

Strawberries: An Elixir of Spring!

By: Paula M. Youmell

Strawberries are these exquisitely delightful red gifts from nature. When at peak sun-ripened readiness their color and scent is a beacon to the senses. Plucking one from the plant (or plucking from a berry box) is pure delight. The eyes hone in on the vibrant red color, the finger's nerve endings are charmed by the satiny skin peppered with seeds, the nose... well it knows it wants some of that sweet essence, the ears perk up with the gentle crunch of your teeth sinking into the sweet and luscious flesh, and your taste buds dance to the mesmerizing flavor in your mouth. Strawberries literally create a symphony in your senses.

Did I mention strawberries are good for you? They are good for you in so many more ways than the cellular health I am constantly reminding everyone about. (And yet, it all really boils down to cellular health. But, don't boil your strawberries! See below for more information on not heating these precious icons of late spring.)

Where did these little pleasure gems come from? If you are familiar and friendly with wild strawberries, your life has been touched by a gift. Wild strawberries, at perfect ripeness, are the epitome of what a strawberry is all about. Wild strawberry pickers know the frustration in these little gems; they are tiny! I once picked an eight ounce cup to go into this Native American Corn Bread recipe I was bent on baking up. By the time I had 1 whole cup, I refused to put them into a batter to be cooked at 350 F in my oven

(Cooking destroys the precious and nutritious Vitamin C). I ate them!

These tiny wild delicacies were cross bred with the walnut sized strawberry of Chile in the early 1800s. This cross breeding produced what we know, pick, and love today as the garden variety of strawberry.

Strawberries are high in Vitamin C. As a spring and early summer food this vitamin C is a gift as it continues to help the



body detox from the heavy foods of a long winter.

Vitamin C functions in your body:

- repairs body cells (Did you think I would not again mention your beautiful body cells?),
- keeps skin and collagen youthful,
- increases iron absorption,
- is pivotal in glandular health,
- necessary for many other nutrients to be utilized,
- keeps immune health, well, healthy,
- promotes wound healing,
- protects against blood clots and bruising,
- prevents and heals scurvy, and so much more.

I am not big on the reductionist

style of nutrition, i.e.: eat bananas for potassium, carrots for vitamin A, whole grains for B vitamins, broccoli for calcium... etc. Seriously, I am about whole foods as the synergy of their nutrients is far greater in regards to human health than picking apart food for their individual nutrients. With that said, strawberries are a powerhouse of vitamins, minerals, anti-oxidants, fiber, phyto-nutrients, and so much more we still know zero about. Eat fresh, local strawberries; your body cells will thank you!

Healing properties of Strawberries

This is where I go back to the elixir part as strawberries are an excellent late spring tonic. Their healing properties target the stomach, lungs, liver, spleen, and pancreas. Chemical constituents in strawberries help to break down excess liver toxins. Strawberries are anti-viral, help increase appetite (useful for those healing from cancer), and have internal moistening and lubricating properties. Add the moisture and lubrication to the fiber and you have what all berries are so good at: relieving constipation!

Young strawberry leaves are edible raw or cooked and high in many vitamins (Used for the treatment and prevention of scurvy because of their high vitamin C content.) and minerals. Older strawberry leaves are high in Vitamin C as well. Steep the older leaves in hot water, covered, to brew a medicinal tea. This tea is used as a systemic astringent, tonic, diuretic, for rheumatism, to tighten gums, and to increase fertility in both males and females.



(Fertility teas are often blends of several herbs, not just strawberry leaves.)

The rhizomes of the plant are used for similar medicinal properties as the older leaves and to treat intestinal ills and urinary tract symptoms.

Mashed strawberries are a wonderful astringent poultice for the skin. Regular strawberry masks are considered a wonderful treatment for fine lines and wrinkles. (But please, eat the mash when you are done your spa treatment. No need to waste such amazing berries!) Strawberry plants and berries are also used, both internally and externally, to treat eczema. Internally strawberries are considered a blood purifier and builder, ridding the body of the toxins that contribute to skin outbreaks. Externally they are astringent and moisturizing / lubricating to eczema irritated skin.

Eating Strawberries: Your best bet is to always buy local strawberries as they are vine ripened

and very sweet; their true flavor develops on the vine. Strawberries trucked in from California have been picked before ripening; otherwise they would rot before arriving at their destination, and never fully ripen and develop the tell-tale strawberry sweetness.

Shopping hint: always buy organic. Strawberries are a heavily pesticide sprayed agricultural crop. I have heard tales told that conventionally grown strawberries can be liquefied and sprayed as a pesticide!

Have I effectively made you excited for strawberry season? Will you be waiting at the Co-op door for the first delivery of local berries?

If you would like more personalized attention following these steps and achieving your health goals, please contact Paula Youmell to set up a Nutrition and Health Consultation. I can be reached at the above contact information.

Enjoy radiant health today and every day!

SPRING IS HERE

Finally.



By: Jackie Miller

Once again I give a big thank you to all our packagers who, for quite a few years now, have done great work packaging up our seeds for sale.

I'm writing this on March 29th and the seeds have now been on the shelves since February 22nd. All we need now is some sunny warm weather to start getting us all in the mood to plant. Onions, Peppers and Tomatoes should have been seeded by this date.

There are a few changes to the seeds this year, they are:

Top Notch Golden Wax Bean was changed to KINGHORN because Kinghorn was ordered

by mistake and we decided it would just be easier to keep it instead of sending it back.

We have two new Greens requested by customers, AMARANTH OPOPEO which is grown mainly for its seeds (it is one of the 7 ancient grains) although it makes a stunning sight in Vegetable or flower beds. It can grow to 5 feet so keep about 3 feet between plants. Young leaves can also be eaten up until it starts to flower.

GOLDEN PURSLANE which is a better behaved, more upright plant, than its wild cousin the Common Purslane. Used in Mesclun mixes with golden green leaves.

Another item requested by a customer is PERPETUAL SPINACH aka Leaf Beet, use as you would Spinach or Chard TOMATO ROSE DE BERNE comes highly recommended by one of the seed committee who grew it last year. It's a pinkish color and known in Europe as one of their best tasting Tomatoes.

THAI BASIL lots of customers have asked for this one. It has a strong licorice flavor yet smells like cloves. Small leaves and purple stems. Should look good in pots and flower beds too.

ZINNIA CRYSTAL WHITE we can no longer get just the white by itself so this year

there is a mix of colors CARNATION CAN CAN SCARLET a dwarf 10" carnation, should bloom the first year.

Once again:

THANK YOU PACKAGERS!

I couldn't do the job without you.

The Goddess of Baking Says Goodbye

By: Teresa Stone

It seems hard to believe that it's been 14 years since I first started delivering Artemis Bakers products to the Potsdam Food Co-op. I never would have believed it while I was in college (or even later in my 20's while I was a young professional in Princeton, New Jersey) if someone had told me that I would have a home baking business while I raised my children back home in the North Country. Not a chance....

Well, I couldn't be counting my blessings any more than I am, or wished for a better way of life while my children were growing up.

Sometimes life has a way of taking you on a different path than you may have set out on. When I found myself on that unexpected path, I had a couple of friends that turned me down a road I had no idea would be so long, or would lead me to such wonderful opportunities. It all started with three amazing women who discovered they shared a talent of baking. We all lived on the park in Canton where the local Farmer's Market was held every Tuesday and Friday and we quickly realized there was nobody selling baked goods. And so it began; my life as a baker.

Each day while my two daughters were off at school, I

would bake and fill orders for my various customers – the Potsdam Food Co-op being the longest of those. For years my kids (and their friends) would come home from school to the smell of fresh baked cookies or muffins and comment about how good our house always smelled – something that I had stopped noticing long ago!

I will admit, some days I longed to have that “fancy” office job I had in my 20's -- the one that I got all dressed up in stockings and high heels for -- but when I would stop and think about all the things I would have to give up; the car-pool to drop the kids off at school, my other part-time job and pas-

sion of teaching fitness classes, volunteering in the classroom, being able to nurse that unexpected sick child between batches of cookies, or a late night of baking so that I could go on that why-did-I-volunteer-for-this field trip to the zoo or apple orchard – I would quickly remember why I was doing the work I did.

As my youngest daughter prepares to enter her senior year of high school at Potsdam, my husband and I are beginning to prepare for our next phase, which will include relocating to Wattertown the summer of 2016 so that he can be closer to his main office. With that comes a “retirement” from my baking business.

As of June 1, 2015 Artemis Bakers will no longer stock that end cap shelf that we all know and have such a hard time resisting.

It takes a village, as the saying goes, and I couldn't have asked for a better “village” to live, work and raise my family. I am grateful to the Co-op and all the people who have purchased my products over the years for allowing me to have this opportunity, and for supporting our local producers. It has been wonderful being part of your life and getting to know you. Thank you.

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Co-op visits SUNY Canton Health Fair

Mary Egan and Sandy McCloy, both members of the Outreach, Education, & Event Committee, represented the Co-op at the SUNY Canton Health Fair in April, along with long-time representative, Juanita Babcock. The fair was open to SUNY Canton students, staff, and faculty, as well as the North Country community. In addition to information, our

reps brought salads and spreads from the Co-op's Carriage House Bakery and Deli to offer samples to the hungry crowd. The tofu cashew spread was a particularly hot commodity. In this photo, courtesy of SUNY Canton, Mary and Sandy chat with one of the many participants.



Our Mission Statement

The Potsdam Consumer Cooperative, Inc. is owned and operated by its members and is dedicated to meeting the community's need for specialty and whole foods at the lowest possible cost. As a member of the local community interested in its well being, we will attempt to use local sources whenever feasible.

We strive to provide a pleasant shopping experience and working environment, with an emphasis on education, shared information, and developing our relationship with the community. We encourage environmental respect through the goods we sell and in the manner in which we conduct our daily operations. We are committed to providing a model of responsible business practices based on the cooperative principles of open membership, democratic control, limited return on share capital or investments, return of surplus to members, continuous education, cooperation among cooperatives and concern for our local community.

