

THE COMPOST

Vol. 39, Number 4 Holidays 2017

91 Valley Street Willimantic, CT 06226 860.456.3611

WWW.WILLIMANTICFOOD.COOP INFO@WILLIMANTICFOOD.COOP

STORE HOURS

8:00am - 8:00pm *Every Day*

Co-op Scoop Alice Rubin

As I write this, the weather is finally shifting toward what at least feels like fall, after one of the longest Indian Summers (if you can call it that) I have ever seen! There has still not been a real killing frost – peppers are ripening in the garden, flowers blooming, seeds sprouting. My already tenuous grip on time is slipping further...

The crazy warm weather has extended the growing season so there is an extra large amount of locally grown produce. And it is all on display in our beautiful new produce case! This reminds me how much our Co-op has accomplished this year. The new produce case, meat case and unseen to everyone is a new component to our refrigeration system that increases the energy efficiency of the entire refrigeration system.

Another great accomplishment was our Willimantic Downtown Country Fair. Although it was only our second year on Jillson Square, it felt so much like home. All day was a continuous stream of new and old friends sharing food, games, and music, meeting crafts people, and politicians. Our bulk department set up an impressive display showing just how great our bulk department is. Avery and Cari shared information on the many possibilities for savings – money as well as packaging!

Our food vendors offered enough variety to keep everyone happy and the Community Table was often full. Games of all sorts were popular, especially the giant, walking A that required lots of cooperation. The Farmers Market, Musicians, a Salsa Tasting, and a Community Dance all added to the great day.

This year our Fair Committee included some new volunteers and everyone did a great job. The fair is a lot of work, and a lot of fun! Please let me know if you would like to join this committee.

Beyond all of the improvements and fun, we continue to work on plans for 87 Church Street. A preliminary drawing is posted in the store. We have met with prepared foods specialists from National Cooperative Grocers and they are helping us to figure out what to offer and what equipment we will need to achieve these goals. We continue to also work with the Sustainable Energy Institute at ECSU to renovate our building in the most energy efficient and environmentally friendly way possible. It is not easy, but we are working on it!

And because, believe it or not, Thanksgiving is right around the corner, I can't help but think of all of the things I am thankful for here at the Co-op. Our loyal membership who shops here and through their equity has helped to finance our store's continued improvements and success. Our incredibly dedicated staff who come to work each day to serve our Member-Owners and do their jobs so well. Our diverse and caring Community that supports the Co-op and in turn, allows the Co-op to return the favor with support to organizations such as the Covenant Soup Kitchen, the Windham No Freeze Hospitality Center, Grow Windham, CLiCK and more. I am especially thankful to all of the farmers who work so hard to grow amazing food for all of our tables. Cooperation is a very powerful thing! I am thankful for everyone's participation in our Food Co-op.

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My Trip to Frontier Co-op

🔹 • by Kara Fodaski • •

Hello All! In case I haven't already told you, I was lucky enough to go and spend some time at the Frontier Co-op in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Frontier Co-op has been a member owned co-op since 1976 and only requires a onetime fee of \$10 to become a member for life. This allows you to save 10% on any Frontier product which includes Frontier Spices, Aura Cacia essential oil products, and their Simply Organic line. I was lucky to learn a little bit about each of these lines during my time spent in Iowa.

The group I was with was a mix of co-op employees from all over the country, as well as Canada. We all shared the same passion for Health and Beauty products which made conversation easy and learning about products lots of fun. Our first stop in Iowa was at the factory where they bagged all of their bulk spices.

I will never forget the smell of all the different herbs when we entered the factory! It reminded me of that sweet co-op smell you get when you first start shopping here... but slightly more potent. We were all able to witness the care they put into each herb that passes through the factory as well as their extensive quality testing. They pull samples from each and every bag of herbs that passes through the warehouse and will not accept them unless they meet their strict quality standards. One thing I definitely noticed was how happy all of their employees were and how excited they were to tell us about the products.

Our next stop was at Prairiewoods Franciscan Spirituality Center where we received an extensive training on essential oils, carrier oils, blends, and making your own health and beauty products. Tim Blakely, who was the main aromatherapy teacher during our time in Iowa, told us all about his trips to farms all over the country where they grow the herbs for their essential oils and spices. He showed us pictures of him and the local farmers harvesting lavender, posing with argan trees, collecting rose petals, and even helping build schools for the children of the farm owners. Seeing their interaction with the farmers and the lengths the company goes through to make sure all of their products are sustainably sourced was truly admirable. If they can't sustainably obtain an herb, they don't sell it.

