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Dates to Remember

June:

- 4 Island Park Farmer's Market Opens
- 6 Owner Appreciation Day
- 10 Board Meeting
- 20 Downtown Farmer's Market Opens

July:

- 4 Closed
- 8 Board Meeting
- 11 Owner Appreciation Day

August:

- 1 Owner Appreciation Day
- 12 Board Meeting
- 29 Farm Tour

The 2008 Annual Report

Sarah Christensen,
Co-op Owner, GreenTree General Manager



Two-thousand eight was a transformative year in many ways at our co-op. In early February, after months of research, owner input, and discussion; GreenTree's Board of Director's made the decision to change our ownership structure from a dues/discount structure to an equity/patronage rebate system. The board and staff spent the next ten months working on the transition. We had to institute declining dues for the remainder of 2008 and by November we were running dual systems. It took a lot of organization to keep all of those balls in the air. We appreciate your patience and support throughout the transition!

In November our bread freezer died and we took the opportunity to update equipment and make plans for a storewide reset for early 2009. In addition to planning the reset, the management team began its 2009 business planning process in November. We spent the next three months carefully considering everything from Owner Appreciation Day to Cooking Workshops; from local product pricing to our presence at community events.

Those were some of the major things you probably noticed in the store. It would take a book to go into all of the details and behind the scenes action of 08, but here are some of the highlights:

Products and Services

In 2008 we continued to focus on local, fair trade and sustainability produced products. As a testament to that, every month we began highlighting a Michigan product from each department in our Owner Advantage Sales. We also celebrated Fair Trade Month and Co-op month in October by promoting our numerous fair trade and cooperatively produced options. We expanded our allergen free products as well, by bringing in product lines like Sami's Bakery and Kinnikinnik.

Finance

In 2008 our sales growth was strong despite a lackluster 4th quarter. We managed to end the year with greater than expected sales growth and a small amount of profit. Here is a summary of the numbers:

Sales growth was 13% above 2007

Membership Dues: \$18,370.74

Net Profit: \$2175

Member Discounts paid out: \$31,053.40

Continued on page 2...

GreenTree Staff

MANAGEMENT/ BUYING TEAM:

Sarah Christensen

General Manager

Mary Rozga

Grocery Buyer/
Merchandising Manager

Angie Pohlman

Storekeeper Team Leader/
Wellness Buyer

Liz Busch

Produce Buyer/ Outreach &
Events Coordinator

STOREKEEPERS:

Bobby Bates

Laura Coffee

Graphics & Branding
Coordinator

Jessica Gibbons

Josh Johnson

Mari Potter

Owner Services Coordinator/
Owner Worker Coordinator /
Greenhouse Steward

Grace Rollins

Greenhouse Steward

Josh Johnson

Matt Himmelspach

Greenhouse Steward

Stacy Saul

Welcome to the team!

Jamie Florida

Intern

Welcome to the team!

The 2008 Annual Report Continued...

Marketing/Member Services

We still hear from several people a month that they've lived in Mt. Pleasant for years and have never heard of GreenTree. Over the past couple of years we took this as a challenge. We were always saying yes to local events, requests for presentations, and everything in between. But midway through 2008 we began to reevaluate this tactic. Ultimately we felt that too much of our time and energy was being spent outside the store. And that we needed to take better care of the owners and customers that were already here. We continued this focus in our 2009 business planning. While we continue to support local events and organizations, we hope that this change will bring you a better shopping experience.

In 2008 we collaborated with the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe and the Seventh Generation Program for our cooking workshops. The kitchen space we use is provided to us free of charge thanks to the tribal community. We in turn made the classes free for the public. Since this change we've not had to cancel a single class due to low enrollment.

