

Connect



ASTORIA CO+OP NEWS

SUMMER 2018

A Cooperative Future.....2

Fresh New Look.....3

Sensational Berry Smoothies.....4

Little Island Flowers.....6

Peas Please!.....8

New Board Member..... 10

Change for Community.....13



A Cooperative Future

By Matt Stanley/General Manager



Your local food co-op continues to work hard to make our expansion a success. We continue to jump hurdles toward making our dream store a reality.

I thought I'd take a moment to write about the broader natural foods landscape within which our co-op and co-ops across the country now operate. Natural foods are ubiquitous. It is natural foods, not their conventional counterparts, that are driving the growth of the grocery industry. Gone are the days where the local food co-op carried an entirely unique offering of organic and local products.

We do differentiate in key ways: our produce quality, in-house prepared organic deli selection, truly local products, meticulously curated beer and wine, great customer service and more. But that does not negate the fact that we can now find organic foods in all grocery stores and even on-line.

What we've seen across the country is that some food co-ops have struggled to find a new footing in this ultra-competitive landscape. Co-ops that have taken the challenge head-on continue to thrive. Co-ops that have not thought strategically about how to newly position their businesses have struggled. Some have had to shut their doors.

The good news is that your local co-op has a strong plan intended to maintain and increase our relevance as a provider of healthy groceries. Even in the current location we continue to improve our pricing, foster more local producers, maintain an exciting selection of new products, and more. So we are certainly holding our own as new competitors enter our region.

Our long-term plan is rooted in the expansion of our facility as a way to better highlight what makes us unique and make the store more accessible for both shoppers and staff. We want to grow the cooperative economy in our region and we intend to be here for another four decades!

And what is even more special about our plan is that it came from you! We started our work toward expansion by receiving a resounding yes from the community we serve. We are unique because we are governed by the very folks who shop at our store. No other retailer can boast this cooperative and local approach to operating a business.

As we continue to navigate the winding road to our new store, your dedication to shopping co-op first is more important than ever! We are all sure to be rewarded with our beautiful new store. Please check our web page www.astoria.coop for expansion progress.

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Andrew Catalano
Board Member

The Co-op is a community-owned grocery store. All shoppers welcome. No membership required.

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Finance Manager
Zetty Nemlowill
Marketing Director
Lynne Day
Front End Manager
Sheila Smith
Deli Manager
Danny Rasmussen
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Fresh New Look

By Zetty Nemlowill/Marketing Director



In our last newsletter I told you we'd be freshening up the co-op's look and now... it's official (see our new logo below)! We're making this change now so that we will be ready to start designing our new store. We're still the same co-op you know and love; we're just getting better at sharing our story.

To survive and thrive, especially in a larger, more visible store, we need everyone to understand what makes Astoria Co+op different and why they might want to shop here. A logo and tag line can help represent this visually.

You'll notice the subtle name change of "Astoria Co+op" instead of "Astoria Co-op Grocery." The shorter name looks great, is very friendly and can be paired with our tagline (good. local. food.) It is simple and easy to understand at a glance.

The plus sign aligns our brand with the Co+op, stronger together brand and highlights our cooperative ownership. This allows us to fully utilize the resources available through our membership with National Co+op Grocers—Co+op Deals flyers, coupons, bags, coffee cups, and signs—while maintaining a cohesive visual identity with materials produced in-house.

I believe this change will result in an increase in efficiency, allowing us to mature into an even more competitive business, lowering operating costs while still treating our employees well.

While a new logo is an important symbol, it is our amazing staff, dedicated owners and shoppers, local farmers, delicious food, and being 100% community-owned that makes our co-op truly unique and special. Thank you for your continued support!

Astoria
co+op
good. local. food.

Sensational Berry Smoothies

Blending is believing! These splendid smoothies are bursting with berry goodness.



The smoothie — a drinkable breakfast, snack, or workout drink — is one of the easiest culinary creations to make at home.

A variation on the kinds of fruity drinks made in tropical countries for years, it was christened “smoothie” in the 1960s. As it grew to include healthy add-ins, boosting it from a snack to a meal, the smoothie began to inch into the healthy mainstream. Suddenly, smoothies were everywhere!

Check out these sensational berry smoothies as a starting point. Each one is simple and completely delicious.

Reprinted by permission from StrongerTogether.coop. Find these and other recipes, plus information about your food and where it comes from at www.strongertogether.coop.

Hidden-Spinach Berry Smoothie

Serves: 2. Prep time: 10 minutes.

- 2 cups frozen or fresh raspberries, strawberries, blackberries, or a mix
- 3 cups spinach (packed)
- 1 cup yogurt, kefir, or a non-dairy alternative like almond milk
- 1 large banana, fresh or frozen

Put the berries and spinach in the blender first, and add the yogurt and banana. Process, scraping down as needed. Blend until smooth and serve.

