



Co-op News

A bi-monthly publication for members of the Olympia Food Co-op and its surrounding communities

August / September 2005

Left Foot Organics: More than Local Produce

By **Kim Langston** and **Erin Majors**, Staff Members



Do you ever wonder where those robust heads of lettuce, spicy bunches of mustard greens, and deliciously crunchy bundles of bok choy come from? Have you noticed that these items are often locally grown and delivered to the Co-op fresh from the farm to our cooling racks? Here at the Co-op we spent a great deal of time collaborating with local growers and producers to make good food accessible to more people while supporting local production. One such farm is Left Foot Organics.

It was a cool, cloudy June day when we set out to meet the staff and growers of Left Foot Organics. Situated on an old dairy farm fifteen minutes south of Olympia, Left Foot Organics is bringing inspiration and tasty organic food to the people of the region. Founded in 2001 by veteran USDA agricultural economist Ann Vandeman, Left Foot sets itself apart from most market farms. Whereas most local organic farms in the region are for profit, Left Foot is a registered 501(c)3 not-for-profit venture. The individuals here strive to produce high quality produce for their CSA subscribers and market customers, in addition to “providing employment and life skills training to people with disabilities and to use these activities as a means of educating the public about people with disabilities and the need for inclusion.”

With little more than two acres currently in production, and 10-12 developmentally disabled growers on staff, the folks out here are busy planting, weeding, tending, and harvesting over fifty varieties of vegetables. They have now ventured into growing vegetable starts and perennial crops as well. Left Foot’s success is largely attributable to the dedicated and spirited folks who work their hoes and shovels where their good intentions lead them. Vandeman would likely agree that

none of this would have been possible without the generous support of local businesses, farmers, unions, volunteers, community members, friends, a caring staff, and the dedicated growers who work the land daily.

Left Foot is a reminder that people with disabilities are often overlooked and undervalued in our culture. Very few businesses truly embrace the opportunity to work with the developmentally disabled (DD) and even fewer actually take up the arduous task of equipping them with the tools they will need to succeed. At Left Foot, the development and growth of the individual is as important as that of the plants in their care. Vandeman states that “we want the community that these folks work in to be welcoming them—in employment, in school, in social life—and so we’re creating that kind of environment here on the farm where everybody is working together toward common goals and contributing to the best of their abilities.”

This goal is achieved in a variety of ways. One way is through programs such as Growing Partners, a collaborative endeavor with Children and Youth Services (CYS), which attempts to model inclusive community development by fostering relationships with typically developing youth and developmentally disabled youth. The hope is that the youth will take the knowledge, skills, and compassion they gain in the program with them throughout their lives. This relationship can help break down the pressures of peer modeling and provide a safe space for people with DD to feel integrated and supported. Inclusion is key to this work because people with DD often communicate differently, sometimes non-verbally, and without an inclusive environment, they are shut out and alienated.



As we walk amongst the rocky, weedy fields of lettuce, basil, cabbage, and other sundry offerings I begin to feel my body relax. Suddenly the cars passing nearby are less noticeable, and the sound of Ann’s voice is more audible. I even reach down and start pulling weeds from the parsley as Ann introduces us to Heide, one of Left Foot’s oldest growers and best friends. Heide loves the farm and is clearly proficient in her work. Where she was once very shy and in need of a great deal of one-on-one coaching, she now works independently and steadily.

You can find Left Foot certified organic produce at the farm stand on Case Road, the Co-op, the OlySunday Market in downtown, at both the Proctor and downtown Tacoma farmer’s markets, Bayview, and Ralph’s Thriftway. If you are interested in volunteering with Left Foot, give Kristin Ohler, AmeriCorps volunteer coordinator, a call. Contributions can be made in person at the farm or online at leftfootorganics.org. All contributions are tax deductible and, in some cases, come with a gift.

Left Foot Organics

11122 Case Road, Bldg L
Olympia, WA 98512
360.402.3748
<http://www.leftfootorganics.org>

Mission: Left Foot Organics promotes self-sufficiency, inclusion and independence for people with developmental disabilities in Thurston County by providing meaningful employment, training and related opportunities in the production and marketing of high quality, fresh organic food.

Cover—Ann Vandeman harvests edamame.

