

STORE HOURS

8:00 am - 8:00 pm
Every Day

October is Co-op Month! *Alice Rubin*

It is a pretty special thing to have a Food Co-op in our Community. Not everyone does. There are people who decide to move to this area – because there is a Food Co-op! There are people who have moved away, to a place without a Food Co-op, and are sad; they say it just isn't the same. Some people say they graduated from UCONN and stayed – because of the Food Co-op, although I am not sure we want to take credit for that!

What makes it so special?

There is that Co-op smell. It is often commented on. I can't tell you what it is. Maybe a mixture of the bulk spices, fresh produce and... I just don't know. Most people really like it.

There is the Bulk Department, which is not that common these days. It isn't quite like it used to be – no more 35 lb. tubs of peanut butter that you could scoop out of. But an even larger selection of almost everything else! And you can refill your own containers.

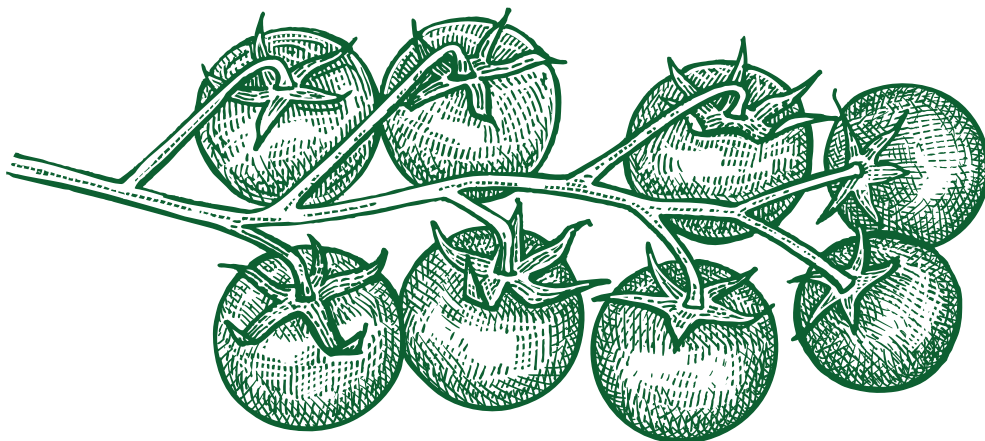
The best produce you can buy is at the Co-op – except maybe if you go to a Farmers Market or a Farm Stand, or you grow your own. It is fresh, it is Locally Grown (and we really do know our Farmers!) or it is Certified Organic.

All of our local eggs come from small backyard flocks –we have 21 different suppliers!

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Sasha's Goodbye

Sasha Bajjo

Greetings Co-ops!

It's been a long time since I've written to you in this wonderful newsletter.

After almost 11 years as a paid staff member, and a couple years before that as a working member, I am "flying the coop" as it were.

I haven't been able to tell all of you individually, so I asked Alice if it would be ok to write to you here.

My time at the Willimantic Food Co-op has been absolutely amazing! The Co-op came in to my life just in the nick of time. Like many of you, when I first walked into the Co-op, I was looking to improve my health and wellness. I didn't understand how shopping in bulk worked, or the difference between tylenol and arnica. The first time I had kombucha ???? Then kimchi?!?! Talk about lifestyle change. I went from a major patron of McYouKnowWho, to my local farmers and neighbors, many of whom I have the pleasure of knowing personally now. I healed myself and even helped others along the way.

As a co-op, we've been through some tough times together, as well as many joyous occasions. We've lost some of our people, watched babies grow and do big things in our communities, across the nation, and even abroad. We fought for raw milk and won. We fought for Fire Cider and won. We support our neighbors. We cooperate with other co-operatives. We've grown.

And now, I am moving on to pursue more of my passions, helping people heal themselves emotionally as well as physically.

I have learned so much here during this period of my life.

I kind of grew up in the Co-op too, in a way. I wasn't born here, but I definitely started my life over here.

