



The Dirt

September
October
November
2013

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Board of Directors:

Eric Baerren

Wilma Blackman

Michael Brockman

Liz Busch:

Vice Chair

Kimberly Crandell

Mark Fairbrother:
Treasurer

Jay Fields: Chair

Talat Halman:
Secretary

Jerry Sundberg

Meet the GreenTree Staff



<Amanda Tomczyk
Produce Buyer

Beth Hansen>
Storekeeper



<Chris Wiesman
Deli Coordinator

Dave Whitney>
Storekeeper



<Dawn Sandahl
Wellness Buyer

Eric Nartker>
Storekeeper



<Erin Astley
Produce Assistant
Storekeeper

Jeff Kuhns>
Deli Assistant



<Jimmy Nuse
Deli Assistant

Laura Coffee>
Marketing & Owner
Services Manager



<Leigh Jajuga
Storekeeper

Lindsay Chestnut>
Deli Assistant



<Liz Nicholl
Storekeeper

Rachel Cromell>
Storekeeper



<Rebecca Clements
Deli Assistant

Reeva Ripley>
Bulk Buyer
Storekeeper



<Sarah Christensen
General Manager

Sirah Dowell>
Produce Assistant
Storekeeper



<Stacy Saul
Grocery Buyer/
Merchandising
Manager

Staff Favorite:



Reeva loves
No Miss
Nail Polish

Why does
she love it?

“It lasts a long time and
the colors are bright and
beautiful. Plus there’s no
strong chemical smell!”

Staff Favorite:

Amanda loves
Bragg’s Ginger
Sesame
Dressing.



Why does she
love it?

“Because it’s tangy and
apple cider vinegar goes
well with everything!”

Staff Favorite:

Leigh loves Yogi
Moon Cycle Tea.

Why does she love it?

“It is aromatic and has a
unique flavor
because of the
fennel, and helps
me maintain a
peaceful
disposition.”



Website: www.greentree.coop

Phone: (989) 772-3221

Email: general@greentree.coop

Planning for Growth

By Sarah Christensen, General Manager, Co-op Owner

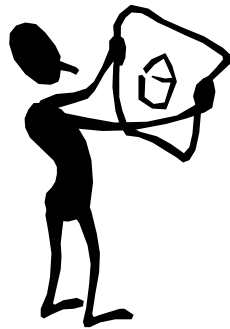


We've been talking about expansion/relocation for about a year and a half now and at least 5 times a week we have someone ask about it because they've heard or read about it for the first time. It takes a while to communicate with a group of 1285 Owners. We'll continue to use all available avenues to keep you informed and up-to-date.

The main question we get asked is "Where will the new location be?" and the answer to date is, "We don't know." We're in what's called Stage 1 of Expansion/Relocation planning, which is all about feasibility. There are four main components of feasibility. They include:

Market Feasibility—Basically asking and answering the question, "Is there a demand for a larger co-op in Mt. Pleasant?" We all have our own opinions. I certainly have mine, but in order to go to the bank or other lenders, you need a professional opinion. So in August of 2012 we hired a consultant from Dakota Worldwide to do a Market Study of our trade area. The results were very positive and confirmed that we do have the market potential. Basically, we got a resounding "yes" to the question, "If we build it, will they come?"

Internal Readiness—We currently have a staff of 19 amazing people. When we expand we anticipate a staff of 30 or more. That means jobs will change and new jobs will be created, but it means more than that. New systems, procedures, and processes all need to be developed. Our Leadership Team has been talking about this for a while and we're beginning to lay



out some of those new systems. Internal Readiness also means the Board has to be ready. To that end, our Board of Directors joined a year-long program to help prepare them for the expansion process. They're working with a consultant from Cooperative Development Services so that when the time comes to make big decisions they feel prepared and know that they're acting in the best interest of GreenTree's Owners. That's why they're looking for your input. Feel free to join us at any of our monthly Board Meetings and share your thoughts.

Financial Feasibility—With financial feasibility you start with some basic assumptions about your plans. The main one being that we know we want to triple our square footage. Other Co-op expansions tell us that anything less isn't worth the expense and more than that puts a lot of strain on the organization. From there we look at different scenarios like building vs. renovating and leasing vs. owning. Then you start to plug in some numbers. How much would we need in bank financing? How much money needs to come from Owner investments like your equity payments or an Owner Loan campaign?

Design Feasibility—This is where we actually start working on a draft of the new store. We haven't done much work in this area. Although we know that fresh departments like produce and prepared foods will be the highlight of our new store.

Continued on page 10...

A Quick Meal Using Bulk Staples

By Reeva Ripley, Bulk Buyer, Storekeeper, Co-op Owner

Looking for a quick and nutritious meal for your busy family? Try this twenty minute stir-fry recipe!