You'll enjoy a salad's worth of healthy spinach in this luscious smoothie, and hardly notice it's there!



Strawberry-Pomegranate Smoothie

Serves: 2. Prep time: 5 minutes.

- 2 cups frozen strawberries
- 1 large frozen banana, cut in chunks
- 1 cup kefir, yogurt, or a non-dairy alternative like almond milk
- 1 cup pomegranate juice
- 2 tablespoons pomegranate seeds

In a blender, pile in the strawberries and frozen banana, then add kefir and pomegranate juice. Process to puree; serve garnished with pomegranate seeds. If the smoothie is too thick to blend, add milk or a non-dairy alternative as needed.

Pomegranate juice is an antioxidant superstar, and its wonderfully tart flavor is balanced by banana and creamy kefir.



Mixed Berry and Oat Smoothie with Granola

Serves: 2. Prep time: 5 minutes.

- 2 cups frozen mixed berries
- 4 ounces firm silken tofu
- ¼ cup rolled oats
- 1 ½ cups vanilla soymilk or other milk
- ½ cup granola

In a blender, place the mixed berries, then tofu, oats and soymilk. Process until smooth. Serve in two glasses, with ¼ cup of granola on top of each.

Berries disguise the secret ingredient (tofu!) and a sprinkle of granola adds a tasty crunch.



Little Island Flowers

By Zetty Nemlowill/Marketing Director

When you walk into the co-op and see bouquets of local flowers you will immediately know they are beautiful but there's something else the farmer who grows and arranges the flowers would like you to know.

"A lot of love has gone into it... they're fresh cut, lovingly handled," Kim Howell of Little Island Flowers says as she gets a little teary-eyed, revealing how pure her passion is for what she does.

She and her husband Mike Howell have a 12-acre farm on Puget Island, Washington. They've been farming their land for about 16 years. They used to do cattle and goats, vegetables, and even started a farmer's market on the island, but Howell has now found her niche and passion in flowers. Howell says she's always been very conscious about where her food comes from and her passion for local flowers stems from this.

"When I started flower farming I realized that same level of consciousness

about food: the carbon footprint to grow it and get it to you, the social justice issues related to labor, and the chemicals and pesticides that are unchecked... all those things drive the same thing for me when it comes to flowers,” Howell said.

Howell is among a burgeoning group of American flower farmers. Currently the U.S. imports around 80% of flowers on the market, according to slowflowers.com, an on-line directory that promotes U.S.-grown flowers. There are many benefits to buying local flowers including jobs, a smaller transportation footprint, and supporting sustainable practices.

Howell grows organically, encouraging pollinators, and doesn't use pesticides or chemicals. She wants to make it safe for people to take a bouquet home and put it on their kitchen table.

“What's the first thing you do when you get a bouquet? You put your face in it. But all those bouquets you're getting at big box stores are not locally grown by people who are concerned about the environment, and it's probably not really safe for you to be putting your face in those bouquets,” Howell said.

After 35 years working for the federal government, Howell retired as a Regional Operations and Maintenance Manager at Bonneville Power Administration. Even though her husband says she works harder now (she rarely takes a day off) this doesn't feel like work to her.

“I feel like I worked a long career to be able to do what I really want to do and that's what I'm doing now. Flowers are great; they're beautiful. To be able to work every day in the beauty, to be able to do floral designs for people who are going to take a flower arrangement to a sick one or for a bride who wants to know where their flowers come from is a joy,” Howell said.

Keep an eye out for Little Island flower bouquets at the co-op.



“When I started flower farming I realized that same level of consciousness about food: the carbon footprint to grow it and get it to you, the social justice issues related to labor, and the chemicals and pesticides that are unchecked... all those things drive the same thing for me when it comes to flowers.”



Peas Please!

A culinary adventure for kids (and grown-ups)

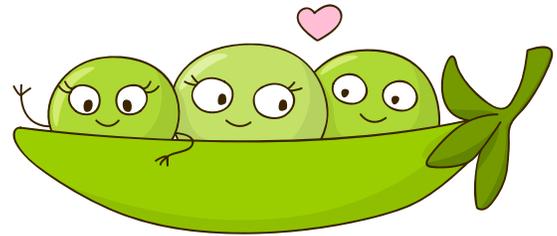
As a dietitian, I see value in providing opportunities throughout early childhood for experiencing nutrition. This can be done (and should be done) through a variety of methods, because the more exposure children have to healthy foods and behaviors, the more likely they are going to engage in them themselves. The class that we offered to third graders demonstrated some of these methods, teaching kids where food comes from, allowing them to experience different preparations and tastes of the same food to see which they find the most palatable, and then providing them with an opportunity for hands-on learning by getting them in the kitchen to cook.