Above—(Top): Erin Majors, Kim Langston and Ann Vandeman;
(Middle): Heidi Preston enjoys parsley harvest; (Bottom): Production Manager,
Beth Leimbach, organizes crop starts growing in the greenhouse.

PHOTOS: Patrice Barrentine

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Westside Store

921 N. Rogers • Olympia, WA 98502
(360) 754-7666

Open every day, 9am - 8pm

Eastside Store

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Open every day, 9am - 9pm

Both Co-ops are open every day of the year, except New Year's Day, January 1st, for inventory.

The purpose of the Olympia Food Co-op is to contribute to the health and well-being of people by providing wholesome foods and other goods and services, accessible to all through a locally-oriented, collectively managed, not-for-profit cooperative organization that relies on consensus decision-making. We strive to make human effects on the earth and its inhabitants positive and renewing and to encourage economic and social justice. Our goals are to:

- **Provide** information about food
- **Make** good food accessible to more people
- **Support** efforts to increase democratic process
- **Support** efforts to foster a socially and economically egalitarian society
- **Provide** information about collective process and consensus decision-making
- **Support** local production
- **See** to the long-term health of the business
- **Assist** in the development of local community resources.

Opinions expressed in the **Co-op News** are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Co-op Staff, Board of Directors, Co-op Advertisers or anyone else. Co-op members are welcome to respond.

The **Co-op News** is published on a bi-monthly basis and comes out in February, April, June, August, October and December. Please contact the editor, Jennifer Shafer, at 360-789-7313 or at olycoopnews@yahoo.com to discuss your article idea or advertising inquiry. You may also leave messages in the newsletter box at either Co-op or mail them to either store, Attention: Co-op News.

Acceptance of advertising does not indicate endorsement by the Co-op of the product or service offered.

<http://www.olympiafood.coop>



Board Report

By **Joanne McCaughan**, Board Member

During the months of May and June the Co-op Board was quite busy with several special meetings to finish work on the proposed amendments to the By-laws. As consensus decision-making is central to the functioning of the Co-op, many perspectives and viewpoints will have been considered by the time the final proposal is ready for action by the membership. This fall, members will be able to vote on the proposal to establish a member initiative process. Please read the article on page 5 to get the whole story.

Now is the time to start thinking about running for the Board. The next issue of the newsletter will be at Board election time! Every year we ask you all to consider serving your Co-op as a Board member. It is a very rewarding way to get involved in the Co-op. These are exciting times for us. If you'd like more information about Board membership you can talk with Eliza or Harry in the stores, or just come to a monthly Board meeting. These are held on the fourth Thursday of each month at the Security Building (corner of 4th and Washington) in the Co-op Office on the third floor, room 320. We may move the meeting to a larger room in the same building, but will post a notice on the door.

In other news, the Board has recently had some interesting visits from members who want us to get involved in their projects. As always, the Board welcomes and encourages members to attend these monthly meetings and to stay as long as they wish. If you'd like to present an idea or solicit the Board's involvement, please contact Harry or Eliza, Staff who attend Board meetings, and they will get you on our agenda. We have very full agendas, so the earlier you can contact them, the better.

For example, at the May meeting there was a visit from two TESC students, David and Lee (sorry, no last names are in the record), who had a proposal to present regarding setting up a "cash card account" system. Their quick presentation was very well done,

and they were directed to discuss their idea with the Co-op bookkeepers. Then, in June, a presentation was provided by community member Ian Kirouac, from the proposed Olympia Peace and Justice Center. Ian gave a 10 minute presentation about how such a Center could be established here in the Olympia area, and he gave examples of some existing centers in other communities. The Board consented to endorse the idea. This is in the very early planning stages, but the plan would be to co-locate non-profit agencies and progressive businesses in a single structure. This would allow for easy networking and some shared services funded by community membership.

At the May meeting, the Board heard a proposal from Barry Cannon representing The Gleaners Coalition, a group working toward establishment of a community-run kitchen/restaurant which will allow people who are hungry to have access to food by working at the business. The entire project involves collecting fresh produce from farms and other establishments like the Co-op; for example, gleanings that which is left after the market is saturated, or left in the fields to be harvested later. An overabundance of food is often available, and the Co-op will work on this project to help ensure food distribution improves so that hunger can be prevented. The Co-op is currently investigating different options for how we might get involved in this project.