Stir Fry with Couscous

- 1 1/2 cups water
- 1 cup couscous
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 1/2 cup cornstarch
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- 1/8 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1(16 ounces) package mixed frozen vegetables



- 1 carrot, sliced
- 1/4 pound cooked meat (or other protein), cut into strips
- 1/2 cup sliced almonds

Directions:

To make Couscous: In medium saucepan, bring water to a boil. Stir in couscous, reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer for 5 to 10 minutes, until fluffy. Cover and set aside.

In small bowl, combine broth, cornstarch, soy sauce, brown sugar and ginger. Mix together and set aside.

Heat oil in a large skillet or wok. Add garlic, carrot, and vegetable mix; stir-fry for 7-8 minutes or until crisp-tender (adding water if the pan gets dry).

Stir in broth mixture and pour over vegetable mixture in skillet, then stir in your meat/protein. Cook 2 minutes, stirring frequently. Stir in almonds. Serve stir fry over hot couscous.

Ten minutes to prep, ten minutes to cook and serves 6!

Want to mix things up? Try these easy substitutions: Switch up the couscous for rice, available in our bulk section along with all the spices and oils you will need! The California blend vegetable mix, available in our freezer section, would be perfect to use in this recipe. Want to have more variety in your veg? Check out the Chinese style vegetable blend!





A Tisket A Tasket—

Let's Compare Our Shopping Baskets

By Dawn Sandahl, Wellness Buyer, Co-op Owner

Recently, I had the pleasure of expanding my department buying responsibilities to include the herbs and spices. It seems to me that many don't realize how much cheaper bulk herbs and spices are. And how much fresher, too.

GreenTree's basket was \$52.19 and the other guys were \$60.76.

Can pre-packaged spices boast that their cinnamon goes from tree to table in 3 months? Or that their supply comes from small farmers and is shipped from Frontier, the only worker-owned distributor in the U.S?

Besides the quality, pre-packaged spice containers in your conventional store are often multiple times more expensive. I did some investigating at other stores to see how bulk spice prices compare to pre-packaged. The worst was bay leaves. Ours were 4,100 times less expensive! Out of the top ten herbs and spices that I looked at, there wasn't a single one where we weren't at least half the price. This sparked my curiosity.

Is GreenTree actually cheaper – per average shopping trip - for natural and organic compared to conventional stores that also carry natural and organic

items? I wanted to know, on an average shopping trip with basic items, whether we or the other guys would end up with the smaller dollar amount. I didn't come

looking for what I already knew we had better prices on (I rarely even step foot anywhere else!). I designed my list around basic items on most natural consumers' weekly shopping list.

Here is what I looked for:

- Greek Gods yogurt, 24oz size
- Organic milk, gallon
- Organic Valley cheese, 8oz
- Kashi Autumn Wheat cereal
- Ezekial Bread
- 2oz of Organic cinnamon
- 1oz of ginger powder
- 4-pack of 7th Generation toilet paper
- 2 pounds Organic bananas (ours are Fair Trade, too)

- 2 Avocados (Organic)
- Celery (Organic)
- 3 pounds Grapes (Organic)
- 1 pound Cherries (Organic)
- 1 doz. Eggs, GMO-free, cage-free, vegetarian-fed (ours are local)

We did not have the best price on every item, but all together, GreenTree's basket was \$52.19 and the other guys were \$60.76. One great disadvantage to us is not having a store brand. Despite that, our Organic Valley milk was still cheaper than the store brand organic milk, and many comparable items were priced within a few cents of each other.

How do we do it? GreenTree's department buyers are smart and understand that it might be better to meet a community need than a price margin—and some things we sell at a loss. We don't have a regional manager or corporate office setting prices. It's up to the individual buyers here, and we think with our community, our pricing guidelines, our hearts, and our goals for the store in mind. We try really hard to keep our prices affordable.

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Who are GreenTree's Community Partners?

The Book Shelf- GreenTree Owners receive 5% off any magazine purchase. Phone: 989-317-3067, Located at: 1014 S Mission Rd

Buckley's Canoes- GreenTree Owners get \$5 off any weekday canoe rental or \$3 off any weekday kayak rental. Phone: 989-772-5437, E-mail: info@buckleyscanoe.com

Crystal Mountain Lotus Moon- GreenTree Owners receive 10% off all body work services. Offer excludes foot detox and other specials. Phone: 989-817-2860, E-mail: crystalmountainlotusmoon@gmail.com

Inner Light, LLC- Provides massage, Reiki, aromatherapy, and counseling services. GreenTree Owners enjoy a \$5 discount on their first session and on regular sessions! Offer cannot be combined with bundle pricing. Phone: 989-621-5171, Website: www.myinnerlight.net

Lavana Shurtliff Jewelry- GreenTree Owners receive 10% off any merchandise purchased at Lavana Shurtliff Jewelry. Contact Lavana at 989-773-3801 or www.lavana.com

McLaren Fitness- Will wave initial sign-up fee for GreenTree Owners. Phone: 989-779-5602, Website: www.wcfitness.org

