



WINTER
NEWSLETTER





OPEN 8-8 DAILY

1355 Exchange Street Suite 1
Astoria, OR 97103
503-325-0027
www.astoria.coop

All shoppers welcome. Just \$25 to start your ownership to receive special sales, discount days, case discounts and more.

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To contact our board: board@astoria.coop

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- Lenny McGrath, Cashier + Receiving
- Chelsea Templeman, Cashier + Grocery
- Joe Wrobel, Cashier + Deli
- Zetty Nemlowill, Marketing Director

Got a newsletter idea? Contact zetty@astoria.coop.

SPECIAL THANKS TO CO-OP OWNER, PAM CHESTNUT FOR HER EXCELLENT CARE IN PROOFREADING THIS NEWSLETTER!

CO-OP GROWS, ADDS 3RD LANE

QUICKER CHECKOUTS & A NEW POINT OF SALE SYSTEM

By now you have probably had a chance to see the new front-end of our store. It includes a new POS (point of sale) system, check-stands, and a third checkout lane. The need for these improvements is a result of our continued sales growth. The new layout, equipment, and additional lane is intended to make shopping more convenient for you by easing congestion and allowing you to check out quicker.



Tim Kennedy of Blind Moses Woodworking in Astoria (see photo) built the check-stands for us. He's done other woodworking in the Co-op produce and deli areas, so we knew he'd do a great job. He says the new walnut and fir check-stands have a "nice personality", and we agree!

While the check-stands are probably the most visible change, the new POS system has been the biggest undertaking, with months of research, setup and implementation. The Willy Street Co-op in Madison Wisconsin "loaned" us their in-house IT person, Angela Lenox, to help with the transition. She was in Astoria for about a week when the new system went live November 12th. Angela, we couldn't have done it without you!

Our co-op has nearly tripled sales since 2008 when we got our last POS system, which was also the year the store moved to its current location. This new POS will be able to grow with us, possibly even into a larger future store. These store improvements are a great example of owner equity at work. We thank our consumer owners and shoppers for your continued support!

TWO SOUPS INSTEAD OF ONE

DELI DEPARTMENT ADDS OFFERINGS



When it is cold outside, hot soup is especially popular in our grab-and-go deli. Shoppers told us they wanted more soup, so now we offer two soups instead of one on weekdays. We've always had a vegan soup option, but our additional soup kettle is allowing us to fulfill demand for soups with dairy and meat. Provincial Chicken Stew and Chowder are just a few examples of new soups that have been on the menu at the Co-op.

"One goal we have is to keep new soups coming, people get excited, even if you're a regular there's always a reason to check back in and try something new. Incorporating seasonal items from our produce department allows for this variety," Co-op Deli Manager Sam Seulean said.

Our soups are made from scratch, using organic and farm-direct ingredients, vegetables, and grains. Keep an eye out for fresh-baked corn bread, muffins and other accompaniments to our soups. As our deli continues to grow we'll be offering more kinds of sandwiches, salads, and side dishes.

GM REPORT

BY CO-OP GENERAL MANAGER MATTHEW STANLEY



When I give Co-op store tours I usually spend some time discussing the difference between certified organic foods and their conventional counterparts. One of the main distinguishing features of organic products is the absence of chemical pesticides. The conventional apple, for example, can contain more than 40 different chemicals on its skin.

What's most alarming, however, is the fact that most of these chemicals have undergone minimal safety testing for human consumption. The testing that has been done during the chemical approval process usually involves adults, so safety in children is not considered.

But much evidence strongly points to the fact that exposure to pesticides is a serious issue, one that is deeply influencing our children's health. And the amount of exposure doesn't necessarily matter as is often presumed. In other words,

the level of harm does not always correlate with the level of exposure. So to assume that any safe dosage exists is often misleading and potentially dangerous.

By the time you read this newsletter the Co-op will have 100 copies of a free publication, courtesy of the Pesticide Action Network North America, entitled "A Generation in Jeopardy: How pesticides are undermining our children's health and intelligence." The publication focuses on the fact that children today are sicker than they were a generation ago and that many of their illnesses are potentially the result of exposure to chemicals.