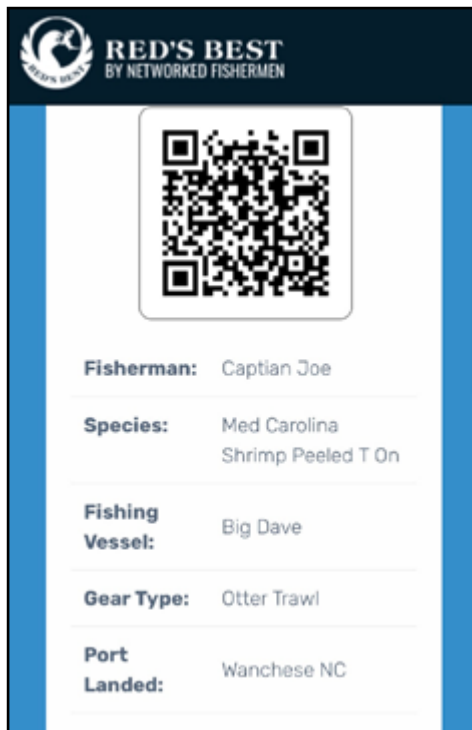
I appreciate you all, from the bottom of my heart.

See you on the other side of the register!

In cooperation,
Sasha 🥕



New Fish and Seafood Supplier *Our Frozen Department*



We've offered **fresh and frozen local meats** at the co-op for years now. From its humble beginnings in a small backstock freezer in our rear hallway that you had to ask a staff member to see, to the comparatively wide selection we enjoy today. One of the common requests over the years has been seafood. We've never had the volume of sales or the space to offer the freshest seafood nor a reliable relationship to carry frozen. Thankfully we finally seem to have found both with a company called Red's Best out of Boston.


Red's was founded by Jared Auerbach in 2008 and has been operating from Boston Fish Pier ever since. They work with a network of fishermen from nearby coastal communities to aggregate catches and offer a wide range of options from scup, skape, and salmon to haddock, hake, and halibut. The goal of the company is to not only sustain the livelihoods of American fishermen but to sustain fisheries for longevity.

Another large part of why we like Red's Best is their approach to technology and traceability. As you can imagine lots of small fishermen bringing in lots of fish can quickly generate a massive amount of information. Red's electronically tracks the daily catch, uploads all the data, and maintains an unbroken chain of custody of the fish through processing, packaging, labeling, and shipping.

Every package of fish is labeled with a QR code so that you can point your phone's camera at it and a link will pop up telling you the company or even individual fishermen, the species, the name of the vessel, the gear used to catch it, and at which port the boat landed. If you're willing to do a little Googling you can find interviews with the captains and research the pros and cons of each catch method. Even if you don't plan on purchasing, stop by the meat freezer door and give the QR codes a scan (most modern phones can handle it right in the camera app). It's interesting and you'll likely start seeing more of these to come (One Degree brand cereals and flours comes to mind).

After learning about the company a bit we placed a small tentative first order of 30lbs which sold out in just over a week. A second order sold out even quicker, and it has been off to the races ever since. Our varied fish offerings over the past six months have increased sales in the frozen meat (and now seafood) department by 50%. So far we've offered a rotation of scallops, salmon, haddock, and monkfish. Be on the lookout for North Carolina shrimp and perhaps bluefish to enter the rotation soon.

The combination of traceability, potential for education, a tasty product, and strong sales from you, the member-owners, has been a satisfying success for the department. 🌱




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Helen's Wellness Review *Helen Scanlon*

Hi, Co-ops! It's been a minute! I hope this review finds all of you and your loved ones healthy and safe. Wellness Reviews are all about being good to yourself, and the Willimantic Food Co-op is full of wonderful items to promote health and inspire joy. Stroll around our aisles and see what speaks to you. The friendly Co-op staff are never too busy to answer your questions.

For this edition of *The Compost*, I reviewed two great items—*Megafood "C" Defense* and *Nantucket Spider Extra-Strength Natural Tick Repellent*.

Megafood "C" Defense is a yummy little vitamin C gummy (look, she's rhyming again) that features 100% of your daily vitamin C loveliness in a single serving.

From megafood.com:

Our C Defense Tangy Citrus gummies provide 180 mg of vitamin C to help support daily immune health. Organic oranges give our gummies an authentic citrus flavor and color! These immune gummies have no artificial flavors, are non-GMO Project Verified, certified Vegan [by the Vegan Action/Vegan Awareness Foundation], gluten-free, soy-free and dairy-free, and are delicious!

As we know, vitamin C is the “go-to” vitamin to boost our immune defense—it is a powerful antioxidant, promotes iron absorption, and reduces the effects of aging because it boosts collagen production. And since our friend vitamin C is water soluble, it only stays in our bodies for a day.

Megafood "C" Defense is a fun, easy, and yummy (there's that word again!) way to get more vitamin C in your life. I found the gummies to be like eating a



nini-orange—quite nice! Two a day, and you are good to go. Stock up on this yummy gummy for the colder months!

