



The Dirt

March
April
May
2012



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Board of Directors:

Eric Baerren:
Vice Chair

Wilma Blackman

Michael Brockman:
Chair

Liz Busch

Lyndsey Chippeway:
Treasurer/Secretary

Jay Fields

Talat Halman

Penny Lew

Meet the GreenTree Staff



<Angelo Moreno
Storekeeper



Amanda Tomczyk
Produce/Bulk Buyer



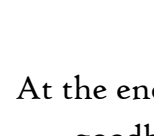
<Brian Radomski
Storekeeper



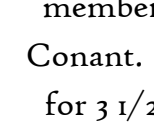
Casey Snyder
Storekeeper



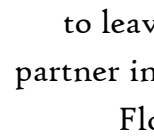
<Chris Wiesman
Baker



Dawn Sandahl
Wellness Buyer



<Jeff Kuhns
Storekeeper



Laura Coffee
Marketing & Owner
Services Manager



<Lindsey Merkel
Deli Coordinator



Rachel Cromell
Storekeeper



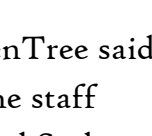
<Reeva Ripley
Produce Assistant
Deli Assistant



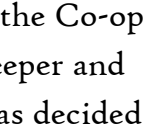
Rudy Hansen
Storekeeper
Deli Assistant



<Sarah Christensen
General Manager



Sirah Dowell
Storekeeper



<Stacy Saul
Grocery Buyer/
Merchandising Manager



Tracy Guthrie
Storekeeper

Good Luck Ladies!

At the end of February GreenTree said goodbye to two long-time staff members: Grace Rollins and Sydne Conant. Grace has been at the Co-op for 3 1/2 years, as a storekeeper and Greenhouse Keeper. She has decided to leave the Co-op and become a partner in Mt. Pleasant's own Flour Uprising.

Sydne has been with us for two years, more than half of that as our HABA, General Merchandise, and Wellness Buyer. She is moving back to Madison, Wisconsin. We wish both of them the best of luck in their new pursuits!



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So Much to Celebrate!

By Sarah Christensen, General Manager, Co-op Owner



A good portion of 2011 was spent researching, planning, and executing the renovation that brought us, among other things, a delicious deli. Like gestation and childbirth, we spent all this time preparing, learning, changing, and then finally giving birth and then guess what? The real work began. Whew! Since the deli opened on October 8th, we've been running at full speed on every throttle and cylinder in our cooperative engine and it's been incredibly exciting. I wanted to take this opportunity to say thank you to our staff for all of their hard work throughout many transitions and to you—our loyal customers—for your patience while we moved things around not just once, but in some cases three times. We simply wouldn't be *we* without you.

So what's in store for 2012 you ask? Well, to begin with, we hit a major milestone in January: we have over 1000 owners! In just three years over 1000 members of the Mt. Pleasant and surrounding communities have invested in our Co-op. So thank you again. We hope that this means that more and more people see the value in our business model or that what we sell and what we do is worth their hard earned money. We hope you're proud to be a GreenTree Owner and that you tell your friends and that they tell their friends and before you know it "world domination through cooperation" is more than just an imaginary bumper sticker in my mind.

Speaking of world domination—the UN declared 2012 the International Year of the Co-op. We're excited that they've recognized the cooperative business model as an economic force to be reckoned with. (Well, no one actually said that, but I think it's implied.) Did you know that there are over 1 billion owners of Co-ops world wide? We'll be celebrating this declaration throughout the year with our fellow cooperators and of course, you. Keep your eye on the website or Facebook or Twitter or the good ol' fashioned chalk board

for events and info throughout the year.

One of the things that I am most proud of and most excited about is the outreach work we continue to do through the Mt. Pleasant Food Project. Again this year, we will have plots available for free at the Pine Street Community Garden. The lot is actually owned by Central Michigan Mental Health Facilities Board and they've graciously agreed to let us use it for the last three years. We'll also be helping Union Township's Sustainability Committee with their community garden project at Jameson Park. And we'll be working with the City of Mt. Pleasant's PEAK program to bring gardening into the lives of after school and summer program kids. More people, growing more food, closer to home. It really is a dream come true.

We'll be working on our in-reach too; yes, I just made up that word. By that I mean that with our 2011 renovation behind us we will continue to fine tune our existing operations. We're not doing any major construction or opening any new departments, but we plan to make each and every one of our existing departments better. When you think of good customer service we want you to think of Ric's; when you think of above-and-beyond-extra-mile-left-you-smiling customer service, we want you to think of us.

