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Dates to Remember

June:

- 5 Owner Appreciation Day
- 16 Board Meeting

July:

- 3 Owner Appreciation Day
- 21 Board Meeting

August:

- 7 Owner Appreciation Day
- 18 Board Meeting
- 28 Localpalooza

The 2009 Annual Report

Sarah Christensen,
General Manager, GreenTree Co-op Owner



We experienced some big changes in 2009, not just at our Co-op, where we changed our ownership structure and redesigned the store, but worldwide where we watched markets crash and corporations collapse. It's no small feat that we survived and thrived the Great Recession of 2009. It wasn't always easy. Like most retailers we experienced a sudden sales drop in late 2008 and in early 2009 we had negative growth. We made adjustments to our inventory, ordering, and personnel. Due to the transition in ownership structure we began the year with zero owners, but we ended the year with; 687 owners, sales growth of 4%, and a \$9128.03 profit.

In retrospect the improvements we made to the store couldn't have been timelier. The produce cooler, new freezer, and new shelving were big investments, but they paid off in increased sales, improved product selection and enhanced quality.

2009 Highlights

Products and Services:

- ◆ Expanded Produce Department
- ◆ Expanded Frozen Department
- ◆ Expanded Grocery Department
- ◆ Expanded the number of local producers we work with.
- ◆ Expanded our Gluten Free selection
- ◆ Declining balance availability for owners

Finance:

- ◆ Total Owners: 687
- ◆ Total Equity Invested: \$32,610.00
- ◆ Total Owner Discounts (via owner appreciation day): \$7,214.26
- ◆ Net Profit: \$9,128.03
- ◆ Percentage of Sales to Owners: 60.98%
- ◆ Owner Generated Net Profit: \$5408.56
- ◆ Patronage Refund: \$5408.56
- ◆ Average Refund: \$8.10

Community Outreach & Education

Mt. Pleasant Food Project

In 2009 we began an outreach adventure called the Mt. Pleasant Food Project. The idea initially generated from our desire to better utilize our greenhouse space, both functionally and as an educational tool. Over the past year we've discussed many potential projects. In 2009 we worked with CMU's Campus Grow. This year we'll be starting a community garden in the 400 block of Pine Street. We see this project as a way to educate the community about the benefits of local food, to share resources, and to do our part in building a food secure community.

Continued on page 3...

GreenTree Staff

MANAGEMENT/ BUYING TEAM:

Sarah Christensen
General Manager

Stacy Saul
Grocery Buyer/
Merchandising Manager

Angie Pohlman
Storekeeper Team
Leader/
Wellness Buyer

Liz Busch
Produce Buyer/ Outreach
& Events Coordinator

STOREKEEPERS:

Erin Bialik

Laura Coffee
Graphics & Branding
Coordinator

Christian Colombini
Produce Assistant

Sydne Conant

Josh Johnson

Molly Kampf
Produce Assistant

Mari Potter
Owner Services
Coordinator/ Owner
Worker Coordinator

Grace Rollins
Greenhouse Keeper

Brian Radomski
Welcome to the team!



What's the deal with Parabens?

-By Angela Pohlman, Wellness Buyer and Storekeeper Team-Leader, Co-op Owner



In 2004, a study found parabens in tumors of women with breast cancer. This study created a chain of consumer inquiries and concerns about the safety of the preservatives. Coming out at the height of the Green movement and a general mistrust of chemicals and corporations, this study prompted many organizations and publications put out articles and warnings to consumers about parabens, starting a wave of consumer reactions.

Parabens are listed as one of the “Dirty Dozen” in an article by the *Green Guide* that lists potentially harmful cosmetic ingredients. According to the article, “Parabens, which have weak estrogenic effects, are common preservatives that appear in a wide array of toiletries.”

Consumer reaction caused manufacturers of health and beauty products to begin labeling products if they were paraben free or reformulating to become paraben free.

Chemicals like dioxins and OCPs were once thought to be safe...

In response to consumer inquiry, the Food and Drug Administration reported:

“...the study left several questions unanswered. For example, the study did not show that parabens cause cancer, or that they are harmful in any way, and the study did not look at possible paraben levels in normal tissue.” And; “FDA believes that at the present time there is no reason for consumers to be concerned about the use of cosmetics containing parabens.”