Simmons Enterprises- Offers a 10% discount on labor (plumbing and contracting) to GreenTree Owners. Phone: 989-400-5762 E-mail: simmonsenterprises8415@yahoo.com

The Triangle Motel- Offers a 5% discount on room rentals to GreenTree Owners and visiting family members. (Not to be combined with any other offer.) Phone: 989-463-2296 Website: www.thetrianglemotel.com

Whitford Chiropractic Clinic- GreenTree Owners get a free initial consultation and exam on their first visit. Phone: 989-773-2534, Website: whitfordchiropractic.com

If you have your own business in the Mt. Pleasant area and are interested in becoming a GreenTree Community Partner, please contact us by calling 989-772-3221 or sending an email to laura@greentree.coop



Wait—You're a What?

Making Sense of Special Diets

By Laura Coffee, Marketing and Owner Services Manager, Co-op Owner

We've all been there. You invite a new friend over to dinner for the first time, your child has a friend or significant other visiting from out of town, or you need to set up a dinner meeting with a new client or colleague. All is going well until you ask, "Do you have any allergies or anything I should know about?" Then the bomb drops, "Actually, now that you mention it, I am a Paleo-pesce-chloro-vegegan..." (Don't worry, that one isn't real!) You smile and nod and say things like "fantastic" and "no problem", but inside you're just thinking—what does *that* mean?

Like I said, we've all been there. Hopefully, this basic primer will help you feel a little less overwhelmed the next time you find yourself making dinner for a Kosher Omni-freegan. (Nope, that one isn't real either.)

Blood Type—Each of the four blood types, O, A, B, and AB, has its own specific set of guidelines. Either ask your guest what his/her blood-type is and find a list of acceptable foods (each type has three categories of food: Highly Beneficial, Neutral, and Avoid), or ask which foods work for them.

Diabetic—Includes healthy carbohydrates (fruits, vegetables, whole grains, high fiber foods, fish, and good fats—primarily from vegetable sources). Things to avoid include saturated and trans fats (largely found in high-fat animal products and processed snacks), cholesterol (primarily found in fatty animal products), fried foods, refined carbohydrates, and excess sodium.

Engine 2—Also known as the Firehouse diet. No meat, fish, eggs, and dairy are consumed. No oils are used in cooking. Simple carbohydrates, such as table sugar, are to be avoided. Whole grains, fruits, nuts, vegetables, greens, and beans can all be eaten.

Flexitarian—Follows a predominately vegetarian diet while occasionally eating meat. Generally includes

consumption of animal products such as eggs and dairy.

Freegan—Consumes food that has been discarded or otherwise would not be eaten. May also barter or forage for food rather than purchasing it.

Fruitarian—May encompass a variety of food choices, but generally means no animal products, no processed foods, and no grains. Includes fruits, vegetables, and sometimes nuts and seeds. Some practitioners will only eat products which can be harvested without killing the plant. You may need to ask for additional clarification.

Actually, now that you mention it, I am a Paleo-pesce-chloro-vegegan..."

Gluten-free—Some individuals, especially those with Celiac disease, suffer serious gastrointestinal difficulties when consuming gluten, a protein found in wheat, spelt, barley, rye, triticale, and kamut. They cannot eat foods containing this protein, even if used in small quantities as a breading or thickener.

Halal—Means "permissible" in Arabic. This diet is typically practiced by followers of the Islamic faith. Foods that are not allowed include pork, alcohol, blood or blood byproducts, cheeses containing animal rennet, and improperly slaughtered animals. It may be best to avoid animal products entirely, or at least choose only products which are certified Halal.

Kosher—Means fit or suitable in Hebrew. This diet is typically practiced by followers of the Jewish faith. Foods that are not allowed include pork, certain types of poultry and seafood, rabbit, and any meal or food which mixes dairy and meat products, like a

cheeseburger or a dairy product thickened with gelatin. Strict practitioners require different sets of dishware for these foods. It may be best to avoid animal products entirely, or at least choose only products which are certified Kosher.

Low Cholesterol/Sodium—While not the same, low cholesterol and low sodium diets are often followed together. For low cholesterol avoid saturated and trans fats found in high fat dairy and animal products and fried foods. Include vegetables, olive oil, and fish. For low sodium avoid highly processed foods as they tend to contain high levels of added sodium. Use herbs and spices to season foods instead of adding table salt.

Paleo—Also known as the Caveman or Primal diet. Foods to avoid include refined sugars, grains, legumes, dairy, and most processed foods. You can include meats, fruits, vegetables, nuts, mushrooms, and natural fats such as those found in olive and coconut oils.

Pescetarian—Does not consume red meats, pork, or poultry but does eat fish. May sometimes include other types of seafood as well.

