

BLUE HILL FOOD CO-OP

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BLUE HILL CO-OP NEWS

DECEMBER 2007 / JANUARY 2008

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Blue Hill Co-op Mission Statement

Through a thriving cooperative enterprise, we encourage a vibrant healthy community and a sustainable local economy.

President's Letter

One of the Blue Hill Food Co-op's new objectives, or intentions, asks that our store provide the Blue Hill peninsula with a retail source of food that is fairly priced, healthy, organically grown, and/or processed locally to the fullest extent possible. This is not meant to be a kind of all-encompassing fundamentalist statement declaring that every single item in the store meets all of these criteria – rather, it is an idea intended to serve as a guidepost, or lodestar, a horizon to steer towards. Each of these individual categories – healthy, local, organic--are open to debate and highly individual interpretation. But in studying this together as a Board, we noted that for our store, and our community, the real bugaboo in this vision lies in the phrase “to the fullest extent possible.” It is this phrase that has the potential to create challenge, or at the least, impatience, among us as we move into the future.

While it might seem tempting to reject the degree of complexity we've arrived at, both in the store and in our organization, increasing complexity is a natural process, even ecological, just as trees are more complex than ferns, or teenagers more complex than infants. Having a buying club or home-schooling a small family entails simpler organizational decision-making than does creating a thriving alternative school or vibrant retail food outlet, but collaborating together to form schools and stores adds to the community in ways that acting alone just doesn't. One of the outcomes of organizational complexity is the healthy creation of good jobs, something that can be seen here at the Co-op, at MOFGA, and at the Bay School. Healthy organizations benefit communities, and make places like this peninsula very desirable places to live.

Nationally, food cooperatives are collaborating more than ever before, shar-

Continued on next page

President's Letter *Continued from page 1*

ing among themselves what works and what doesn't. (Just so you know we're not comparing apples and oranges, our Co-op is part of a study group of a dozen or so similarly sized stores in other small communities.) Some of you may suspect that this collaboration is driving up costs, but for those of us who think daily and deeply about food distribution, the risks entailed in sharing what we've learned far outweigh the risks of going it alone.

My personal definition of elegance is the equipoise of simplicity and complexity, and I love noticing how this plays out everywhere – in music, in relationships, in the sky – and it is my hope that together, we can find elegant solutions to the challenges ahead. For there will be challenges—change is inevitable, and change is in the Co-op's future just as it's woven throughout our past. We began our journey on Feb. 2, 1979, when we incorporated as a consumer cooperative in the state of Maine. Essentially, back then we were in the business of importing food into Maine, bulk grains, beans, cheese, and other products that couldn't be bought at the local supermarkets. This is still a very big part of what we do today, but it is inevitable that the cost of food imported from distant places will go up; co-ops across the nation are now buying together to contain costs as much as possible, something supermarkets started doing decades ago, but this will only buy a little more time, several more years if we're lucky. As the cost of these imported items rises, (which will be happening at all stores, not only at the Co-op), we will need to make informed personal choices about not only what we buy, but how we live. If, one by one, we're willing to spend more of our food dollars locally, we'll enable more local farmers to survive, and encourage

more of our young people to shoulder the hard work of career farming. All fingers point to a future of regional, and local agriculture. Yet there is no simple or easy way to quickly, or fully, shift our business overnight in this direction. As we make these changes, we'll need to foster a sense of equilibrium, cooperation, and financial composure in our business, also to the fullest extent possible. Just as in yoga, full extension is best reached through attentive, kind, gradual, and persistent stretching toward our objective.

As your Board, a big part of our assignment is listening to and learning from you, the owner-members. We find there is a surprising amount of diversity in our membership, not, in this neck of the woods, a diversity of ethnicity, but nonetheless a healthy multiplicity of tastes, means, ages, opinions, inclinations, temperaments, politics, and eating preferences. Just as this kind of diversity is prolific throughout nature, and thought highly desirable in seed banks, not to mention in art and literature, we think it's also a very good thing to see in our membership. The challenge for all of us then, is to build tolerance, and consensus within that diversity, without forsaking the courage of our convictions. It takes time to bring everyone along. As people who chose to join a food co-op, what we all seem to share, and agree upon, is our love and appreciation of good food.