We continued to support several organizations and events throughout our community. Here are some of the highlights:

Community Association Memberships:

- Downtown Business Association
- Chamber of Commerce
- Inter-Service Club Council
- Mt. Pleasant Farmers Market

Cooperative Association Memberships:

- National Cooperative Grocers Association -- NCGA
- Through our participation in NCGA we are members of the Organic Consumers Association (OCA)
- Cooperative Grocers Information Network -- CGIN
- Two Subscriptions to Cooperative Grocer Magazine
- The Cornucopia Institute (an organic watchdog group)
- North Country Cooperative Development Fund
- Frontier Natural Products Co-op

Events and Sponsorship:

- Mardi Gras Parade
- CROP Walk
- Wares Fair
- CMU Health Fair
- Tribal Health Fair
- CMU Earth Day
- Mt. Pleasant Earth Day
- Mt. Pleasant Sidewalk Sales
- Art Reach Chair Affair
- We made a contribution to the Chippewa Nature Center LEED certified renovation.
- We also planned to make contributions to the Chippewa River District Library renovation although it didn't go through.

GreenTree Events:

- Cooking Workshops
- Annual Membership Meeting
- 1st Annual Farm Tour

Employment Opportunity:

We are now accepting applications and/or resumes for our Grocery and Merchandising Manager Position. Applications can be downloaded from our website (www.greentree.coop) or picked up in store. Send your resume to sarah@greentree.coop

Local Fare

By Mary Rozga, Co-op Owner, Merchandising Manager and Grocery Buyer

Thoughts of the Eat Local Challenge bring up images of summer evenings, fresh greens, and that first tiny tomato budding off of the plant in the garden. We feel kinship and fulfillment buying from the Michigan vendors at the farmer's market or delving into the year's first CSA share. Local produce feels so alive compared to the 3,000 mile + fruits and veggies we've become accustomed to over the winter.

The only issue for a Michigander is (and I apologize for mentioning the "D" word)... December. This is Michigan, and at that snowy point of the year, our stores and variety of produce are seriously dwindling along with our memories of sunshine and happiness. Oh yes, and there are also the matters of the "F" and "P" words (young children, please look away: we do not like to speak of our insufficiencies)... Fats and Proteins. I'm not even going to mention the "C" word because I'm frightened enough of Dr. Atkins. What is a homo-sapien Michigander to do?

Plenty. There are so many products that can satisfy our "Eat Local" agenda and our bodily needs throughout the year. We have Michigan beans and grains grown by and distributed by a Michigan company. We have Michigan eggs, meats, cheeses, dairy, and sweeteners, chips, pastas, granolas, preserves, nut butters, beer, and wine all year long.

I remember when I first started working here, and I was very unsure how to incorporate "co-op" food into my diet. It was a tad overwhelming, and our then Marketing Manager Hollis Hamel told me that 50% was a great goal/accomplishment for anyone. That woman was wise and I think the same principle can be applied to spending grocery dollars on Michigan items. 50% seems pretty big, but think what a big change that would make in the freshness and palatability of the foods in our pantries as well as the contribution of funds to our local economy, and knowledge that our food is safe and produced especially for us. Have a hole in your diet that you're interested in filling with local/ Michigan products? Shoot us an e-mail, a phone call, or ask when you come in the store! We want to provide our customers, owners, and ourselves with as many tools as possible to support local.



The Mount Pleasant Food Project

The Mount Pleasant Food Project now has 10x10 garden plots available to rent immediately!

Each 10x10 plot costs \$25, with each additional plot costing only \$15. There are a limited number of spaces, so call today!

Plots are located next to Theunissen Field (The baseball field.) on West Campus Drive.

To reserve a space please call Jessica at: 906-235-3152

Or, join the Facebook group: MPFP Campus Grow

Or, send an email to: mpfpcampusgrow@gmail.com

Help make Mt. Pleasant a greener (and tastier) place!

Hungry?

Let's Cook, Let's Eat!

Cooking Workshop Schedule

in collaboration with the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, 7th Generation Program and Nimkee Memorial Wellness Center

Wednesday, September 16, 2009, 6-8 p.m.
Canning and Planning for Winter!