Specifically, there exists compelling evidence that pesticide exposure is linked to brain disorders like autism, ADHD, and a general decline in IQ. Furthermore, strong evidence exists for a

connection to childhood cancer. Even extremely low levels of pesticides can cause significant health issues.

Of course, there exists a political component to the issue. According to the publication, the pesticide industry is well served by current policies. A handful of large companies control the policy arena that dictates the setting of research agendas and regulatory controls. They keep the market for pesticides safe with little regard for the safety of the human population.

One may argue that scientific studies are often flawed and that causation is not always definitive. I give great credence to the publication because it specifically refers to and abides by a "weight of the evidence" approach. The study's findings and recommendations don't rely on any one study. Instead, the clear risk to our children's health is attributable to the evidence found in several well designed, robust studies that come to similar conclusions.

I encourage you to pick up a copy of the publication the next time you are in the store. I think it is a powerful reminder of why we all choose to shop at the Co-op. As the natural foods movement continues to grow so too does the use of the word "natural." Unfortunately the word has very little meaning and makes no certified promises that products are free of pesticides or GMO's. It is therefore ever more important to be clear that making the decision to purchase organic food does make a difference in our lives and the lives of the workers growing our foods. The Co-op makes that decision pretty easy. Here's to a healthy 2014!

"CHILDREN CANNOT MAKE CHOICES ABOUT THEIR ENVIRONMENT; IT IS UP TO ADULTS TO MAKE THE RIGHT DECISIONS TO ENSURE THAT THEY ARE PROTECTED." -DR. LYNN R. GOLDMAN

PRODUCE REPORT

BY KELLY HUCKESTEIN CO-OP PRODUCE MANAGER



Roasted Squash

Preheat the oven to 375 F.

Cut the squash in half lengthwise and scoop out all the seeds and fibers from the middle.

Lightly oil a baking sheet and place the squash halves cut-side down.

Bake until soft (can take anywhere from 15-45 minutes depending on the size and type of squash).



Nothing says fall and winter quite like squash. There are so many varieties that have unique flavors and fun shapes and colors. Their thick, hard skins help them store over long periods of time. The thicker skinned varieties can last for 6 months. While you are waiting to prepare your squash you can use them for a beautiful center piece for your table!

Winter squash and pumpkins are low in fat and high in fiber. The golden color of the squash's flesh denotes their high level of beta-carotene. Beta-carotene is converted by your body into Vitamin A, which promotes good eye and skin health. Winter squash is also a good source of antioxidants.

Choose squash that is heavy for its size and is free from blemishes. When the skin has a dull look it usually denotes a sweeter flesh. Squash should be stored in a cool dry place (not the refrigerator) that has good ventilation. Once the squash is cut, the pieces can be wrapped and stored in the refrigerator for a week.

The best and easiest way to prepare squash is to roast it. The flavor stays intact and the texture is wonderful. You can also boil or steam diced squash, but for the best flavor roasting it is the way to go. Here is an easy recipe for roasted squash as well as roasted seeds. Don't forget that other squash varieties also make great pumpkin pie. Experiment with different kinds to find one that you like the best.

Alternative Method

For a more caramelized squash flavor and texture, slice the halves or cut the squash into rings about ¼ inch thick (works best for delicata, dumpling, etc). Bake the same way as the above recipe (this method takes only 10-15 minutes).

Toasted Squash Seeds

Use any squash or pumpkin seeds. Preheat the oven to 325 F.

Rinse seeds and separate them from the stringy squash flesh and fibers. Let them dry a bit in a colander or laid out on a kitchen towel. Toss them with olive oil and salt. Add extra spices to your taste (paprika, cumin, curry powder, etc). Arrange seeds in a single layer on a baking sheet and bake 10-12 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool and store in an airtight container.

Pumpkin (or Squash) Pie Filling



Use pie pumpkins, sweet meat squash, or try your favorite squash.