2012 also finds us focusing on the future. We're still in stage 1 of our expansion/relocation plan (think feasibility), but we're moving forward one step at a time. We want to feed more people, employ more people, support more local farmers, and build a stronger community. So here's to celebrating all that we've accomplished—both as a little food Co-op in the middle of the mitten and as an international movement. Here's to all of the possibilities of 2012. And here's to you. Now, let's get this party started.



Fresh Flavors

By Reeve Ripley, Produce Assistant, Deli Assistant, Co-op Owner

The ground may be frozen and inhospitable in Michigan, but at GreenTree the local garlic, mushrooms, and turnips are still plentiful. As spring gets closer the organic produce from California and Mexico will give way to local produce from Alma, Morley and Edmore! Our produce department will host a farmer's meeting in March, the first step to bringing local produce to our produce cooler.

Soon the farmers will head out into the fields to plant the first crops of the season; before we know it May will bring a rush of local and lush produce offerings. First to appear will be the perennial Michigan favorite: asparagus, compliments of Dawn Star Farms. These delectable shoots are one of the first signs that a bountiful produce season is on the way. The arrival of asparagus will be followed in short order by beets,

rhubarb, chard, spinach, spring mix, lettuce, and various greens. These local goodies will be supplied by Yoder Family Farm, Sunny Slope Garden and Monroe Family Organics (local *and* organic), just to name a few.

There are many ways to enjoy local produce; here are a few of my favorites: Start the grilling season off right by topping your burgers with crisp local lettuce. Make a healthy salad with local spinach and spring mix, a great way to get iron and magnesium. Chard is good raw or sautéed, has a more delicate taste than spinach, and supplies you with fiber and protein. For dessert, top vanilla ice cream with some fresh local carrot juice, a great way to get fiber while satisfying your sweet tooth. Mix up breakfast by adding pan-fried kale to scrambled eggs, then top with cheese to make the filling for a delicious breakfast wrap. The leftover kale can be frozen and will continue to be a good source of iron, calcium, and vitamin C throughout the year. All these treats will be yours to enjoy in a few short months!



Grow a Garden in Your Guts

By Sydne Conant, Wellness Buyer, Bulk Buyer, Co-op Owner

Your digestive system is host to hundreds of bacterial species. These bacteria help keep your intestinal linings healthy and assist in breaking down food. Humans have between 300 and 1000 different types of microorganisms that help with digestion in the stomach and both intestines. These microorganisms are also believed to help regulate healthy immune systems. Probiotics are the bacterial flora that keep all of your digestive microorganisms in balance. The most common probiotics are Lactobacillus and Bifidobacterium. There are several species of each that can be found in probiotics and their numbers are usually in the billions for each strain!

Lactobacillus probably sounds familiar. It is the strain most often seen in yogurts. Probiotics are available in several different foods and supplements, like multivitamins. As a supplement, probiotics come in a powder, pill, or liquid form. Foods become probiotic through the process of fermentation. This is the chemical breakdown of a substance by bacteria, yeasts, or other microorganisms. You can find probiotics in yogurt, kefir (a fermented

dairy beverage), sauerkraut, kombucha (an effervescent tea fermented with a yeast/bacteria culture), kimchi, and tempeh. Some favorite probiotic foods at GreenTree are Bubbie's fermented pickles and The Greek Gods yogurts.

Probiotics can be taken daily to maintain your health but are also used after illnesses to help boost your internal flora. Sickness may cause a decline in your digestive microorganisms, whether it is because of an intestinal illness or from taking antibiotics. This lack in probiotics may create an environment that supports a multitude of ailments, from kidney stones to Irritable Bowel Syndrome. Replacing your probiotics may help with those ailments and prevent diarrhea, strengthen your immune system, and reduce the side effects of taking antibiotics. Some people even believe that taking probiotics may decrease your chances of getting cancer!

To really get the most out of probiotics, don't forget to take prebiotics.

Prebiotics are non-digestible foods that make their way through your digestive system and nourish your probiotics. Most prebiotics are carbohydrates that can be found naturally occurring in whole grains, fruits, and legumes. Some foods that you can ingest to get prebiotics are bananas, onions, leeks, soybeans, sweet potatoes, and asparagus. If your probiotic doesn't seem to be working, or you know that you aren't eating enough prebiotic foods, taking a prebiotic may be the jumpstart to healthy digestion!