The FDA, the American Cancer Association, and the Breast Cancer Fund all critiqued the study, saying that the study found parabens in the breast tissue of women with breast cancer but did not find out if women without breast cancer had parabens, nor did they determine that the parabens caused cancer.

The Organic Consumers Association had a nice rebuttal to the above critique:

Up to now it was known that parabens could be absorbed from the gastrointestinal tract or the blood, metabolized, and eventually excreted in the urine. But now the presence of intact parabens in tumor tissue shows that these chemicals can not only be absorbed through the skin but can also persist and accumulate in breast cancer tissue in their original form, without being degraded. (when parabens are eaten they are degraded and lose some of their constituents, making them less estrogen-like). This is new information. We do not yet know how long they can persist and what effects they might have.

The OCA article reminds us how chemicals like dioxins and OCPs were once thought to be safe; and only later did we realize that these chemicals bio-accumulate and cause problems. For me, it's enough to know that parabens have been added to the list of chemicals that may accumulate in my body. Whether or not they cause problems is another issue.

Lucky for us, many natural cosmetic companies are already creating paraben free products. The vast majority of the products GreenTree carries are paraben free. Definitely continue to read labels if you are concerned. We'll keep you updated as new information is released.

References:

- ◆ <http://www.thegreenguide.com/personal-care/dirty-dozen/>
- ◆ <http://www.fda.gov/CosmeticsProductandIngredientSafety/SelectedCosmeticIngredients/ucm128042.htm>
- ◆ <http://www.organicconsumers.org/bodycare/breastcancer090604.cfm>

Outreach Continued

GreenTree Co-op is not simply a business, we see ourselves as an integral part of the community. We frequently get requests to support other organizations, events, businesses and people. We'd love to support everyone in their efforts to improve the community we live in. While that is not possible, we were able to support the following in 2009:

2009 Community Association Memberships:

- ◆ Chamber of Commerce
- ◆ Mt. Pleasant Farmers Market
- ◆ Mount Pleasant Discovery Museum Founding Member

2008/2009 Contributions, Donations, 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, Vowles Teacher Appreciation, Mount Pleasant Discovery Museum, Isabella Community Soup Kitchen, Baptist Children's Home, Chippewa Watershed Conservancy, Muscular Dystrophy Association, White Pine Montessori Children's Center

2009 GreenTree Events: After 40 years in the food co-op business we are a source of not only food, but food information and co-op information. In 2009 GreenTree sponsored the following events:

- ◆ Cooking Workshops
- ◆ Annual Membership Meeting
- ◆ Eat Local Mount Pleasant
- ◆ Social Responsibility & Cooperative Business Presentation at CMU
- ◆ Fair Trade Presentation at CMU

2009 Cooperative Association Memberships: Cooperation among cooperatives is one of the cooperative principles. We believe strongly in the cooperative business model and value the relationship with the following co-ops.

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

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Gardening Tips:

Some plants play well together, some don't.

Beans should be planted near: Beets, Broccoli, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Corn, Cucumbers, Eggplant, Peas, Potatoes, Radishes, Squash, Strawberries, Summer savory, Tomatoes

Beans should be planted at least 4 feet away from: Garlic, Onions, Peppers, Sunflowers

Want to know which common veggies grow well together? Get more info here:

<http://www.almanac.com/content/plant-companions-list-ten-common-vegetables>

Cooking Workshop Schedule

Cooking classes are not held during the summer months.

Classes will begin again in the fall. Updated topic and schedule information will be posted on the webpage, in the newsletter, and in the store as soon as it is available.

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

Transforming the Tea Industry:

From Plantations to a Small Farmer Model

By Phyllis Robinson, Equal Exchange Education & Campaigns Manager

A Different Kind of Tea Model

We think the time for change in the tea industry is now, and our tea partners - in India, Sri Lanka, and South Africa - share this conviction. The time of large-scale, colonial-era plantations is over. On a November 2009 trip to Darjeeling, India, a small group from Equal Exchange visited our partners, Tea Promoters of India (TPI), and saw an array of exciting projects that are part of their vision of a transformed tea industry where the farmers are empowered, making decisions, taking risks, building their own businesses and improving their lives and communities.

