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December:

5 Owner Appreciation Day
16 Board Meeting
24 Open 9am -3pm
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31 Open 9am -3pm

January:

1 Closed
2 Owner Appreciation Day
20 Board Meeting

February:

6 Owner Appreciation Day
17 Board Meeting

The Co-op Scoop

Sarah Christensen,
GreenTree Co-op Owner, General Manager



It is hard to believe 2009 is nearly over. For many of us we'll spend the next two months celebrating and giving thanks for the many blessings we've experienced this year. As a business we'll do something similar.

We'll take a look at all that we've done in 2009:

- We accomplished a store wide reset.
- We updated equipment.
- We continued to build strong relationships with local farmers and producers.
- We had record breaking attendance at our Annual Owner Meeting.
- We helped launch the Mt. Pleasant Food Project.

But we won't stop with the just the accomplishments, we will take a critical look at our failures as well. We'll use both to make plans for 2010.

In 2008 the GreenTree Board of Directors revised our mission statement: *GreenTree Cooperative Grocery empowers people and celebrates community through food and cooperative principles.* It was the first step in amending what are known as *Ends Policies*. GreenTree's Ends Policies include our Values, Mission, Vision, and Annual Goals. These policies are the avenue the Board uses to accomplish what they believe the Owners of GreenTree want. How do they know what you want? As of today, we are a community of 669 Owners and growing daily. Do we all want the same thing from the Co-op or for the Co-op? Do we have the same values, interests, tastes? I am sure it's obvious, but the answer is no. So how can the Board as the Owners' representatives create policies that reflect a diverse and growing Ownership? They need input.

This year at the Annual Owner Meeting we did an activity in which each attendee got 3 stars. Around the pavilion we had poster boards with ideas about potential areas of focus that the Board generated from some of its visioning work. Owners were asked to star the three things they felt were most important for the Co-op to focus on. There were four categories of ideas: 1) Governance, Management, & Ownership, 2) Education & Community Building, 3) Physical Location, and 4) Products & Services. We had over 150 people attend our meeting this year. The following is a list of the top scoring items in each category. Check them out and then let us know what you think.

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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:

Bobby Bates

Erin Bialik

Welcome to the team!

Laura Coffee

Graphics & Branding
Coordinator

Christian Colombini

Produce Assistant

Josh Johnson

Molly Kampf

Produce Assistant
Welcome to the team!

Mari Potter

Owner Services Coordinator/
Owner Worker Coordinator

Grace Rollins

Greenhouse Keeper



Don't Panic



The Holiday Season is a very busy time of year, whether you celebrate actively, or just find yourself surrounded by the general hustle and bustle. It's easy to get overwhelmed by the food, the socializing, family obligations, shopping, and the minutia of organizing it all. It's at times like this that I'm reminded of a book with large comforting letters on the cover; they read, "Don't Panic." And really, there is no need to panic. Planning, organizing, and attending these yearly celebrations should be a joy, not a chore. As always, GreenTree is here to help.

To begin with, we carry all the holiday staples, from pumpkin to cranberries, and turkey to tofurky! You'll find pie crusts and pies, stuffing, sweet potatoes, and fresh veggies. Bulk herbs and spices can add an inexpensive kick to anything you make. Do you have a favorite item we don't normally carry? Put in a product request or special order a case. Not sure what to cook, or just want a new side to set off the old favorites? Check out the GreenTree Recipe board, you will find suggestions for classic dishes as well as new twists on seasonal items. And if you have a vegan or vegetarian coming for dinner, just ask a Storekeeper for suggestions. We can show you easy substitutions for meat and dairy items, or direct you to the best cookbook for trickier recipes. Even if you aren't planning a special meal, now is a great time to check out sales and stock up on seasonal treats.

Don't forget to feed yourself too. When things get hectic it's easy to miss a meal, but that can leave you feeling run down and irritable. Carry healthy snacks like nuts or dried fruit in your car, backpack, or purse for a quick pick me up. Or if you find yourself pressed for time, grab a cup of soup and a roll from GreenTree's new soup station!