Stop into the Co-op to find our wide selection of probiotics in the Wellness section's cooler. Different strains of probiotics can affect

your body in different ways, so make sure to talk to a doctor about what might be appropriate for you. We carry varieties from Probiotic Pearls with just 1 billion cultures to Renew Life's Critical Care with 50 billion cultures!

Whatever your probiotic needs, we are sure to be able to keep your digestive tract teeming with life!

Super Simple Lemony Roasted Asparagus

Image and text reprinted with permission from www.rufusguide.wordpress.com

For some time, we've fussed with juicing lemons. No more! Well at least not when it comes to roasting asparagus. Let the lemon slices do the work for you.

Lemony Roasted Asparagus

- 1 small bunch of asparagus, washed and woody bits trimmed
 - 1/2 lemon sliced thin
 - 1/2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
 - 1/2 tsp sea salt

Preheat oven to 375. Toss asparagus in olive oil and sea salt and line in a single layer in an oven-proof pan. Layer lemons on top in a single layer. Roast until asparagus is tender, about 10 minutes.



For more recipes like this one visit rufusguide.wordpress.com.



Deliciously Local

By Stacy Saul, Merchandising Manager and Grocery Buyer, Co-op Owner

Why not try something new (and local) this season? GreenTree has many items for the adventurous foodie to try. One of my personal favorites is McClure's pickles, made right here in Michigan. Brothers Joe and Bob McClure started their business in 2006. They use their great grandmother's recipe and hand pack each jar in Detroit. They make dill garlic and spicy dill garlic pickles, dill relish, and Bloody Mary mixer. Give 'em a try; you won't be disappointed!

Most people think of Wisconsin or California when they think of cows and cheese, but Michigan has a lot of great options too! Have you tried Farm Country cheeses? They are made in Lakeview, MI with local milk. These creamy cheeses pair up great with the zingy McClure's pickles. With flavor options like habañero, truffle, or smoked cheddar, there is sure to be something to suit your mood.

These savory snacks lend themselves naturally to pairing with classic Michigan beers. Did you know that we carry—on a rotating basis—over 25 styles of Michigan beer? There are many varieties, such as porters, India pale ales, stouts, ambers, and wheats. With the arrival of spring comes Bell's most loved variety (or at least my favorite): Oberon! Bell's Oberon is a wheat ale fermented with a signature house ale yeast, mixing a spicy hop character with a mildly fruity aroma. If you crave a lighter flavor, try out Atwater Brewery's Grand Circus Avenue. This IPA comes in a can and is great for hiking, camping, or kayaking.

Even with all of these great choices (and quite a few more), we haven't cornered the market on Michigan flavor. We know that there are many other great Michigan companies out there! If there is something that you are craving from your favorite Michigan business or town, let us know and we'll look into carrying it!



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Manager

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Whoa Deli!

By Lindsey Merkel RD, Deli Coordinator, Co-op Owner



Spring Brings More Recyclable Packaging!

Your cooperative deli is transitioning to recyclable salad/spread containers. To our great excitement, we found number 1 PETE containers, which Isabella County accepts for recycling. We will continue to use the "clam shell" style containers, which are proudly made of 100% recycled number 1 PETE plastic.

Our plastic wrap used for sandwich packaging is also sustainably produced by Berry Plastics.

Fast fact: Produce scraps from the deli are either composted or fed to local ducks and chickens! How many restaurants can say that?

Deli Coordinator's New Developments and Food Philosophy

It is quite exciting to be able to put the letters RD behind my name. I recently became a Registered Dietitian, and I am very happy to be able to put my passion for food together with my education in nutrition science to feed the community through GreenTree's deli. It is my pleasure to speak with Owners and customers about their nutritional questions and how GreenTree can provide foods and products to meet their individual needs.

I put a lot of energy into producing quality food from organic and local products for you to enjoy. I would like to take a moment to tell you about my food philosophy and what you can continue to expect from our humble kitchen.

Most of our soups are vegan and/or without gluten to keep them accessible to the greatest number of people. All soups are made here on site with caring attention to flavor! When we do use meat, we get it locally or research it to make sure that the animals were raised humanely.

I believe in keeping excess sodium out of food. Most Americans consume 2-3 times the recommended limit of 2300 mg of sodium per day. Salt has a place in my kitchen, just not center stage. There are so many other flavors to accent with seasonings! (There is a salt shaker by the soups if you happen to prefer a bit more salt.)