Small Farmer Co-operatives

Sanjukta Vikas, a dairy co-operative comprised of 450 small farmers, also exports high-quality, organic Fair Trade tea with the technical assistance of a local non-governmental organization, and the processing and marketing assistance of TPI. Walking through the community felt like that mythical Shangri-la of the movies. The village was clean and well maintained; water flowed in abundance; the brightly-painted homes were surrounded by sweet smelling flower gardens, terraced hills, and shaded farms planted with oranges, bananas, onions, garlic, ginger, and turmeric.

We visited farms and spoke with many farmers. The commitment they have made to bio-dynamics, organic farming, and permaculture was clear. Materials are recycled and reused. The farmers displayed a sense of pride and self-assurance. Owning their land affords a stronger sense of investment and control over their business.

Worker-owned Plantations

The Potong Tea Garden, established over 100 years ago by the British, is the story of a plantation repeatedly abandoned, taken over, mismanaged, and abandoned again, until 2005 when the 350 farmers decided to take control, and with the support of TPI, run the estate themselves. 2,500 people now depend on the plantation for their livelihoods, shelter, medical needs and educational services.



Members of the Potong Welfare Committee (which serves as a social council for the members) told us about the economic hardships they suffered during these periods of abandonment: schools were closed, malnutrition was rampant, illnesses abounded and dozens of people died. The committee's president, Sher Bahadur, said, "It was so very, very bad. There was no food in the house. The plantation system was structured in such a way that we were never taught any other means of livelihood. We were 100 percent dependent on the tea plantation. So when the plantation was abandoned, what could we do?"

The government took over the plantation, and in 2005, Potong was auctioned to a Kolkatta unfamiliar with the tea industry. After suffering huge losses, the owners sought out TPI to see if they would consider running the estate. TPI approached the workers, explained the situation and proposed a solution to keep the estate in operation: the workers take over management - and 51% ownership. TPI would purchase 25% of the remaining shares and provide the technical assistance and market support. Like Sanjukta Vikas, the farmers could process their tea at TPI's facilities.

After 45 days of deliberation, the workers agreed and a Management Team was created comprised of farmers, TPI, and representatives of the Kolkatta business which still owns a minority share. "Now we have a new structure and we can work with dignity and for our own development," he said. "We are working for ourselves and no one else. This is our model and if we are successful, then we will have a future."

Nothing Short of Transformation

We believe there is a path toward a small farmer tea model like the ones we saw at Sanjukta Vikas and the Potong Tea Garden: one which paves the way for small farmers to have greater access to the market, affording them more economic power, stronger control, better lives, and healthier communities. There is no reason to accept anything less.

So that's where my food is from...

Whimsey Farm

Whimsey is cultivated by Terrie Blaga.

Terrie considers herself to be more of a gardener than a farmer, and has been growing things since the age of six. She keeps a large garden of unique and heirloom variety plants, pear and walnut trees, and grape vines. And it's not just plants at Whimsey, at present several rescued donkeys and mules, 9 rescued cats, 3 rescued dogs, 27 chickens, and 10 chicks call the place home. And by the time you read this there might be an emu too! Because she is concerned about GMOs the lucky birds are fed only organic chicken feed.



Since 2003, in order to make the most of available space and improve yield, Terrie has set up a box garden. She has combined a variety of methods to do this, including French Intensive Gardening. By planting in a wooden box filled with compost, kelp, and manure combined to create a very nutrient rich soil, you can grow more in a small space. This also cuts back on the amount of weeding you need to do. Weeds can't spread into the bed from surrounding soil, and once the space is filled with mature plants there's no room for them anyway! In order to keep the beds fertile she adds additional compost every year; chicken waste in the fall, and well-rotted compost in the spring. In addition crops are rotated from bed to bed. Plus, because of the height, you can sit on a stool while gardening.



With such a beautiful garden it's only natural to share it with others. Terrie does this by participating in a Farm to School program in Gladwin. Traditionally these programs involve the school purchasing produce from local growers. She doesn't sell produce to the school, but instead donates food to the nutrition classes and works with teachers to organize student tours of her garden. On these tours the students get to taste fruits, vegetables, and herbs fresh from the earth. They also learn where their food comes from, something many of them never before considered.