Each summer the Board spends time working on long range planning. While this summer is no different in some ways, the Co-op is already busy implementing many aspects of recent planning efforts. Looking at our healthy financial picture and the consistently busy stores, the Board has decided to focus the summertime planning work on developing a process to address the Co-op's expansion issues. We will meet for a retreat at the end of August. Look to a future newsletter article for specific details on that very important meeting.



Protect Yourself from Fraud

By **Darlene Morales**, TULIP Staff

Have you ever received e-mail from someone you've never met, asking you to do something seemingly innocent and get paid for it?

Have you ever received a phone call from someone telling you that you've won a great deal of money, and all you have to do is pay the taxes up front in order to receive a check?

Have you ever had your mail stolen and your checks used fraudulently?

Have you ever been befriended by someone who you later discover has used your identity or your credit?

Unfortunately, it is likely that some of you will experience a fraud or scam such as those described above during your lifetime. We at Tulip Cooperative Credit Union have seen the aftermath of some of these scams. We care about our membership and hate to see any one of them hurt by these activities. So, we are compelled to provide you with these tips.

- The first thing to realize is that it can happen to you, so you do need to take steps to protect yourself.
- Review your credit report at least annually to make sure you know what it contains.

continued on page 3

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Finance Report

Discounts Put Ideals Into Action

By **Kitty Koppelman**, Staff Member

Let's face it, finance reports can be pretty boring. Most people would much rather talk about philosophy or social issues than balance sheets and budget reports. But at the Oly Food Co-op, we pride ourselves on the fact that we express our philosophies through our financial behavior. Some obvious ways we put our philosophy into action are through our product selection practices and our donations process. One of the most significant ways that may not be so obvious is through our discount system. Discounts recognize Co-op members who have particular needs, and reward members who help keep the business going.

At our Co-op, the prices on the shelves are member prices. Non-members are charged an additional 10% at the checkstands. So all members receive a membership benefit every time they shop.

Working Member and Staff Discount

Our Co-op relies on volunteers to help the paid staff run the stores. The philosophy is that since the members own the place, they ought to be able to help run it. And like most retail businesses, if you run the place, you'll probably pay a little less than everybody else. Volunteer working members receive a 25% discount on purchases. Co-op Staff people also receive this discount. Over 200 volunteers and over 50 staff people help us keep everything running smoothly. In 2004, volunteers and staff received just over \$106,000 in discounts.

Senior/disabled Discount

The Co-op offers a free lifetime membership and a 10% discount to anyone who is over 62 years old, or who identifies themselves as disabled. We have around 3500 Senior

and 500 Disabled members, and in 2004, they received over \$71,000 in discounts.

Low Income Discount

In 1998, the Co-op created a class of membership for people who identify themselves as low-income. Low-income members also receive a free membership and a 10% discount for one year, and the membership can be renewed if the low-income criteria still apply. We currently have around 1200 low-income members, and in 2004 they received almost \$88,000 in discounts.

Non-member Markups

We make it very easy to join the Co-op. In addition to the options above, a mere \$29 will buy a regular lifetime membership. Most other food co-ops require a substantial cash outlay in order to join. Since it's so easy to join we don't get a lot of business from non-members, so our 10% non-member markup is relatively small. In 2004, we received around \$5,500 in non-member markups.

2004	West	East	Total
Volunteer & Staff Discount	\$ (45,444)	\$ (60,854)	\$ (106,297)
Senior / Disabled Discount	\$ (17,947)	\$ (53,241)	\$ (71,188)
Low Income Discount	\$ (44,235)	\$ (43,376)	\$ (87,611)
Non-Member Markup	\$ 1,864	\$ 3,692	\$ 5,557

Our Co-op started as a food-buying club, whose members enjoyed lower-than-retail prices in exchange for their contributions to operating the business. Over the years since food co-ops began, many have discontinued their volunteer systems. Through our



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Through the discounts we offer to members who are Senior, Disabled, or Low-income, we are recognizing the unfortunate fact that in our world, there are classes of people whose access to food and other goods are limited by forces that may be beyond their control. By offering these discounts, the Co-op is more accessible and affordable to a broader spectrum of our community, and good food and other Co-op products reach more people.