Making stock and broth here is another way that I have worked to reduce our use of packaging, improve flavor, and control salt content. We often use whole chickens because of their superior flavor, and after they are roasted we use the bones and skins to prepare a rich stock for our chicken soup. We also make vegetable stock from time to time, which is why on the ingredients of soups I often do not specify the brand. When we have not made our own vegetable stock, we use packaged broth, Rapunzel bouillon cubes, or Better Than Bouillon: all products that do not contain added MSG and are made with certified organic ingredients.

Accurate labeling is also very important to me. We all do our best to make sure that all ingredients are listed in order of greatest to least quantity by weight, and that allergens are clearly labeled.

Your suggestions, questions (and praise) are always welcome. It is true that I delight in nothing more than a sincere compliment! If you would like to contact me, my email address is

deli@greentree.coop.

GreenTree Co-op: Local

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

If you've been with us long enough to have seen GreenTree in the summer you know how much we love local. Our selection of unsprayed, organic, and heirloom Michigan produce is second to none. Our network of farmers works hard to bring us the healthiest, best tasting, most beautiful produce possible, and we're grateful for it. But sometimes, with all that gorgeous greenery flashing around, we can lose sight of the other side of local—those farmers, companies, and craftspeople who aspire to provide us with their wares all year long.

Spring is the perfect time to take a look at these dedicated Michigan businesses; we haven't got all of that summer bounty to distract us, and we've finally started waking up from those groggy winter blues. In fact, sampling our astonishing variety of Michigan foods is a sure-fire way to make your taste buds feel as refreshing as the rapidly warming weather! There are many remarkable local vendors at GreenTree, but in this issue we'll be focusing on three in particular: Food for Thought, Ray's Polish Fire, and Hilhof Farm Dairy.

Gathering the information I needed for this article really brought home to me the uniqueness of these Michigan businesses. Within two hours of my first attempt to contact Food for Thought and Ray's Polish Fire, I had direct responses from the founders of both companies—not the help line, automated “we'll get back to you email”, or generic form letter—the company founders. (I was also never placed on hold.) They provided me with answers to all of my questions, pictures, and friendly requests to let them know if I needed anything else. Can you imagine that happening with Nestle or Kraft? My experience with Hilhof Farm Dairy was even more direct, I just gave the questionnaire to the man hand-delivering the milk to our store. Since he's also the farmer, I knew my questions would get exactly where they needed to go.

Signs like this one indicate that a product is from within 100 miles of the Co-op. Signs without the Local Color badge are from businesses in other parts of Michigan.



Food For Thought, Inc.

Owner/Founder: Timothy Fitzgerald Young

Food For Thought has been in business for 17 years.

Timothy started Food For Thought after doing Human Relief work in Central America during the 1980s. The violence and inequality he witnessed there convinced him that he couldn't stand by and perpetuate the cycle of injustice. After spending so much time in a place where the perpetrators of violence were as much victims as the people they were paid to subjugate, he became acutely aware of how our systems, particularly food systems, affected people in other parts of the world. As a result of this, Food For Thought is very concerned with responsibly sourcing their ingredients.

The company has strict standards for both product quality and origin. All ingredients must be either certified organic or sustainably harvested from the wild. In addition, they follow a “local at any cost” policy when purchasing ingredients. In some cases they even grow certain items, like lavender, themselves if a suitable source cannot be found. Only when there is no local or regional option available will they begin looking further afield. If an ingredient, like cane sugar, must be purchased from overseas, Food For Thought chooses to deal exclusively with Fair Trade certified producers.

In the broad scope of things, Food For Thought is an unusual company. They are a locally focused business with a deep awareness of their global impact. I think Timothy really said it best: “There will always be more to do. Sustainability, after all, is a journey, not a destination. We're always looking to find ways to decrease our energy consumption, farm beyond organic, create fair trade with our next-door neighbors, create more meaningful lives for our dedicated staff and all whose lives our company touches. We stumble, debate, work hard, learn from our experiences, and accept our limitations. It's a lot to put into a jar.”



—Always in Good Taste

Ray's Polish Fire Hot Sauce

Owner/Founder: Raymond Weglarz, hence “Ray’s”

Ray has been experimenting in the kitchen for many years. He began to spend more time making and marketing Polish Fire in the past few years after leaving his job as a hospice program manager and hospice nurse.