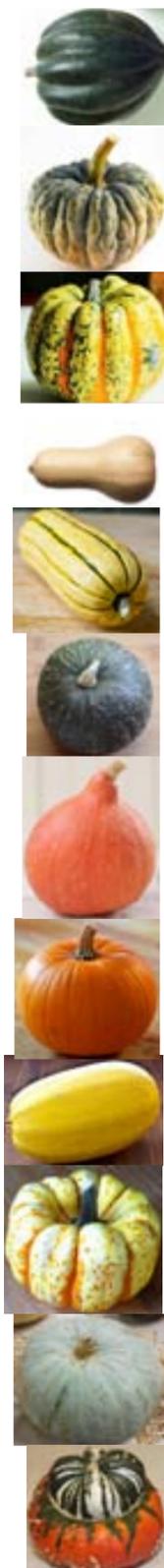
First make pumpkin/squash puree. Roast the squash as above and then scoop out the flesh, leaving the skin. Mash by hand if you like slightly chunky filling (I like this because it shows it's homemade) or run in a blender or food processor until smooth.

Lightly beat 2 eggs, then add:

2 cups pumpkin/squash puree
1 can evaporated milk
¾ cups packed brown sugar
1 ½ tsp ground cinnamon
1 tsp ground ginger
½ tsp ground nutmeg
¼ tsp ground cloves
½ tsp salt

Bake in pie crust for 15 minutes at 425 F, then reduce to 350 and continue to bake for 35-45 minutes until middle is set.

In the photo: Butternut Squash Pie from the Yankee Cook.



VARIETY	TEXTURE (COOKED)	FLAVOR	SOUP	STEAM	STUFF	SIZE	FUN FACTS
Acorn	Moist, tender	Sweet & Nutty	✓	✓	✓	12 oz. - 2 lbs.	Was recently the most popular squash in the U.S. but now it is butternut.
Black Futsu	Smooth	Sweet, rich, nutty (hazelnuts)	✓	✓		Small, 3/4-3 lbs.	Japanese variety, popular in Europe.
Carnival	Semi-dry & firm	Sweet, buttery, & mild	✓	✓	✓	Small-medium 5"-7" across	Hybrid of sweet dumpling & acorn.
Butternut	Moist	Very sweet	✓	✓		2-5 lbs.	Use in place of pumpkin in pies for a soother texture.
Delicata	Semi-dry	Sweet, nutty		✓	✓	5"-6" long 3" diameter	The skin is edible too.
Kabocha	Tender, dense	Sweet, nutty & very flavorful	✓	✓		2-5 lbs.	Pairs well with Asian spices.
Kuri	Dry, meaty	Sweet, nutty (chestnuts)	✓	✓		4-7 lbs.	Replace sweet potatoes with Red Kuri in most recipes.
Pie Pumpkin	Tender	Sweet	✓	✓	✓	4-7 lbs.	A 4lb. pumpkin will yield 1.5 cups of mashed pumpkin.
Spaghetti	Stringy, firm	Slightly sweet		✓		3-5 lbs.	Use in place of noodles in spaghetti.
Sweet Dumpling	Semi-dry	Very sweet			✓	1-2 lbs.	Makes a perfect personal stuffed squash
Sweet Meat	Creamy	Rich, sweet	✓	✓		10-15 lbs.	Makes amazing "pumpkin" pie.
Turban	Floury	Nutty, deep	✓			4-7 lbs.	Makes a fun soup tureen when roasted.

MEET OUR DISTRIBUTOR ORGANICALLY GROWN COMPANY

BY ZETTY NEMLOWILL ASTORIA CO-OP MARKETING DIRECTOR

The Co-op prides itself on buying farm-direct produce from truly “local” small farms when available, but this time of year we rely heavily on Organically Grown Company to fill in our produce department with high quality fruits and veggies. Recently we toured OGC’s warehouse in Portland for the purpose of bringing you this story and educating our produce crew.

Kelly Huckestein, our produce manager, who is a farmer outside of her day job at the Co-op, takes all her work very seriously. And when she’s on the phone placing orders with OGC, you can often hear laughter, as she and the sales rep happily banter. This is not only a reflection of the work culture at OGC, but also the important relationship between the Co-op and the distributor.

“It’s all relationships. That’s the number one thing in produce, who you’re working with and who you know, their practices and integrity,” Tonya Haworth OGC Marketing Communications Specialist said.