By Grace Laman
Dietitian Columbia Memorial Hospital

Often I find myself struggling to get my own kids to eat healthy, and I have found that this repeat exposure method works really well for them. It used to be that I would throw some broccoli on their plate every night for dinner and then bicker with them about finishing it for half an hour before finally giving up and eating it myself (justifying my poor parenting skills by telling myself “at least you are setting a good example by showing them that you eat healthy”). Utilizing the idea that my kids may be more open to eating broccoli if I serve it some other way, I started using it pureed in soups or adding broccoli shreds as a topping in tacos and the kids didn’t bat an eye and ate it with no complaints.

It is also important to allow them to engage other senses in experiencing food besides taste, such as sight and touch. Allowing kids to help in the kitchen and “play with their food” can help kids start to see foods that are new to them as being “safe” and sometimes even fun. It is easy, as a parent, to get very anxious about your child not eating a particular food or food group, but the best thing you can do is relax, make it fun, and not focus on the food but rather the experience of eating as a whole.



Snap Pea Pesto

A fresh spring sauce that can be used to top pasta or bread or great as a dip for vegetables.

Ingredients

- 1 ½ c. shelled snap peas
- 1 garlic clove
- ½ c. grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/3 c. olive oil
- Salt and pepper

Directions

Pulse together the peas, garlic, Parmesan, 1 teaspoon of salt and ¼ teaspoon of pepper in a food processor. With the machine running, slowly add the olive oil until well combined, about 1 to 2 minutes. Season with additional salt and pepper, if needed. Makes eight ¼ c. servings.

Brought to you by:



Your co-op went to Lewis & Clark Elementary to teach 3rd graders about healthy food. In collaboration with Columbia Memorial Hospital and parent-volunteers, we led students in planting peas, tasting them (they preferred fresh over canned & frozen), and cooking pea pesto. Selling groceries is our business, but giving back to community is at the heart of what we do!

New Board Member

Chef Andrew Catalano recently joined our Board of Directors.

Tell us a little about yourself (where you're from, education, etc.).

I'm originally from a small town in upstate New York. I went to Wesleyan University in Middletown, CT, where I studied Philosophy.

I spent a semester in Bologna (Italy), which was where I really experienced for the first time the cultural significance of food. There was a deeply ingrained way of life that just took for granted the importance of quality food; it was fundamental. Everyone knew how to cook, had a facility with the seasonal ingredients that grew around them, were connected in some way to the land, respected the land and its produce, and so on.

I had grown up in a house that was full of good food and good cooking, but this was the first time I was immersed in an entire culture that valued food. It was in Italy, when I returned after college to work and live (WWOOF) on organic farms, that I really decided I wanted to be involved in food.

I've worked in many restaurants over the last 15 or so years, and thankfully they all emphasized the importance of raw ingredients. As I continued cooking, I was increasingly drawn to the farms that provided the food for the restaurants, and got more curious about that part of the process. I've always tried to cook in a minimal style, manipulating

the ingredients as little as possible, so this shift in perspective from the plate to the dirt seemed natural.

What made you want to join the co-op Board?

Being out of a restaurant kitchen for the past year has forced me to think about access to local food. How does all the wonderful stuff being grown around us get into people's homes? The co-op is a big part of the equation, and with the expansion I see our role and responsibility growing with it. I think the co-op really has the power to engender a love and appreciation for good, real food, and to help people have some version of that realization that I had when I was in Italy.

What do you do when you're not at co-op board meetings?

Other activities: working on my small business, Alimento, which provides a weekly meal kit, using all locally sourced ingredients and largely re-usable packaging. I also cook private dinners/ small catering jobs. But mostly, I hang out with my daughter, Lucy. Looking forward to summer vacation (my wife, Sarah, is a kindergarten teacher)!

What are your favorite things to eat and drink in the summertime?

Snap peas, rosé wine, raspberries, and tomatoes.

You can find Andrew shopping at the co-op just about every day with his little girl, Lucy. He purchases his family's groceries and ingredients for his locally-sourced meal kit business.



New Products

Here are some new products we're excited to share with you!



Red Duck Ketchup

Made in Portland, this ketchup is becoming a staff favorite. It has a slight kick to it that sets it apart. You'll be hooked after your first try! Try the Red Duck BBQ sauce too.



Thai Home Curry Pastes

Made in Portland, these curry pastes are expertly crafted. You'll be eating restaurant-tasting curry at home!



Crunchsters

Sprouted foods are in style! These make an excellent healthy snack packed with easily digested protein from sprouted mung beans.