The Dharma Farm

The Dharma farm is run and tilled by Suseon Kathryn Doran-Fisher, Sukha Ryan Doran-Fisher, Anwen, and Lilia.

What can you do when you live in town but long for a farm? Build one in your backyard! A yard may not sound like the best place for a farm, but it turns out that with some ingenuity and perseverance you can grow a lot of food on 1/10 of an acre. After checking out this impressive transformation, it seems to me that the goal of sustainable farming is as near as our own back yards!



2007: Before

Complete with raised beds, a grape arbor, rotating compost bins, a variety of trellises and supports, and even a little red "barn", the Dharma Farm really demonstrates a marvelous use of limited space. They've managed to create a home for more green and growing things than I have room to mention. In the first year alone they planted three varieties of grapes, tomatoes, peas, beans, potatoes, cabbage, brussels sprouts, onions, herbs, cantaloupes, sweet corn, a wide variety of greens... well, you get the idea. And this year's gardening agenda includes an expanded front yard herb garden as well!



Spring 2009: Goodbye grass, hello garden!



A micro-barn for a micro-farm.

Of course, having been a lawn for many years, the topsoil was in need of a bit of TLC. The first task was to till under the grass, then the soil needed to be fed. So far it has been treated to a mixture of compost, rabbit manure, Sea-90 (a mineral product produced by dehydrating sea water), worm castings, and a combination of kelp and fish emulsion. So there's no need to worry with this produce, chemical fertilizers and pesticides are never used on the Dharma Farm.

If you would like to learn more about the process of transforming a yard into a micro-farm visit: <http://thedharmafarm.com>.



Summer 2009: After



Hey Boo Boo!

Let's Get Us Some Pic-a-nic Baskets!

-By Liz Busch, Produce Buyer, Outreach Coordinator, and Co-op Owner

In the summer my family rarely sees the dining room table. Whether we are sitting at the table in our backyard, a blanket at The Dams, or passing snacks back and forth in our canoe- it just doesn't seem right to eat inside. To enjoy the bounty of summer I like to experiment with fresh new takes on picnic basket favorites like sandwiches and salads. I hope you'll enjoy this recipe and of course create some new tastes of your own with all the delicious local veggies coming our way in the months ahead.

Lunch Box Veggie Delight Sandwich

(This creative sandwich was adapted from betterrecipes.com.)

The peppers can be roasted the night before on your barbeque or in a medium temperature oven on a lightly oiled cookie sheet for about 20 minutes

Ingredients:

- 2 roasted yellow peppers, drained, seeded and sliced
- 1/2 red onion, sliced
- 2 pears, peeled, cored and thinly sliced
- 2 roasted red peppers, drained, seeded, and cut into strips
- 1/4 cup pitted and sliced kalamata olives
- 1 cup arugula
- 3 avocados, peeled, pitted and sliced 1/4 inch thick

Bread mixture:

- 4 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1/4 tsp minced garlic
- 1 tsp chopped oregano
- 1/4 tsp red peppers flakes (or to taste)
- 8 slices wheat or multi-grain bread

Directions:

Whisk together all bread mixture ingredients and lightly brush on 8 bread slices, one side only. Layer sandwich as follows: yellow peppers, onion, pears, red peppers, olives, arugula and avocados. Close sandwich, cut in half, serve.

L o c a l p a l o o z a

And as summer eating winds down you can join us for Localpalooza! We will be launching Eat Local! America, on August 28th from 6pm-Dusk in the Island Park South Pavilion. We will have a local foods pot-luck, on-site CFX Broadcast, outdoor concert and great local organizations will offer prize drawings, samples and more! Want to float to the party while cleaning up the Chippewa River? Buckley's Mountainside Canoes, Materials Recovery Facilities and City Parks and Recreation are helping get a crew of paddlers on the river to clean up one of the most heavily used sections of the Chippewa. Contact liz@greentree.coop for more info about participating as a business, paddler, and or celebrant!

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Island Park South Pavilion
5:30pm-Dusk

Localpalooza

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What is a GMO...

And why are they in my food?