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Store Hours
Daily 8:00am - 7:00pm
Except major holidays

The Co-op Accepts

- Cash
- Checks
- MasterCard/VISA
- EBT/SNAP
- Co-op Gift Cards
- Potsdam Chamber of Commerce Gift Certificates

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Christoff Bemis	Baker
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Erik Laubscher	Cashier
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Jessica Peters	Lead Baker
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Wendy Turnbull	Packaging Coordinator
Tom Yugartis	Deli

Co-op Community News is the official newsletter of the Potsdam Consumer Cooperative, Inc. in Potsdam, NY. It is published seasonally and serves as an open forum for the exchange of information and ideas between Co-op members. Articles appearing in this newsletter may be reprinted in other cooperative newsletters provided credit is given to Potsdam Co-op Community News and to the author of the article. We welcome submissions and comments from members and non-members. Submissions can be submitted via e-mail to potsdamcoopnews@gmail.com.

From the General Manager



Happy Spring! It was starting to feel like the winter would not end, but longer days and warmer weather have finally come.

Sales

Through the end of March we are up 3.38% in sales compared to 2014, which equates to \$13,600. We had a very strong January, followed by a very slow February, trailed by a decent March. Since packaged, refrigerated, and frozen grocery sections continue to show robust growth, the deli is no longer our strongest driver in sales growth. Produce sales are currently lagging behind last year, but I believe this is related to seed sales being off from last year due to a longer winter. The warmer weather is showing promise for all sales.

Juanita's Creations Recipe Binder

Because of the great response to Juanita's Creations and numerous requests, we have created a binder for all of Juanita's remarkable recipes. The binder is located on the shelf across from the seeds next to the current issue of the newsletter. We have included the recipes from every sampling Juanita has prepared so far. Each month we will continue to update the collection to include Juanita's most recent creation. There is one laminated version of each recipe, which is intended to remain in the binder for everyone's reference. Immediately following the laminated copy will be a page pocket containing printed copies for anyone to take. If a pocket is empty please let a staff person know and it will be refilled. The Co-op is thrilled with the success of this program and very grateful to Juanita for her creativity and time.

UNFI Show

A few of us just went to a food show hosted by UNFI, our largest distributor. 2015 represents the third year that the Co-op has sent staff to this show and the benefits keep increasing. Most of the new items that are brought into the store have been found at this nationally recognized natural foods show. The benefit of finding new products this way is that staff has the opportunity to sample products and pose questions to vendors before items arrive at the store. While we generally have a great sense of what you will like, it's nice to taste and touch products before we offer them

to you.

The other great reason for attending this food show is for sales that are offered. Most of the items you will find on promotion this summer will have been attained at this event. While we need to agree to purchase larger amounts of each product line, the deals allow us to sell through increased quantities over the summer and fall.

Equipment

We are continuing to maintain and update our equipment with various levels of difficulty. I'm sure many of you noticed the scale missing from register one for over a month. The scale was not weighing accurately so it was sent to a repair outfit in Florida, which was the only place we could find willing to work on the scale. The repair was simple once they received the parts but it cost the Co-op \$700. The repair price seems substantial but is less than a new scale would be at \$1,200 to \$1,800. The server for our Point of Sale system has become outdated and the new one should be in the store by the time you are reading this article. The new server cost about \$3,000.

Looking forward to next year, we will need to replace both of our register panels as they will no longer be PCI (Payment Card Industry) compliant. PCI compliance are standards set to insure that your credit information is protected when using your credit / debit cards. The new panels will work smoothly with the rest of the equipment at the registers so the change will be minor. The Co-op has already begun to

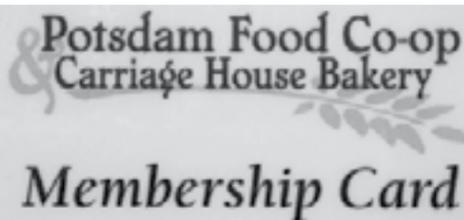
start saving as the cost of the new panels will be \$6,500 for the pair. The following year both of our card readers will need replacement to maintain PCI compliance. These aren't as expensive in comparison at around \$1,200 each.

It may seem like a lot of expense to maintain Co-op systems, but keep in mind that the server and register panels were installed during the reset in 2007. We have used these machines well with little maintenance until now and the new equipment will have a similar lifespan.

B&G Committee and Summer Projects

The Building & Grounds committee met in February to outline projects that need to be done over the next year. The committee has some new structure including a committee chair, a working owner coordinator, and a materials coordinator. Upcoming projects include; replacing the store's broken floor tiles, fixing the door frame on the door to the loading dock, refreshing the bathroom and painting the Carriage House, the latter being the largest project for this summer. As many of you might remember, the Bakery was painted 5 years ago, but the paint is beginning to flake off the building. We must have assistance from our member-owners for these projects, if you are interested in helping please email me and I will put you in touch with the committee.

Become a Member-Owner



Join the Co-op!

2% discount for all member-owners. Working one hour per adult in your household will earn your household a 10% discount for a month. Core workers work three hours per week to earn a 20% discount. If you are interested in becoming a working member-owner, please give us a call at 315-265-4630.

Co-op Business Partners

These locally owned businesses have generously agreed to grant the following offers to Co-op members. Present your current Membership Card when asking for the discount. One time offers will be checked off when used.

3 Bears Gluten-Free Bakery & More
For each \$10 purchase you will be entered into a drawing to win a \$5 gift certificate
51 Market St., Potsdam
Facebook: 3 Bears Gluten-Free Bakery & More

Alchemistress
10% off body art (excluding specials)
17 Maple St., Potsdam 267-6925
www.alchemistress.com Alchemistress-BodyArts on Facebook

The Alexander Technique - Lessons and Workshops
10% off on first lesson
73 Leroy St., Potsdam 265-7386
www.amsatonline.org/teacher/bethrobinson

The Blackbird Café
Free cup of coffee with purchase of a sandwich
107 Main St., Canton 386-8104
www.theblackbirdcafe.com

Body Shop Fitness & Salon, Inc.
10% off Fitness Center Membership
47 St Hwy 345, Potsdam 262-0482
www.bodyshopfitnessandsalon.com

BodyWorks Chiropractic
15% off initial visit
17 Leroy St., Potsdam 265-2030
www.PotsdamBodyWorks.com

Chiropractic Office of Dr. Jamie Towle & Dr. Lisa Francey Towle
10% off chiropractic services at both Canton and Malone locations.
16 Park St., Canton 386-2273
3276 St Rte 11, Malone 518-483-6300
www.NorthCountryChiropractic.com

Colton Massage Therapy
Catherine A. Klein, BA, LMT
...and everyone knew her as Nancy
\$10 off first massage or gift voucher
4808 St Hwy 56, Colton 315-262-2636

Community Performance Series
15% off any regular priced ticket (some restrictions may apply). Tickets must be purchased through the CPS Box Office.
Snell Theater, SUNY Potsdam
267-2277 www.cpspotdam.org

The Computer Guys
10% off all in stock items at both Potsdam and Canton locations
4 Clarkson Ave., Potsdam 265-3866
2564 St Hwy 68, Canton 714-3866
www.techtext.com

First Crush Wine Bar and Bistro
10% off 7 am - 2pm Mon. thru Fri.
32 Market St., Potsdam 265-WINE
www.firstcrushwinebar.com

Hands On Health Holistic Healing
20% off the first two consultation appointments
Hannawa Falls 265-0961
www.handsonhealthhh.com

Jazzercise
1 complimentary class to new customers (may not be combined with other offers)
22 Depot St., Potsdam 265-0849
www.jazzercise.com

Jernabi Coffeehouse
10% off brewed coffee
11A Maple St., Potsdam 274-9400
www.stlawrencevalleyroasters.com

The Knead of Life
Helen Kenny, NYS LMT
\$5 discount on first session
Hannawa Falls 265-3369

Little Italy
\$1.00 off any large pizza
30 Market St., Potsdam 265-5500
www.PotsdamLittleItaly.com

Maple Run Emporium
10% off any regular priced kitchenware items
49 Market St., Potsdam 274-0102
www.maplerunemporium.com

Michael Greer Residential Carpentry
5% discount
Potsdam, 528-7507

North Country Center for Yoga and Health (Yoga Loft)
1 time \$5 discount for any drop-in class
30 Court St., Canton
315-605-8637
www.yoga-loft.org

Potsdam Center for Innovative Dental Technologies
Aaron Acres, DMD
10% discount
83 Market St., Potsdam 265-3377
www.docreed.com

Purple Rice
\$2 off 1 lunch special (one-time offer)
20 Elm St., #105, Potsdam 268-0923

Rebecca Weld, AIA and LEED AP
5% discount on residential architectural services
11 Washington St., Potsdam 262-0082
www.renewarchitecture.com

St. Lawrence Nurseries
10% off regularly priced plant stock
325 Rte 345, Potsdam 265-6739
www.sln.potsdam.ny.us

Seaway Cash Register & Typewriter
5% off on machines, service and supplies
14 Bray Rd., Norwood 353-3533

The UPS Store
10 Free Self-service copies copies daily (B&W 8 1/2 x11 20lb standard paper)
200 Market Street, Potsdam 265-4565
www.theupsstorelocal.com/5986

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Renew Architecture & Design



Member-owners: Dancing and Desserts



Friday June 19th from 7-9pm
Trinity Church on Fall Island

Bring a dessert to share if you want and come have some fun dancing with fellow Co-op member-owners.

Bright Days Ahead

By Jim Bartlett, Assistant Manager/Lead Buyer

Today is indeed bright. It is bright, but cold and not entirely appreciated because it has been cold for a long, long, long time. Since I am not native to the area, I'm not able to say, "this is how cold it was when I was young." But, many have said it to me and all I can say is, "I'm sorry!" Soon we will be in the throes of a most humid and sultry summer and I say, "a men!" We, at your Co-op are able to say, "a men" too as we will have all of the ice cold refreshment that you can handle! What follows will quench the thirst and cool down the most drastic of situations anyone will encounter...read and choose; choose and enjoy:

Iced Bhakti, original chai
Ingredients: Organic Fair Trade Black Tea, Organic Ginger Juice, Organic Evaporated Cane Juice, Organic Soy Milk and Spices. And they exhibit a social conscience, "We at Bhakti Chai feel honored to know that the premium we pay on our ingredients — whether it's Fair Trade Certified

tea, organic ginger or Non-GMO Verified soy — is establishing a standard of self-sufficiency on a global level. We are impacting today's land owners and entrepreneurs which will lead to a new generation of educated and passionate community leaders. In addition, from zero waste manufacturing to sustainable packaging, Bhakti Chai incorporates conscious practices into every aspect of its business." This drink not only makes you feel good inside, it makes sense for our community and our world. (<http://bhaktichai.com/>)

Live Kombucha A staff member found this product and we are so glad they did! It was developed to help the creators father minimize his "addiction to soda." It is a great rendition to the more traditional kombuchas on the market. We carry the following flavors: Doctor Pure, Root beer, and Cola. The producer offers some interesting facts (<http://live-sodakombucha.com/>):

- A 12 oz. can of regular soda contains 140-165 calories and 39g of sugar.