The last places we visited on our trip were the facilities where they bottle all of the essential oils, and the main Frontier Co-op headquarters, where they have offices and labs to do most of their quality testing. Watching the oils getting packaged was so amazing because all of their products that are sent all over the world are put together in one small building! All of their essential oil blends are put together by a human, not a machine. They start by weighing out how much of each essential oil they will need and then pouring those together into giant canisters so that they become one essential oil blend. If only they let me take a canister home with me, I would be set for life!

The Frontier Co-op headquarters themselves were going through a slight renovation during my time spent there but the changes being made seemed essential and the outcome was breathtaking. Almost everything in the facility was brand new, including all of their lab equipment. I was lucky enough to be able to see one of the lab employees extracting curcumin from turmeric (which is the active ingredient in turmeric). Once again, I noticed how happy all of the employees seemed to be working for Frontier. The building had its own gym, as well as on-site childcare at a huge discount for employees! We ate lunch at the employee café that had organic, made from scratch meals for only \$2 a tray. My time spent in the headquarters

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A Fair to be Remembered Emma Smith

On September 30th, the Willimantic Food Co-op hosted the annual Downtown Country Fair at Jillson Square, Willimantic, CT. The fair was a collection of interesting vendors from the area, who offered their various services and handmade goods. Many types of entertainment were around for the customers' enjoyment. These included a series of bands who played at the front of the Fair all day. The bands who played were Studio 88, Sarah and the Sundays, the Hartford Hot Several, the Hypnostix, Fiesta del Norte, and Tuesday Saints. The stage also hosted other forms of entertainment throughout the day, including storytelling, a community dance, and a skit from Monty Python and the Holy Grail. All performers in question were from Connecticut. Another entertainer from the day was Heartwood Tales, a storyteller who incorporated children into the performances and sang original songs. Finally, a children's activity area kept every child happy, and the adults, too. It

Thank You Sarah Keleher

A big thank you to the Willimantic Downtown Country Fair committee and working members for all the hard work they did to create an awesome community event!

The Willimantic Downtown Country Fair on Saturday, September 30th, 2017, was a great success! Weather included!

Planning started behind the scenes back in April with a new and expanded fair committee. Sign up of working members to help the day of the fair was tremendous. We had co- op working members helping with vendor parking, children's activities, the co-op booth, all day music and clean up at the end of the fair.

The energy given to create this successful event was truly a cooperative experience!

had a collection of hula-hoops, parachutes, and handmade games by Johnnie Walker. The food was delicious, as the customers agreed as they ate at the community table. Food vendors were Pleasant Pizza, Not Only Juice, Cafemantic, Maharaja, E2 Market, and Click Community Kitchen.

One of the things that makes Willimantic, and the Co-op itself, so special is the mix of backgrounds, personalities, and ideas that come together to create an event like the Downtown Country Fair. Thank you to everyone that organized, supported, and attended it. It was the best one yet, and certainly a Fair to be remembered.



Winter Wellness Nancy McMerriman

The fall allergy season is behind us, and many of you have taken your fair share of Nettles and Quercetin supplements to help with those troublesome allergy symptoms. Now the long months of winter stretch before us, whether we embrace them or not.

Thoughts from the Wellness Department as we head into cold weather and cold season....

Hydrate! We don't tend to drink as much water as we should when the weather turns colder. Unless we are working out, we rarely feel thirsty in winter, but staying hydrated keeps the body operating at its best and is the first line of defense in preventing colds and flu. Lucky for co-op shoppers, there are many delicious, nutritious herbal teas available for a continuous variety of hot beverages. Cold weather is also a great time for making soups and bone broths, a terrific, tasty addition to our fluid intake.

Adequate sleep during the winter months is imperative for overall health. For those who are closer to following their circadian rhythm, this isn't a problem, as the short daylight hours help our hibernation instincts! So embrace the reduced light and wrap yourself up in a cozy blanket with a good book, a mug of hot tea and some overdue self-care. Woodstove or blazing fire, optional! If you happen to doze off, your body will thank you.