Raw—Usually does not involve the consumption of animal products, though some practitioners may consume raw dairy products or, more rarely, sushi or tartar (both raw meat dishes). Nuts and sprouted grains are often included. Alcohol, caffeine, and refined sugars are generally avoided. Foods cannot be cooked. Most raw foods diets do include dehydrated items, but these cannot be processed above a certain temperature typically between 104-118°F. Ask your guest for clarification.

Vegan—Consumes no animal products at all, this means no meat, fish, eggs, or dairy. Many vegans also avoid insect products, such as honey.

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GreenTree Cooperative:

Article courtesy of NCGA with an introduction by Stacy Saul, Grocery Buyer and Merchandising Manager, Co-op Owner

This past June 25-28th, I was lucky enough to attend the fifth annual Convergence Conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota with my co-worker Dawn Sandahl, Greentree's Wellness buyer. This yearly conference gathers together all of the grocery and wellness buyers from over 130 Co-ops, all belonging to the National Cooperative Grocers Association. Attendees arrive from all regions of the country with some Co-ops that are huge (One Co-op has nine locations!) and some that are very small, like GreenTree.

One thing that we all have in common is a goal to serve each of our communities with healthy food choices. I came back from the conference energized after attending panels from industry leaders, meeting with my peers, and discussing how to make our Co-ops better. This year we all spoke about our concerns about GMOs and the need for our consumers to have access to the information they need to know what's in their food.

Many Co-ops in the past year have developed official statements identifying their approach to GMO foods. In light of this increasing awareness, our leadership team has adopted a policy for GreenTree's grocery department that will be adopted in January 2014.

Here is our new policy:

Effective January 1st, 2014, our Co-op will require that any new grocery items we bring into the store that are produced with "high-risk" crops (or that contain ingredients derived from them), excluding animal products, be Non-GMO verified by the Non-GMO Project or have USDA Organic certification prior to being stocked by the Co-op. In the case of small vendors, for whom the cost of such certification might be prohibitive, we will contact them directly to ascertain detailed information about product and ingredient sourcing.

These are the crops considered to be high-risk :

- **Alfalfa** (first planting 2011)
- **Canola** (approx. 90% of U.S. crop)
- **Corn** (approx. 88% of U.S. crop in 2011)
- **Cotton** (approx. 90% of U.S. crop in 2011)
- **Papaya** (approximately 988 acres)
- **Soy** (approx. 94% of U.S. crop in 2011)
- **Sugar Beets** (approx. 95% of U.S. crop in 2010)
- **Zucchini and Yellow Summer Squash** (approx. 25,000 acres)

Just Label It: Co-ops Support Consumers' Right to Know

Food labels alert us to potential allergens, help us do the math on our sodium intake, and even reassure us that our

morning glass of O.J. is "not from concentrate." Now, surveys show that over 90 percent of Americans want mandatory labeling on foods containing genetically modified organisms (GMOs). It's interesting to note that GMO labeling is mandatory in much of the world already. In fact, 64 nations—from Brazil to New Zealand, plus the entire European Union—already require labeling to inform their citizens about the presence of GMOs.

GMOs are plants or animals created through the process of genetic engineering. This technology inserts DNA from one species into a different species. The resulting GMOs are combinations of plant, animal, bacterial and viral genes that cannot occur in nature or be created by traditional breeding.

Over the past two decades, GMOs have been entering U.S. grocery stores at a dizzying rate. While certified organic foods are prohibited from containing GMOs, the Congressional Research Service estimates that **60 to 70 percent** of processed conventional foods contain GMO ingredients, **none of which have been tested for safety by the FDA**. Most of the safety data used in the approval of GMOs is provided by the companies which produce them.

We believe people have a right to know what's in the food they're eating and feeding their families. That's why GreenTree has joined other food Co-ops across the country in support of the Just Label It (JLI) campaign, a national coalition of more than 650 organizations dedicated to bringing about mandatory labeling of genetically engineered foods in the U.S.

This October, the National Cooperative Grocers Association (NCGA), a business services cooperative owned by food Co-ops including GreenTree, is partnering with manufacturers to contribute \$75,000 to JLI. Together, we're supporting JLI's research to show that mandatory labeling will not increase food costs; efforts to educate lawmakers and the media about GMO labeling; and outreach to make more people aware of an important labeling petition to the FDA.