For Ray the fascination with cooking is something that began very early in life, as he watched his mother, a “4’10” Polish powerhouse”, cook and experiment in their family kitchen. He thinks cooking is something that people undervalue in today’s society, and strives to create a product that doesn’t just taste good but makes you feel good too.

This emphasis on cooking and sharing has impacted the choice of ingredients that go into making Ray’s Polish Fire (or as we call it at the Co-op, “Ray’s”). “The 5 organic herbs in Polish Fire are really ‘super herbs.’ They all are known now to promote health and digestion and are stimulants to the system but are not irritants—and they taste great together. Modern and historic herbalists promote cayenne, garlic, ginger, cumin, and turmeric as among the most healthful of herbs.” In addition to being healthy, these spices are organic too.

The apple cider vinegar, a key ingredient, is also organic. In fact, all the ingredients are organic, except the ume plum vinegar. (And you can bet that would be too, if he could find a source for it!) Ray and his wife Viki place a lot of importance on using reputable suppliers, like Eden Foods and Wholesome Sweeteners. They embody this ethos in their own lives as well, volunteering with community garden projects and practicing permaculture on their 20 acre homestead. This positive approach to cooking and living is apparent in the manufacturing process too. Ray’s is made in 8 gallon batches—in the certified kitchen of his local Co-op.



Ray, his wife Viki, and their three girls.



William and Connie

Hilhof Farm Dairy

Owner/Founder: William & Connie Straathof (The name Hilhof is derived from the names of William’s parents. His mother’s maiden name, Hilanra, forms the first part, and the “hof” comes from Straathof.)

William’s parents first purchased the farm in 1962 and he took it over in 1979 when he was a senior in high school.

The farm wasn’t always organic. Over time William grew unhappy with conventional farming methods, and even considered getting out of farming altogether. Then his wife Connie suggested that they switch to organic farming practices. In 1996 they stopped using chemicals and herbicides on their soil and began fertilizing with composted manure instead. In 2004 they completed the long process of organic certification for all of their crops and cattle. They are still certified organic today and intend to continue with these practices.

Their cows are out to pasture for eight months of the year and are let outside whenever the weather permits during colder months. When there is no grass to be had, the cows are fed organic hay, grown on the premises or purchased from a neighbor whose fields are also certified. This 100% grass diet is good for the cows, and has been shown to increase levels of CLAs, omega-3s, and vitamin E in their milk. It also has the ideal ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 fatty acids.

When you have high quality milk, it makes sense to invest in quality processing and packaging. Hilhof milk is sold in glass bottles (**Hilhof is the only producer of certified organic glass-bottled milk in Michigan!**) and is non-homogenized. That means the fat (cream) will separate from the milk and you must shake the bottle before drinking. Homogenization changes the physical structure of the fats in milk, making it harder to metabolize properly.



Can Organic Feed the World?

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



Feeding the world is a hot button issue. Politicians talk about it, activists talk about it, and big agri-businesses talk about it. In October of 2011 the world population reached the 7 billion mark, and the question of how we'll feed them all is a legitimate concern. Large agricultural companies have become particularly fond of touting GMO crops as a solution to this problem, while at the same time stating that organic production isn't up to the task. But is it true? Is organic food production really incapable of feeding all 7 billion of us?

Before we get into production methods, it's important to realize that a large portion of the food we are already growing is routinely wasted or lost. In January of 2011 The Swedish Institute for Food and Biotechnology completed a study they had undertaken at the request of the Food and

Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. *"The results of the study suggest that roughly one-third of food produced for human consumption is lost or wasted globally, which amounts to about 1.3 billion tons per year. This inevitably also means that huge amounts of the resources used in food production are used in vain, and that the greenhouse gas emissions caused by production of food that gets lost or wasted are also emissions in vain."* ¹

In other words, simply by learning how to control our food waste, we could effectively increase useful food production by a third. It turns out that industrialized and developing nations as a whole are actually wasting food at very similar rates (though the amount per person is much lower in developing nations); these losses are just occurring at different points in the process. The study suggests that in industrialized nations most waste occurs when consumers and retailers simply throw away uneaten food. Some food is even

rejected by retailers simply because its appearance is not uniform enough. In developing countries food is lost before it ever reaches retailers or consumers, often due to a lack of infrastructure for transportation and storage. This lack of distribution channels is a major hurdle to feeding developing nations, regardless of production rates.