OGC is the largest northwest organic produce wholesale distributor, with locations in Eugene, Portland, and Kent, WA. It is owned by its employees and growers. Its flagship Ladybug brand includes 40 organic growers in Oregon, Washington and British Columbia. 35 years ago these farmers formed a cooperative, differentiating crops, and bringing them to market. They scraped together personal items such as a guitars and backpacks for collateral to purchase refrigeration and trucks. After years of struggles a cultural shift and awareness about organics has finally allowed the company to see an incredible amount of growth and success.

“I feel like we’re finally reaching this point where people know what organic is. We finally have the ear of almost all consumers whereas 10 years ago people didn’t really think of it,” Haworth said.

The produce OGC carries is not only from Northwest farms; the company sources from all over the world.

“There are people who want to go to the farmers market and want their produce to come

directly from the farm. That’s awesome and we 100% support that, but people also want to eat bananas 365 days a year so there has to be infrastructure, trucking distribution. We’re the unsexy side of produce,” Haworth laughs.

None of us like to think about our food sitting in a warehouse for long periods of time and it is a challenge to keep quality high when it comes to a perishable product. Haworth assures us that quality control systems are in place to test all produce received and a feedback loop with growers to maintain standards. She says her sales team often sells products before they’ve even landed.

OGC Sales Rep Ben Cutler is one of the cheerful folks we work with. He not only knows produce, but he also knows food co-ops. In his off-time, he’s working with a neighborhood group in east Portland, which is forming the Montavilla Food Co-op.

“I really have been interested in co-ops for a long time it’s a great way to build community wealth and allow greater access to food resources,” Cutler said.

WORK CULTURE

OGC has a crew of 160 employees. As their time at the company grows, so does their share in it. They hold seats on the board. We’re told they have excellent benefits and some of the highest pay in the industry. Many came to the company with farming and gardening experience. The company’s web site boasts, “We eat, sleep and breathe organic produce. It’s not just our job, but a passion we embrace in our everyday lives.” And from what we’ve seen, all this is true.

SUSTAINABILITY

OGC is changing its practices to become a model of sustainability. In recent years the company has reduced its waste in the landfill by 75 percent via recycling and composting. The list is long on examples of how the folks at OGC are being “green”, but here are a few highlights: hybrid delivery trucks and their new 119,000 square foot warehouse (they moved into in Gresham last year) was built to environmentally-friendly (LEED) standards.

10 REASONS TO BUY ORGANIC

ORGANIC FOOD MEETS STRINGENT STANDARDS that are required of any grower approved for certification. Organic farms are inspected at least once a year.

ORGANIC FOOD TASTES GREAT because it is grown in healthy living soils and typically picked ripe and shipped direct.

ORGANIC FOOD IS HEALTHY because it is not exposed to persistent pesticides and on average contains more nutrients such as Vitamin C, magnesium, calcium and iron.

ORGANIC FOOD CONTAINS NO GMOs, which are prohibited under organic standards.

ORGANIC FOOD IS SAFER FOR CHILDREN who eat larger amounts of fruits and vegetables for their body weight, and so run higher risks from exposure to pesticides.

ORGANIC FARMERS PRESERVE AND BUILD HEALTHY SOIL, the foundation of the food chain and the primary focus of organic farming.

ORGANIC FARMERS PRESERVE WATER RESOURCES by eliminating polluting chemicals and nitrogen leaching.

ORGANIC FARMERS PRESERVE PLANT DIVERSITY by using genetically diverse varieties adapted to local conditions. Conventional farming seeks to use fewer varieties developed to prosper within more universal and heavily controlled production.

ORGANIC FARMERS PRESERVE SPECIES DIVERSITY by including forage crops in rotation and retaining fence rows, wetlands and other natural areas.

ORGANIC FARMING HELPS KEEP RURAL COMMUNITIES HEALTHY by offering small farms an alternative market where sellers can command fair prices for crops.

Source: <http://www.organicgrown.com/>

The OGC warehouse tour: Co-op produce crew and the guys from OGC we work with most. From left: OGC Account Manger Matt Landi, Co-op Produce Manager Kelly Huckestein, Danny Rasmussen, Co-op Produce Boy (his preferred title), and OGC Sales Rep. Ben Cutler.