By Laura Coffee, Storekeeper, Graphics and Branding Coordinator, Co-op Owner

In Mt Pleasant, come February or March, you may have found yourself bombarded with displays of seeds and gardening supplies at pretty much every store in town. Spring is the time to start thinking about what to plant in that lovely summer escape known simply as “Your Garden”. But now as all those farms and gardens are starting to show off their stuff, I find myself wondering, where did all those little seeds come from in the first place? Maybe you saved last year’s seeds, bought them at the supermarket, ordered from a catalogue, or purchased a special Organic or Heirloom variety. Maybe you bought starter plants and didn’t use seeds at all. Or maybe you prefer to purchase produce from a farmer, Co-op, or grocery store. No matter where they came from, it’s important to know the story behind your vegetables.

If you’re interested in where your food comes from you’ve probably heard the term GMO (Genetically Modified Organism), GM (Genetically Modified), or GE (Genetically Engineered) before. What you may not know is exactly how the process differs from traditional breeding and hybridization techniques.

Traditional hybrids are created by crossbreeding compatible organisms to pass on desired traits. In other words, one plant’s pollen fertilizes another’s seeds, and the offspring shares traits from both parents. While this is a simple natural process it is also a long one. It can take many generations of crossbreeding to create a stable and reproducible hybrid. In our “agribusiness” culture not everyone is that patient. This is where GMOs come into the picture.

GMOs are produced by artificially inserting new DNA into an existing organism. Because the DNA is inserted directly

it is easier and faster to alter the desired trait. There are two separate types of GMOs, transgenic and cisgenic. Cisgenic organisms only contain DNA from the same species, while they are still genetically engineered they are similar to traditional hybrids in this respect. Transgenic GMOs involve the addition of DNA from completely different species of plants, animals, or sometimes both.

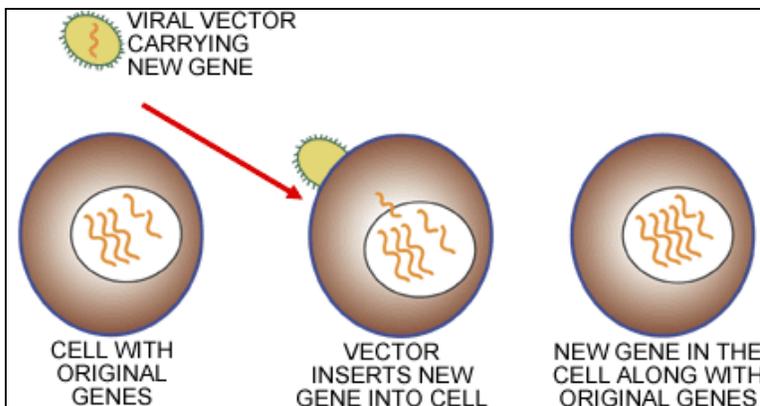
Now these transgenic GMOs present a unique problem. How exactly do you get a tomato seed to accept the DNA of a fish? You have to break in; and nothing is better at breaking into cells than bacteria and viruses. So to get new DNA into a cell geneticists attach a little piece of bacteria or virus. This helps the new DNA to break through the cell’s natural defenses and carry the information into the nucleus. (You can also shoot the DNA into the cell with a Gene Gun, but this technique is not as effective so it is used less often.) The nucleus is where all the genetic information needed to make a new tomato, potato, or fish is stored. So now you have a bit of virus or bacteria hiding inside your cell.

Of course, this doesn’t always work exactly like it is supposed to, so there needs to be a way of checking where that DNA went within the cell, and whether or not it is active. Little bits of DNA can be hard to spot on their own, but this problem can be addressed by adding a marker to the inserted DNA. The marker of choice is usually a gene that confers resistance to an antibiotic or herbicide. Then the cells are incubated along with the antibiotic or herbicide. Only those that contain the new genes and resistant marker will grow, making this an easy way to single out successful gene transfers. Now you have bits of virus or bacteria in a cell that is resistant to an antibiotic or herbicide.

What effect could these GMOs have on our health and our food supply? That’s the question we’ll be addressing in our Fall newsletter. Some of the most commonly voiced concerns include the possibility of increasing antibiotic resistance, virus fragments that can recombine to form new contagions, and unique or increasingly potent allergens. This is an immensely complex issue. (For example: Is a vegetable containing animal DNA still vegetarian?) While I have researched this topic to the best of my abilities there is no substitute for firsthand research. If you want to investigate for yourself, here are some good sources of information:



**Transgenic
GMOs involve
combining DNA
from completely
different species.**



- ◆ <http://www.fda.gov/Food/Biotechnology/default.htm>
- ◆ www.efb-central.org
- ◆ <http://www.saynotogmos.org/>

The Spa Space

The bright summer sun can do peculiar things to skin just coming out of a Michigan winter and spring, so here are a few recipes, courtesy of *Peace in Every Bite*, to help soothe what ails you.