- Study after study links soda consumption to obesity, diabetes, stroke, tooth decay, and osteoporosis.
- A 12 oz. bottle of LIVE Soda contains only 60 calories and 14g of sugar.
- LIVE Soda is raw kombucha which aids digestion, detoxifies the liver with organic acids & enzymes, energizes the body with organic B-vitamins and antioxidants, and realigns your digestive system with live probiotics.
- If you replace just one regular soda with LIVE Soda every day for a year, you'll save around 30,000 calories and 6,600g of sugar!
- LIVE Soda contains more probiotic bacteria than the vast majority of kombuchas on the market today.
- LIVE probiotic organism content
- Lactobacillus spp: 3.5 billion
- Saccharomyces boulardii: 3.3 billion

Veri Organic Soda This one, I found. It's an interesting drink if you love soda. I love soda, but

even the organic sodas without the artificial sweeteners have pure sugar and organic sweeteners and I'm not a fan of all of the calories. This drink has a blend of organic stevia and organic sugar. In my book they nailed the proportions. The sweetness is there without the "funky" stevia taste and they only have 60 calories. The flavors are true and only "top shelf" ingredients are used. This is one you will want to try. We carry Lemon Lime, Cola, Ginger Ale, and Orange. Here's a bit of "Veri" philosophy:

Remember a time when soda wasn't a four-letter word? Before corn syrup replaced cane sugar and chemicals became "acceptable" substitutes for real ingredients? Those were the days when soda was a more innocent treat.

We do. And we've spent years crafting a soda that's like no other; one that we could proudly serve to anyone, even our children, guilt-free. Some said it couldn't be done.

Experts insisted that a soda with no additives or preservatives would have a shelf life shorter than a Hollywood marriage. Some

argued that eliminating 65% of the calories was the same as eliminating most of the taste. Others said it was impossible: a soda with no artificial colors, no artificial aromas, no artificial flavoring and no artificial sweeteners? No way. We politely disagreed. Then committed ourselves to crafting the world's finest organic, low-calorie soft drinks. A soda like no other. Say hello to Veri. A truly different kind of soda. (<http://www.verisoda.com/>)

Three drinks. Three different approaches to quenching your thirst. All from creators who desire to make a difference in the world, their community and you. How can you go wrong? Please try them and let us know what you think. We have so many new items and are excited to have you try all of them. We hope you enjoy them and trust that you will let us know what you think? Your opinions are essential to what we do...we are, after all, your Co-op. Thanks for sharing and enjoy the sunshine!

Shopping with Rosie

By: Laura J. Cordts

Rose Rivezzi describes herself as a "teacher by nature;" telling me that she "enjoys conveying information in a way people can understand." She's been teaching elementary school and remedial reading since the early 1980's. That's her full-time job, but after talking with Rose for an hour, it's evident that her other real passion is food. Growing it. Finding it. Cooking it. Sharing it. Eating it.

When it comes to food, Rose isn't just a teacher. She's a true "food maven."

Rose came to Potsdam as a student in the late 1970's, and met her husband David at SUNY. When she moved off-campus, she discovered the Potsdam Co-op, and she's been shopping and volunteering here ever since, including several stints on the Co-op Board.

"I grew up in an Italian family, so of course we ate lots of good Italian food," she tells me. After leaving home for college, she got interested in exploring different foods - especially "real" foods. "My early food Bible was the original Moosewood Cookbook. I had the Joy of Cooking and

Fannie Farmer books for the basic 'how-to' instructions. But the Moosewood book really launched my creativity."

Through the years, Rose has accumulated many cookbooks, and she still loves exploring new recipes. "I really like Lynn Rossetto Kasper," (of NPR's Splendid Table show) she mentions. "She's great at giving ideas for how to use what's on hand, and how to orchestrate so everything is ready at the same time, which can often be challenging for new cooks."

"But you know, with experience, cooks gain confidence. Eventually you don't really need a recipe. You start to just know what will work." And that's really where the art of cooking, and the fun, can begin.

Even while working and raising her family, food always remained a top priority. "I didn't care much about decorating, or cleaning," she laughs. "But I did care about food - cooking for my family, and for friends. Food connects people. It's immensely satisfying to serve people food, to see them enjoy it. Food is my gift of choice, and it's how I help others. When someone has surgery, I bring food. When someone has

a new baby, I bring food." In fact, for 18 years Rose's family and three others have maintained a weekly dinner group - taking turns preparing enough food for all 4 families, to pick up and eat at their own homes.

As you might expect, sourcing good food is a high priority for Rose. Her family has their own garden, and subscribes to a year-round CSA for produce they don't grow themselves. "We do eat meat," she says. "There's room for everything at our table. I just like to know where our food comes from."

Much of that food comes from the Co-op, so when the Co-op was looking for ways to help people get better-acquainted with the store, Rose was a natural choice. Last fall, "Shopping with Rosie" was born.

The Co-op hosts "Juanita's First Thursday Creations" food tastings on the first Thursday afternoon of every month, showcasing creative ways to use some lesser-known Co-op ingredients. Now, Rose is also on hand: to walk people through the store, highlight food items shoppers may have never used, answer questions about ingredients, share recipes, or sim-



ply explain how the bulk pricing works, along with other Co-op tips.

"I love doing it," she tells me. "It's very informal. One day I saw someone looking at all the granolas, and we ended up talking about what ingredients he could buy to make his own. Another day, I showed a customer how easy it is to make pesto. Every month, it's different."

As we finish our interview, Rose sums up her philosophy for me. "People shouldn't be intimidated by good food and cooking,"

she says. "Good food doesn't have to be more expensive, or more time-consuming to make. It will probably be better for you than 'fast food' or 'convenience food.' And it will certainly taste better. I just want to help people feel empowered around food."

If you'd like to feel empowered - stop by after 4pm on the First Thursday of any month. There will be some terrific food to sample. And Rosie - the Co-op's own food maven - will be there to shop right along with you.

Going Gluten Free and Dairy Free – The Chocolate Chip Pumpkin Muffin

By: Liz Bollt

Our family has been gluten free and dairy free for a few years now, and we have been feeling much healthier for it. If you would like to try eating GF/DF, rest assured, there is plenty to eat! First and

foremost, there is meat, and there are vegetables. Lots! What about yummy baked goods? Yes, there are lots of them too. However, when you go gluten free, the idea is to stay away from most grains, so, I try to “beef up” my baked goods with veggies and protein. My best advice to people

going gluten and dairy free is this: instead of thinking of what you cannot eat, think of what you CAN eat. And, get yourself Bette Hagman’s cookbook, “The Gluten Free Gourmet.” This book tells you everything you need to know about going gluten free, including how to read labels and looking

for hidden glutes. Here is one recipe that I have adapted from the zucchini muffin recipe in Hagman’s book. Yes! They are kid approved!

Dry ingredients

- 1 cup brown rice flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ¾ tsp of salt
- ½ tsp of baking soda
- ½ tsp of cinnamon

Wet ingredients

- 3 tbsp walnut oil
- 1/3 cup brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup canned pumpkin

Directions

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

1. In small bowl, combine dry ingredients
2. In a separate bowl, whisk together wet ingredients
3. Mix the dry ingredients into the wet ingredients
4. Mix in the chocolate chips if desired – about 1 cup (read your ingredients in your chocolate chips. You can get totally dairy free chocolate chips by Enjoy Life and Sunspire, but our family tends to go with the Ghirardelli 60% cacao chips – they are not dairy free, but they are pretty close)
5. Place in paper muffin cups in muffin tin – makes about 8 muffins. Bake for 20 minutes.

I like to add different things to these muffins, such as: 1 tbsp ground flax seed, or 2-3 tbsp chocolate RAW Replacement MEAL by Garden of Life, or ground walnuts, hemp meal, or ground almonds. You can substitute for the oil as well. I’ve used butter, and I’ve used coconut oil. Have fun making these your favorite muffins!

Mr. Bunny’s Produce Patch

A Helpful Guide to Local Vegetables (For Humans)

By: Mr. Bunny

The Bollt house bunny, Mr. Bunny, has decided to create this column for the Potsdam Cooperative Newsletter, and give you ideas on how to identify and enjoy his veggie of choice for each quarter. Who better to teach us about vegetables than the biggest fan of the garden, the bunny!?

This quarter’s column is about the Wild Leek, which is popping out on the forest floor and in the Potsdam Food Cooperative’s produce section! Otherwise known

as “Ramps”, they are from the Lily/Onion family and are known to be one of the first spring plants that protrude from the leaf litter along streams. They can be dug up by hand, or with a small shovel. Make sure you have a good nose and can sniff to be sure they are Wild Leeks! They will smell of garlic and will have a small bulb at their root below soil level. They have smooth green leaves. If you are not sure, then just pick them up at the PFC. Our produce section will have them when they are in season. If you dig the wild leeks up, please

restore the soil clods to their original holes, and leave some of the leek bulbs. If you do not disturb them too much, you will keep a healthy crop of these perennial treats there for decades to come!

Potato/Leek soup is a favorite North Country Ramp recipe, as is adding the Ramps to salads, soups, or any sauce or stew in which scallions would be normally be used. But I want to try something new, and maybe you do too! I found Ramp Risotto! See below for the recipe. Take advantage of this fresh spring vegetable

now. You will not see them again until next spring!