While labeling opponents spend millions to defeat labeling initiatives, momentum for mandatory labeling is building. **Over one million people have signed JLI's petition to the FDA already—more than any other food petition in FDA history.** And, although it didn't pass, California's Proposition 37 to label GMOs brought the

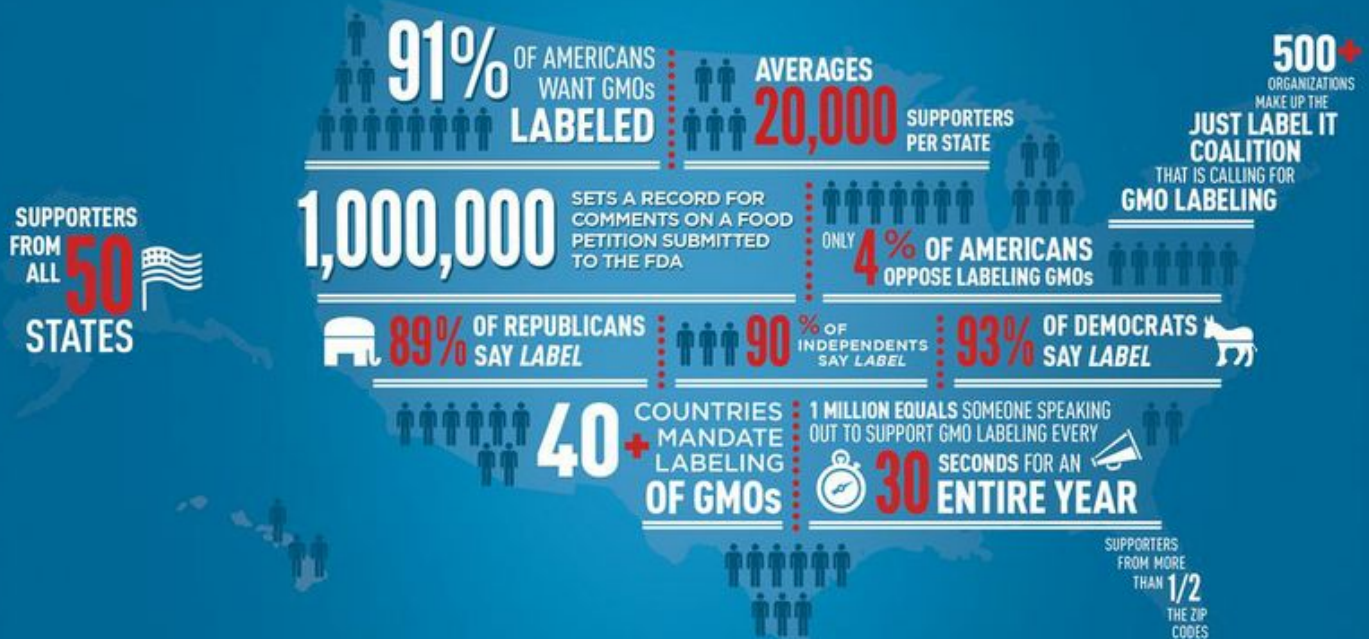
Taking a Stand on GMOs

issue to the national forefront. Currently, GMO labeling legislation is pending in more than half of U.S. states!

Connecticut, Maine, and Vermont have already passed laws related to GMO labeling. Hawaii has passed some limited measures as well. At the time of this writing labeling initiatives in Washington and New York are being hotly debated. You can follow new developments and find out more about these and other state labeling initiatives here: <http://www.centerforfoodsafety.org/issues/976/ge-food-labeling/state-labeling-initiatives>

Through our collaboration with the Just Label It campaign, food Co-ops like GreenTree are an integral part of the GMO labeling movement. Co-ops are owned and run by people like you. That means you are an integral part of the GMO labeling movement too. It's your desire to understand more about the food on your plate that is driving this movement. To learn more about GMOs and make your voice heard, visit www.justlabelit.org/take-action/, or visit www.strongertogether.coop/fresh-from-the-source/what-is-a-gmo/ to read more about GMOs.

AMERICA WANTS GMOs LABELED



MORE THAN ONE MILLION AMERICANS HAVE CALLED ON THE FDA TO LABEL GMOs
ISN'T IT TIME FOR THE FDA TO LISTEN?

MORE AT WWW.JUSTLABELIT.ORG

“GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS” OR GMOs, ACCORDING TO THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION ARE ORGANISMS IN WHICH THE GENETIC MATERIAL (DNA) HAS BEEN ALTERED IN A WAY THAT DOES NOT OCCUR NATURALLY



Basic Vegetable Storage

By Amanda Tomczyk, Produce Buyer, Co-op Owner

Do you have a lot of garden or CSA vegetables and wonder what you're going to do with them as fall arrives and winter creeps closer? Well have no fear! We've compiled the basics for you here!



1) Harvest vegetables at their peak maturity. They will store better than if they are over or under-ripe. There should be no deterioration or pests on the vegetable. Root veggies can stand a bit more time underground as long as you have a pest-free garden.

2) Be sure not to bruise, nick, or handle produce roughly. If you find items with these issues, use them up first or prep and freeze them. If you get to the end of the season and have some "imperfect" items, use them up in soups, stews or stir fry!

3) When trimming produce for storage, leave about an inch of the stem so that it retains water and doesn't become prone to molding or deterioration.



Produce such as tomatoes, peppers, zucchini, and summer squash don't keep well, so be

sure to freeze, can, or even dehydrate them. Making your own sauces and then freezing or canning them can be a fun and easy way to make sure those items don't go to waste. When you preserve these sauces yourself you can also choose the perfect package size for your cooking style—whether that's two servings or twelve!