Every Co-op is unique, and each one reflects the personality of the members who created and use it. Membership policies, discounts, capital investments, and patronage refunds

are some of the ways in which individual Co-ops can determine how they want to organize their financial activities. Our Co-op's mission states that our purpose is "to contribute to the health and well-being of people by providing wholesome foods and other goods and services, accessible to all" and "to encourage economic and social justice." Our discount programs help to make the Co-op more participatory and accessible, and through these compensations, we recognize the inherent effect that economics have on personal nutrition and choice. In 2004, discounts on sales at the Co-op totaled over \$250,000 (3.38% of total sales). This is one of the many places where philosophy and finances intersect, and we look forward to fulfilling the goals of improving accessibility and sustainability this way in our community for many years to come.

Olympia Food Co-op 2004 Income Statement (pre-income tax)	
Sales (after discounts)	7,408,196
Cost of Goods Sold	(5,284,867)
Gross Revenue from Sales	2,123,329
Other Revenue	12,615
Total Revenue	\$ 2,135,944
Community and Marketing Expenses	60,064
Staffing Expenses	1,582,622
Operations Expenses	317,247
Depreciation Expense	49,878
Interest Expense	15,527
Total Expenses	\$ 2,025,338
Net Income	\$ 110,606

Fraud continued from page 2

- Use a shredder to destroy personal information you are throwing away (including those annoying credit card offers).
- Monitor your bank statements and your account balances (on-line, via phone, etc)—not only is this a good idea from a money-management perspective, but it will also alert you to any unaccounted-for activity on your account.
- Mail your bills in a secured mailbox or at the post office.
- Do not have your Social Security Number printed on your checks AND don't keep the card in your wallet.
- Keep all personal information in a safe place where others cannot get to it.
- Consider opting-out of unsolicited credit card offers (1-888-5-OPTOUT).
- Remember that if it sounds too good to be true—IT IS!! Scam artists play on your desires and emotions. Don't fall prey to the ploy of getting something for nothing.

- This list is not exhaustive — just some basic steps for protection, so use Tulip Credit Union as a resource when you have questions.

Remember, Tulip credit union is available to you to use as your financial institution. While our focus is on helping the low-income population of Thurston County by providing quality, low-cost banking services, financial education and counseling, we also welcome those of you who are members of the Olympia Food Coop (regardless of your income level) to use our services. By doing this you help to support our mission and you contribute to your own community in a positive way.

We all pay for the fraudulent acts of a few. We hope these tips can help you avoid becoming a victim.

TULIP Cooperative Credit Union is located inside the Eastside Co-op. Hours are 11-4 on Monday, Friday, and Saturday and Wednesdays 11-8. All Co-op members are eligible to join. You can also call 570-2292 for more information.

Buy an ad in the Co-op News!!

Business Card Size:
\$45 single run
\$35 for two or more consecutive

Double Business Card
\$75 single run
\$65 for two or more consecutive

Circulation: 5-6,000 Bi-monthly to Co-op members and at local distribution points throughout the community.

Submissions: Contact Jennifer Shafer at (360)-789-7313 or at olycoopnews@yahoo.com

A'Planning We Will Go

By **Harry Levine**, Short & Long Term Planning Coordinator and Staff Rep on the Board

Generally speaking, the Board of Directors holds a summer planning retreat. After reviewing the Co-op mission statement, the Board brainstorms organizational goals to be accomplished in the upcoming year as well as goals to be considered over the next 3 to 5 years. In the fall, the Board submits the brainstorm to the Staff and the Co-op Membership for feedback. After reviewing the feedback, the Board approves a batch of short and long-term goals.

An ambitious slate of goals were approved in December of 2004. Below is a summary of progress (or lack thereof) we've made on these goals in the last six months:

An ambitious slate of goals were approved in December of 2004.

New & Ongoing Short Term Goals

(To be completed before or in 2005)

1 Complete By-laws review w/respect to member involvement & governance.

A By-Laws Committee comprised of members from the Board, the general membership, and the staff worked feverishly to produce recommendations for by-laws changes. After months of review and discussion, the Board will be presenting a slew of by-laws changes for membership vote this fall. For an in-depth report on

the process and timeline, see the article by Board Member Jason Baghboudarian on page 5 of this issue.