Facial Astringent

- 1 Cup witch hazel
- 15 Drops tea tree oil
- 10 Drops rosemary oil
- 12 Drops lavender
- 7 Drops birch oil (optional)

Shake all ingredients together in a small bottle. Spray or dab on face. This is a great astringent for acne or oily skin conditions.

Aloe-E Sunburn Oil

- 1/4 Cup aloe vera gel
- 1 tsp vitamin E oil
- 10 Drops lavender oil

Shake or mix everything together until well blended, and apply when needed.



Peace in Every Bite, by Two Moons, N.D. is available for purchase at GreenTree Co-op.

A Word From the Board

By Eric Baerren, Board Chair, Co-op Owner

I am, right now, staring at a bowl of food. It's my lunch, and it's the same thing I had for lunch yesterday. If that sounds boring, please be assured that the food is spicy and flavorful. Also, I planned things to work out in precisely this way.



Lunch consists of three basic ingredients. Tofu, brown rice, and a curry simmer sauce.

I realize the sauce contains more than three ingredients, but it came in a jar. If you'd like to find out precisely what's in the curry sauce, you can find the ingredients listed on the jar. It's on the shelves at the Co-op under the label "Bombay Curry Sauce". A jar of it costs about four dollars.

That leads us to the point of this article. I bought the jar of curry simmer sauce last week, while at the same time buying a brick of tofu. That day that I received a letter from the Co-op containing a slip of paper telling me how much I received as a result of my purchases at the store in 2009.

All of you reading this should have received basically the same letter, although probably not for the same total. Some of you purchased more at the Co-op last year, some of you purchased less. What you got back is a percentage of how much you spent. For me, it was 9 or 10 dollars. I can't remember the exact total off the top of my head, and even though I took the unusual step of asking for a receipt so I'd know exactly how much, I have since lost it or used it as a drink coaster or turned it into a shopping list.

I'm not normally a tofu person, but with a rebate in my hand, I went to the Co-op to pick up some tofu to experiment with. I asked a couple of people which tofu to try, and the universal suggestion was to go with the bulk tofu in the produce section. Turns out that it comes from Oryana, one of our fellow Co-ops located in Traverse City.

Anyway, the tofu and the simmering sauce came out to about \$7, which left a couple dollars of my rebate for last year's purchases. I'd like to say that I used it to buy some bulk brown rice, but I'd be lying (of course, how would you know this, dear reader). Truth is that not only do I have bulk brown rice at home, but I had leftover cooked brown rice to use. Instead I used the last two dollars to buy a single beer, a Huma Luma Licious from Short's Brewing Company.

In the end my purchases from last year produced a little less than 10 bucks in our new patronage rebate system, and I used it to buy ingredients for three days' lunches. Talk about saving up for a rainy day!

GreenTree's Current Board Members are:

Eric Baerren: Chair, Michael Brockman: Vice Chair, Wilma Blackman, Lyndsey Chippeway, Talat Halman, Penny Lew, Chris Wiesman: Secretary



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Smokin' Hot Greens

By Erin Bialik, Storekeeper, Co-op Owner



Vegetables are more than just plants; they are delicious meals, tasty morsels, and are packed full of nutrients our bodies need to remain fueled and strong throughout our days! Often these delicacies are the last edition to a meal because many

people are unsure of how to prepare them. Long before becoming vegan I treasured all forms of produce. And when prepared with care veggies can be the perfect main course, a tasty snack, or the most tender of side dishes.

Summer can be the perfect time to experiment with produce. What better way to accent your grilled main dish than with zesty asparagus, corn grilled right in the husk, or summer squash and zucchini tossed with salt and pepper? Talk about fire roasted! By adding your favorite butter or nondairy spread, salt, pepper, cayenne, smoked paprika, thyme, or even oregano, you can make any vegetable a work of art.