Next up, the amazing and awesome *Nantucket Spider Extra-Strength Natural Tick Repellent*...

Wow, do I love *Nantucket Spider* products. They repel like a boss—and they do it naturally without DEET or other nastiness.

I am a runner, and one of my favorite runs is at UConn's Horsebarn Hill. In the summer and fall, the grass gets waist high, and one can almost hear the deer ticks rubbing their little tick hands together waiting for some human to walk or run through so they can hitch a ride. Well, I sprayed my legs, arms, torso and sneakered feet with *Nantucket Spider Extra-Strength Natural Tick Repellent* magic and the deer ticks steered clear. As in, all of them. As in, I could hear them screaming “retreat!” After checking and triple-checking, not one of those nasty buggers latched on to me. Here's the kicker— *Nantucket Spider Extra-Strength Natural Tick Repellent* smells really good—not all chemical-ly and gross. It has vanilla spice and clove in it for goodness sake. I know, right? Why spray down with toxic DEET when you can repel icky ticks with natural, great-smelling goodness?

Read more about my favorite bug and tick repellent company here: www.nantucketspider.com

And check out all of the *Nantucket Spider* products on the shelves of our beloved Willimantic Food Co-op.

As always—be well, be safe, be happy. Take care of yourselves and others, we are all in this together.

Until next time,

Helen 🥕

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The 2021 Downtown Country Fair

The Willimantic Food Co-op is very happy and excited to once again host the Willimantic Downtown Country Fair! Our fair has run continuously (except for last year) since 1991 when it began as a Block Party at our location on Meadow Street. It was our way of saying Thank You and celebrating our neighborhood in Downtown Willimantic. We closed the street, had craft vendors, kid's activities, food and music – most importantly, we all had a good time!

We carried on the tradition when we moved to Valley Street. We closed the parking lot and the street! And eventually, we got brave enough to move the whole thing over to Jillson Square. There, we teamed up with the Willimantic Farmers Market - there was plenty of room for all of us!

We are once again saying Thank You to our Community! Please come and enjoy the day with us!

This year we have....

A fantastic lineup of local musicians

- 11:15 Sally Rogers, Folksinger
- 12:15 Earl MacDonald, Jazz Quartet
- 1:30 Frog Bridge Strings, Fiddle
- 2:30 Bentetu, Caribbean/Afro

And...

- A diverse collection of crafters selling their wares
- Delicious food from several local restaurants
- Information from our community organizations (including your Food Co-op).

The Willimantic Downtown Country Fair is a free event which welcomes everyone. I hope that you all can join us on Saturday September 25th. We'll be on Jillson Square from 11-4, celebrating our wonderful community! 🥕

Co-op Scoop *continued from page 1*

Our staff is simply amazing! They all work so hard to meet the needs of our Member-Owners and our shoppers. They are smart, they are funny. They want to help. They want you to feel welcome here. It is truly an honor to have them representing our Co-op.

The Co-op contributes in many ways to our local economy. We have 98 local vendors. We have paid them \$332,372 so far this year. We pay property tax, we hire local contractors to maintain and make repairs at our Co-op. We keep it all as close to home as possible.

As the bumper sticker says, I own a Grocery Store with my friends. That is a pretty great thing! And even better is that our Grocery Store is cooperatively owned, by you, our more than 7,000 Member Owners and operates under the 7 Cooperative Principles.

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

So, Happy Co-op Month! There is so much to celebrate! 🥕



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**THE WILLIMANTIC
DOWNTOWN COUNTRY**

FAIR
SEPT. 25 FROM **11 to 4**



FREE! • EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

JILLSON SQUARE

WILLIMANTIC, CT

- 11:15 SALLY ROGERS
FOLKSINGER**
- 12:15 EARL MACDONALD
JAZZ QUARTET**
- 1:30 FROG BRIDGE STRINGS
FIDDLERS**
- 2:30 BENTETU
CARIBBEAN/AFRO**





La FERIA de la CIUDAD De WILLIMANTIC el 25 De SEPT Des de 11 Hasta 4



¡GRATIS! • ¡TODOS SON BIENVENIDO!

LA PLAZA JILLSON
WILLIMANTIC, CT

- 11:15 SALLY ROGERS**
TROUADOR OR CANTANTE
FOLKLORICO
- 12:15 EARL MACDONALD**
CUARTETO DE JAZZ
- 1:30 FROG BRIDGE STRINGS**
INSTRUMENTOS DE CUERDA
- 2:30 BENTETÚ**
AFROCARIBENO