We are always happy to see you and help with your

vitamin and supplement needs in the Wellness Dept. But before heading to those center aisles, make sure your first stop is the Produce Department! We are so fortunate to have a healthy supply of nutrient-packed local greens still coming in for a good portion of the cold weather season. A special thanks to our amazing farmers who work so hard to provide fresh veggies beyond our average backyard growing season! Dark green leafy vegetables such as kale and spinach can't be beat for their immune boosting zinc and iron content, and are easily added to soups and stews. While in Produce, don't forget your Vitamin C! Citrus fruits have long been a winter staple for keeping colds at bay, and we have a steady supply of delicious organic varieties of oranges and grapefruit throughout the winter.

With reduced winter sun exposure, you may want to consider taking a Vitamin D supplement. Low Vitamin D levels put you at an increased risk of flu and colds. The best way to absorb vitamin D is through sun exposure, so on warmer winter days, try rolling up your sleeves and turn your body towards the sun for 15 to 20 minutes. For supplementation, the RDA for D is 400-800 iu, but for illness prevention, 1000-5000 iu is suggested. It's important to have your Vitamin D checked before embarking on a self-diagnosed regimen, so request a blood test to determine your levels.

If you do have a deficiency, there are a few key things to consider boosting your D up to a normal range:

- Vitamin D is a fat-soluble vitamin and should be taken with a meal containing healthy fats (olive oil, coconut oil, avocado, ghee, grass fed butter) to help it metabolize.
- Proper absorption of D requires healthy gut bacteria, so include fermented foods or a daily probiotic to ensure your digestive tract is in prime condition.
- Magnesium is a crucial cofactor that helps convert Vitamin D to its active, bioavailable form, so it's good to take a magnesium supplement concurrently with D. In

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The Board Board Linda Brock

What is the "Board Board"?

WFC shoppers have all seen what Board members refer to as "the Board board": it's the bulletin board in the store where Board meeting agendae and minutes are posted for all to peruse.

It's one expression of how your food Co-op is different from a grocery store: a part of the two-way communication between you as a member-owner, and the member-directors you elect to represent your interests. The "Board board" has also long been a public place for members to post feedback and questions...and now there's a private digital option as well.

On the WFC web site, you can send comments and questions directly to the Board by going to About the Co-op and selecting Our Board. Put your name and message in the little form on the right side of the web page (include your email address if you'd like to receive a response), submit the form, and voila! All current directors will receive your message.

If your question or comment is one that other members are likely to have, a public reply may be posted on the bulletin board or web page; but if so, your name will not be published without your permission. We hope to hear from you!





Reshaping the Planks

The Board is working on a possible revision of the WFC By-laws, with the primary aim of making it easier for members to vote on important issues and to know how to submit proposals.

Much of the wording of the by-laws is decades old and in some places is not consistent with WFC's "Policy Governance" model of management. Requirements for meetings and voting are especially confusing, and could more clearly provide for members to vote "in absentia" instead of being required to attend a meeting.

If you'd like to comment, find the current by-laws on the WFC web page under About the Co-op > Our Board; and watch for proposed revisions in the next newsletter. Members will vote on revisions at the Annual Meeting next spring.

Are You Bored?

Maybe WFC Board service is for you! WFC Directors are motivated to protect and promote cooperative principles and sustainable, healthy, environmentally responsible food sources. And they're willing to bend their talents to the sometimes geeky process of developing policies, reviewing finances and evaluating compliance – but also thinking about the big goals and dreams for Willimantic Food Co-op's future. Check it out by attending some Board meetings – the first Thursday of each month at 7:00pm, usually at Kerri Gallery on Main St, Willimantic – and if you decide you'd like to join the dedicated and lively team, complete a candidate application found on the Our Board page.

The Co-op Board Wants YOU!

Have you ever wondered how the Co-op works? Who is responsible for what and how decisions get made? A great way to learn more about your Food Co-op is to join the Board!

Our Board of Directors meets once a month for 2 hours. Terms are 3 years. Board Members also serve on sub committees.

If you are interested, please come to a Board Meeting. The next one is scheduled for Thursday December 7th at 7 pm. We meet at the Kerri Gallery, 861 Main Street – where the Co-op had its first store.

Or email Kathleen Krider, our Board Chair – KathleenKrider@sbcglobal.net to learn more.

Winky's Food Review Winky Gordon

Here's the lineup: Kale It Up veggie/fruit drink from Blue Print, \$7.89/16 fl. Oz.; Matcha Latte by Rebbl, \$4.39/12 fl. oz.; Kraut Krisps by Farmhouse Culture, \$3.69/5 oz. bag. Onward!