And don't forget tofu and the wonders of soy. Marinating tofu in teriyaki sauce, putting it on a skewer, and then roasting over woodsmoke on the fire makes your soy nuggets a taste explosion! Not into teriyaki? How about barbecue sauce or hot sauce? Marinating tofu can be fun, but it's also delicious just to lay slabs of soy on the racks and grill them for that great smoky flavor. The grilled slabs are great for sandwiches or sliced up and thrown into salads, wraps, or even fajitas!

Have you ever had grilled pizza? Roast those veggies, throw them on a crust and grill to perfection. Grilled pizza is one of my favorite dinners! It's a perfect treat for one or a meal for the whole family. Making a grilled pizza could be a great way to get your family involved in dinner.

I hope this inspires all of you to get out there and get grilling. Remember, all those vegetable options take only a few minutes to prepare and a few more to cook over hot coals or a gas flame. Plus, unlike meat, you never have to worry about undercooking veggies. Below I've added a quick curry marinade. Try it out and the next time you're at the co-op let me know how it worked for you!

Curry Vegetable Marinade

(From *The Post Punk Kitchen* at www.ppk.com)

Ingredients:

4 chopped garlic cloves
1 Tbsp olive oil
1 Tbsp wine vinegar
2 - 3 Tbsp soy sauce
1/4 cup water or orange juice
1 Tbsp sugar
1/4 tsp thai chili paste
or red chili paste
2 Tbsp chopped cilantro

Directions:

Combine everything in a bowl. Pour over your choice of vegetables (about 4 cups worth), allow to marinate for as long as you can. Garnish with sesame seeds if desired. Grill on both sides.

Enjoy!

Staff in the Spotlight

Featuring: Christian Colombini, Storekeeper, Produce Assistant, Co-op Owner

Where are you from?

Born in Lansing, raised in Traverse City. All my family is in New York though, so I feel more like a New Yorker than a Michigander sometimes.



How did you first find the Co-op?

A lot of my friends are former employees of GreenTree. I suppose when they left I kind of used GreenTree as a way to fill in the gap. Now it's my life.

What is the best part of your job?

Playing with produce, dancing jigs, interacting with local farmers.

Do you like to cook?

Love to! Especially for people I care about. Feel free to ask me for advice!

Describe your perfect breakfast.

2 eggs over easy, whole wheat toast, bowl of muesli w/ fresh fruit, orange juice, 1/2 grapefruit, and a glass of Hilhof whole milk. I could literally eat this every day.

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

Ride my bike down to the river with my mandolin and just sit and strum by the banks.

Tell us something about yourself others might not know.

I can play 9 different instruments, and the list is always growing.

Where are some of your favorite travel destinations?

Yucatan Peninsula, Mexico. I studied abroad there and got to see Mayan ruins and las piramides. Very cool!

What are your hobbies?

Music is my life, but I also love to exercise a lot, like bicycling and studying martial arts (Kuntaw, Tang Soo Do).

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

It's always something different, but right now it's City and Colour, Bela Fleck, My Dear Disco, and Dr. Horrible's Sing-a-long blog.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

I am currently working on a musical all about life in a cooperative grocery that's appropriately titled "The Co-opera". If that's a huge success who knows where I'll end up? Seriously though, I see myself teaching/composing music somewhere. Not sure where yet.





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Locally Grown

Community Owned

Tales of the Strange but Edible



Have you ever seen something like this growing in your garden? We've all seen them, strange looking vegetables with bumps and lumps, sometimes they even look like people or animals. Any number of things can cause these weird veggies, obstacles in the soil, soil composition, and weather patterns are just a few.

Some people even grow them in molds! Well the next time you see one get out the camera! This growing season when you step into the garden and find that some of your produce is oddly shaped, strangely colored, gargantuan or tiny take a picture of the bizarre beet or strange squash and send it to laura@greentree.coop. It may be featured in a future newsletter or e-news!

Making carrot sticks just got easier.

Hey Kids? Are you a Green Sprout yet?

Membership in the new GreenTree Green Sprouts is free and fun! Sign up today and start getting a free piece of fruit every time you shop in the store. We also have membership cards, birthday greetings, and a special drop-in activity the third Saturday of the month from 2-5pm. Here you can see some of the great art produced at May's outdoor painting event.