As someone who has invested a great deal of time and energy in our Co-op, I sometimes find myself worrying about her in the wee hours. On those nights I lull myself back to sleep by asking: "May our Co-op be safe and protected from harm; may she be peaceful and happy in her heart; may she be healthy and strong in her body; may she experience ease in her being."

Wholeheartedly wishing all of you a joyous and fulfilling holiday season with loved ones,

—Gail Bartlett

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Notice of Board Meetings

The Co-op Board meets on the third Tuesday of each month from 6:30 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. The meetings will be held in the Howard Room at the Blue Hill Public Library. They are open to the membership. The next Co-op Board meetings will be held on Tues, Dec. 18th & Tues, Jan. 15th.

Co-op Board Officers & Members:

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<i>Vice President</i>	Deborah Wiggs
<i>Treasurer</i>	Bob Sullivan
<i>Secretary</i>	Erich Reed

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Catherine Princell, Jennifer Traub,
Allison Watters

*Newsletter articles do not necessarily
reflect the opinions of the Board, staff,
management, or Newsletter Team.*

General Manager:

Karen Doherty

Store Hours

Mon - Fri 8 am to 7 pm;
Sat 8 am to 6 pm; Sun 9 am to 5 pm
374-2165

Letters to the Newsletter

The Newsletter Team welcomes input. If you have something you'd like to share with other Co-op member-owners, please send a letter to: Letters to the Editor, Blue Hill Co-op Community Market, PO Box 1133, Blue Hill, ME 04614, or send an e-mail to maureenfarr@verizon.net. Letters may be edited for style, not content; and should be brief. Please include your name, address and daytime phone number.

Hello Co-op Owners!

Things are falling into place all the time...that's how it feels to work at the Co-op...it's satisfying...and there's always more to be done!

We are continuously working towards creating or improving systems in just about every aspect of operations, from equipment maintenance to inventory...and every little (or big) thing in between. Once a good system is in place it can be easily repeated and creates uniformity and clarity when it comes to particular tasks, leading to more efficient store operations, happier staff people, and happier shoppers.

I have recently been working on getting our POS (cash register) systems updated with new data from our major distributors, making the task of updating prices each month much, much easier! This was a huge and time consuming endeavor but now that it's done I can move on to other tasks.

A constant personal goal I have as General Manager is freeing up my time to work on the "bigger picture" stuff, which is very exciting and especially crucial if we are going to move forward with exploration into relocating the Co-op.

Please keep in mind that I am always looking for ideas and direction from you, the owners. What do you want your Co-op and your community to look like 25, 50, a hundred years from now? How can we contribute to the further development of local food systems, ensuring availability in these tenuous times? Keep those cards and letters coming! Here's one idea that has recently come to light:

As you know, the Co-op is always looking for ways to promote and support local agriculture. Are you a farmer who uses organic feeds for your farm animals? The Co-op is considering becoming a distribution

center where local farmers can purchase organic feeds. If we could offer really competitive pricing and you agreed to pick up your feed on the day of delivery, the Co-op would love to participate in helping farms have easy access to quality organic feeds. Please call the Co-op if you are interested, and if we get enough calls we will pursue this option!

In other news, we have decided to go back to the old way of doing inventory; taking it after hours and doing it ourselves as opposed to having an inventory company come in during hours of operation. This will give us reassurance that our numbers and departments are as accurate as they can possibly be.

If you are interested in getting your working-owner hours in by helping with inventory, call our Owner Coordinator Ruth at the Co-op (374-2165) and she can help you sign up. Next inventory is Dec 29th at 6 pm. And yes...we could really use your help!

Please note the Co-op WILL have fresh turkeys from The Turkey Farm in New Sharon, Maine available for pre-order. Sign up at the register to reserve yours! Delivery to the Co-op is set for Friday Dec 21st.

And I want to leave you with one last tidbit of information:
www.catalogchoice.org!