Here is the recipe from <http://www.delallo.com/recipes/wild-leek-ramp-risotto>. This is a gluten free recipe, and the only dairy in it is the Romano Cheese (generally a more digestible cheese for those of us with dairy issues). For a video showing you how to cook Risotto, go to <http://www.delallo.com/video/how-to-cook-risotto>

Ingredients

- 1 pound leeks, trimmed and peeled
- 3 tablespoons Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 1 1/2 cups Arborio Rice
- 6 cups vegetable stock, simmered with ramp leaves and a carrot, salted to taste
- 2 canned DeLallo San Marzano Tomatoes, drained and finely chopped
- 2/3 cup grated Pecorino Romano

Directions

1. Trim the whites of the wild leeks into thin slices
2. Slice the greens of the leaves into 1/2 inch ribbons
3. Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan over medium heat
4. Add the whites of the ramps and cook about 1 minute
5. Add the rice and stir to coat each grain; toast until they are opaque, about 4 minutes
6. Add 1/2 cup of simmering broth and stir until almost completely absorbed. Continue cooking the rice by adding the broth one ladle at a time, stirring constantly and allowing each addition of broth to be absorbed before adding the next
7. After about 15 minutes, when it looks like you’re on the last ladle of broth the rice will be willing to absorb and still be al dente, add the ramp leaves and tomato. In 5 minutes, begin tasting rice. You want it to be tender but with a bit of bite.
8. When the rice is perfect, remove skillet from heat, add the Pecorino Romano and stir briskly. Add a little salt if needed. Risotto should be slightly soupy. Serve immediately.

Here’s another link to a gluten free ramp recipe that sounds delicious! <http://mynorth.com/northern-michigan-recipes/creamy-wild-leek-pesto-pasta/>

Cheese of the Day

By: Vanessa Bittner

Brie, Boucherondin, Cambozola, Camembert... the cultures, flavors and traditions behind these soft-ripened or aged European cheeses are rich. Unfortunately, the fat and calorie counts are also high and most of these cheeses are imported. While foreign cheeses may be wonderful treats, what cheeses can be made locally and consumed on a daily basis without worrying so much about fat and food miles?

The answer is yogurt cheese.

In their 1982 book *Cheesemaking Made Easy* Ricki Carroll and Robert Carroll provide a recipe for yogurt cheese using a “1 quart yogurt colander” and cheesecloth. The fresh yogurt is poured into the cheesecloth-lined colander, the four corners of the cheesecloth are tied and the bag of yogurt is left to drain old-world style. The resulting yogurt cheese is scraped from the cloth. The book gives suggestions on both sweet and savory additions for a spreadable cheese.

The book *Making Artisan Cheese* by Tim Smith gives similar instructions for making yogurt cheese, advising not to use yogurts that contain gelatin, because gelatin prevents the whey from separating. Picturesquely, Smith describes the process of tying the ends of the cheesecloth around a wooden spoon and suspending the yogurt over a deep bowl to drip. He advises that two pounds of low-fat or nonfat yogurt yield two cups of tangy yogurt cheese. After first instructing to “discard the whey” the author adds “(or save it for baking).”

A small but important technological advancement has occurred since the publication of those books. I’m not sure when the tool

appeared, but two years ago I purchased from the very same Ricki (the “Cheese Queen”) Carroll at the New England Cheesemaking Supply Company a Donvier Yogurt Cheese Maker that cuts out the cheesecloth, hanging, dripping and potential mess.

Made by the Cuisipro company, the Donvier Yogurt Cheese Maker is marketed as a BPA-free square container with patented-design strainer to turn a quart of yogurt into yogurt cheese in between two and 24 hours. At this writing, the product was available online at under \$20 (no longer from New England Cheesemaking Supply Company but from Amazon and other sources). If cared for properly and washed promptly, the container and strainer are very durable.

So, over the past two years, in between raids of the Co-op’s refrigerated gourmet cheese section (thank you packagers!), I have been making yogurt cheese for more or less daily consumption at home. The variations are many, but here are some suggestions and ideas for making, eating and baking yogurt cheese and, also, what to do with the resulting whey.

While Tim Smith encourages readers to experiment with flavored yogurts, I have only used Prosper’s Farmstead Creamery plain yogurt, which is available at the Co-op and other shops in

the North Country. It is possible to plop the entire quart of yogurt with the creamy layer, already separated whey and all, right into the strainer without overflow, although sometimes a teaspoon of yogurt drops between the strainer frame and container. It usually takes a couple of hours at room

Plain yogurt cheese can serve as a spread or dip for crackers and chips: flavorful crackers are best. I have also mixed in herbs, salt, pepper and garlic for a savory spread. Raisins, walnuts and maple syrup can help create a lower fat version of North Country cream cheese for bagels. Speak-

ing of which, the plain yogurt cheese is also an excellent companion to lox or smoked salmon on bagels, toast or crackers. Homemade or store-bought jams combined with plain yogurt cheese produce an instant, low-fat breakfast or dessert.

As for ethnic cuisine, it may not be necessary to thicken yogurt to make *raita* for Indian dishes, but the plain yogurt cheese is still an excellent accompaniment to spicier Indian *dals* and vegetable dishes. I have served it instead

of sour cream with refried beans, salsa and corn chips. Russian menus rely heavily on both sour cream and a soft cheese called *tvorog* that is a variety of quark. It is possible to substitute yogurt cheese in many Russian, Eastern European and Scandinavian recipes that call for a fresh white cheese. Examples are fillings for blintzes (*bliny*), dumplings such as *vareniki* (*pierogi* in Polish) and as an ingredient for Russian *syrniki*, or cheese pancakes.

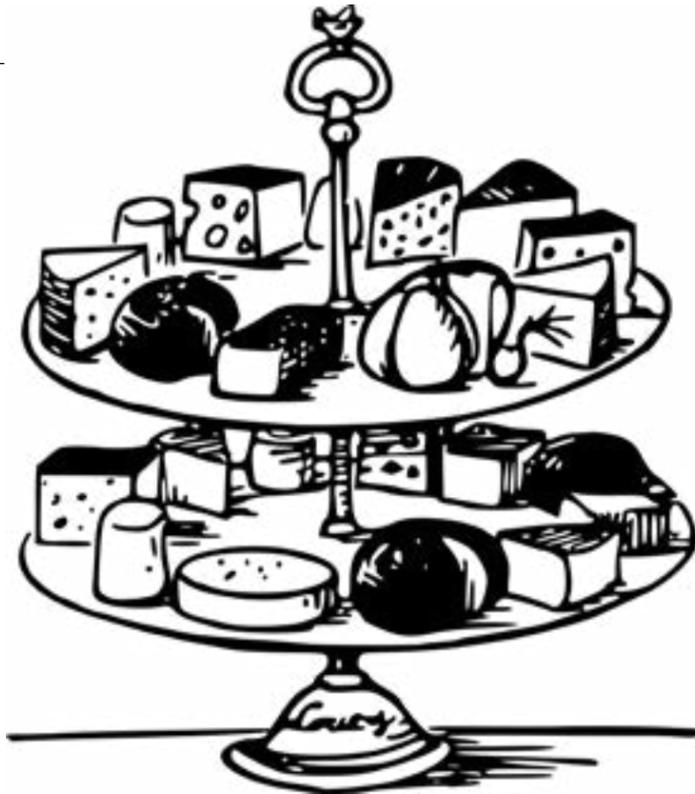
In the winter, plain yogurt cheese can be dolloped into soups,

whether they are bullion based or of a creamier consistency, such as butternut squash soup.

Baking presents an even greater range of possibilities. I have used yogurt cheese to make a white pizza and onion pie, just making sure that the cheese had drained for 24 hours and was relatively solid, so the pizza dough would not get wet. Cheesecake is an obvious application, although it adds more fat and sugar and should be experimented with to achieve the desired texture and form.

Returning from solids to liquids, those not used to whey may not know what to do with it. However, whey is a simple 1:1 substitute for milk in a pancake recipe, can be added to smoothies or drunk plain. Whey is called for in many of the recipes in Sally Fallon’s well-known cookbook *Nourishing Traditions*, where it is used “as a starter culture for lacto-fermented vegetables and fruits, for soaking grains and as a starter for many beverages.” I am not sure, however, whether the whey from yogurt cheese can be used to make another cheese, such as Norwegian *gjetost*. That would require more research and even more experimentation.

So, whether you buy or make your own yogurt, it is worth trying yogurt cheese at least once to experiment with texture, consistency and food pairings. It is a healthy idea to keep a spare quart of yogurt or two in the refrigerator anyway. Dips and spreads can be made quickly and served to surprise guests with wine, beer or other beverages. Dessert is always just a few hours and spoonfuls away. Finally, use yogurt cheese as an everyday food and save the aged, veined and artisanal cheeses from distant lands for a special treat.



temperature (recipes suggest 72 degrees F) for the quart of yogurt to drain enough to put the lid on the container. Then the entire container can be stored in the refrigerator until the yogurt cheese is needed. The strainer will stay like new the less it is scraped, so it is a good idea to plunk the yogurt cheese into a glass or other bowl for cooking and consumption and immediately wash and dry the strainer.

If you have your own source of raw milk, then the option of using homemade yogurt exists.

I Love the Co-op

By: Stacy Cole

Living in town over the past few years has been great. I can walk almost everywhere I need to go and don’t have to plan my meals days in advance. If I forget to purchase an item I can quickly walk down to the Co-op and get what I need. It is a place where I don’t have to worry about what I’m supporting by the products I purchase. Packaged groceries will often times come from companies with ethical and environmental values. Produce will be local whenever possible and the eggs will be fresh from fellow neighbors coming from chickens raised in a humane environment. Lastly, I can meet almost every farmer and learn about their practices which supply the store with products. Another amazing aspect is that when I walk through the doors I know I’m going to be greeted by friendly employees and customers. Where else can you go in which the shoppers will say hello to you?

I recently got back from vacation from a place where shopping and eating the foods that my body is used to wasn’t exactly convenient. It was a 40 minute drive to any store that sold ethical products, so meals needed to be planned out well in advance. If an ingredient was forgotten either the meal changed or a run to “duhn duhn duhn” Walmart was in order. I really dislike that store, but my only other options were gas stations and smoke shops. As time went on I realized how much I took the Co-op for granted. Every day I was eating less because my options were so limited and I had quickly consumed the food I had brought down with me.