“If it’s available in the world and it’s organic, we’ve got it,” says Andreas Moppin, OGC’s Director of Sales (left) with Matt Landi, an account manager we work with, holding a Buddha’s Hand.



WHY DO ALL THE WORKER-OWNERS AT OGC SEEM SO HAPPY?

“AT THE END OF THE DAY WE’RE BRINGING THE BEST FOOD POSSIBLE TO PEOPLE’S PLATES AND YOU HAVE THESE RELATIONSHIPS WITH FARMERS AND CUSTOMERS,”

TONYA HAWORTH, OGC MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST (LEFT) SAID.



The fruit lockers at left keep bananas at ideal conditions for ripening.



The Ladybug brand includes Northwest growers who are also owners of Organically Grown Company.

CO-OP OWNER SPOTLIGHT

MARNI POSTLEWAIT/CO-OP OWNER AND DEDICATED ASTORIA MOTHER

Q: What is your food philosophy (what do you enjoy eating and feel is healthy)?

A: In our house we focus on “real food”. To us this means food that is as fresh and local as possible, mostly organically-grown or raised in a way that nature intended, home-made and minimally processed. This means I prepare a LOT of food in my own kitchen. We also try to minimize our consumption of grain-based carbohydrates and one member of our family has a recently-discovered wheat allergy so we try to avoid that altogether. The goal is, every meal entirely from scratch including sauces, condiments and salad dressings. We don’t achieve this 100% of the time, but we do most of the time.

Q: Why do you shop at the Co-op?

A: I shop at the Co-op because it is a convenient place to find many of the organic or specialty products that I love while supporting a local business. I also believe that every food dollar we spend is a vote in support of what kind of food we want to eat and the practices that are used in bringing these foods to our dinner table. The less we spend at large, corporate grocery stores that oppose GMO labeling and use practices that overtly deceive consumers, and the more we spend at locally owned stores like the Co-op that provide quality products from quality farms, dairies and other companies, then the quicker we will see a shift in our overall food supply. This is a shift that I believe is happening, which I think is exciting.

Q: What is your favorite product(s)?

A: Many of my favorite products at the Co-op are in the bulk section. I love the selection of nuts, seeds and alternative flours. I also love the selection of farmstead cheeses and other dairy products. And of course, I buy many of the herbal



supplements and natural remedies. My husband is especially impressed with the beer selection.

Q: How do you encourage your children to eat healthy?

A: My kids are older now and are able to understand how food affects them and why good nutrition and “clean eating” are important. I share articles with them that I read on certain subjects so they can have the information themselves.

When they ask for things I’d rather they not have I’ll ask them to read the ingredients. Learning what many of these hard-to-pronounce ingredients are, is often enough to help them decide on their own to make a better choice. My kids often hear me say “This isn’t food”.

I also really try to help my children understand how the food they have eaten may be making them feel at a certain time. About 8 years ago I stopped buying anything with artificial color and immediately noticed a change in their behavior. It was drastic! Now they are older and though eating colorful candy is still tempting to them and they occasionally do, they all realize that it doesn’t help them feel and think better, later.

Q: “What are your favorite foods around the holidays?”

A: We celebrate Christmas at our house and that starts soon after Thanksgiving. Normally we don’t do too many sweet treats, but at Christmas we splurge a little. Each of the kids gets to help make their favorite treat, and we share with friends and neighbors and enjoy them through the season. Our big Christmas dinner usually consists of a prime rib roast with all the usual side dishes. This will be the second year it will come from locally raised, grass fed beef. And in keeping with my mother’s tradition, who felt like Christmas was her only day off throughout the year, we have our big dinner on Christmas Eve. It’s all home-made from scratch, and the whole family is involved! Walt roasts the prime

rib, my daughters make pies, my son makes fluffy dinner rolls and I take care of the sides. Christmas morning is a cheese and egg breakfast casserole with homemade cinnamon rolls. Both have been made ahead so all we have to do it pop them in the oven. The rest of the day we snack on the most delicious reheated leftovers, and things like dips, cheese spreads and cold salads that have been made ahead so that we have more time to enjoy the day without spending it working in the kitchen.