2 Develop strategy to increase member involvement including web bulletin board, member handbook, efforts to increase voter turnout, etc.

The Outreach & Education Committee of the Board continues to work on these issues. There is now a Co-op chat room or online forum on our website at olympiafood.coop. Based on recommendations from the By-Laws subcommittee, the Board plans to implement a Member Relations Committee sometime after the fall elections.

3 Develop strategies for improving Volunteer Working Member involvement & input in Co-op operations and organization.

The Staff has substantially increased hours in volunteer coordination. Strong efforts have ensued in recruitment, training, and retention. Orientations have expanded as we keep seeking ways to strengthen our amazing volunteer system. Please see training opportunities in this (and every) Co-op News.

4 Complete revision and restructuring of cashiering system.

We currently have a confusing hybrid cashiering system with a combination of volunteer and paid cashiers. We are working with Staff and cashiers to create a coherent and effective system for everyone involved. We expect to have some solutions to consider in the near future.

5 Support Staff efforts to restructure staff system thru review & evaluation.

The Staff has been operating as a collective since the Co-op opened in 1977. We have grown from a paid staff of 5 operating one store to a staff of 53 operating 2 stores. Sales have grown from \$500,000 per year to over \$8 million projected for 2005. The collective restructured in 1986 and made

lots of adjustments and adaptations in opening the Eastside store in 1994 (staff doubled overnight). In 2002, we began to examine our staffing system and consider new ways to operate collectively. This

is a long (and sometimes excruciating) process, and Staff is currently working on a complete work plan. There have been and will be updates and in-depth articles detailing this process in every issue of the Co-op News.

6 Complete revision of hiring process.

A committee formed in the past year to conduct an overhaul of the Co-op hiring process and procedures. This work is well underway and should be completed in 2005.

7 Create Mission Statement and Guidelines for staff compensation.

Staff submits budget proposals for labor costs that are included in the Board-approved, overall operating budget. Wages and benefits have been a yearly negotiation process within Staff as to how to allocate the labor budget funds. What should wages, benefits, bonuses, pensions, etc be? This goal is to create guidelines that can facilitate the process and clearly illuminate the organizational view and goals for compensation. While this is a wonderful goal, it is on the back burner at this moment, as much of our planning time is going towards the Staff Restructuring process.

8 Create a Local Product Committee.

We have a functioning local Farm Committee. We would like to create a committee that not only links with local producers of all types, but helps create, support, and facilitate more local production. Staff is now mobilizing to initiate this exciting new committee.

9 Implement more sustainable technologies and systems.

There is a lot of old and new green technology happening. The Board has just started a new Energy Committee. We plan to research and implement systems as an ongoing goal and value of the Co-op as well.

10 Link financial and pricing strategies to organizational goals.

The Co-op has always been careful in financial planning. Efforts have been made to minimize debt load and budget conservatively. We own the Westside store and property free and clear, and will own the Eastside, as well, within 10 years. The business has been successful, and growth has been constant and strong. Mark-ups have

essentially stayed unchanged or have gotten lower over the past 25 years. The Co-op Mission Statement directs the Co-op to be responsible for a lot more than selling natural foods. This goal is to conduct careful and thoughtful analysis about how the Co-op deals with all the money issues and to develop a holistic strategy for meeting our goals and mission statement. The Finance Committee and the Bookkeepers are trying to wrap their brains around this goal.

Long Term Goals

(Started in 2005 or later & completed in 2006 and beyond)

1 Perform an organizational assessment for space needs & then create solutions.

This is the biggie. The Co-op continues to grow between 10% and 15% yearly. The Westside store is shoulder-to-shoulder shopping. Finding space to park in the Eastside parking lot is getting more difficult every day. Members keep asking when the downtown Co-op will be opening.

Determining if, when, and how to expand is extremely challenging at the Co-op. The Board has decided to focus on space needs and expansion issues at its summer retreat. There are plenty of great goals to continue working on in 2006 and beyond, so instead of creating new ones, the Board will put all of its energy into this goal. We want to create an exhaustive and inclusive process for all corners of the Co-op community to come together to create solutions for our growth and space needs. Stay tuned!!!