I am fascinated by the cleverness of advertising campaigns that try to convince us of The Dietary Answer: The Most Important (fill in the blank) Food!; Live Forever With Probiotics!; announcing something that is never made with gluten as Gluten Free! Those marketing campaigns deliver products that run the gamut from absurd - Gluten Free Milk - to worthy of notice. A food fad of the moment is the category of "functional beverage," defined as "a non-alcoholic drink that contains non-traditional ingredients...which is claimed to provide specific health benefits." (So much better than dysfunctional beverages, right?) Read on for two such beverages worthy of notice.

Before you get turned off by the formidable price of the Kale It Up, listen to Chad's rave review of the whole line of Blue Print drinks: "It's coldpressed, raw, and you'll have so much energy you'll go bam bam," demonstrated by doing super-hero punches into the air. Chad likes this stuff so much he orders it by the case. Now that's a great review. Myself, I'm not quite as excited but would describe this as a healthy tonic that is definitely fresh. Kale It Up contains romaine, apple, celery, cucumber, spinach, kale, parsley, ginger, and lemon and, according to the label, delivers 2 servings of fruits and vegetables. The

taste is strong on the leafy greens but the apple, cucumber and ginger round it out so that it's not just pureed green stuff. Try it; see if it makes you go "bam bam bam." We also carry Watercress Warrior, Dandelion, Beet Blast, and Pineapple Power. Blue Print appears to be an offshoot of the Hain Celestial Group, out of New York.

Rebbl, maker of the Matcha Latte (Avery's favorite in this line), describes their product as "righteous plant alchemy soulfully crafted." Cleverly said; the copy-writers have aced it again. I would describe the Matcha Latte as a sophisticated, health-inspiring grown up milk shake, made with coconut milk instead of cow's. It's creamy,



smooth, matcha subtle, and just sweet enough to feel like a treat. Maybe you knew a long time ago but I just learned exactly what matcha is: ground whole green tea leaf. Because you ultimately consume the whole tea leaf, rather than just the extract derived from steeping, matcha has higher levels of antioxidants, vitamins and minerals, as well as fiber than your usual a cup of green tea. And it'll give you a little caffeine boost - more than a regular cup of green tea, less than a cup of black tea or coffee. In addition to organic matcha and coconut milk, the other righteous ingredients in the Matcha Latte include organic honey, organic spirulina, pink salt, organic stevia. In the Rebbl line, we also carry Dark Chocolate, Maca Cold Brew, Maca Mocha, and Reishi Chocolate. Rebbl comes from Berkeley CA. Based on their website, the company really does seem righteous and has a progressive model for resourcing their ingredients.

Back to the discussion about food fads. Almost as strange as organic açai berry pop tarts, here comes a corn chip that not only supports digestive health, but it also supports immune health and protein utilization. That's what the package says – no kidding! I'm talking about dill pickle flavored Kraut Krisps, with 1 billion probiotics per 1 oz serving. Believe it or not, they're made with sauerkraut – really. These chips are strange...and good. They're strangely good. Even as I chow down on them, I'm trying to wrap my mind around this bizarre combination of foods – sauerkraut, corn and brown rice flours, vegetable oil, sea salt, and bacillus co-

agulans, among others. They're good and crunchy, taste substantial, and have the just right combination of salt and sour. I like 'em. They're not cheap, but they're good. And weird. Farmhouse Culture makes this organic food in Watsonville, CA.

That's all I've got this time around, dear Coopsters. This newsletter should come out around the euphemistic "holidays." Whichever one/s you celebrate – or don't- best wishes for peace and happiness. And as HH Dalai Lama says- "Be kind whenever possible. It is always possible." Remember - this means to yourself as well



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Winter Wellness continued from page 4

fact, if an individual is magnesium deficient, they lack the ability to absorb vitamin D, and the D supplementation will draw magnesium from the body's muscles, causing leg cramps. Recommended dosage for magnesium is 400-900 mg daily. There are many forms of magnesium, so do some research or ask one of the Wellness staff to help you choose.

Besides sun exposure, high quality Cod liver oil is one of the best ways to get your Vitamin D. We carry quality, time-tested brands of cod liver oil such as Green Pasture, Carlson's and Nordic Naturals. There are other forms of D available as well, including drops, caps and gummies. Stop in and talk to us; we can help you choose the vitamin D variety that best meets your needs.

It's tough to get through winter without at least a brief cold, but boosting immunity and keeping our bodies primed to fight germs and infections will minimize the severity if illness hits. We wish you WELL this winter season!