And the Co-op can help you find more than just food. We also carry all the cleaning products you might need to get your home ready for visitors, and a wide selection of gift items. You've probably seen our beautiful World of Good products, including jewelry, kitchen items, bags, and scarves, but did you know we also carry handmade hats and gloves from Nepal? Michigan made beeswax candles? Or Maggie's socks and scarves made from Organic cotton and wool? Do you know someone who's been eyeing a Kleen Kanteen or Laptop Luchbox? Our natural, Fair Trade, and local bath and body products also make great gifts. When you purchase responsibly made items like these, you can be secure in the knowledge that the gifts you give will provide happiness to both the recipient and the producer! And if you find yourself asking, "What can I give to someone who has everything?" the answer is simple. Food of course! Who wouldn't appreciate a beautiful bottle of olive oil, or some Fair Trade chocolate? And if you want to dress it up a bit, put it all in a lovely African Market Basket. We've got something for everyone!

Of course, there's more to this time of year than just eating and shopping. For many of us, it's an excellent opportunity to visit with people we care about. Spending time together can be the perfect occasion to go on a group outing. Though Mt. Pleasant is a small city, there are many fun (and family friendly) events going on all the time. You can find out about many of them by visiting www.mountpleasantwv.com. Or check out the GreenTree Community board, which often covers many smaller local events that don't always make it onto the webpage. Whatever you decide to do, I hope you'll take advantage of the chance to make a connection and enjoy each other's company.

So while Greentree is doing it's best to help your celebrations go smoothly, don't forget to do a little something for yourself. Find a quiet corner, take a deep breath, and recharge for a moment. Savor some hot tea, coffee, cocoa, or cider, drink a toast to the people you love. Remember, this is supposed to be fun! And whatever you do, Don't Panic.

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

Hungry?

Let's Cook, Let's Eat!

Cooking Workshop Schedule

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

Wednesday, January 20, 2010, 6-8 p.m.
Heart Healthy Homemade Valentines!

Wednesday, February 17, 2010, 6-8 p.m.
The Gluten Free Lunchbox

Wednesday, March 17, 2010, 6-8 p.m.
Vegan World Tour

*Classes are free and will be held at the
7th Generation Program's
New Kitchen at*

*7957 East Remus Rd.
in Mt. Pleasant.*

Space is limited.

*Please call GreenTree to
register: 989-772-3221*



Moosewood Soups



And Stonehouse Rolls



Make for a quick and tasty lunch!

Moosewood comes to the Co-op!

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

The soup's on here at GreenTree! We are now serving up soup; made by the famous Moosewood Restaurant. For over thirty-five years, Moosewood has been cooking up innovative and tasty vegetarian food. The soups are all organic, delicious, and healthful. We are offering ten different flavors, six of which are vegan! We will have two different flavors each day, steaming hot and ready to eat. Let us know which is your favorite! Stonehouse Rolls are available for just 49 cents each. And at about \$3.95 a pound you can get as much or as little as you want, it's a great deal!

Moosewood Organic Soups:

- ◆ Tuscan White Bean and Vegetable (Vegan)
- ◆ Hearty Mushroom Barley (Vegan)
- ◆ Tibetan Curried Lentil (Vegan)
- ◆ Texas Two Bean Chili (Vegan)
- ◆ Potato and Corn Chowder
- ◆ Creamy Broccoli and Cheese
- ◆ Hungarian Vegetable Soup
- ◆ Mediterranean Tomato and Rice (Vegan)
- ◆ Savannah Sweet Potato Bisque
- ◆ Moroccan Stew (Vegan)



On the go, for lunch or dinner, we've got it!

Are you interested in making your own soup? We have two of the Moosewood Restaurant cookbooks available for purchase. We carry "The New Moosewood Cookbook", which has the recipes for the Mushroom Barley soup and the Cream of Broccoli soup. My favorite recipe in the book is the White Bean and Black Olive soup. I have used this recipe for years and it's always a crowd pleaser! We also carry "The Moosewood Restaurant Cooks at Home", which includes 19 more great soups. Maybe one of them will be your new favorite!