We are lucky to have a place like the Potsdam Food Cooperative. Next time you stop in I ask that you take a moment to really appreciate the fact that we have this amazing store to buy the food we enjoy from sources that support our values.



By: Chris Affre

The Carriage House? What I know is happening by this time is that we have cake at the beginning of the week, cupcakes at the end of the week, and little things to buy with your morning coffee most of the week. Thanks to our Jessica there is a rotation of several flavors and I’m certain you’ve found at least one to call a favorite. What I hope is happening by this time is that we are producing for sale the winning recipes from the 2015 Jr. Iron Chef competition. This annual

competition, sponsored by The Saint Lawrence County Health Initiative, gives middle and high school students a chance to show off their cooking skills using local ingredients. We think it’s a great fit for us and why haven’t we thought of this sooner.

Shout out to Don Butters our uber core worker. There isn’t anything that Don doesn’t help out with during the up to twenty hours per week that he logs in. He’s truly our fifth Beatle. Thank you Don Butters.

Thank you to all of our Core Workers, and we always need

more, well not always but most of the time, and don’t worry, you don’t have to put in twenty hours per week. The basic shifts are three hours once per week for 20% off your grocery bill. Time slots are 7am-10am and 2pm-5pm, we can be somewhat flexible and the willingness to work is the only experience needed. If you’re interested send us an email, phone the Co-op, or just stop by, all contact info should appear somewhere in this news letter. TTFN

All About the Pace

The View from the Packaging Room

By: Wendy Turnbull, Packaging Coordinator

In this fast-paced world where grocery stores compete with restaurants to satisfy an ever-growing demand for faster food, the Potsdam Food Co-op is as unique as its members. The average Co-op customer appears to have priorities that do not always put speed above quality. Thankfully, the Co-op delivers both. Even if you don't have time to taste Juanita's Creations on the first Thursday each month; you can stop by later to pick up the recipe and ingredients to make those nutritious meals at home, when you have time. The great thing about the Co-op is the option to choose. Choose organic. Choose from the deli. Choose gluten-free. Choose commercially packaged and ready to eat. For great value, choose Co-op-packaged foods and create something wonderful. It's important to us that you choose your own pace.

I recently wanted something fast, decadent and healthy. It was one of those freezing, far-too-many frozen-pipe evenings of the North Country. I confess I wanted an excuse to turn on my oven, if only to help keep the water flowing from my taps. Spying a bag of pizza dough on the

Co-op deli shelf, I grabbed it and then a shopping basket. With the foundation of a great meal in my basket, the rest was easy. I invite you to try it.

After picking up my dough and basket, I head to the cheese section. Choose some of that excellent quality, low-fat mozzarella (top shelf). There is no exact science to this, so relax. You know you're going to nibble some while making the pizza. Grab a few other cheeses—maybe fontina and a tiny bit of parm reggiano, which delivers a wallop of flavor for a tiny amount. Sometimes I go with asiago or cheddar. Choose the cheese that appeals to you. If you crave a stuffed crust—get cheddar. Now, slide over to the vegetable section for mushrooms, peppers and more. You can be wild and exotic, organic, or commercial. I like veggie pizza, but meat options abound. Check the deli for olives. Slicing up feta-stuffed or garlic-stuffed olives adds a pizza twist.

Past the bulk spice section, you'll see Muir Glen pizza sauce. I hardly ever buy anything in a can and it costs more than some pizza sauces; but if you have not tried it... well, I feel sorry for you. It has some undefinable taste that can only be described as "bright." If you don't have your

own organic tomatoes growing outside your door, try it just once. It does two pizzas, so I freeze half the sauce for next time.

As soon as you get home, set your oven to 400. Grease a pizza pan and coax the dough out of its bag. Let it sit in the middle of the pan on your counter. Grate the mozzarella and slice or grate any other cheese and set it aside. I cut twigs of cheddar and set those aside to make a stuffed crust. Cut up your veg; then nibble some cheese as you pour a glass of wine. Smear your hands around the oil and push the dough out from the center to the edges of your pan with your greased fingers, until it dangles. Create an outer circle with the twig of cheddar and flop the dangly edge over to cover them. Spread half the can of pizza sauce, toss on the veg and top with your cheeses. Bake for about 20-25 minutes and you will have an unmatched pizza and your home will smell glorious.

Spring brings us asparagus (also great on pizza, especially parm, fontina and blue cheese) and I love the pace at which asparagus grows—fast! You'll want to eat it the day it is harvested. So, if you don't have your own asparagus patch, find locally grown spears at the Co-op. Speaking of local vegetables, I am very happy

to welcome our new Packaging Supervisor, Megan Kent. You will see her and family on one of our local supplier posters in the produce section. If you have not yet met Megan, book a packaging shift and get acquainted. You will work along-side a host of great members. This is a community of people who work together to support something they value, while earning a discount for their household. Everyone is welcome to shop at the Co-op, but if you are an owner you are also welcome to earn a discount. A single-adult household maintains a 10% discount with one hour of work per month.

If you have not brought your own containers for bulk liquids, you have noticed the sanitized jars, below the bulk liquids, ready to carry home everything from local maple syrup to laundry detergent. We have a great system: Shoppers return washed & dried jars with lids. They leave them in a cabinet for jar-sanitizers to finish the job for discount credit. If you'd like to sanitize jars for your household's discount, please stop and talk with a packaging supervisor so we can set you up with the necessary information and tools. Long-time jar-sanitizer, Mary-Ann would be the first to tell you that removing labels and

sanitizing jars cannot be done in a hurry. It is a job you can do at a leisurely pace in your own home.

Someone else really knew how to pace herself—Evelyn Reihl. I miss her. She was a dedicated packaging core-worker well into her eighties. Many of us worked at different times with Evelyn and heard stories that probably sent laughter throughout the store. Evelyn spoke often of her peaceful house in the woods, how lovely it was in the spring. It was among the reasons she chose to retire in the area. I agreed with Evelyn—we live in a fantastic place, and part of what makes it great is the Co-op community. Stop and see us in the packaging room. We'll be packaging everything from organic, mangoes and pecans to the best granola you may have ever eaten—prepared in the Carriage House Bakery; as well as products from other local businesses. We try to cover all your baking and cooking needs. Check out the newly arrived bulk legumes—buy a little or a lot. This spring, whether you are aspiring to do a marathon or a triathlon, or maybe something as strenuous as keeping the weeds out of your asparagus patch, take time for healthy food and remember... It's all about the pace.

See No Evil

Organic Industry Bigwigs Dispute What Cornucopia's Aerial Photos Reveal

Published on April 6th, 2015 at <http://www.cornucopia.org>.

By: Mark A. Kastel

Organics was founded on a loving collaboration between family farmers and eaters who established an alternative to the industrial paradigm of how our food, including livestock, is produced.

When we founded The Cornucopia Institute, nearly 11 years ago, there were two CAFOs (concentrated animal feeding operations or "factory farms"), each producing "organic" milk from thousands of cows. Today, there are over 20.

The Organic Foods Production Act, passed by Congress, is a good law but both the Bush and Obama administrations have rolled out the red carpet for corporate agribusiness lobbyists to shape organic regulations and enforcement with an emphasis on profit rather than organic integrity.

Over the past decade, Cornucopia has hammered the USDA and the White House on grossly incompetent, or intentionally harmful, management of the organic program. We have filed numerous legal complaints, some of which have shut down factory farms or constrained their production, while others have been ignored or dismissed.

So, throughout most of 2014,

Cornucopia contracted with a professional aerial photography service to photograph 15 "certified organic" factory farms from West Texas to the eastern seaboard (view the photo gallery here).

We forwarded over 250 highly detailed 50-60 MB images to the USDA. We additionally provided scores of other satellite photos and supporting documentary material.

Our flyover campaign was the subject of an investigative report on December 11 in the Washington Post (so we know this landed on the USDA Secretary's desk). And what have been the results?

The U.S. Department of Agriculture

Nothing. Congress charged the USDA with protecting the interests of ethical organic stakeholders and the authenticity of organic food. You'd think that the magnitude of the alleged violations would prompt some kind of response. We're talking about dairies managing 18,000 cows and poultry "farms" licensed to raise over 1 million hens.

Weeks after we transferred this information to the USDA, they have said nothing publicly. They didn't even acknowledge receipt of the voluminous materials we supplied, via Federal Express and email, until we contacted the National Organic Program

Staff Director, Miles McEvoy. He subsequently had their enforcement staff confirm that they had, indeed, received the evidence.

Organic Trade Association

It's a shame that the OTA, the powerful industry lobby group, would express no concern over the threat to organic integrity represented by the widespread pattern of giant industrial-scale livestock producers "gaming the system" and the USDA going along for the ride.

When the reputation of organics is tarnished, everyone loses, large and small industry participants alike, as well as organic eaters.

Instead, the OTA issued an industry damage-control release stating: "We continue to have confidence in the oversight of organic operations and in the checks and balances built into the organic certification system which includes regular inspections of operations, regular accreditation audits of certifiers, and complaint investigation procedures."

Nate Lewis, a specialist on organic certification of livestock operations for the OTA, was unimpressed by the photos. "For any of these photos, I could come up with a completely valid reason for what you're seeing," he told an NPR reporter. In the case of egg-laying chickens, for instance, the rules allow animals to be



MBA Poultry, marketing under the trade name Smart Chicken, maintains 40 barns near Tecumseh, NE. On the day this photograph was taken, all had fencing but with gates open, freshly mowed grass, doors closed, and no sign of birds ever being outside. This was true of all 40 barns.



In stark contrast to MBA/Smart Chicken's industrial-scale operation, RedHill Farms, multiple coops on multiple farms in Marin County, California, gives laying hens access to pasture all day long, as well as enrichment such as this handmad perch. Photo courtesy of RedHill Farms

enclosed for several different reasons, such as when temperatures outside are too hot or cold, for reasons of preventive health care, or when the chickens are very young.

Maybe Mr. Lewis' title should be changed to "Corporate Apologist." He certainly is doing his job

defending OTA members.