Bitchin' Sauce

A secret blend of seasonings combined with almonds make for a spectacularly popular new item on the co-op shelves! Try it as a dip or spread too.



CocoYo

These have been flying off the shelf since day one! Made from fresh young coconut, they are slightly effervescent and make a unique dairy-free change up to your yogurt routine.



Bellwether Farms Yogurt

A true farmstead yogurt made from Jersey cow milk. The use of high quality organic milk creates excellent taste and texture without adding thickeners or stabilizers.

Change for Community

Our new program provides a way to make an even bigger community impact together.



Dr. Tracy Erfling
President Astoria Parks Foundation

Letter of Thanks from Astoria Parks Foundation

The Astoria Parks, Recreation and Community Foundation gives great thanks to Astoria Co+op. Over the past year the co-op has gone above and beyond to help raise money for our local Parks Foundation. This has come in the form of the Beans for Bags program, sponsorship of the 5th Annual Run on the River and the June Parks After Dark movie, as well as selecting us as the initial recipient of the Change for Community program in May. These contributions, which totaled over \$2,000, go directly into our scholarship pool that provides the funds necessary to keep our in-need community healthy and active. Our board has a goal of extending our scholarship boundary beyond Astoria to include both Warrenton and Knappa and it is committed partners like the co-op which will make this possible. Just another great reason to feel proud of the dollars you spend at your local co-op, and how shopping local really does provide a return to the community. A sincere thank you to the co-op from the APRCF Board!

About Change for Community

Selling groceries might keep our store in business, but giving back to our community is at the heart of what we do. We think this new program will reap big rewards for community nonprofits. There are three ways for you to help: round up your purchase total to the nearest dollar, bring a bag and donate your bean, or share your pocket change. With your help, we can be the positive change for community!



Our first Change for Community recipients: Astoria Parks, Recreation and Community Foundation in May, the Clatsop Community Action Regional Food bank in June, and The Healing Circle's VOCA (Victory Over Child Abuse) Camps in July. Learn more at www.astoria.coop.



Staff Picks with Chad

By Zetty Nemlowill/Marketing Director

Meet our newest cashier, Chad Gemma! Chad is outgoing, friendly, and full of energy. Part of his confidence being in front of people comes from doing stand-up comedy. He started this hobby a few years ago after moving to Astoria, doing shows locally at the Labor Temple and in Portland.

“I’m not afraid of being up in front of people or talking to people. Talking with people at the co-op is just like having a conversation with a friend,” Chad said.

Chad was born and raised in Portland, but love brought him to Astoria after he started dating someone from here. He likes the shops in town, enjoys kayaking, and conveniently lives just up the street from Young’s Bay.

This is Chad's first job in a grocery store. His prior work experience includes doing sales for power tools, a communications company and a lumber yard. He likes the easy-going atmosphere of his new gig.

“The co-op has a more relaxed vibe to it and there’s more comradery,” Chad said.

Working at the co-op also provides Chad with great access to foods on his new diet. He lost 15 pounds after doing the Ketogenic Diet for only about three

weeks.

“The cool thing about this diet is you find substitutes for higher carbs, you can use cauliflower in place of noodles and potatoes. It makes it kind of fun trying new things,” Chad said.

On the Keto plan, Chad limits his carbohydrate intake to about 20 grams per day. Eating healthy protein and fats, he says puts his body in a state of ketosis, getting energy from burning fat stores rather than from carbohydrates.

Chad has started cooking more lately, to the delight of his girlfriend, Courtney who bakes desserts at Fort George, and needs a break from the kitchen after work. He's trying out new Keto-friendly recipes. One of the best things he made recently was cheesy chicken fritters, low-carb fried patties full of protein and fat.

Chad has some go-to low-carb favorites at the co-op. See his staff picks "so good you gotta try 'em" on the following page.

“I’m not afraid of being up in front of people or talking to people. Talking with people at the co-op is just like having a conversation with a friend.”

So good, you've gotta try 'em!



Manchego Cheese

It's got an almost smoky flavor and it's super good melted, so making a cheese sauce out of it is to die for!



G Joy Sake

I tried it on a whim. It is a perfectly drinkable, smooth and great tasting sake.



Gimme Organic Seaweed Snacks

They're salty and taste amazing but the cool thing about them with my diet is they have zero carbs and you can eat as many as you want without feeling guilty.



Bob's Red Mill Almond Flour

It's lower in carbs than most flour so it makes a great substitute for baking or making a roux for a guilt-free cheese sauce.

G R O C E R

You Are the Reason We're Here

When you shop at the co-op, you cast a vote for a robust local economy, a vibrant community and a healthy environment. Thank you for supporting your neighborhood food co-op!

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