Take a Lesson from the Squirrels.



Something I have learned about Michigan in the winter time is you need to have a lot of acorns put aside. I don't mean literal acorns, I mean the little reminders of joy, warmth and sunlight that will help get us through the winter ahead. This time of year when we are experiencing the last few warmish days of 2009 we need to pack up these little acorns to be pulled out when we need them. In the depth of winter they are sometimes hard to remember.

That is why this year I am making a list of my acorns so I won't forget the goodies I have put aside. Here are a few items on my list:

- 1) Take the time to make a really good meal - and enjoy it. I am a true foodie and rarely give myself a chance to make a really special meal. With three little kids, all very good eaters, but each with their own likes and dislikes, I often have to sacrifice what I would like to eat in favor of something everybody will eat. For the last few years I've made a ritual of making myself a special meal one night a week after my kids go to bed. I look forward to it and plan it throughout the week, and it really carries me through the often dreary weeks of Michigan winter.
- 2) Get out and about! I am a very outdoorsy person but I often find myself making excuses to not go out in winter. Too many clothes to layer on, kids need me, floor needs sweeping, tooth-brushes need organizing. Enough already! I know I will feel better if I just get up and do it, and I can bring the kids with me!
- 3) Tend to my houseplants. I unfortunately don't have a lot of good window light in my house so my houseplants sometimes need extra TLC. I like to move them into my kitchen and re-pot them. The soil feels so good on my hands and they appreciate a good trim and aeration of the soil. My spider plant and philodendron also give good cuttings which makes for more green things around the house!

Perhaps the most important acorn you can put away is to remember you are not alone. My first winter in Mount Pleasant, five years ago, I felt like no one got out of their cars or even looked me in the eye. Never underestimate the power of calling a friend and inviting them over for a meal, tea, wine, a snowy hike or plant cuttings. You might just remind them that they are not alone by sharing one of your acorns with them.

My first winter in Mount Pleasant, and in fact every season since, I have found a real acorn in GreenTree. Even before I worked here and even on my days off I gravitate here for warm natural smells, the vibrant colors of produce, the fun ideas for meals, now hot organic soup, and of course the friendly faces. Whatever list of acorns you keep to help you this winter, be it yoga, painting, hiking or organizing toothbrushes, keep GreenTree at the top of your list and we will share our acorns with you.

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

Roasted Root Vegetables

(Adapted from bigoven.com)

In Michigan, we have a variety of root vegetables available year round, not just potatoes. So why not be a little adventurous and try them all!



- ◆ 4 lbs of rutabagas, parsnips, carrots, sweet potatoes or other root vegetables
- ◆ 1 large shallot
- ◆ 1 large leek
- ◆ 4 cloves garlic (or more)
- ◆ ¼ cup olive oil
- ◆ salt and pepper to taste (coarse salt and pepper work best for this recipe)
- ◆ 2 tsp rosemary
- ◆ 1 tsp thyme

Or try your own favorite herb combination!

Pre-heat oven to 425°. Peel and chop vegetables into approximately 1" cubes and coarsely chop shallot, garlic and leek. Toss vegetables in the olive oil and sprinkle salt and pepper on top. Place in shallow baking dish and roast for approximately 40 minutes, checking and stirring occasionally until vegetables are slightly browned and soft. Herbs should be stirred in near the last five minutes of baking so the flavor is infused without burning. Serve hot, but this dish very successfully reheats.

A Healthy, Viable Holiday

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



The holidays are usually a time when people splurge on food that they wouldn't normally eat. The whole time you are forking in those unwanted ingredients, part of your brain reminds you of all the horrible consequences

that await you; the long visits to the bathroom, the acid reflux, the bloating, the headaches, the guilt.

Not this year! We will head off temptation with a little planning. Let's eat ourselves stupid with food we can feel good about!