That's the website I want to shout from the rooftops these days. If you are getting WAY too many catalogs in the mail, go to this website and you can stop the endless flow and save so many trees!

It's so easy; just rip off the back covers of your catalogs before tossing them in the recycling bin, sit by a computer for a few minutes at a time to select those companies on the catalogchoice.org website, and you will find in several weeks that you will no longer be getting the catalogs you don't want.

I learned about the website when I saw it's founder interviewed on Bill Moyers' PBS show, it is legit and

backed by many well-known environmental organizations. Over eight million tons

of trees are consumed each year in the production of paper catalogs, and I'd guess most of them end up in the recycling bin without ever being opened.

Have a safe and wonderful winter...let's hope for lots of beautiful fluffy snow to ski on, lots of warm winter evenings with our families by our firesides, and Peace in the coming year!

—Karen Doherty


MANAGER'S LETTER

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Microwaving the Holidays, plus Health Notes

I had thought to write about the madness of microwaving organic, or any, food, and, after hours of websearch, have found very interesting gaps in info. Industry says jolly fine, no problem, convenient and safe. Holistic sites either quote or plagiarize an April 1994 Acres, USA article, called "The Hidden Hazards of Microwave Cooking," by authors of unknown competence.

www.all-natural.com/microwa1.html
The article is fast and furious with conclusions. Snopes points out discrepancies.

So, 90% of US households are said to be using microwave ovens, and studies are notable by their absence regarding effects on nutrients at the molecular level, and more subtly, on the life force of food. Regulatory agencies apparently supervise the proper fitting of microwave doors, but not the food then eaten.

The Townsend Letter (for MD's and interested lay persons) addresses two of the studies mentioned in the Acres, USA piece:

"In 1992, Swiss biologist Dr. Hans U. Hertel and Bernard H. Blanc of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology and the University Institute for Biochemistry released the results of a small study on the effects of microwaved food on humans. [snip] The blood samples taken after the consumption of microwaved food showed significant changes in hemoglobin values, cholesterol, and lymphocytes."

Disturbed by the findings, the researchers called for larger studies into the effect of microwaved food. Instead, industry attacked. A trade organization representing microwave manufacturers went to court, seeking a "gag order" against Hertel and Blanc. Blanc

recanted. Hertel did not, and in March 1993, the court prohibited Dr. Hertel "from declaring that food prepared in the microwave oven shall be dangerous to health and lead to changes in the blood of consumers, giving reference to pathologic troubles as also indicative for the beginning of a cancerous process." (Emphasis added.)

Another preliminary study that indicated that microwave cooking may have an adverse effect on food was published in Pediatrics [snip], April 1992. John A. Kerner, MD, and Stanford

colleagues who took part in the study found that unheated breast milk that was microwaved "lost lysozyme activity,

antibodies, and fostered the growth of more potentially pathogenic bacteria." Critics of the study believed that heat, not microwave energy, was responsible for the changes. The Pediatrics study reported a 96% loss of immunoglobulin A in breast milk microwaved at a high setting (72 degrees to 98 degrees C). Milk microwaved at a low setting to a mean temperature of 33.5 degrees C also showed some loss of anti-infective properties, indicating that non-thermal factors may be affecting the milk. [snip]

Although the authors of the Pediatrics article, like Dr. Hertel, called for further research on the effect of microwave cooking, such studies do not receive funding. (Emphasis added.) The web sites of the FDA and Health Canada assert, however, that microwave cooking is not hazardous if proper techniques are followed and the oven is in good repair so that it doesn't leak radiation."

http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0ISW/is_246/ai_112727999/pg_4

For the moment then, we are to trust industry and FDA. Most will opt for the

convenience of microwaving, though a toaster oven is nearly as fast. (Less fast, the Luddite-within could try a solar oven. See link below.)

www.lifeaftertheoilcrash.net/IndividualItemPages/SunOven.html

For the holidays, you'll find organic cranberries, sweet potatoes, and pre-order turkeys at the co-op. Apple juice, whole cinnamon stick, allspice, and clove, make a microbe-fighting mulled cider, with its welcoming fragrance of hearth and home.

