, a highly effective and safe way to energize or relax, and boost the body's natural immune response.

Before you become too skeptical—let me just throw a couple of things out there: human olfactory senses are sharp and have the ability to recall memories we may have stashed away in the corners of our minds. Our sense of smell may be far better at recalling memories than any of our other senses, because scent is so present and immediate. For example, the aroma of apple pie can bring us right back to grandma's kitchen, or the warm, earthy scent of a horse can remind of us of when we were young and brave on the back of a beloved pony. Because of its ability to awaken memory in the brain, smell is powerful, and can be considered a major player in the mind/body health connection. For example, when we smell a fresh-baked pizza, our salivary glands go into overdrive and we are motivated to eat. We may feel sleepy when we smell lavender, honeysuckle or a spring rain. We may get energized when we get a whiff of the coffee brewing, or when we stick our noses in a grapefruit. Am I right? Try not to feel refreshed when you smell peppermint, I dare you.

Scent can be comforting. It can be invigorating. It can help us to change our moods. I know that I can't be in a bad mood when I smell lilacs in the summer, and I absolutely can't be surly when I smell pine in the middle of winter.

Veriditas aromatherapy oils harness the power of scent, and puts it in a small, portable bottle—so we can take it anywhere, and use it anytime.

The first Veriditas oil I tried was Mental Clarity, a vibrant blend of peppermint, lemon, basil, grapefruit, lavender and rosemary. Here's how you do this aromatherapy thing: Put two to four drops in the palm of your hand, then rub your hands together to warm the oil so the aroma can be released. Then, cup your hands around

your nose—and breathe deeply—and let the scent snap you out of complacency. Just a note: you can dab the oil on your collarbone and neck, but be sure not to get it in your eyes—peppermint and others oils can irritate the delicate mucous membranes. Yes, the Co-op has testers—so test away. The Veriditas Mental Clarity oil

is amazing—I remember saying “it's like magic,” because it kinda is. The snappy, bright aroma told my mind to wake up, get moving and create a masterpiece already—and as Chris (the Co-op's Wellness manager) and I were testing it, the scent wafted over to a Co-op customer who immediately wanted to know where the product was. Another testimony to the power of scent, when we smell something wonderful and connect with it—we gotta have it!

Veriditas Mental Clarity oil can also be used to “ease nausea, soothe tense muscles and open lungs before exercise.” No wonder it's their “most popular formula,” I fell in love at first whiff.

The second Veriditas oil I sampled was Sleep Aid, a calming combo of lavender, sage, vetiver, chamomile and orange. Another ingredient is spikenard, a member of the famous sleep-inducing valerian family. Lavender has long been used to help the sleep-deprived find their internal snooze button, and when it combines forces with a valerian cousin, the results are monumentally dreamy. The scent is delightful and warm, with nothing to jar the senses. Lavender is lovely on its own, and sage and orange round it out nicely: The smell reminded me of napping in the middle of a fragrant field of flowers on a breezy summer day. I am not even kidding—the Sleep Aid oil inspires poetry and sappy prose in a product review. You might even be getting sleepy just reading this.

Keep this loveliness on the bedside table, and when you find yourself getting geared up about anything, warm the oil in your hands and take a long, deep inhale. Then, say hello to your pillow.

Find these incredible new Veriditas aromatherapy oils in the Wellness aisle—test 'em, and collect 'em all.

Until next time, enjoy a nap, and when you wake up—create your masterpiece. 🌿



## Winky's Food Review *Winky Gordon*

**Warning:** there will be nothing sexy in this food review. I often review foods that are exotic, “gourmet,” and not inexpensive. The foods in this review are practical, basic, and will give you an idea of some of the healthy foods that are part of the Co-op’s “Basics” program (identified with a B on the shelf where the product is sold). The Basics program offers “healthy staple foods...at a low price,” with products throughout the store. (Newsletter 2013) We’re looking at: Field Day organic Gluten Free Fusilli \$3.29/12 oz. bag; Field Day organic Roasted Garlic Pasta Sauce \$2.99/26 oz. jar; Field Day organic Original Applesauce \$2.99/24 oz. jar; New England Naturals Maple Almond Date Granola \$4.59/lb;

Your keen powers of observation have led you to notice that 3 of the 4 products are made by Field Day. It was only when shopping for this review that I understood that all Field Day products are part of our Basics program, and that they make up the bulk of the Basics program. So who the heck is Field Day and where do their products come from? Great question, its answer not immediately obvious.

Field Day is a line of foods manufactured for our primary supplier – United Natural Foods. Field Day describes itself as offering “value-priced...organic and natural products with a commitment to non-GMO.” The Field Day line includes packaged foods such as beans, crackers, nut butters, and household goods including paper and cleaning products. Oddly, their web site does not make it obvious that they are a division of United Natural Foods. The Field Day distribution center is in Providence RI, not so far away. The newer Field Day logo is easily recognized with its cursive black letters on a white background. Someone did some branding research - the old logo looked earnest but clunky; the new one is much snappier.