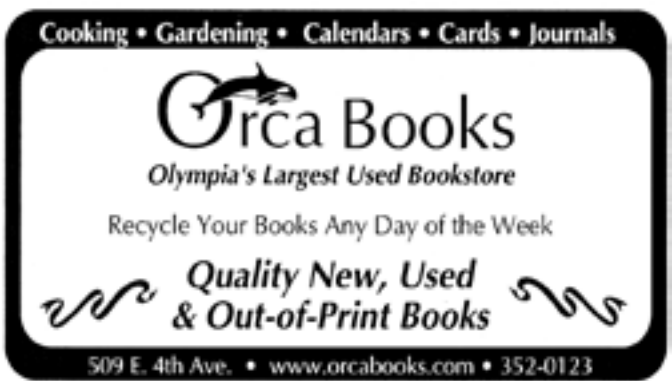
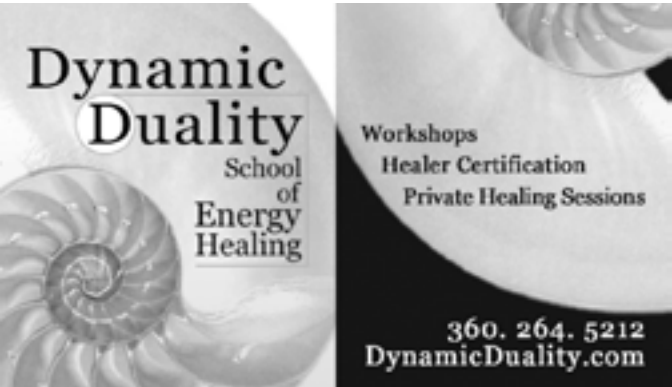
2 Develop a process for being strategic in Capital Improvements.

Generally, we fix or replace equipment when it breaks. Sometimes we dream up and purchase new equipment that we believe will improve our stores. This goal is to create a process that works holistically. Inventory and assess all of our equipment and develop replacement schedules. Try to develop budgets that spread out the necessary improvements. The Staff and Finance Committee (of the Board) are working together to improve our planning

Here are some of the other long-term goals established in December 2004. We have barely scratched the surface on any of these:

- Increase political involvement consistent with Co-op mission statement.
- Support formation of a new non-profit to provide consensus training and education and facilitation services.
- Develop Co-op education programs for kids.

If you want to give your input, feedback, musings or even new goals and ideas, send it to Harry at: olyfoodcoop@juno.com or call **357-1106**



Committee Reports

By **Gail Sullivan**, Board Member

Local Farms Committee Report

The Local Farms Committee has been working on making it easier for you to connect with the farmers that sell their produce to the Co-op. On the first Friday of every month, the Co-op is sponsoring Meet the Farmer night at Fertile Ground Guesthouse. Farmers eat free, and everyone else donates money for their wood-fired pizza. On August 5th the funds will be raised for The Gleaners Coalition, and on September 2nd, it's a fund-raiser for Left Food Organics. Come out and meet the farmers and help support the non-profits that work hard in the fields.

Another way we're honoring our farmers is at the Harvest Party on September 11th at Priest Point Park. Everyone is encouraged to come to this big celebration. (See details on back page.)

Look for the new Message Boards at both Co-ops where farmers can leave notes to you and visa versa.

Outreach & Education Committee Report

The Co-op continues to collaborate with Olympia Community FreeSchool to put on Community Kitchen classes. On August 16th, we present "Growing Sprouts." On August 23rd, we present "How to Cook Gluten-free and Dairy-free Quick Meals." A blueberry field trip is planned. Watch the Co-op doors for signage with details on locations and time. We usually offer about 12 classes per quarter and average about 8 students per class. Anyone can facilitate a class by contacting FreeSchool at 352-4165.

The Co-op's website is sporting a nifty Online Forum for Co-op members to discuss their opinions and post their events, services and housing needs. The address is <http://olympiafood.coop/forums>. Please drop by and post.