Consider stocking in a box of homeopathic Oscilloccinum, which taken at the onset of flu, can stop it dead in its tracks. After full blown symptoms, it can moderate and shorten the time of miseries.

Another simple home medicament for colds and flu is also very inexpensive. Set a bottle of over-the-counter 3% hydrogen peroxide in a bowl of warm water. Prepare a cozy bed or sofa nest for the child or spouse or self, for 30-40 minutes of quiet. While lying on one's side, tilt a capful, or less, of body temp hydrogen peroxide into ear. The liquid will snap crackle & pop for 15-20 min. (Deeply relaxing, and helpful to children with earache.) When the bubbling stops, hold a tissue to the ear, and roll to one's other side. The warm liquid drains out. Repeat process. Done at the onset of cold or flu symptoms, this has often stopped the infection, whether bacterial or viral. (See your physician, etc...)

For the winter-drearies, laugh! Guffaws and chortles actually alter one's brain chemistry and immune function for the better. www.mdausa.org/publications/Quest/q34laughter.html Watch comedies, be silly, grab a feather boa and dance the fandango! Turn off the news, and make some.

Happy Holidays to one and all.

—Mary-Anne de Lany

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Another Reason for Chocolate...

If your blood pressure is high, it might be time to look into the cardiovascular benefits of dark chocolate. Recent studies have indicated that eating dark chocolate may be almost as effective at lowering blood pressure as taking the most common antihypertensive drugs.

Chocolate, like any other bean, contains plant chemicals. These antioxidant plant chemicals called flavonoids are a diverse class of naturally occurring polyphenols that are abundant in some plant foods. The current research provides clinical evidence that the blood pressure lowering effects of cocoa have a biological basis due to being a rich source of polyphenols.

Cocoa extracts have been shown to cause the arteries to dilate by increasing endothelial production of nitric oxide. The endothelium is the lining membrane in the heart, blood, and lymph vessels. This suggests that the polyphenols in cocoa containing foods are likely to be responsible for the reduction of blood pressure, and improvement of endothelial function and platelet inhibition by causing local synthesis of the molecule nitric oxide which signals the arteries to dilate. With blood moving more freely through the arteries the cardiovascular system works more efficiently and blood pressure is lower.

Jeffrey Blumberg PhD, a senior scientist at the Jean Mayer USDA Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging at Tufts University in Boston conducted a study with colleagues at the University of L'Aquila in Italy.

All of the participants had high blood pressure of 140-159/90-99 mm Hg and none of the participants were taking blood pressure medications. Half of the participants ate a 3.5 ounce bar of dark chocolate daily and the other half ate the same amount of white chocolate. After 15 days the blood pressure readings in those that ate the dark chocolate were 128-147/81-90 mm Hg which is a clinically meaningful improvement. Those participants who ate the white chocolate showed no improvement in their blood pressure readings.

The April 9, 2007 edition of the *Archives of Internal Medicine* reports on a meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials in adults with statically significant reductions in blood pressure due to diets rich in cocoa. Milk proteins prevent the absorption

of polyphenols, so milk chocolate is not effective and white chocolate has no flavonoids at all.

It isn't just about adding chocolate though... as chocolate does have calories! Remember that exercise helps to keep those calories burning. And avoiding other high calorie snack foods might not be a bad idea either! Including dark chocolate as part of your total daily caloric intake instead of an "extra" and doing at least 30 minutes of exercise is a good way to make this prescription work for you!

JUST FOR THE HEALTH OF IT

—Catherine Princell
RN MS
Health Education
Specialist

References:

American Heart Association Journal
Report 7/18/2005

New York Times Vital Signs 4/24/2007

Archives of Internal Medicine 4/9/2007

CO-OP NEWS ADVERTISING FINE PRINT:

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COMMITTEE DESCRIPTIONS

This list includes a current description of the existing Co-op committees, which work in an advisory role to the Board of Directors. The status and recent activity of each active committee is reported on by the committee's Board liaison during the Board's monthly meeting.