There are several places to find expert information on the subject of vegetable storage. The National Center for Home Food Preservation ([http://](http://nchfp.uga.edu/)

nchfp.uga.edu/) is a great resource. They cover freezing, canning, smoking, and pickling, as well as a variety of other methods. If you just want to store your veggies whole, here is a chart that we've adapted from the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association to get you started!

COLD and VERY MOIST (32- 40 degrees F, 90 - 95% RH)	Cold and Moist (32- 40 degrees F, 80 - 90% RH)	Cool and Dry (32-50 degrees F, 60 - 70% RH)	Moderately Warm and Dry (50 - 60 degrees F, 60 -70% RH)
Beets	Potatoes	Garlic	Winter squash
Brussels sprouts	Apples	Onions	Pumpkin
Carrots	Cabbage	Dry beans	Sweet potatoes
Parsnips			
Turnip			
Rutabaga			
Leeks			
Celeriac			
Winter radish (Daikon)			
Sun chokes			

Delectable Dips

Article provided courtesy of Frontier Natural products Co-op

If you really need to use up those veggies right away, try slathering them in something delectable. "What's in the dip?" Thanks to your way with spices, that's what guests will be asking as they wonder why your dips are so delicious and distinctive. Here are some tips to help you whip up your very own version of the ultimate party food.

Healthy Homemade Dips

Homemade dips can be a lot healthier than store-bought dips, which are often high in fat, sodium and calories.

- Make skinny dips by simply using non-fat or low-fat versions of cheese or mayonnaise.
- Use high-nutrition bases for your dips—like beans (chickpeas, kidney, pinto, black or white beans all work well), spinach, avocado, tomato, or soft tofu.
- To enhance flavors, add a dash of tamari, lemon or lime as a finishing touch.
- Try using plain yogurt instead of sour cream in your recipes. You can ease into the transition by replacing just half of the sour cream with yogurt to start.
- Fill up on fiber. Use sliced vegetables or

wholegrain breads and crackers for dipping instead of high-fat chips and snacks made with refined flours.

- Add finely chopped vegetables to your dips—like carrots, red, green and yellow peppers, celery, broccoli and whole peas. They add nutrition, color and flavor.
- Serve dips with bite-sized pieces of raw vegetables—smaller pieces mean no double-dipping!
- Instead of salt, season your dips with natural and organic spices and herbs from Frontier, such as curry powder, garlic, thyme and oregano. For sweet dips, try cloves and cinnamon. To find out more visit www.frontiercoop.com.



Herbal First Aid: Part 1

By Dawn Sandahl, Wellness Buyer, Co-op Owner

Take-the-Bite-out-of-Stings Treatment:

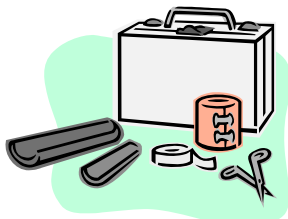
Combine 1 teaspoon echinacea tincture with 1 teaspoon green clay powder and 1 teaspoon water. **Apply to insect bite or sting and allow to dry. Rinse when itching or stinging has subsided.**

Must-Have Herbs For Your First Aid Kit:

- Arnica**—used in liniments and balms on unbroken skin for sore muscles, strains, swelling, and bruising
- Calendula**—often found partnered with comfrey in salves, soothing to the skin
- Cayenne**—warming revitalizing to the skin
- Citronella**—the strong, citrusy essential oil is often used to discourage insects
- Echinacea**—may help support a healthy immune function
- Eucalyptus**—popular in steam inhalations and chest rubs for congestion
- Ginger**—often relied upon to soothe the stomach
- Goldenseal**—the powder can be sprinkled on wounds and is a tonic
- Lavender**—considered relaxing and soothing
- Mullein**—a rich source of soothing mucilage (breaks up mucus)
- Slippery Elm**—soothing and settling to the stomach or throat (sore throats)
- Tea Tree Oil**—used for cleansing small scrapes and cuts
- Valerian**—promotes relaxation, especially helpful before bedtime

Note: Always keep your first aid kit out of the reach of children.

Disclaimer: I am not a doctor. GreenTree employees can **NOT** give medical advice to customers. In Michigan, any and all attempts to do so are against the law. If you are looking for information about illnesses and about supplements, we can help you. We will also refer you to books and websites that educate in these areas. Please understand that we cannot guarantee that an herb or supplement will fix or cure your ailment.



A Word from the Board

By Jay Fields, Board Chair, Co-op Owner



In my last article I reviewed GreenTree's Annual Owner Meeting and the vision exercise we participated in there. As noted, the large majority of Owner participants want GreenTree to provide additional goods, have more space, additional parking, offer additional education services and classes, and provide larger and better staff amenities—all from a centrally located store. In essence, more services from a larger store that is readily accessible.