Q: What advice would you give to another family who is just starting to focus on feeding their family healthier, less processed food?

A: My advice would be baby steps. It can be very overwhelming at first. Try to focus on any improvement you make and not on how much is left to be learned or accomplished. If most of your meals are processed or packaged, then begin by trying to cook 2 nights a week. Try to make extra to put in the freezer for a future meal. Get the whole family involved. Watch cooking shows or You Tube videos to learn techniques or new recipes. And don’t be afraid to experiment a little! And then after 6 months or so look back at what you were doing when you started and see how far you’ve come. You’ll probably impress yourself!

TRIED AND TRUE WINTER & HOLIDAY RECIPES

CREATED AND TESTED BY CO-OP OWNERS AND STAFF

SPAGHETTI SQUASH AU GRATIN

BY MARNI POSTLEWAIT
CO-OP OWNER

1 spaghetti squash
¼ cup butter
¼ cup flour
½ tsp salt
2 cups milk
4-8 ounces cubed cheese (cheddar, Monterey Jack, Colby or any combination)
¼ grated parmesan or Romano

Cut the squash in half and scoop out the seeds and pulp. Place face down on a baking sheet and bake at 350 for about 45 minutes or until easily pierced with a fork. Cool until easy to handle. Using a fork “rake” the squash out of the shell from the stem end to the blossom end to loosen the strands of “spaghetti”. Place into a medium casserole dish.

Meanwhile, melt the butter in a medium sauce pan over medium to medium high heat. Stir in the flour and stir with a flat end whisk until foamy, but not brown. Slowly add the milk whisking to incorporate the roux. Add the salt and any other seasoning you would like: dash of cayenne; ½ tsp dry mustard; dash of nutmeg or just black pepper. Get creative! Then add the cubed cheese and stir until thick and the cheese has melted. Mix the sauce with the squash mixing to completely coat the squash and top with grated cheese. Bake on 375 until bubbly and brown around the edges.



BAKED ROOT VEGETABLE MAIN DISH

BY BRANDON MASSEY CO-OP DELI COOK
& CO-OP CHEESEMONGER

Wow, I went back to the old magazine (Veggie Life) I took this recipe from and discovered I’d transformed it beyond recognition over the years. Its really a flexible dish, you can put any combination of root veg in any order or no order; they all cook together and blend. The taste is very slightly sweet and earthy. The smell as it bakes is appetizing too.

Preheat oven to 425 F

¾ lb. celeriac, sliced ¼ inch thick
¾ lb. rutabaga, same
½ lb. turnip, same
½ lb. carrot, same
3 - 4 medium onions, sliced thin
2 - 3 garlic cloves, minced
1 large bunch green kale, in small pieces
1/2-¾ lb. sort of creamy, slightly sweet cheese like havarti, gouda, fontina, or jack, grated coarsely
¼ cup water or dry white wine or dry cider
thyme
one whole nutmeg with grater
black pepper
salt

4 medium to large potatoes, mashed*

Butter one large, covered ceramic baking dish/casserole. Slice all root veggies as directed in ingredient list. Cover bottom of dish with one layer of onion slices. Sprinkle garlic evenly.

Begin to “build” the levels of vegetables: rutabaga, carrot, turnip, celeriac, then cheese. Grate a very small bit of nutmeg over the cheese, then a pinch of thyme, then a couple grinds of black pepper, then a pinch of salt. Top with kale and press down. Continue building each layer this way, pressing down at the end of each layer, to just below the top of the dish. Add ¼ cup liquid, cover, and bake at 425 F for 50 min.

While the veggies bake, prepare the spuds. *Steam, peel, mash with butter, cream, and butter milk or milk. Also add ½ tsp salt, a few grinds of black pepper, and few grates of nutmeg (no thyme this time).

You can also mix the spuds with mashed celeriac or mashed parsnip--both of which add a wicked good flavor--in a proportion of two parts spuds to one part celeriac or parsnip.