Let's set aside the question of waste and assume a perfect system for a moment. If all the food that was produced was also eaten, could organic production keep pace with conventional production? Critics claim that only industrial farming and GMOs created to increase yields can provide for our current levels of consumption. This claim has recently been refuted by a 30 year study carried out by the Rodale Institute. The results showed that



My balcony garden.

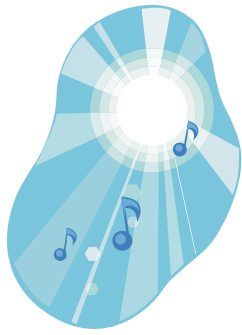
organic and conventional production of soy, corn, and wheat was equivalent. Organic crops were better able to tolerate competition from weeds, and, *"Organic corn yields were 31% higher than conventional in years of drought. These drought yields are remarkable when compared to genetically engineered "drought tolerant" varieties which saw increases of only 6.7% to 13.3% over conventional (non-drought resistant) varieties."* ² An ongoing study at the University of Iowa had similar findings, concluding that, *"Skilled management is an adequate replacement for synthetic chemicals."* ³ In other words, organic production generally equaled or even outstripped that of conventional and GMO crops.

A large part of the productivity and resilience in organic agriculture is likely due to the health of organic soil. Compaction, erosion, heavy fertilizing with synthetic nitrogen, and the lack of rotation can all lead to poor, depleted soils on large scale conventional farms. ⁴ Organic farmers use composted plant matter or animal waste to fertilize their fields, resulting in a richer mix of nutrients in the soil. Rotating crops, especially with nitrogen fixing varieties, also helps keep the soil from getting depleted. Healthy soil plays host to a greater array of insects and microbial life, and contributes to healthier root systems, ⁵ which in turn reduces erosion and helps plants develop greater disease resistance. When we think in terms of sustainability, it's important to consider long-term productivity, and you can't get that without healthy soil.

Another advantage to organic production is the built-in diversity. Regular crop rotation (changing what is grown in a field from one planting to the next), and planting multiple crops in the same field both help to keep down weeds, pests, and disease. When the same crop is planted in a field year after year, weeds can adapt to the plant's growing cycles. If this happens, they can continue to deposit seeds into the soil, growing bigger and more numerous season by season. By varying crops and mixing plants with different lifecycles, organic farmers make it more difficult for weeds to establish a long-term presence in any particular field. ⁶ These natural methods of disease, pest, and weed control can help to bring down costs and reduce the use of chemicals, yet another contribution of organic farming to agricultural sustainability. But even if all of these changes back to organic rather than conventional production were undertaken tomorrow, an additional concern remains—is there enough land?

...continued on page 11

The Spa Space



As Michigan begins waking up and spring slowly arrives, it can be nice to give our skin a springtime boost as well. This simple scrub from Stephanie Tourles' *Organic Body Care Recipes* is just the thing.

Brewer's Yeast and Oatmeal Scrub

Recommended for: All skin types except dry or dehydrated skin)

Use: 2 times per week

Follow with: Moisturizer

1/4 cup brewer's yeast
1/4 cup ground oatmeal

This scrub really revs up the circulation—it restores life and glow to the complexion.

In a small bowl, mix dry ingredients using a spoon or tiny whisk or shake them in a sealed plastic bag. No refrigeration is required for dry ingredients, but for maximum freshness and potency, please use within 6 months.

To mix the scrub for use: In a small bowl, combine 1 tablespoon scrub with enough water to form a spreadable paste. Allow mixture to thicken for 1 minute.



Application tips: Using your fingers, massage onto the face and throat and allow to dry for 15 minutes. Rinse with cool water.

Ad Rates:

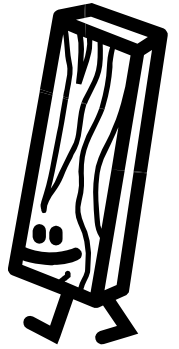
Small ad: 3.5" wide by 2.0" high: \$45 per issue (\$40 per issue for GreenTree Owners)

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

Space in the Summer 2012 newsletter must be reserved by May 15th. Ad spaces are based on a first-come, first-serve basis depending on the layout of each newsletter. Payment must be received with camera-ready or high resolution electronic copy (jpg, pdf, or gif) at the time of reservation.

A Word from the Board

By Mike Brockman, Board Chair, Co-op Owner



I'm running for a seat on the GreenTree Board of Directors—and so can YOU!