Before the holiday of your choice (or your family's choice): Make a list of all of the expected foods that give you trouble or that you would rather not eat. What is important to you? Allergen free? Cholesterol? Fiber? ORAC rating? Really sit down and go through the whole meal in your head, even call family members and ask what they are bringing. Ask if they can set you aside a portion of the potatoes without the butter, salt or milk; or salad without the bacon, cheese, or oil based dressing. Offer to make something!

Create a menu with replacement foods and make enough to share! Be realistic, Uncle Bill - who lives on venison and potatoes - is probably not going to be interested in a quinoa pumpkin paella, so reconsider doubling the recipe. Either way, offer some to him! People are full of surprises.

Are you worried that if you create a meal that is ok for you that others will not like it? There are amazing recipes for all dietary needs and all cooking skill-levels out there. At GreenTree, we have plenty of cookbooks to choose from and a knowledgeable, helpful staff with lots of eating and cooking experience! The internet is a wonderful resource with a zillion foodies sharing their recipes and experiences. There are even a few cookbooks out there, like *Deceptively Delicious*, that sneak healthy food into recipes to get your kids eating better. There is nothing that says the same trick won't work on Grandpa.

Concerned about spending too much? Shop our bulk department and dust off that old crock pot or bread machine. Food from scratch can be time consuming, but very inexpensive. Make a Seitan "Turkey" Roast instead of buying a Tofurky Feast (Less than a quarter of the price!). Budget! Replace expensive ingredients with comparable ones, cut the recipe in half, or choose a different recipe.

Plan on partaking of a little something that is not ideal, and stick to your portion; like one (just one!) of Grandma's springerle cookies, or two tablespoons of Aunt Debbie's whipped cream on a two finger slice of Cousin Katie's first attempt at an apple pie.

The day of: Do not skip meals! Eat as normally as possible; otherwise it could be hard to not overeat during the main event.

You know better than anyone what a comfortable portion size is for you. Grab a smaller plate, fill it with your good choices first. Wait about 15 minutes before refilling your plate, just to make sure you are still hungry. Bring a storage container and take some home for another meal. Offer to help put away food! It's easier to stop eating if it is not staring at you.

Bring small things that make a meal special: How many times have you decided to eat dairy because you didn't have an alternative? Or you choked down your bland potatoes because you forgot your salt free Spike? This year, bring your accoutrements with you! Your butter or salt alternative, non-dairy creamer for your chicory tea, or a few slices of gluten free bread.

Be ready with remedies. Slipping up may happen. Not a big deal! Bring some ginger or peppermint tea, digestive enzymes, Nux Vomica, or aloe juice—what ever works for you.

Lots of leftovers? Freeze them. Put them in storage bags in reasonable portion sizes with the date and name of the food. Give food to your neighbor or family. Multiple visits? Don't feel like you have to eat at each household. Bring a storage container if you need to, and take some home.

Forget the guilt. The holidays are about love and friendship (just like Harry Potter), do what you need to do to stay in the zone. I admit that I am the kind of person who makes food to express my feelings for people. As much as I like to see folks eating themselves into a coma with my wares, what is more important to me is to see folks enjoy the meal and be honest with me about their needs. Your health and comfort are more important.



Please don't feel like you need to overeat to prove your love for me, or anyone else.

A Word From the Board

When Robert F. Kennedy Jr. spoke on the campus of Central Michigan University in the middle of November, someone asked him what he thinks people can do to help make this a better planet. His answer was very simple ... get involved. He went a bit further than that. He told the student that she should do more than just support good politicians, but that she should run for office herself. And, then he rattled off a list of local boards that require good people and that have local impact.

I bring this up because before you know it, the snows of winter will have cleared away and it will be May, the month of GreenTree's Annual Owner Meeting. At that meeting, in addition to getting together for some socializing, we select new members of the Board and vote on changes to the Co-op's bylaws. It's a very small, yet very personal, expression of democracy.