After 50 minutes, the vegetables will have cooked down into the dish considerably. This is why a vigorous pressing down of each layer as you build can pay off. Fill up the top with your mashed spuds. You can add some butter pats here and there, too. Cover the dish. Put back into the oven for 10-15 min, long enough to get the spuds hot.

That’s it. I hope you and your family enjoy it!

DISCOVER THESE NEW PRODUCTS AT THE CO-OP



A NEW COLD PRESSED OLIVE OIL from Hummingbird Wholesale. The award winning organic extra virgin olive is made from Arbosana olives from Polit Farms in California. It has complex, robust flavors, and a piquant spiciness. It is raw, which means it maintains more enzymatic properties and health benefits. You can use it for salad dressing, bread dipping, bean

dishes, hearty soups, baked potatoes, grilled bread, vegetables, and so much more. It is perfect for grilling and drizzling over food just before serving. Look for it in a half gallon glass jug.

TEFF FLOUR comes from an extremely popular tiny-seeded grain which is traditional faire in North Africa. It is naturally gluten free, light with a unique and pleasing flavor, and is versatile for baking and other utilization.

YUMM! SAUCE is an all-purpose sauce developed in a vegetar-



ian café in Eugene, which now has 11 locations throughout Oregon. It has a thick hummus-like texture and includes nutritional yeast and nuts. It is full of flavor and protein and is very versatile. Some fans think it tastes great on EVERYTHING. Think about adding it to Asian and Mexican cuisine, salads, sandwiches, pasta, tacos and a dip for veggies or chips.

MOTTO: SPARKLING MATCHA TEA is a lightly sweetened, refreshing and uplifting chilled bottled beverage. It uses premium high grade green tea powder and boasts the equivalent health benefits of 12 cups of green tea with only one third the caffeine of a cup of coffee. It is all-naturally sweetened with honey and agave, a great, light, pick-me-up.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

FOOD, EDUCATION, + OWNER APPRECIATION DAYS

DECEMBER 2013:

December 1-31: 10% Floating Owner Discount

Co-op owners may choose one shopping trip in December to save 10%. This discount does not stack with special order or case discounts. Not an owner? Just \$25 to become one.

Monday December 16: Closing early at 6 p.m. for a staff Christmas party.

Sunday December 22: Co-op will donate 10% of sales to the Clatsop Food Bank. Drop a can in the food bin too. It all goes to help feed those in need.

Tuesday December 24 (Christmas Eve): Co-op closes early at 6 p.m.

Wednesday December 25 (Christmas): Co-op will be closed.

Friday December 20: Fun Food Friday with Co-op Owner Merianne Myers

Come taste seasonal foods and get the recipes. 3-6 p.m.

JANUARY 2014: THE ASTORIA CO-OP TURNS 40!

Year-long recognition: the Astoria Co-op turns 40! Our first storefront opened in 1974.

Wednesday January 1 (New Year's Day): Co-op will be closed.

Thursday January 9: "Beers to Your Health" 7 p.m. Fort George Lovell Showroom. This is our monthly food and wellness lecture series (with special thanks to Fort George for providing the space). We're excited to have the general manager of Central Co-op in Seattle here on this date with his Co-op success story. Should be very inspirational to hear from the leader of such a big food co-op, as we prepre to envision our next steps.

Friday January 31: Fun Food Friday with O' Falafel. Come by the Co-op between 3-6 p.m. and learn how to cook the locally-made falafel mix, as well as sample the salads we also carry.

Please check our web site www.astoria.coop for monthly board meeting date, time, and locations.

FEBRUARY 2014:

Thursday February 13: "Beers to Your Health" 7 p.m. Fort George Lovell Showroom. We'll be teaming up with AAUW to present "Food Culture of Clatsop County".

Sunday February 9 through Friday February 14: Owner Appreciation Week! Co-op owners may choose one shopping trip to save 10% on groceries. The discount does not stack with special orders or case discounts. *Become a Co-op owner for \$25.*

O'FALAFEL OFFERS MIDDLE EASTERN FOOD TASTING AND FALAFEL



Photo courtesy: Jeff Daly

Omri Siklai and Leslie Greele own and operate a Mediterranean food business in downtown Astoria called, O'Falafel. Their food cart is located about a block away from the Co-op at 13th and Duane Street. They sell some of their most popular salads and falafel mix at the Co-op, located in our grab-and-go deli cooler.