The exercise also teased out concerns or fears that come with change or growth—prices will increase, GreenTree will lose its character, will move to a busy or less accessible location, or GreenTree will take on too much debt.

Thankfully the vision and the concerns noted above are not novel. I learned over the last two years serving on your Board that almost all Co-ops that consider changing their store are confronted with the push and pull reflected in our exercise at the Annual Owner Meeting. During this process GreenTree can look to the successful and unsuccessful models of Co-ops that considered and consummated changes to their existing footprint.

To facilitate our process, we have tapped into the resources available through CDS Consulting Co-op and the National Cooperative Grocers Association—entities that work with, train and supply Co-ops all over the country. As noted in my prior article, we as a Board are committed to doing our due diligence and are dedicated to GreenTree's fiscal integrity.

So the question remains—"Why consider relocation or expansion?" In short, because data tells us we need to. Our Co-op experienced a ten year sales growth of 192%, a five year sales growth of 51%, a 68% increase in Owners since 2009, and a sales/square foot increase of 192% over ten years. The data proves that you like your Co-op and the goods and services it provides. Additionally, more people like our Co-op and are becoming Owners. However, the Board is not guided solely by raw data, which is why the exercise at the Annual Owner Meeting was so critical.

To gather additional input from Owners, Board Secretary Talat Halman, Board Member Kimberly Crandell, and I met with Owners and patrons at the August Owner Appreciation Day to listen to ideas and concerns regarding expansion. Once again the majority of the respondents were in favor of relocation in order to facilitate more products, indoor seating and additional outdoor seating, hands-on classes, and more deli items. Most of the respondents indicated a very strong desire to stay downtown or in the downtown area. Thank you to the Owners and patrons that stopped to discuss this topic and their ideas with us. This input is critical as the Board weighs and considers any possible next steps for GreenTree.

Ad Rates:

Small ad: 3.5" wide by 2.0" high: \$45 per issue (\$40 per issue for GreenTree Owners)

Large ad: 3.5" wide by 4" high: \$85 (\$75 per issue for GreenTree Owners).

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Gluten Freedom

By Christopher Wiesman Deli Coordinator, Co-op Owner

Gluten. For some, it is a word that evokes images of delicious pastries, pizzas, and pancakes (or if you're me, donuts). For others, it is simply a reminder of wrenching gastrointestinal pain and anaphylaxis. How can such a small thing divide people so sharply? What is it about gluten that makes it so despised by a growing subset of eaters? Recently, the gluten-wary were given pause to rejoice as the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) formally defined gluten-free foods as those which contain no more than 20ppm (parts per million) of gluten. (The same definition holds true for the labels "without gluten," "no gluten," and "free of gluten.") For those wondering, 20ppm is the lowest level of gluten that can be scientifically analyzed in food. The new law represents a watershed, and to better understand the furor surrounding gluten, I recently sat down the Registered Dietitian and lame-duck Deli Coordinator Lindsey Merkel to talk about the recent FDA ruling and the various levels of gluten sensitivity.

According to Merkel, there are three distinct kind of gluten intolerance. Celiac disease is the most severe: For those afflicted, the body reacts dramatically to the presence of gluten, attacking and destroying the villi in the small intestine, leading to poor nutrient absorption, chronic inflammation, and a host of gastrointestinal discomforts (to put it delicately). "Gluten sensitivity," a condition less severe than celiac disease, "is a popular self-diagnosis," warns Merkel, but it is not a condition that has yet been medically distinguished. She suggests that those who cut glutinous foods out of their diets may actually be responding to the reduction in refined sugars and fats. Nevertheless, she concedes that individual limits for any foods vary person-to-person, so gluten-intolerance is not unlikely. Related to gluten intolerance is



wheat allergy, which the FDA has long required be labeled on foods (along with the other "major" allergens). Wheat, and its cousin grains and derivatives, precipitate an immunological response in those with an allergy that can lead to anaphylaxis and death if the reaction is severe enough. Oats occupy a tricky position for the gluten-intolerant because although the grain does not itself contain gliadin, that protein that makes gluten so problematic for many, it is almost always contaminated with wheat. According to Merkel, "even oats that have been labeled 'gluten-free' may still provoke a reaction in sensitive folks, because their sensitivity may be so high that the presence of any gliadin is intolerable."

For those with Celiac disease and/or a wheat allergy, Merkel does not recommend eating out, unless the kitchen that prepares the food is itself certified gluten-free. "Cross-contamination is just too easy in commercial kitchens, even with the most fastidious precautionary measures," says Merkel. In GreenTree's deli, we are always aware of the possibility of cross-contamination and therefore follow strict sanitation protocols. We are also vigilant never to share unwashed equipment. However, we recommend exercising discriminating judgment if you are extremely sensitive to gluten or wheat. To promote uniformity, we have removed the yellow stripping from the deli case, which is used in other areas of the store to distinguish foods that have been certified as gluten-free. GreenTree's kitchen cannot certify our food as gluten-free, but we will always include notes on our labels to let you know when our food has not been made with gluten-containing ingredients—which includes over half of our menu. So stop in sometime and try one of our "gluten freedom" offerings, and bid our beloved Lindsey Merkel a bon voyage as she begins a new adventure in Kalamazoo. Thanks for a great two years, Lindsey! We'll miss you!