But isn't it a coincidence that all 14, randomly selected factory farms, producing "organic" eggs, milk and chicken, were confining their animals on a wholesale basis the day an airplane happened to fly overhead? **Continued on page 9...**



Anne's Easy Recipes



Lynn's Sesame and Peanut Noodles

From Lynn Clark-Stone
Potsdam Food Co-op Bookkeeper and Outreach/Marketing Coordinator

Ingredients

- 1 package (13.25 ounces) whole grain pasta

Peanut Dressing:

- ½ cup Smucker's Natural Chunky peanut butter (Or, use smooth peanut butter and add chopped peanuts)
- 1/3 cup low-salt Tamari
- 2 tablespoons white wine (or rice) vinegar
- 1 tablespoon olive oil (canola or toasted sesame oil)
- 2 tablespoons toasted sesame oil
- ½ teaspoon ginger, ground or freshly grated

- 2 teaspoons sugar (or honey)
- 2 teaspoons lime juice
- salt to taste

Salad:

- 1 tablespoon cilantro, dried or freshly chopped
- ½ cup green onions, sliced
- 3 cups bok choy, thinly sliced (napa or green cabbage)
- 1 cup carrots, julienned
- 1 tablespoon garlic, chopped

Directions

1. Put peanut butter in a large glass measuring cup or bowl and microwave 15 seconds to soften if needed
2. Stir in tamari, vinegar, oils, ginger, sugar, and lime juice

3. Thin the peanut dressing with starchy pasta water if needed, 1 tablespoon at a time. Dressing should be thick, but pourable
4. Cook pasta until al dente. Lightly coat pasta with oil and set aside.
5. Heat toasted sesame oil and sauté heavier stocks of bok choy for 2 minutes until partially cooked
6. Add carrots for another minute, then add leafy part of bok choy and garlic for 2-3 minutes.
7. Add green onions and cilantro, and sauté for 1-2 minutes.
8. Gently mix together dressing and salad with linguine.
9. Chill for at least an hour or more to meld flavors. Before serving, let sit at room temperature, until olive oil liquefies and peanut butter softens.

Jesse's Sweet Pepper Hummus

From Jesse Clark-Stone, Hummus Enthusiast

Ingredients

- 1 can chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- 5 sweet peppers
- ¼ cup tahini
- 1/8 cup lemon juice
- 1/8 cup apple cider vinegar
- 2 cloves garlic
- ½ teaspoon coarse, unground sea salt (Or, ¼ tsp. table salt)
- ½ teaspoon cumin

- ¼ cup and 2 teaspoons olive oil
- cayenne pepper, to taste
- water

Directions

1. Put tahini, lemon juice, and apple cider vinegar into food processor for 30 seconds. Scrape sides, then process another 30 seconds.
2. Add garlic, coarse sea salt, cumin, sweet peppers, 2 tsp. olive oil, and process for 1 minute and then scrape. Add dashes

of cayenne to taste. Process 30 seconds more.

3. Add ½ can of chickpeas and process for 1 minute. Add remaining chickpeas, and start food processor.
4. Add ¼ cup of olive oil and process for another minute.
5. Add water and/or more oil and continue to process until desired consistency is reached.

Lucy's Best Vegan Chocolate Cake

From Lynn Clark-Stone, Potsdam Food Co-op Bookkeeper and Outreach/Marketing Coordinator

Makes one 8 inch cake. Double recipe to make a double layer or 13 x 9 inch cake.

Ingredients

- 1 ½ cups flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ cup cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon vinegar
- 6 tablespoons Earth Balance butter, melt-

ed (12 tablespoons = ¾ cup)

- 1 cup water

Frosting:

- Tofutti cream cheese
- Approx. ¼ cup Earth Balance butter (optional)
- Approx. ½ cup cocoa powder
- Approx. 3 cups confectioners' sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions

1. Thoroughly mix together dry ingredients. Make 3 wells to accommodate the vanilla,

vinegar, and butter, and add them to the wells in dry ingredients. Pour water over all. Mix together really well using a fork and/or a whisk.

2. Pour into greased and floured cake pan(s) and bake at 350°F (or 325°F if using a glass pan) for approximately 20 -30 minutes until done. A toothpick should come out clean.
3. To make Frosting, Tofutti and butter should be at room temperature. Beat frosting ingredients together well. Spread on cooled cake.

Penny's Easy Egg and Cheese Casserole

Ingredients

- 6 slices old/stale crusty bread
- 3 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup salsa
- 2 cups Cheddar cheese or cheese of your choice

Directions

1. Cube about 6 slices of old/stale crusty bread and arrange in a greased 9 inch baking dish. The bread should generously

cover the bottom of the dish.

2. Beat together 3 eggs and 1 cup milk
3. Stir in 1 cup salsa
4. Grate and spread 2 cups cheddar cheese over the cubed bread.
5. Pour the egg and salsa mixture over the bread and cheese. Press everything down with your hands to make sure the bread is soaked through.
6. Refrigerate overnight or for 4 hours
7. Bake at 350 for an hour

Let it rest before serving.

Become a contributor!

Email

potsdamcoopnews@gmail.com
with your submissions before the content deadline.
The deadline for our next edition is:

July 15

Spiced Apple Cake

Shared by Linda Myers from Epicurious.com

This scrumptious recipe was the winner in the Fruit category of the Potsdam Food Co-op's 17th Annual Holiday Baking Fest and Silent Auction, which benefits the Potsdam Neighborhood Center.

Ingredients

- ½ cup raisins or dried cranberries
- 3 tablespoons Applejack, dark or golden rum, or warm water
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup (packed) light brown sugar, sifted
- 1 cup granulated sugar

- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
- 3 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3 Golden Delicious apples (not Granny Smith), peeled, cored, and cut into ½ inch diced (about 4 cups)
- 1 cup (4 ounces) pecans, coarsely chopped
- 1/3 cup crystalized ginger, finely chopped confectioner's sugar, for dusting

Directions

1. In a small bowl, combine raisins and rum. Let stand until raisins plump, about 1 hour. Drain, discarding rum, and set aside.
2. Position rack in middle of oven and pre-heat to 350°F. Lightly butter Bundt pan, then dust with flour, knocking out excess.
3. In a large mixing bowl or bowl of electric mixer, sift together flour, baking powder, baking soda, allspice, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, and salt. Add brown and granulated sugars, butter, eggs, and vanilla. Using electric mixer, beat on high speed,

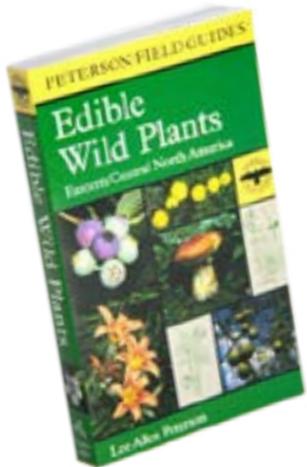
scraping down sides of bowl with rubber spatula as needed, until batter is pale and smooth, about 3 minutes.

4. Stir in apples, pecans, ginger, and raisins. Spoon into prepared pan and smooth top.
5. Bake until wooden pick or skewer inserted in center of cake comes out clean and cake just shrinks from sides of pan, about 1 hour. Cool cake in pan on rack 10 minutes, then invert and unmold onto rack and cool completely. (Cake can be made up to 3 days ahead and stored at room temperature, wrapped tightly in plastic wrap.)

Just before serving, sift confectioner's sugar over cake. You can look up an Eggnog Sauce to pour over the cake on Epicurious.com, but it is not needed.

Spring Foraging

By: Zach Gagliardi



Ah spring, a magical time of year that gives back a sense of life to the earth. The snow is melting, the bears are waking, the deer are trotting feely, and the songbirds return to lull us with their tantalizing melodies. Here in the North Country, this season of rebirth is often long overdue; and can be quite an exciting time after feeling trapped indoors for the entirety of our brutal winter months. However, despite the fact that most

people think of spring as simply warm weather and animals coming back into their annual routine, this could not be farther from the truth. This, my friends, is when our inner forager awakens. From the avid mushroom hunter searching for May's elusive morels, to the simple gardener picking out leeks and fiddleheads for soup, wild edibles are everywhere this time of year; and with all the different kinds to look for, it can be hard to know when and where to go looking for them. This is why

I highly recommend to any of you who are interested to purchase or borrow a book on wild foods before the season's end; in order to learn about and explore more aspects of this beautiful corner of the world than many folks ever do. So remember, whether you live here, are spending some time, or just passing by; you too can become a part of what I and many others in the North Country consider to be, the most joyful spring experience anyone could ever have!

Editorial Note: Zach is one of the youngest of the Co-op owners to regular work in the packaging area. When we asked him for a suggestion on a specific book to help a wild food forager get started, he was quick to recommend The Peterson Field Guide to Edible Wild Plants, Eastern/Central North America, by Lee Allen Peterson. Thanks, Zach.

See No Evil (continued from page 7)

Does this instill confidence, as the OTA has, in organic oversight of certification by the USDA? I will remind readers that, until recently, 100% of the inspections that took place, annually, were made by appointment. And now the certifiers, being paid by their clients, are choosing which outfits get unannounced visits.

Upton Sinclair once said, "It is difficult to get a man to understand something, when his salary depends on his not understanding it."

Chino Valley (Idalou, Texas)

"Based on what I see in the picture, it's high noon," said David Will, general manager of an associated company, Chino Valley Ranchers. "You will find that birds avoid being outside on bright sunny days. They are a prey creature. They are not predators." The day after the article appeared in the Washington Post, Chino sent the newspaper a photo of a small percentage of their birds outdoors.

The 15 high-resolution photographs Cornucopia shared with the USDA, shot from every angle, show no birds out (either in direct sunshine or in the shade). Four additional satellite images, from two other days, show no birds out as well.

What should the public and the

USDA believe? Unannounced, independently procured photos or a possibly "staged" photo submitted by the factory farm operator under scrutiny?

Aurora Dairy (Clearwater, Texas)

"A single photo doesn't really tell us anything about a farm and its practices," an Aurora spokesperson, Sonja Tuitele, told the Washington Post. "Our records do indicate that all of our lactating cows at the Coldwater facility were grazing on pastures on May 17. Since we don't know what time of day this photo was taken, we can only assume this photo was taken outside of their daily grazing hours."