Wednesday, October 21, 2009, 6-8 p.m.
Gluten Free Harvest Party!

Wednesday, November 18, 2009, 6-8 p.m.
Have a Vegan/Vegetarian Holiday!

Classes are free and will be held at the 7th Generation Program's New Kitchen at 7957 East Remus Rd. in Mt. Pleasant. Space is limited.

Please call GreenTree to register: 989-772-3221



Top Ten Signs You Might Be a Locavore

If any of these symptoms apply to you might be afflicted with an extreme case of locavorism. The condition is not dangerous but if handled appropriately can be extremely contagious. Locavores in Mt. Pleasant need not panic; treatment is available at GreenTree Grocery.



10. You know at least one person by first name who identifies as a farmer. You have probably been to their house.
9. You identify as a farmer.
8. You know what CSA stands for.
7. You make a mad rush to the produce cooler when the first Swier spinach appears.
6. You take pleasure in counting the number of local ingredients in a meal (extra points if the meal is in December!).
5. You stick out the heat in the kitchen on the hottest day in September to get all your tomatoes canned for winter.
4. Strawberries with dirt on them fresh from Cooley's field are better than California berries.
3. Your children have planted their own seeds.
2. You can't remember the last time you bought eggs that had a UPC code on them.
1. You won't eat an avocado during the Eat Local America Challenge no matter how much it tortures you.

If more than 8 of these symptoms apply to you seek treatment immediately. The first prescription is to plan a pot-luck. Call friends, neighbors, co-workers, tell them about your locavorism and share your story. You will probably find that many of them are also infected with the condition. If some of them need additional help, or if you need more information about dealing with this epidemic, qualified professionals at GreenTree are available to counsel you in the best ways to feed your need for local food. Let them show you all the freshest produce, the Michigan vendors and the great recipes featuring local foods on the Green Recipe Board. Have no fear Mt. Pleasant, help is here, the best time for Locavores is now!

-By Liz Busch, Produce Buyer and Outreach Coordinator

The Farm Tour Children's Scholarship

Attention Kids Ages 5-12!

Love Farmers? Love Food? Love Mt. Pleasant? Here is an opportunity for you and a grown-up of your choice to join us as our guest on the Second Annual GreenTree Farm Tour August 29th 2009. Get your creative juices flowing and describe in a brief essay or drawing/painting why you choose to eat local food. GreenTree staff will anonymously vote on their favorite essay and drawing and the two lucky kids will get to bring a grown-up friend on our Farm Tour for Free! Please submit your entries to the co-op attention Liz by July 31st.

Contact the store with any questions at

772-3221.



A Great Family Activity

Come to Cooley Farms and give your whole family a treat!

Strawberry season is set to begin around the 25th of June! Spend an afternoon with your family gathering delicious no-spray strawberries.

Call for U-Pick Strawberry season information:

989-433-0100

Located at:
8992 E Vernon Rd
Coleman, MI



The Eat Local America Challenge

Eating Well for Yourself and Your Community



From August 22nd to September 6th, as last year, GreenTree will be participating in the Eat Local America Challenge. The two week event encourages interested individuals to engage their local food producers and find out just what the Mt. Pleasant community has to offer. It turns out the answer is: A lot! Many of you already know about the local produce, grains, meats, eggs, milk, cheeses, and even body care products available at the Co-op, but did you know Mt. Pleasant has not just one, but *two* weekly farmer's markets? And that GreenTree has a booth at the downtown Saturday market? Plus there are many great programs, like the Mt. Pleasant Food Project for those who would like to get more involved in community food production. Of course if you have the space and the inclination you can even start a garden and produce your own produce! So we know that local foods are available, but why are they desirable?