Frontier Co-op continued from page 2

building definitely made me feel proud for being a part of such an amazing cooperative.

After spending three days learning all about Frontier, I flew home with a good feeling about the community I was a part of...the co-op community. I would have never thought in my life time that I would be given such an amazing opportunity to do a job I love and to make a career out of it. Every person I met on the trip seemed so happy to be a part of their co-op community and each person and co-op was unique in their own way. Thank you Willi Food Co-op for sending me on such a fun trip! Also, for anyone reading this that has questions about essential oils don't be afraid to come up and ask me anything and everything you would like to know! I feel so excited to talk about blends and diffusing oils with this new knowledge I have obtained.



Attention Busy Foodies! Make Your Holidays Fast and Easy! Carol Davidge

As a newbie to the Co-op, I am awed by thousands of products that I have never seen at chain grocers. Very special is the helpful, knowledgeable staff who are eager to assist. At the Co-op I met the folks shown here and learned about local farmers, tea and coffee producers, bakers and restaurateurs in my own back yard who bring their goods to the Co-op for us.

1. Avery Gratton, WFC's lead for bulk foods, with just one of hundreds of coffees, grains, nuts, teas, spices, chocolates, organic or not, Free Trade & international, that she oversees. 2. Jean de Smet with a cart of groceries and produce. 3. Sasha Bajjo & Samantha Lee at WFC's customer service area. 4. Michelle Lorentz whose son calls the WFC "The Peanut Butter Store" because they love the fresh-ground nut butters & dairy-free chocolates. 5. Matthew Woodward, bulk food specialist, holding artisan olive oil & a bag of nuts (flavored, mixed, unsalted, roasted), dried fruits, granolas-great food gifts that you design. 6. Alaina Bisson, UCONN environmental science student whose mostly plant-based diet requires unusual spices. 7. Chad Dunnack, spice & tea specialist, holding Two Hills Matcha Tea alongside Useful Weeds herbal teas (Storrs) and Ben's Beans (Putnam) 8. Firsttime shopper, vegetarian Andrea Pedraza who is thrilled to find grab-n-go goodies, especially the Not-Only-Juice Kale Salad that she first tasted at that store, amid foods from Heirloom Foods (Danielson), Monet's Table (Tolland), Shayna B's the Pickle (Ashford), Simply Fresh Solutions (Willimantic) & international take-out, great for holiday meals or a quick lunch. 9. Chris Dubis and Kara Fodaski, wellness staff, with Pacha soap in its own package, dozens of self-care & cosmetic, tees, beeswax candles & gifts. 10. Saige Johnson, bakery & frozen foods specialist, holding quick-thawing vegan cheesecake, coconut whip (non-dairy whipped "cream") & chocolate cakes. Below are artisan baked goods from local specialists including Culinary Expressions (Willimantic) for pies, quiches & cheesecakes (order ahead for holidays), Sweet Sage Bakery (Rockfall), Against the Grain & others. 11. Steve Scanlon in groceries, with Maudie's Squash Scraper & a winter squash. 12. Mark Giangrave and Wendy Jakoboski, who find and provide 50 locallygrown & often unusual fresh foods. Did you know that Brussel Sprouts are sweeter after a frost? Celebrate by choosing great foods and gifts at the Co-op.

FRESH LOGAL BREAD

SUTHAN

JOHNSON

ABOUT STATES

ABOUT ST

Spices, Vegan, Vegetarian, Gluten free, Non-dairy, Sweets, Chocolates, Artisan Breads & Cheeses, International Foods, Greens, Local Brands, Coffee & Tea, Spices, Vegan, Vegetarian, Gluten free, Non-dairy, Sweets, Chocolates, Artisan Breads & Cheeses, International Foods,

Greens, Local Brands, Coffee & Tea















Explore the Wonders at the Willimantic Food Co-op!

Grab-n-Go, Pre-order Pies, Gifts under \$10, Healthy Treats for People n Pets, Locally-grown, Fair Trade, Special Diets, Bulk Foods, Unique Gifts & Foods

































Artisan Holiday Tables

THE CO-OP WILL AGAIN BE HOSTING LOCAL ARTISTS
AND CRAFTS FOLK SELLING THEIR WARES IN THE CO-OP
CAFÉ THIS HOLIDAY SEASON! LOOK FOR HOLIDAY TABLES
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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23RD FROM 10 AM TO 4 PM.

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