The shadows in the photo suggest it is about mid-day. Maybe if you are a highly paid executive at an industrial dairy concern, you might think of "grazing hours" the same way some country club members think about "banker's hours." Most real organic farmers don't limit their cows' access to pasture—and the law doesn't allow for that (unless there are weather concerns). The photos were taken on a sunny 78-degree day, perfect grazing conditions for the 18,000 cows at Aurora's Coldwater, Texas feedlot.

Organic Valley

Maybe the most disappointing response has come from George Siemon, CEO of Organic Valley, a farmer-owned cooperative that has grown to an almost \$1 billion a year enterprise. In an interview on NPR, Siemon said that he does not believe that "the organic producers targeted by Cornucopia are flouting the rules."

This might seem like a strange disconnect coming from the leader of a co-op that gets almost all of its milk and eggs from family-scale farmers. That is, until you dig a little deeper and find that, when it ran short of milk a few years ago, the management of the co-op (without the knowledge of its farmer-owners) decided to purchase milk from one of the targeted factory farm dairies: Natural Prairie in Texas, milking 8,500 cows. This continued until OV farmers demanded it stop.

Evidently management didn't learn much from the experience because when they wanted "local" California eggs, they chose an industrial/confinement operation, Petaluma Farms, currently under investigation for organic violations and animal abuse, after settling a lawsuit for consumer fraud. You won't find the name "Petaluma Farms" on the OV website. They refer to their new "family farm" member in Cali-



Milking 8,500 cows in the desert-like Texas Panhandle, Natural Prairie supplied milk to Organic Valley until the farmer-members of that cooperative demanded they stop. On the day this photo was taken, almost all the cows were in the dry lot rather than on the surrounding irrigated fields.

fornia as "Judy and Steve's Egg Farm," delineating the first names of the agribusiness' owners.

Closing Thoughts

In the pages of his best-selling *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, Michael Pollan describes Petaluma Farms as a good representation of his definition of "supermarket pastoral." I call this type of subterfuge "farming by press release."

As they say, a picture is worth a thousand words. Either these corporate executives and lobbyists are in need of a good ophthalmologist or their definition of organ-

ics differs from the farmer-members at The Cornucopia Institute and our urban-allies, who believe in the environmental stewardship, humane animal husbandry, and positive health and social impacts that true organics represents.

This story originally appeared in the spring issue of *The Cultivator*, The Cornucopia Institute's quarterly print publication available to members and online.

Cornucopia's scorecards rating hundreds of brands of organic dairy, eggs, soy foods, breakfast cereal and yogurt help you choose the best foods while rewarding the true organic heroes.

Environmental Working Group's 2015 Shopper's Guide to Pesticides in Produce™

Nearly two-thirds of the 3,015 produce samples tested by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 2013 contained pesticide residues - a surprising finding in the face of soaring consumer demand for food without agricultural chemicals.

EWG's Shopper's Guide to Pesticides in Produce calculates that USDA tests found a total 165 different pesticides on thousands of fruit and vegetables samples examined in 2013.

The USDA findings indicate that the conventional fruit and produce industries are ignoring a striking market trend: American consumers are voting with their pocketbooks for produce with less pesticide. USDA's Economic Research Service estimates that the organically produced food sector, though just 4 percent of all U.S. food sales, has enjoyed double-digit growth in recent years. The trend is particularly strong for sales of organic fruits and vegetables, which account for the lion's share of all organic food sales: USDA economists reported that organic produce sales spiked from \$5.4 billion in 2005 to an estimated \$15 billion last year and increased by 11 percent between 2013 and 2014.

Pesticides persisted on fruits and vegetables tested by USDA, even when they were washed and, in some cases, peeled.

USDA EWG's Shopper's Guide to Pesticides in Produce recognizes that many people who want reduce their exposure to pesticides in produce cannot find or afford an all-organic diet. It helps them seek out conventionally grown fruits and vegetables that tend to test low for pesticide residues. When they want foods whose conventional versions test high for pesticides, they can make an effort to locate organic versions.

Highlights of Dirty Dozen™ 2015

EWG singles out produce with the highest pesticide loads for its Dirty Dozen™ list. This year, it is comprised of apples, peaches, nectarines, strawberries, grapes, celery, spinach, sweet bell peppers, cucumbers, cherry tomatoes, imported snap peas and potatoes.

Each of these foods tested positive a number of different pesticide residues and showed higher concentrations of pesticides than other produce items.

Key findings:

99 percent of apple samples, 98 percent of peaches, and 97 percent of nectarines tested positive for at least one pesticide residue.

The average potato had more pesticides by weight than any other produce.

A single grape sample and a sweet bell pepper sample contained 15 pesticides.

Single samples of cherry tomatoes, nectarines, peaches, imported snap peas and strawberries showed 13 different pesticides apiece.

The Clean Fifteen™

EWG's Clean Fifteen™ list of produce least likely to hold pesticide residues consists of

avocados, sweet corn, pineapples, cabbage, frozen sweet peas, onions, asparagus, mangoes, papayas, kiwis, eggplant, grapefruit, cantaloupe, cauliflower and sweet potatoes. Relatively few pesticides were detected on these foods, and tests found low total concentrations of pesticides on them.

Key findings:

Avocados were the cleanest: only 1 percent of avocado samples showed any detectable pesticides.

Some 89 percent of pineapples, 82 percent of kiwi, 80 percent of papayas, 88 percent of mango and 61 percent of cantaloupe had no residues.

No single fruit sample from the Clean Fifteen™ tested positive for more than 4 types of pesticides.

Multiple pesticide residues are extremely rare on Clean Fifteen™ vegetables. Only 5.5 percent of Clean Fifteen samples had two or more pesticides.

Dirty Dozen PLUS™

For the third year, we have expanded the Dirty Dozen™ with a Plus category to highlight two types of food that contain trace levels of highly hazardous pesticides. Leafy greens - kale and collard greens - and hot peppers do not meet traditional Dirty Dozen™ ranking criteria but were frequently found to be contaminated with insecticides toxic to the human nervous system. EWG recommends that people who eat a lot of these foods buy organic instead.

Genetically engineered crops

Most processed food typically contains one or more ingredients derived from genetically engineered crops. GE food is not often found in the produce section of American supermarkets. A small percentage of zucchini, yellow squash and sweet corn in the produce cooler is GE. Most Hawaiian papaya is GE.

Others GE foods are currently being tested. The USDA may approve them in the future. Since U.S. law does not require labeling of genetically engineered produce, EWG advises people who want to avoid GE crops to purchase organically-grown foods or items bearing the "Non-GMO Project Verified" label. EWG recommends that consumers check EWG's Shopper's Guide To Avoiding GE Food, and Food Scores database and app which can help identify foods likely to contain genetically engineered ingredients.

Pesticides in baby food

The USDA's most recent pesticide monitoring data included hundreds of samples of applesauce, carrots, peaches and peas packaged as baby food (USDA 2014a, USDA 2014b). Because cooking reduces levels of pesticides and baby food is cooked before packaging, it tends to contain fewer pesticide residues than comparable raw produce.

The European Commission has set an across-the-board limit of no more than 0.01 parts per million

of any pesticide in baby food, assuming that infants are more vulnerable than adults and older children damage by to harmful chemicals (European Commission 2006). Some samples of American baby food, particularly applesauce and peaches in baby food tested in 2012 and green beans tested in previous years, exceed the European limit. In contrast to the EU's position, the U.S. has no special rules for pesticide residues in baby food.

The USDA detected 10 different pesticides on at least five percent of 777 samples of peach baby food sold in the U.S (USDA 2014a). Nearly a third of the peach baby food samples would violate the European guideline for pesticides in baby food because they contain one or several pesticides at concentrations of 0.01 part per million or higher.

The USDA tested 379 baby food applesauce samples for five pesticides (USDA 2014b). Some 23 percent of the samples contained acetamiprid, a neonicotinoid pesticide that European regulators singled out for additional toxicity testing because it might disrupt the developing nervous system (EFSA 2013). Another 10 percent of the samples contained carbendiazim, a fungicide.

The USDA found six pesticides in apple juice, a staple of many children's diets (USDA 2014b). About 17 percent of the apple juice samples contained diphenylamine, a pesticide banned in Europe in 2012. Grape juice samples tested positive for six pesticides, most common was carbaryl, a potent insecticide not allowed in Europe but found in about 25 percent of the 176 U.S. grape juices tested (USDA 2014b).

USDA tests have not detected significant pesticide residues on carrots and peas packaged as baby food.

How consumers can avoid pesticides

Smart shopping choices matter. People who eat organic produce eat fewer pesticides. A study by Cynthia Curl of the University of Washington published February 5, found that people who report they "often or always" buy organic produce had significantly less organophosphate insecticides in their urine samples, even though they reported eating 70 percent more servings of fruits and vegetables per day than adults reporting they "rarely or never" purchase organic produce (Curl 2015). Several long-term observational studies have indicated that organophosphate insecticides may impair children's brain development.

In 2012, the American Academy of Pediatrics issued an important report that said that children have "unique susceptibilities to [pesticide residues'] potential toxicity." The pediatricians' organization cited research that linked pesticide exposures in early life and "pediatric cancers, decreased cognitive function, and behavioral problems." It advised its members to urge parents to consult "reliable

resources that provide information on the relative pesticide content of various fruits and vegetables." One key resource, it said, was EWG's Shopper's Guide to Pesticides in Produce (AAP 2012).

With EWG's shopping tool, people can have the health benefits of a diet rich in fruits and vegetables with less exposure to pesticides.

Leafy greens and hot peppers carry toxic pesticides

Two American food crops - leafy greens and hot peppers - are of special concern for public health because residue tests conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture have found these foods laced with particularly toxic pesticides. Among the chemicals at issue are organophosphate and carbamate insecticides. These are no longer detected widely on other produce, either because of binding legal restrictions or voluntary phase-outs.

Leafy greens did not qualify for EWG's Dirty Dozen™ list this year under the traditional EWG Shopper's Guide rating system, which highlights produce with the highest number and concentrations of pesticides. Still, because of the extraordinary toxicity of the pesticides detected on them, we are highlighting them in this special Plus section.

USDA tests of 739 samples of hot peppers in 2010 and 2011 (USDA 2010, 2011) found residues of three highly toxic insecticides - acephate, chlorpyrifos, and oxamyl - on a portion of sampled peppers at concentrations high enough to cause concern. These insecticides are banned on some crops but still allowed on hot peppers.