There are many reasons to eat local. Conventional produce travels about 1500 miles before reaching your dinner plate. Most of it travels the highways in semi-trucks, and 1500 miles means quite a bit of gas is burned to get that tomato to Michigan. That means local produce is better for the environment, especially if it is certified organic, or no-spray. And because it doesn't have to stay fresh on a long journey, local produce is picked ripe, sold ripe, and eaten ripe. This makes another difference; and that's taste. So local food is better for the environment, fresher, and tastes better, why wouldn't you buy it? These foods may be a bit more expensive, but that money stays in your community, instead of flowing away through corporate channels to people who have never even heard of Mt. Pleasant, Michigan.

With all of these options eating local is easy. It's also delicious, ecologically friendly, good for the local economy, and fun! So why not treat yourself and make eating well a priority with the Eat Local America Challenge!

Making Food a Priority

We all need food, shelter, and sleep to make it through the day. While the need for shelter and sleep is hard to ignore, many of us are less aware of how we satisfy our need for food. So long as it tastes ok and your tummy isn't grumbling, why worry about it? I say don't worry about it. Get *excited* about it. Embrace it. Be curious about ingredients, and learn what *is* good for you as well as what isn't. Make each meal a memorable experience. It's not as difficult as it sounds. Just come down to the co-op, we'd love to help you get started!

~By Laura Coffee, Storekeeper, Graphics and Branding Coordinator

Want more information on the Challenge?

The Eat Local America Challenge asks participants to commit to eating 80% local ingredients during the event. GreenTree is running the Challenge from August 22nd through September 6th. Other co-ops will be running the event at different times throughout the summer. To find more information on the Challenge please visit the official website at: <http://www.eatlocalamerica.coop/jointhechallenge> Additional information will be available at the co-op during the event.



Bringing Swine Flu Home:

Fighting Flu with Local Foods.

As of this writing, there have been 419 cases and 1 death in Michigan of the pandemic H1N1 flu, also known as Swine Flu, or Swine-Origin Flu. The fear of the H1N1 pandemic has shaken us into an awareness of potential health threats that have been brewing in our backyards. Despite the evidence that H1N1 has so far proven to be no more fatal than the more common flu virus, it has still captured headlines and provoked fear. According to the CDC, around 36,000 die every year from seasonal flu related complications in the US, while H1N1 (according to the WHO) has killed 27 people so far in the US, 145 deaths across the Americas.

One of the most frightening aspects of H1N1's is its origin. Most research now supports the theory that H1N1 is a product of industrialized animal agriculture, also known as factory farming. Put simply, factory farming is the practice of compacting and confining farm animals to maximize production and exploitation of their bodies and reproductive organs for profit. These conditions are characteristically abusive and cruel. H1N1 is believed to be born out of these kinds of intensive animal agriculture. H1N1 has the genetic material from a swine, avian and human flu varieties. The avian flu scare from a few years ago did not become the pandemic we feared because it didn't make the jump to humans. H1N1 made that jump. In fact, the 1918 Influenza pandemic that killed over 6 million people was of avian origin. For more Bird Flu history, visit: <http://pattricejones.info/blog/archives/171>

Bringing Swine Flu Home continued...

While it is still relatively tame right now, H1N1, and potential future “factory farm flu viruses,” are nothing to sneeze about. For more information about the origins of H1N1, check out: http://www.hsus.org/farm/news/ournews/swine_flu_virus_origin_1998_042909.html

Currently, the CDC and WHO are advising people on ways to prevent the spread of H1N1 (check out <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/ga.htm>), some of the suggestions are as simple as wash your hands and stay home if you don't feel well. Many of us are beginning to look at ways to prevent new viruses from forming. One of the angles I see is reducing our national dependence on factory farming. There have long been campaigns and movements to end factory farms, from animal rights and welfare organizations, to environmental, workers rights, anti-poverty and Locavore organizations. I see an easy step that everyone can do, and it makes a great bumper sticker: Support Local Farmers.

Enter: GreenTree. We have long been a part of the organic and local farm movement. We do our darndest to provide locally grown produce and locally raised animals for meat, dairy and eggs. We also have a wide variety of packaged Michigan grown products. Buying local not only means keeping your money in the local economy, it generally means the animals were raised in a less confined and less population intense environment. However, small farms are not a guarantee of no factory flu, raising animals for food is always going to create situations in which pig, chicken, and human viruses come into the sustained contact required for gene swapping to occur.