Primarily, the Board is an oversight body, keeping an eye on how the store is managed and providing the store staff with an overall direction of where the Ownership wants its Co-op to move. You don't get to walk into the store and order Storekeepers where to put the whole wheat spaghetti, but you do get to have a say in what role you think GreenTree should play in the local community.

Today, with a growing emphasis on local and regional food networks, this is especially important. GreenTree is not just a store, and it is not just a Co-op that once was a buying club. It is a part of a growing worldwide movement in the realization of what food is and where it comes from. You take part in that movement each time you go to the store and buy a local or a Michigan product. You can take a more active role in that movement by volunteering to serve on the Board or just simply showing up to Board meetings.

Almost half a year out may feel a bit early to begin discussing this kind of stuff. Well, the time line for Board elections starts in late winter, so time is shorter than you may think. Plus, it's always a good time to take an interest in the world around you.

The Co-op Scoop (Continued from page 1)

Education & Community Building

- GreenTree sponsored programs i.e. Mt. Pleasant Food Project
- Classes about food, cooking, and co-op ownership

Products & Services

- Focus on local products, organic or not
- Deli
- More bulk food

Physical Location

- New site, Downtown/Anywhere
- Invest in energy efficiency
- Sustainable growth (no debt)

Governance, Management, & Ownership

- Implement a living wage model
- Employee Retention
- Owner linkage (support ways for owners to connect with one another i.e. blogs, online community board)
- Financial stability

The board intends to use this information to continue its revision of our Ends Policies. The Management Team will also use the information in our 2010 Business Plan. Be sure that your input is part of the picture. Join us at the Board meeting the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 6pm at Max & Emily's. You can also send us an email sarah@greentree.coop or board@greentree.coop.

The Spa Space

Stressed? Try one of these delightfully decadent recipes and relax yourself happy!

Relaxing Massage Oil



- 12 drops ylang ylang oil
- 6 drops lavender oil
- 6 drops bergamot
- 1/4 C. almond oil

Mix all ingredients in a small jar or container.

Gentle Eye Oil

(For the skin around the eyes)

- 1 tsp. wheat germ or almond oil
- 1 drop lavender oil
- 1 drop lemon oil



Mix together well and apply at bedtime to the tender skin around the eyes.

Relaxing Bath Salts



- 1/2 C. sea salt (or Epsom salts)
- 1 TB. Baking soda
- 1 TB. Borax
- (Or 1 additional TB. Baking Soda)

1/4-1/2 tsp. lavender oil or your favorite essential oil

Mix Dry ingredients first, then add oil. Store in a zip lock bag or airtight container.

VARIATIONS: Invigorating Bath salts—
Use peppermint oil instead of Lavender

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A note of caution: Some people are very sensitive to essential oils. Always be sure to test a small amount of oil on the inner elbow several hours prior to product application. If irritation develops, do not use the product.

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All these wonderful recipes, and more, can be found in (or were adapted from) the book "**Peace in Every Bite**" by Two Moons, N.D., available at GreenTree.

Slow Food

(Courtesy of the NCGA News Service)

"Make in only ten minutes!"

"Eat on the go!"

"Get out of the kitchen fast!"



These are the kinds of promises designed to sell food—fast food. What kind of a transformation would occur—in our lifestyles, our communities, and the earth—if we changed our relationship with food, if we focused on food as physical and spiritual nourishment? If we savored every bite, eating would no longer be simple refueling. If we considered cooking an art and a source of fulfillment, it would cease to be drudgery. When others cooked for us—or when we picked up quality food at our local co-op—we would be truly grateful. And as we paid attention to the processes that bring food to our tables, we would take care to respect both the land and its farmers. Our approach to what we eat would be the opposite of that promoted by commercial fast-food providers.

These concepts are at the core of the Slow Food Movement, which embraces a love of food and a respect for the environment. An educational and activist organization, the Slow Food Movement was born in 1986 out of concern about how the taste of food becomes standardized by its industrialization. It now has 80,000 members in over 100 countries.