O'Falafel will demonstrate how to cook falafel and offer samples for you at the Co-op in January (see calendar).

CO-OP STRENGTHENS FINANCES

CHANGES TO OWNER DISCOUNTS

We have been on a quest to discover a sustainable model for owner appreciation days. Earlier this year we branched out of the mold of set discount days, and started offering a floating discount, in which Co-op owners could choose a day within a given time period to save 10% on a shopping trip. This method proved popular among shoppers and logistically worked well for the store, reducing discount day congestion.

In the summer, we responded to positive feedback from our owners regarding floating discounts, eliminating most set discount days, and implementing monthly floating discounts. While this has proved popular, none of the discount models we're accustomed to are sustainable for our store. We're simply spending too much on owner discounts.

Our discounts are among the highest in the country compared to other food co-ops. We know this because we joined the NCGA (National Cooperative Grocers Association) earlier this year. NCGA has brought us the Co-op Deals program. It watches our financials and other member co-op's to ensure we can make good on our collective contracts with manufacturers. This allows us to have better buying power and offer

lower prices on certain products.

NCGA has a wealth of expertise and connects us to other food co-ops around the country, including ones like ours that started small and reinvested profits in enhancing and expanding their stores. While we've experienced a lot of success and growth, and our day-to-day financial picture is certainly not bleak, we are not currently profitable. Our co-op peers say to fix that, we've got to stop giving away so much in discounts, which is essentially giving away profits before we've made them.

Why become profitable? So we have the ability to be around for the long-term. So we have the ability to grow, expand, and better serve our community. What this means for our owners in the short-term? Starting in the new year, we will offer quarterly weekly floating discounts, possibly adding more days when financially feasible. We're taking other measures as well to become profitable. If we meet this goal, the Co-op board would have the option of offering patronage dividends, in which Co-op owners would receive a portion of the profits.

If you have questions or concerns please contact: matt@astoria.coop or zetty@astoria.coop. Thank you for your continued support!

ASTORIA CO-OP OWNER BENEFITS

Owner Appreciation Days:

Check our newsletter calendar for dates of when you can save up to 10% shopping.

Owner Sale Prices:

Owner-exclusive sales each month.

Owner Produce Specials:

Weekly sales on organic fruits and veggies.

Discounts for Buying Large Quantities:

Order a case of a product and save 10%.

Special Orders:

If we don't carry a product you desire, we may be able to special order it for you.

Patronage Dividends:

Co-op's profits are re-invested in our business or shared with you in profitable years.

Active Democracy:

You can vote for the board members who represent you, or run for the board yourself.

Regular Communication:

We will mail you quarterly newsletters plus keep you up-to-date via member emails.

Support a Healthy Local Economy:

Your share supports local farmers, producers, and a downtown grocery store.

VISIONS OF THE FUTURE

AN UPDATE FROM THE CO-OP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BY ALLIE EVANS CO-OP BOARD PRESIDENT



As the winter finds its way to us, things appear to be dormant in nature. Seeds remain in the soil collecting all the nutrients and energy they need to become a tree when the time is right. We, as your Board of Directors are in this same seed stage. Taking information we have gleaned from the market survey we had done as well as our store audit from the NCGA, we are armed with what we need to create a vision of what our “tree” will look like when the seed is ready to germinate.

That being said, it is time for us to create a five year vision of what we want our store to look like and where we are going. This will help us with a framework to make decisions about store improvements and other issues. It will also help us to all hold a

common vision that together we can manifest. As the new year rolls around, the Board of Directors and the Management Team will be having a retreat to do just that. We will come up with our dream of the future Co-op, and work toward making that dream a reality.

The Board of Directors has two vacant seats right now. If you are interested in serving on the Board and being a part of this visioning process, please let us know. We have a description of the position in the store. Feel free to come check out a meeting and see if it is something that might interest you.

Thank you all for continuing to support our Coop. The future looks very bright and exciting for us. Happy Holidays and Happy Shopping!