In tests conducted in 2007 and 2008, USDA scientists detected 51 pesticides on kale and 41 pesticides on collard greens (USDA 2007, 2008). Several of those pesticides - chlorpyrifos, famoxadone, oxydemeton, dieldrin, DDE and esfenvalerate - are highly toxic. Although many farmers may have changed their pesticide practices since 2008, chlorpyrifos and esfenvalerate are still permitted on leafy greens. Organochlorine pesticides DDE and dieldrin were banned some years ago but persist in agricultural soils and still make their way onto leafy greens grown today.

EWG recommends that people who frequently eat leafy greens and hot peppers buy organic varieties. If you cannot find or afford organic types, cook them, because pesticides levels typically diminish when food is cooked.

The federal Food Quality Protection Act of 1996 mandated that the U.S. Environmental Protection Act improve its regulation of pesticides and reduce the risks of pesticide exposure for children. The act prompted EPA to restrict the use of many chemicals, including organophosphate pesticides, which are potent neurotoxins. Even in low doses, they can impair children's intelligence and brain development. Over the past two decades, organophosphates

have been withdrawn from many agricultural uses and banned from household pesticides. Yet they can still be applied to certain crops.

Several long-term studies of American children initiated in the 1990s found that children's exposures to toxic organophosphate insecticides in not only agricultural communities but also cities were high enough to cause subtle but lasting damages to their brains and nervous systems (Bouchard 2011, Rauh 2011, Engel 2011).

The EPA and some in the agriculture industry argue that restrictions enacted after these children were born would ensure that contemporary children's exposures to these pesticides from food are safe.

However, a study led by Stephen Rauch of British Columbia's Children's Hospital and published in 2012 in the scientific journal Environmental Health Perspectives found decreases in infant birth weight and shorter pregnancies among 300 Ohio mothers exposed to organophosphates during pregnancy (Rauch 2012). These pregnancies occurred after major organophosphate restrictions took effect in the early 2000s. The Rauch study indicates that organophosphate exposures must be further curtailed to protect children's health.

The EPA should continue to restrict toxic pesticides, including organophosphate and carbamate insecticides that are still allowed on many crops. Until this happens EWG will continue to publish a Dirty Dozen Plus™ list that highlights crops tainted with unusually risky pesticides. The USDA should expand its produce-testing program to conduct more frequent analyses of pesticide residues on popular foods. To name a few, kale, collard greens, strawberries, cherries and tomatoes have not been tested since 2009 and are overdue for retesting.

Methodology

The Shopper's Guide to Pesticides in Produce ranks pesticide contamination on 48 popular fruits and vegetables based on an analysis of more than 34,000 samples taken by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and federal Food and Drug Administration. The USDA doesn't test every food every year. EWG uses the most recent sampling period for each food. Nearly all the tests that serve as the basis for the guide were conducted by the USDA, whose personnel washed or peeled produce to mimic consumer practices. It is a reasonable assumption that unwashed produce would likely have higher concentrations of pesticide residues.

In order to compare foods, EWG looked at six measures of pesticide contamination:

- Percent of samples tested with detectable pesticides
- Percent of samples with two or more detectable pesticides
- Average number of pesticides found on a single sample
- Average amount of pesticides found, measured in parts per million,

- Maximum number of pesticides found on a single sample
 - Total number of pesticides found on the commodity
- For each metric, we ranked each food based on its individual USDA test results, then normalized the scores on a 1-100 scale, with 100 being the highest. A food's final score is the total of the six normalized scores from each metric. The Shopper's Guide™ Full List shows fruits and vegetables in order of these final scores.

Our goal is to show a range of different measures of pesticide contamination to account for uncertainties in the science. All categories were treated equally. The likelihood that a person would eat multiple pesticides on a single food was given the same weight as amounts of the pesticide detected and the percent of the crop on which any pesticides were found.

The EWG's Shopper's Guide™

is not built on a complex assessment of pesticide risks but instead reflects the overall pesticide loads of common fruits and vegetables. This approach best captures the uncertainties about the risks and consequences of pesticide exposure. Since researchers are constantly developing new insights into how pesticides act on living organisms, no one can say that concentrations of pesticides assumed today to be safe are, in fact, harmless.

EWG's Shopper's Guide™ to Pesticides in Produce aims to give consumers confidence that by following EWG's advice, they can buy foods with fewer types of pesticides and lower overall concentrations of pesticide residues.

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SEE MORE PHOTOS AT [HTTP://INSTAGRAM.COM/POTSDAMCO_OP](http://instagram.com/potsdamco-op)

Board of Directors Minutes Summary

The Board of Directors has had an exciting few months! We've welcomed new members, said goodbye to old ones, and worked to develop a strategic plan that will take the Potsdam Co-Op forward not only through this year, but hopefully for years to come.

December

We began December by welcoming Joe Andriano (your author of this summary) to the board. We then turned to Eric's monthly report, and he reviewed for us some changes in staffing in the co-op and some new sales numbers. After that, each committee reported to the board. The Governance Committee discussed its preparations for the upcoming elections, the Outreach Committee reported on our \$875 donation to the Neighborhood Center from the Baking Fest, and the Website Committee gave us an update on the new website. Most importantly, though, the Budget Committee presented, and the board approved, the 2015 budget for the Co-op. Vanessa, the President, then updated us on the GM evaluation, and, after reminding us all about the February Annual Membership Meeting and January's regular meeting, we adjourned.

January

January's meeting began with a discussion of some member comments, and the idea of maybe using Pinterest for sharing recipes between members (check it out—<https://www.pinterest.com/potsdamcoop/>). The GM's report then began with some bad news: the Department of Weights and Measures visited the Co-op and informed us that there was

something wrong with the scale on Register 2 (which is why we couldn't weigh things on that register for a few weeks!). On top of that, our spice scale had some problems too, which required the staff to retag every item in the store that had been weighed with the spice scale (thanks to the hardworking staff for pulling off that major job quickly). However, Eric assured us that everything would be in compliance as soon as the register scale got back from Florida, and we turned to more exciting news, that we had been approached by a marketing class at SUNY Potsdam to help us with some PR issues we had been mulling over for some time.

None of the committees had very much to report, except that the Finance Committee informed us we made a 4th quarter profit, and we approved their recommendation for our annual financial review, to be done by Pinto, Mucenski, Hooper and Van House & Co, PC. We also learned from the Website Committee that the new website would be ready for our review soon, and the Governance Committee gave an update that the election was underway.

We then approved a postponement of the GM's annual review until February, and were updated that we would be getting a draft copy of the Annual Report soon. We did a little planning for our Annual Board Retreat, approving the selection of a facilitator and choosing to have the retreat at Robin McClellan's (thanks Robin!). After reminding everyone again of the upcoming Annual Meeting on February 4th and of our February 17th monthly meeting, and going in to executive

session, we again adjourned.

February

Our Annual Membership Meeting occurred during a snowstorm on February 4, 2015 at Trinity Church, Fall Island, Potsdam, New York. A small but enthusiastic crowd enjoyed a potluck summer, heard the annual reports of the GM, President, and Treasurer, and enjoyed post-dinner conversation.

The February board meeting was an important one, with Martha Pickard Palmer, Joe Andriano, Eric Ochranek, and Erica La-Fountain being certified as having been elected to three-year terms to the Board of Directors, and Marie Richards being certified as being elected to complete the two-year term remainder of Tamijean Cole's seat. Each brings a wealth of experience to the board, and we hope you will read their bios (and the bios of all board members) at <http://www.potsdamcoop.com/board-members>

We also said goodbye to Will Siegfried and Janet Learned, and thanked them for their years of service.

Eric then gave us an update on the issue with our scale. Although we learned that things were going to take longer than we expected and be a bit more expensive, the Department of Weights and Measures came back and was very happy with the all the work the staff had done the month before. After certifying our new scale upon its return, we will be in full compliance. We also learned from Eric that sales were up 5.75% for the year, but that credit card sales were up \$7000 this month, with this month's processing fees

\$1700 up \$226 from last year.

Our committee reports included the proposed slate of officers for the coming year, with Abby Lee, President; Laura Cordts, Vice President; Joe Andriano, Secretary; and, Robin McClellan, Treasurer. Robin McClellan and Pam Maurer were both willing to continue as our staff liaisons. This all was approved by the board. The Finance Committee reported that they were working on the 2014 Financial Statements, and were pleased with the new "perpetual inventory," where once a quarter we do inventory and adjust monthly. They closed their report by telling us that in 2014, the Co-op had 1.7 million in sales, an operating loss of \$35,000, and a net loss of \$13,000. We actually had an operating profit in the last two quarters with increases in wages. We are well positioned for a strong year in 2015.

A few other minor items were discussed, including the potential for the Co-op to partner with some MBAs at Clarkson, and for the Potsdam Wholesale group to be hosted at the Co-op. We finally approved the 2014 GM evaluation and 2015 bonus agreement in executive session, and adjourned.

March

The next time the board saw each other was at the Annual Board Retreat. It was a long but productive day. The board spent much of the day learning about various decision-making models for strategic planning, looking at how other co-ops and local food companies operate throughout New York and New England, and finally getting down to the business of coming up with an

annual plan for moving the Co-op forward.

There was so much work to do that this meeting went well over the time schedule, and the board had to meet again on March 17th to finalize this document. Since the board had previously decided to cancel this meeting, the board decided that this would be a "Special Meeting," which, in parliamentary terms, means that we were bound to discuss one thing and one thing only: our annual plan.

At that meeting, we adopted three overarching annual goals for the Potsdam Co-op: financial solvency; membership engagement and recruitment; and, increase in sales. We discussed a little bit about what each of these means to the Co-op, and then turned to the question of what it means to implement each of these goals. By the end of the meeting, we agreed that each committee would be in charge of reporting their part of the action plan for the year, identifying the most important issues that they want to address this year. The Executive Committee will take this and produce a draft action plan for the April meeting for discussion and adoption. After this, the meeting adjourned.

Our next regularly scheduled meeting is at 6 PM on Tuesday, April 21st above the Carriage House Bakery. All are welcome!

To read complete minutes of the monthly Board meetings, please check the Co-op's website:

<http://www.potsdamcoop.com/board-members>.

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