NEWSLETTER - The Newsletter Committee (Team) produces a newsletter which is distributed every other month.
Liaison: Steve Benson

NOMINATING - The Nominating Committee looks at the needs of the Board, recommends new Board members, and helps to facilitate the work of the Board. This committee also examines the Coop's by-laws and makes recommendations to the Board in order to keep the by-laws and current Co-op practices in concert.



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Hadley Friedman

Hadley's journey to the Blue Hill Co-op cafe has been paved with as many stints in food-related jobs as one can imagine. Growing up outside of New York City, Hadley entered a nearby college where she was enrolled in a nutrition and food science program. Her "passion for cooking," however, brought her to chef's school. Although she loved creating food dishes for others, the idea of trying to make a living in this profession with its lack of financial stability or health care benefits was daunting. After leaving school, and while she was working in advertising, Hadley continued her enthusiasm for cooking by taking holiday orders for casseroles which she concocted with a friend in her tiny apartment.

Eventually, the drudgery of city life got her down and when she met the director of Kniesel Hall and was recruited as a chef for the school's summer season in 2005, she jumped at the chance to "try small town life." It was natural that Hadley end up at the Co-op café since she is committed to serving healthy, wholesome food and sourcing ingredients locally whenever possible.

At varying times in her life, Hadley has found herself managing a catered foods company, working as a dairy farmer, toiling as a stern woman on a lobster boat, and coordinating a nutrition program for low-income kids in New York City. This latter

occupation is where she hopes to focus her food interests in the future. Ideally, Hadley aspires to create a work situation for herself that would incorporate agriculture, school children, and nutrition into the life she has carved out here in Blue Hill.

Justine Curtis:

Justine first became familiar with the Blue Hill Co-op when she worked next door at the Fishnet. She would escape the grease-drenched floors of her workplace and head to the oasis of the Co-op where she could get something nutritious to eat from the café or stock up on bulk goods. She found that the people she ran into at the Co-op on her breaks were inevitably friendlier than the ones she served just down the hill. Eventually she decided that

better place for her weekends because pace then and using sure the back for the work week

she attends Husson College where she is presently at the beginning of a six year program which will give her a doctorate in physical therapy. She also spends time on her surrealist painting and continues a study of classical violin that began when she was in the third grade. She particularly enjoys playing gavotte music – a kind of 17th century French peasant dance music which includes many up tempo waltzes.

A local gal, Justine is from Ellsworth, but says she would like to settle down in the Blue Hill area where she appreciates the easygoing nature of the people. She one day hopes to settle down here and perhaps work at the Blue Hill Hospital, but not before doing some traveling – hopefully making her way to Greece eventually.

STAFF PROFILES

by Allison Watters

the Co-op might be a to work.

found at the Co-op on she enjoys the quieter ally busies herself mak-stock items are shelved ahead. During the week



Julianne Barrett:

A talented artist first and foremost, Julianne grew up outside of Boston. She eventually found herself in school at Massachusetts College of Art where she immersed herself in the study of oil painting. Although she felt at home in the city, she and her boyfriend, Joffrey, began to explore the coast of Maine on the weekends. They made several road trips "Downeast" going further afield on each adventure. On one of their forays up the coast, they reached the Blue Hill Peninsula. After experiencing the laid-back attitudes of the people they met and the rural coastal scenery, they soon agreed it was the place to stay for awhile.

Julianne's interest in artwork landed her a summer job at the Blue Hill Bay Gallery, but now she and Joffrey both work at the Co-op (Joffrey can be found assembling tasty dishes in the café). Soon Julianne will begin working at the Co-op full time for the winter. She says it is worlds better than folding sweaters at the Gap, which was her last workplace in Boston.

When she's not working at the Co-op, Julianne spends most of her time painting in her studio. She has been working on a series of oils of ribbons arranged with dried flowers. Most drawn to still life paintings, Julianne finds inspiration in items that she discovers

in local antique shops, imagining the places they have been before she holds them in her hands. Her ultimate goal is to live around other artistic-minded individuals and be able to make a living from selling her artwork.