It's true, sometimes locally raised animal products can be more expensive than conventionally raised (read: Factory farmed), but with that price the chances are good that the farmer and the laborers were paid a fairer price. While paying higher prices for animal products, one might consider reducing the amount you consume. The USDA only recommends an average of 5 oz of protein per day, less than many of us eat in a single meal.

This brings me to my next suggestion: Eat More Veggies. And Fruit. And Beans. And Whole Grains. Lucky for us, the local produce season is beginning! So far, we have seen rhubarb, mushrooms, arugula, baby kale, spinach, salad greens, radishes, and much more! Check out our bulk department for Michigan grown beans and flours. By reducing our dependence on animal products, we help reduce the demand for factory farms. Check out www.nutrition.gov and www.pcrm.org for more information about nutrition. For recipes and serving suggestions, GreenTree has a recipe board located near produce. It changes regularly, so check it often.

H1N1 has created opportunities for us to think critically about our food systems, and begin working toward food systems that promote health and vitality; working conditions that are just, and relationships with the environment and animals that are compassionate.

-By Angela Pohlman, Wellness Buyer and Storekeeper Team Leader

A Delicious Moment

With all the fresh greens available this time of year it is easy to get bored with salads. And lettuce doesn't take well to cooking, so what else can you do? Why not try something a little different than the typical tomato cucumber garden salad? This is a simple easy to prepare salad, and a child friendly introduction to the idea of fruit in a savory dish. I usually guesstimate proportions when making this dish, so feel free to tweak the amounts to suite your taste buds!

Mediterranean Salad

Ingredients:

Enough greens for 2-3 people, or about 8 loosely filled cups. (I recommend spring mix or romaine.)

2 Cups packed fresh mint

3-4 Tbsp Olive oil

1 1/2 Cups Red Grapes

1 Cup crumbled Feta Cheese

1/2 Cup Slivered or Sliced Almonds

Optional:

Salt, Pepper, 2Tbsps Balsamic Vinegar

Preparation:

Prepare your greens by rinsing and chopping if needed. Set aside in a large salad bowl. Coarsely chop mint, or quickly run through food processor. Combine with olive oil in a small bowl. If desired add salt, pepper, and Balsamic vinegar to taste. Toss grapes and crumbled feta with greens. When well combined add mint mixture and continue tossing until well coated. Set salad bowl aside. In a small dry frying pan toast almonds over low to medium heat. Stir them frequently as they burn easily. When almonds are just beginning to brown remove from heat and sprinkle over salad. Toss lightly and serve.

Recipe contributed by Laura Coffee

Erin Says Goodbye:

For those of you did not know her, Erin Swystun was GreenTree's Marketing and Owner Services Manager. She has left us for warmer locales, and these are her parting words to all of us here in the co-op community.

Thankful for the GreenTree Community

Hello GreenTree community. I will be settling into northern California by the time you read through this publication. My little Iza turns four on June 3rd. I will be stopping in Viroqua, WI to pickup GreenTree alumni K Vogel and then be scurrying out there to meet up with Iza and her sister Klara for the birthday celebration!

I have learned so much about the importance of community relationships, the gifts that each individual offers to create a rich, diverse culture and the importance and impact of our food system as a foundation for community. I feel so very fortunate to be a part of this cooperative group of people. I first became a member of GreenTree when I was pregnant with Klara who is now 8 ½! I feel very strongly about the individuals who make this co-op happen and I am very passionate about its success! That said, I am very pleased to share that Liz Busch, Laura Coffee and Mari Potter will be working together with Sarah the GM to add their talents and gifts to the Marketing and Owner Services position. This place is in good hands!!! Liz will be organizing the outreach and events; Laura will be handling graphics, signage, enews, and the newsletter; Mari Potter will take care of Owner Services and the Owner/Worker volunteers; Sarah will oversee all of this in her masterful way. If you stop by the farmer's market this summer you'll even see Mary Rozga in on the job!!! Cooperation makes it happen. I am sure they will make the transition smooth and we will see great things in the future.