Wait—You're a What? Making Sense of Special Diets, *Continued from page 4...*

Vegetarian—Does not consume meat or fish. As a general rule this term is short for "ovo-lacto vegetarian," which means that eggs and dairy products are consumed, but it may be best to ask your guest for additional clarification.

In choosing which diets to cover I tried to include only diets that tend to be a long-term part of an overall lifestyle. I did not include diets, like the Clean Program or the South Beach Diet,

which are primarily utilized in pursuit of short-term (6 months or less) weight-loss goals. There are other food lifestyles and dietary choices that I may have missed. The inclusion/exclusion of a diet in this article is not intended as



a judgment or recommendation of any kind and should not be used as a replacement for advice from a doctor, dietitian, or nutritionist. This guide is only

intended as an introduction to the more commonly encountered diets.

While it can be tempting to assume that someone's special dietary needs are just a personal preference, especially when you haven't come across them before, that may not be the case. The person you're feeding could follow a special diet for any number of reasons, including health, religion, or personal ethics. Personally, I feel it's always best to err on the side of caution and treat your guest's dietary restrictions as a real and important issue.

Staff in the Spotlight

Featuring: Jimmy Nuse, Deli Assistant



Where are you from?

Utica, MI

How did you first find the Co-op?

Craigslist job post for the deli.

How long have you been working here?

Since June 11th, 2013

What is the best part of your job?

I ♥ my coworkers.

Do you like to cook?

Not really, but I do like to make lasagna.

Describe your perfect breakfast.

Two eggs, sunny side up, hash browns, crispy bacon and two chocolate chip pancakes. And coffee with two creams and two sugars.

What is your favorite GreenTree product?

Pear and chocolate chunk scones.



Favorite movie?

The Lord of the Rings series and ALL horror movies.

What's your favorite thing to do in Mt. Pleasant?

Trivia at Hunter's Ale House!

Tell us something about yourself others might not know.

I was a raft guide last summer. And I have a twin.

Where are some of your favorite travel destinations?

The Bahamas

What are your hobbies?

Perfecting my zombie make-up skills, rock climbing, and watching reality TV with my beautiful girlfriend, Danielle.

What music is playing in your car, home or head?

Talk radio, specifically Doctor Radio on Sirius XM.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

As a special education teacher in the process of getting my PhD.



Planning for Growth, *Continued from page 2...*

Stage 2—Preparing for Construction begins when we actually secure a site with contingencies and finalize our finance package based on that site rather than our assumptions. It also includes finalizing the design. We won't move onto Stage 3 until our financing is secured. Sometimes Stage 2 leads back to Stage 1.

We know that there's more to shopping at GreenTree than the building or the fixtures or even the products. We've heard (and thank you) that you also like the atmosphere, the familiar faces, and that Co-op smell. Some people have expressed concern about losing those intangible things. There's a fear that we will be too big, too corporate, too sterile and I can tell you with all honesty that as a staff we don't want that either. We want to continue to keep it real and funky and sometimes really funky and have fun while we're at it.

A Tisket A Tasket *Continued from page 3...*

Also, these were all regular priced items. We have great Co+op Deals (available to all shoppers) that change every two weeks, and Owner Deals (available to Co-op Owners) that change on the first of every month, as well as an Owner Appreciation Day discount on the first Saturday of every month. When you factor in these discounts, we can make that price gap even larger.



Something you may not know is that larger stores get volume discounts from suppliers. Basically, the more a store buys on average, the less they pay per item. Huge chain stores get tremendous discounts compared to a store like GreenTree. However, in our new location, we'll have the space and demand to increase our purchases, which will make prices lower, and in turn increase the community that shops with us, which will increase our purchasing, and so on. We will better meet the needs of our community while having the most organic items and best prices in town.

It's just another example of how GreenTree does it better together!



214 N Franklin
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858
www.greentree.coop

myFood.

myCommunity.

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Appreciations and Announcements

GreenTree would like to offer our condolences to the family of Michael Lukens.

He was a wonderful part of the Co-op family and he will be missed.

Thank you so much for the donations made in Michael's memory.

Our neighbor, Crapo Insurance, would like us to remind you that you are not allowed to park in his lot while shopping. GreenTree has street parking only. Thank you!

Thank you *Max and Emily's* for allowing us to hold our monthly Co-op Board of Directors meetings in your fine establishment!

Starting on October 1st, GreenTree will be open from 8am-9pm every day!