This isn't my official letter of intent; it's just my way of saying that I would like to continue to serve the Owners of GreenTree. I am currently the Board Chair, and have served as Vice Chair and Secretary during my tenure. My second term is coming to an end in May, but I am pretty much guaranteed re-election, as there are two other (unoccupied) seats available, and we seem to have a hard time finding people to run for Board seats anyway. Maybe people think that Board members have to restock the bulk bins and take out the garbage and stuff like that; I can see why that might discourage people from running for a seat. Actually, the Board has almost nothing to do with the day-to-day operations at GreenTree; we're more of a broad oversight and long-term planning type of group. Our main job is to make sure regular operations continue.

I would love to see more candidates than available seats in the upcoming Board elections. It would show that there are many GreenTree Owners who have a depth of commitment great enough to offer their help... lighten the load... lend a hand... impart their wisdom... be a sport... etc... . Your 3-year term will start at an exciting time in GreenTree's evolution: You will be helping GreenTree expand and relocate, while continuing to offer the goods and services on which Owners have come to rely. I know we've been talking about this for a while now, but things are going to start happening really soon. Day-to-day is a good way to describe the operation of GreenTree at its current location; we will not be able to provide the necessary goods and services to our growing Ownership from 214 N Franklin for much longer. Whether you run for the Board this year or not, if you're a GreenTree Owner, there will come a time in the next couple of years when you will be asked to help sustain our valuable Cooperative.

So, if you want to help us serve the 1000+ Owners of GreenTree, run for one of the three 3-year terms available this year on the GreenTree Board of Directors. The application can be obtained at the store and also on the website. The election will be in May. The results will be announced during the Annual Ownership Meeting; we'd love to hear your name!



Michael Brockman -
GreenTree Board Chair



Community Partner: The Book Shelf

By Sydne Conant, Wellness Buyer, Bulk Buyer, Co-op Owner

When you walk into the Book Shelf, the first thing you'll notice is how comfortable you feel. The colors are warm, there are rocking chairs for relaxing with a book or magazine, and a cat just might walk up to see if you have some love to give. You're flanked by a wall of fiction and a wall of magazines, made more inviting by shorter shelves in the middle of the store that hold everything from kids' books to biographies. The comfort of small, locally owned bookstores is something you can't find in a large chain!

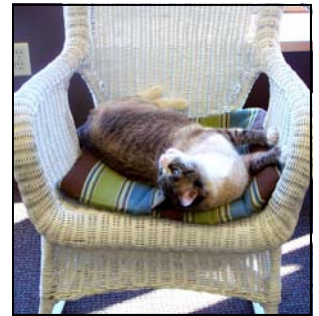
The Book Shelf opened in May of 2010, but books have been a part of owner Kristin Moutsatson's whole life. She spent 20 years working at The Book Mark and, after The Book Mark closed, decided to open a shop of her own. In the short time the store has been open, sales continue to grow and loyal shoppers are spreading the word to the community.

Whether you're looking for a new political book or fun crafting guide, The Book Shelf carries a wide selection for such a small space. There are cook books, romance novels, science fiction, and local interest books. You can also get lost in the 600+ magazine titles. If you can't find what you're looking for, chances are high that you can place a special order and get it in less than a week.

Even if you're not looking for a book, the Book Shelf is a great place to shop! Several local artists have their wares for sale here. You can find needlework, hand felted mittens and hats, potholders, book covers, greeting cards, and more! Find your favorite classic book cover as a tee-shirt or pick up a journal for the writer in your life. Along with locally made greeting cards, The Book Shelf also carries a few unique and environmentally friendly card lines made from recycled paper and soy inks. You won't find them anywhere else in town!

Kristin Moutsatson supports local artists and businesses because she believes it is important to keep her money in the community. She grew up in Mt. Pleasant and has been an owner at GreenTree for close to 18 years. Her children grew up on a healthy diet of organic food and a never ending supply of reading materials. Another way that Kristin helps the community is by fostering cats from the Humane Animal Treatment Society's foster program. She has had five cats adopted out of her store and expects the sixth cat to find a home soon.

GreenTree is excited to welcome the Book Shelf to our growing group of Community Partners. This program is aimed at creating connections between small local businesses and raising awareness of all that Mt. Pleasant has to offer. You can visit Kristin, the cats, and your favorite books at 1014 S. Mission, next to Auto Zone. For more information, call 989-317-3067 or e-mail bookshelfmountpleasant@gmail.com. Hours are Monday through Saturday from 10am-7pm. As a new Community Partner, The Book Shelf will give you 5% off of your magazine purchase when you show your GreenTree Owner card!