And who is United Natural Foods? They are a big big – really big – natural foods distributor based in Dayville, Connecticut. The web site gives an interesting history of the company’s evolution and the many businesses it has acquired. United Natural Foods bought out our earlier distributor, North East Cooperatives. My guess is that what they lack in small-business personality, they make up for in bulk purchasing benefits and breadth of product offerings. Also oddly, their web site does not say much about the Field Day line. And, just in case you wondered, the CEO of United Natural Foods, Steven Spinner, makes more than \$3 million dollars a year in wages and other compensations. (Reuters web site)

Back to the actual foods:

The gluten-free Fusilli is one of several Field Day pastas we carry, including one other that is gluten-free. This one is made simply with organic brown rice and organic quinoa. I’d say it does a darn good job of holding it together, not getting mushy or falling apart as some gluten-free pastas are wont to do. That is such a bummer when it happens – your dinner turned to goop. Its taste is mild but not absent. Not so bad for a humble gluten-free pasta. Yup, I’ll buy it again.

While I’m not big on red pasta sauce, of course I had to try the Roasted Garlic on top of the fusilli. Although its third ingredient is sugar, it otherwise has great ingredients (all organic): tomato puree, dried tomatoes, roasted garlic, onions, parsley, basil, oregano, olive oil, salt. I liked that I wasn’t overwhelmed by the acidic sensation that can come from tomato sauce and I could actually taste the vegetables. But it’s too bad about the sugar, even if it’s not unusual. This is a decent pasta sauce that even those who are not “health food” eaters will enjoy.

Applesauce is one of the great comfort-foods, calling up warm memories of being nourished and feeling content. Field Day’s organic Original Applesauce (no weird extra flavors) passes muster in my book. Made just with organic apples (from the USA) and organic apple puree (from Italy – kind of sexy), it’s mild but not bland and is spared being overly sweet from added sugar. Occasionally I bake something that calls for applesauce in it; this will be my go to. For an extra-comfort, slightly spicy treat, I might warm it and add cinnamon.

Moving away from Field Day, we go to New England Naturals for one of my all time favorite Co-op products, also a Basics food: Maple Almond Date Granola. At least once a week I can be found sitting in the café area of the Co-op, eating this granola with the goat milk yogurt. This is turbo comfort food for me. Yes, I have sometimes eaten it for dinner. It’s got crunch, fiber, some sweet, and a little bit of protein. It’s made with: whole rolled oats, expeller pressed canola oil, dates, almonds, honey, maple syrup, and natural maple flavor. I love it when I find big, chewy clumps in this granola – it’s like finding candy in your breakfast. New England Naturals is a small natural foods (granola and trail mix) business that profit-shares with its employees. It’s located in Greenfield, MA.

By the time you read this, we will have voted on whether the Co-op should purchase a new property and on who will be president of the United States. I hope you are satisfied with both outcomes. And I wonder how these two things are related? I bet they are. Until next time, Co-operators, be well and be kind. 🥕



**Storrs**  
**Winter Farmer's Market**  
**2016-2017 Dates**

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**January 7 and 21**  
**February 4 and 18**  
**March 4 and 18**  
**April 8 and 22**

[storrsfarmersmarket.org](http://storrsfarmersmarket.org)

**Co-op Scoop** *continued from page 1*

property for our needs I would like to have several meetings where we can update you on progress and hear your thoughts and get feedback. Keep an eye on the bulletin board for meeting announcements to be held this winter. It's an exciting time! 🥕



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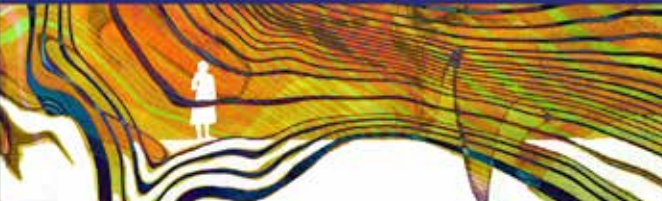
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## — Meet Your New Co-op Staffers! —

**Earlier** this season, we said goodbye to our friend and fellow staff member, Jose Maldonado. Jose was sought out for his skills in higher education administration at Binghamton University. We always had roaring fun when Jose was in the building. While his presence is missed in our store, we are happy to see him succeed in the field he graduated in.

**Nereida** joined the cashiering team, and is getting to know our products and coop family with ease, and a little help from other coopers. Nereida is originally from Brooklyn, NY, but now resides in Willimantic. What Nereida likes best about the Coop? The staff and members... Everyone is always so nice. Nereida currently has bread and bagels from the Coop in her kitchen. Her favorite hobbies are fishing and playing pool.



**Frankie** came aboard the Produce team boat, and things are going swimmingly. Frankie's hometown is Enfield, CT, but he now lives in Willimantic. What Frankie likes best about the Coop is the people of course! The environment and sense of belonging to the community. Currently in Frankie's kitchen from Coop: milk, salad, apples, bananas, pumpkin bread, and an apple pie!! lol His favorite hobbies are writing, poetry, and music. Any form of art... 🥕



### Happy Holidays from your Co-op Cashiers!

*Back L-R: Emm, John, Corry, Nancy, Bre, Paula, Nereida. Front L-R: Jess, Sasha, Steph, Cari. Not pictured: Liv*