The Slow Food Movement is a back-to-the-kitchen movement that extends to global issues. It includes the person taking the time to knead dough or simmer a homemade soup in her home as well as the one frequenting the local organic restaurant and the lobbyist fighting for the rights of the family farmer. It's built upon an awareness of food as enjoyment, sustenance and unparalleled importance. By approaching our food with awareness, we play a crucial role in its production. In fact, according to SlowFood USA, we are not consumers of food, but co-producers, "because by being informed about how our food is produced and actively supporting those who produce it, we become a part of it and a partner in the production process."

Important issues to the Movement include:

- **Environmental sustainability.** The Slow Food Movement underlines the risks of agribusiness, factory farms, genetic engineering, monoculture, and pesticides—risks like depletion of the soil, pollution of the air and water, and the loss of family farms and rural communities. Slow Food supports the small family farmer as well as small-scale gardening. (Many chapters have programs that teach children gardening.)
- **Good food.** Industrial food production does not yield the most nutritious, delicious, or life-enhancing foods. The Slow Food Movement celebrates artisan foods (like beautifully crafted breads and farmstead cheeses) the culinary arts (how to cook, not quickly, but skillfully), and seasonal celebrations of local foods and traditions (like an autumn harvest community potluck and the sharing of heirloom varieties of produce).
- **Local foods.** Foods that don't travel a long distance from farm to plate are more nutritious and delicious than those that are shipped across the country to the grocer's shelves and our tables. Eating locally produced food respects and supports our communities, the small family farm, traditional ways of growing food, and the concept of seasonal availability.

- **Fair food.** When we think about how the food that we eat has been produced, we learn to care about fair wages and good living conditions for the farmer and farm workers. Ensuring that no one was exploited in the production of our food is a crucial component to the responsible enjoyment of it.

Whether you're eager to commit to more time in the kitchen or are more likely to switch restaurants in order to enjoy slow food, there are plenty of opportunities to become part of the movement:

- **Buy local food.** Food cooperatives have long supported local food producers. Farmer's markets are another excellent source. Get to know your local farmers and support their endeavors.
- **Support restaurants that purchase local food and that celebrate local traditions.**
- **Pay more for quality food, if necessary.** Sometimes it costs more to produce food that isn't commercialized. Be willing to invest in the cause.
- **Host a community potluck or dinner in celebration of good foods.**
- **Support your local food cooperative,** where you'll find healthful choices as well as opportunities to explore food issues.
- **Grow some of your own food** -- whether in a container on your back steps or on your acreage. Teach your children—and/or neighborhood children—to garden.
- **Look into the history of the food you eat;** make sure all the people involved in producing it were treated fairly.
- **Take classes.** Learn to cook healthful fare and/or local cuisine, how to bake bread, grow spring greens, or can pickles or preserves.
- **Learn more about the Slow Food Movement.** Visit: www.SlowFood.com; www.SlowFoodUSA.org; and www.Terramadre.org (a world meeting of food communities).
- **Join a Slow Food Group, or start your own.** Local chapters of Slow Food exist across the country, and they hold tastings, dinners, potlucks and other events. They support local gardeners and farmers and are also involved in national and international issues of importance to food producers. Your food cooperative is a good place to meet fellow Slow Food members.
- **Commit to at least one leisurely, enjoyable meal each day**—whether it's at the family dinner table or a community potluck. Eat thoughtfully and appreciatively.

Once we change our relationship with food, it's easy to incorporate the same kind of changes in other aspects of our day. We learn to appreciate the things that truly sustain us, and we experience that faster isn't better when it comes to most rhythms of life.





214 N. FRANKLIN AVE.
MT PLEASANT, MI 48858

WWW.GREENTREE.COOP

Locally Grown

Community Owned

Give the Gift of Groceries



Even when someone you know doesn't seem to need anything, they still need to eat! Co-op gift cards are available in any denomination you choose. They can be used to purchase products from any of our departments: Grocery, produce, frozen, bulk, supplements, personal care, general merchandise, and even pet items! With a gift card, you know it will be appreciated, because the person receiving it can pick out exactly what they want!