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 \$2 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. (Excluding foot detox and other specials like community health days on the second Saturday of every month.) Phone: (989) 817-2860, E-mail: crystalmountainlotusmoon@gmail.com

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

Risk Restaurant- GreenTree Owners receive a free dessert with the purchase of two entrees. Phone: 989-317-0844,

Email: riskrestaurantmp@gmail.com

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

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

Staff in the Spotlight

Featuring: Jeff Kuhns, Storekeeper



Where are you from?

Romeo, MI

How did you first find the Co-op?

From legendary cooperators such as Dave Schwartz and Matt Himmelpach.

How long have you been working here?

A little over a year now.

What is the best part of your job?

The overall pleasant interactions I have with my co-workers.

Do you like to cook?

Yes, and it is especially fulfilling when I have grown the food that I am cooking.

Describe your perfect breakfast.

My perfect breakfast involves orange scones, prepared by my lovely fiancé Elena, in a bowl of soy milk, especially right out of the oven when they warm up the milk. After all, she knows that the way to a man's heart is through his gastrointestinal tract.

What is your favorite GreenTree product?

Either Ray's Polish Fire or the recent addition to the soup realm known as Laksa.

Favorite movie?

If the Mighty Boosh were a movie and not a TV series, I would say the Mighty Boosh. Seeing as how it is not, I must say I do enjoy Hayao Miyuzaki



films greatly and I am especially partial to Princess Mononoke.

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

I love long spontaneous adventures through the forest with friends.

Tell us something about yourself others might not know.

I am level 1 Reiki, despite my level 5 beard.

Where are some of your favorite travel destinations?

My family has a beautiful chunk of earth on Lake Superior in the UP, which I will always consider as home. Otherwise, I am contented to be anywhere that I have access to the natural world.

What are your hobbies?

I like to make music, juggle, breakdance and then fix it with duct tape, meditate, run, ski, sled, and generally galavant about with good company.

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

In my car I tend to listen to music with vocals so I can sing along, that or jazz. At home I tend to listen to more meditative and eclectic music. As for my head, I would describe that music as a sort of blend of the twin disciplines of French impressionistic music and circus music, which on occasion you might hear me attempt to express, poorly.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

In 10 years I imagine I will have eaten enough plants that my cells will engulf plastids and I will, at last, be able to photosynthesize.

Can Organic Feed the World? continued...

This is a very difficult question to answer. Some people claim that increases in production will continue to offset the need for increased land use. Others believe just as firmly that we simply cannot feed everyone without creating more farmland. A combination of the two approaches may be more feasible than adopting either position exclusively. Limiting urban/suburban expansion into areas currently used for farming and cutting back on the production of biofuels (on land that could be used for food crops) will allow us to make the most of land that is already being farmed. It is even possible to reclaim lands that have been degraded and return them to a usable state, thus increasing available arable land without the need for increases in deforestation. 7 Finally, there is the possibility of carving out more space for farming in the areas where we live and work. Square-foot gardening can be an attractive and low maintenance way for homeowners to produce some of their own food. Larger cities can invest in rooftop gardening, or create public gardens in parks and empty lots. Vertical farming may enable some urban areas to feed their populations without the need to ship food into the city. Even those of us who live in apartments can grow a few things—on windowsills, porches, and balconies, or along front walks.

In the end, it seems that feeding the world is a question of infrastructure, personal responsibility, and a willingness to change. If we continue to waste food and engage in practices which mismanage the Earth's finite resources in pursuit of short-term gain, we will likely see the resulting shortages within our lifetimes. The population is expected to reach 9 billion by 2050. Only by thinking ahead and taking care of our planet can we ever hope to feed them all.

http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ags/publications/GFL_web.pdf 1

<http://www.rodaleinstitute.org/files/FSTbookletFINAL.pdf> 2

<http://www.leopold.iastate.edu/sites/default/files/pubs-and-papers/2011-11-long-term-agroecological-research-ltar-experiment.pdf> 3

<http://grist.org/food/2010-02-23-new-research-synthetic-nitrogen-destroys-soil-carbon-undermines/> 4,5,6

<http://www.sciencemag.org/content/327/5967/812.full> 7



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

myFood. myCommunity. myCo-op.

Mark Your Calendar!

Spring Owner Appreciation days are:

Saturday, March 3rd

Saturday, April 7th

Saturday, May 5th



Free Coffee

10% Off for Owners

Enter the Drawing