My experiences here with you have shaped who I am in such a way that I will always have fond memories to reflect on. This community will forever be a part of me and what I have to offer the world I am heading out into. I sincerely thank you and invite you to keep in touch. My email address is earthyerin@hotmail.com.

Take great care and please do be in touch!

-Erin Swystun, Co-op Owner

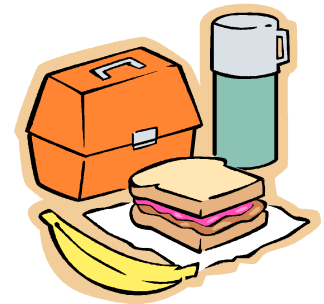
Lunch Packing Perks

In an effort to tighten our budgets, more and more of us are packing our own lunches for work and school. And the benefits extend beyond the household's bottom line. Making your own lunch gives you control over the quality of the food you and your family eat. By making attentive choices about what goes in each lunchbox, you can address specific areas of concern, such as fat and calories, while maximizing quality and taste.

If you're an enthusiastic cook, you'll find preparing homemade lunch especially enjoyable, it offers unlimited opportunities to try new foods and reinvent leftovers. Even if you prefer not to cook, you can find plenty of healthful and economical options for brown bagging. Hands-down the best place to shop for healthful and delicious lunch items—from sandwich fixings to sides, snacks, beverages, and ready-to-serve meals—is your local co-op.

Bring Your Own Lunch Tips

- * Start by bringing your own snacks and/or beverages.
- * Control the nutritional benefits of your lunch by packing healthy items.
- * Use reusable lunch bags and lunchboxes.
- * Add a surprise when packing lunch for children or a partner.
- * Consider presentation. Use skewers, or a bento box.
- * Prepare once a week.
- * Make extra dinner. Leftovers are great served hot or cold.
- * Include lunch items on your grocery-shopping list.
- * Pack your lunch the night before, but store condiments separately to prevent soggy sandwiches/salads.
- * Rely on fruit. It packs well and can stand in for dessert.
- * Find fun places to eat your lunch, like a local park.
- * Look for new recipes and transform old ones.
- * Pack a healthy beverage.
- * If you make lunch for your kids, enlist their help. Ask them to bring home what they don't eat, so you'll know what to stop packing/wasting.
- * Eat cooperatively. Suggest a weekly workplace potluck.



If your objection to packing your own lunch is that you just don't have the time, keep in mind that with a little planning you can trade the time you'd spend standing in line or waiting to be served a lunch for the time it takes to pack a lunch. And you'll have more time to enjoy it! Your kids will appreciate being able to dig into their lunch boxes instead of standing in the lunch line at school, too!



214 N. FRANKLIN AVE.
MT PLEASANT, MI 48858

WWW.GREENTREE.COOP

Locally Grown

Community Owned

How can we help you eat local?

As we gear up for the Farm tour and the Eat Local America Challenge the Co-op buzzes with excitement over how many Local options and resources we really do have here in Mt. Pleasant. But being at the center of things it's easy to forget that not everyone has access to all the information we do.

So what can we do to help make eating local easier for you? What type of information would you like to see at the co-op? Do you need recipes? A list of seasonal produce options? Directions to the Farmer's Market? Do you know how to tell which items are local and which aren't? Have you heard of the Second Annual Farm Tour? Would you like to go? Do you know where to find local pick-it-yourself options?

Stop by and let us know what we can do to help, or, drop us a line at general@greentree.coop.



Co-op Acknowledgements:

Thank you to Mrs. Austin for the new hot plate!

Thank you Karen Lee and Pam Ohls for composting our organic waste!

And a big welcome to our newest Board Members, Penny Lew and Chris Wiesman!