Co-op Committee Meeting Schedule

August

3rd—Standing Hiring Committee Meeting
12th—Newsletter Committee Meeting
17th—Finance Committee Meeting
25th—Board of Directors' Meeting

September

7th—Standing Hiring Committee Meeting
8th—Outreach & Education Committee Mtg
9th—Newsletter Committee Meeting
21st—Finance Committee Meeting
22nd—Board of Directors' Meeting

The work of the Co-op's Board of Directors is assisted by several standing committees, which meet at least monthly. Meeting dates are subject to change. For more info about meetings, please call the stores.



You get excited when there's no line at the Co-op register.
You have no problem with those roundabouts on Harrison (but what's with those other people?)
You think Lacey should host next year's Lakefair.
You think downtown is cool, and getting cooler.
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Compass Rose Staff



Around 100 Co-op members attended the 2004 annual meeting. Members can participate in a variety of committees.

Bylaws Revision Redux

by **Jason Baghboudarian**; Board member, former Bylaws Committee member

In the recent past, there have been some concerns with member governance at the Co-op. To address these concerns, the Board of Directors chartered the Ad-Hoc Bylaws Committee in November of 2003. The purpose of the Committee was "To thoroughly examine the Bylaws with regard to member involvement in governance culminating in a proposal to the Board that addresses whether Bylaws changes should be proposed to the membership."

Well, we have thoroughly examined with regard, we have culminated, and we have addressed: Should changes to the Bylaws be made with regard to member governance? You betcha; at least, we thought so. You may think differently; and that's what this is all about: The committee has fulfilled its charter by presenting to the Board a proposal to be included on the ballot for the upcoming November Board elections. Read on to see how the process has unfolded, and to see how you can be better informed as to what, if any, changes need to be made to our Bylaws.

These have been an interesting 18 months. During its time together, the committee has held numerous meetings in the downtown office; combing over the Bylaws, looking at every section with member governance in mind. We nipped and tucked, and streamlined what was already there. We designed support structures for member governance, and we developed a significant new addition to the Bylaws themselves.

From the beginning, we wanted to solicit member input in the process of examining the Bylaws. Our meetings were open to the membership, and we hosted two member forums in July 2004. We created Bylaws Notebooks which contain the Bylaws and minutes from all of our committee meetings and both member forums. Of course, there is also space available for members to write comments and opinions about all things Bylaws. These notebooks are still in the stores today (see sidebar, page 9).

Over those several months, from the spirited forums and committee meetings, we gleaned that the most impor-

tant features on people's minds were exactly those imperative to strong member governance: increased communication, member education, and member involvement.

Our proposal to the board included recommendations for policy and structure development related to these areas, most notable of which is a Member Relations Committee. This new committee would facilitate communication among, and consist of, representatives from different aspects of the Co-op: the Board, the Staff, and the membership-at-large. It would do this, in part, by creating and maintaining a Member Handbook which would serve as a comprehensive resource of policies and procedures. We were pleased and encouraged to learn that many ideas we had about improving these areas were already being implemented by the Board and staff. One of the more obvious of these is before you right now: the new and revised format of the (regularly published!) Co-op newsletter.

Of course, our proposal also included changes to the Bylaws themselves. These are mostly simple changes in wording or housekeeping; mainly adjustments to provide for more transparency and accessibility to the inner workings of the Co-op. These weren't changes in practice so much as putting already existing practice into writing. This was mainly to account for the fact that the last revision of the Bylaws was in 1998.

One of the most significant changes to the Bylaws would be an addition to provide for a Member-Initiated Ballot procedure. This was designed to empower members by giving them another method to resolve concerns or to bring issues to a vote by the membership.

Usually, when members have concerns, they talk to Staff members to resolve their issues. Since the Staff are the members most knowledgeable in the operation of the stores, the vast majority of concerns are handled this way. If, however, this doesn't resolve the issue, members then have the recourse to bring their concerns to members of a

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Volunteers from Across the Globe Keep the Co-op Going Strong

By **Amanda Jarman**, Staff Member

“In my experience, when I first came to America, no one was reaching out and welcoming me to this community,” said Eunsil Kim, Eastside Co-op working member coordinator. That is why she is reaching out a hand to immigrants and foreign-exchange students in the Olympia area. As a working member coordinator



The next time you pull into the Eastside store, take a look at the landscaping and enjoy a lunch at our outdoor picnic table. Thanks to about a dozen volunteers, the Co-op’s landscaping received a makeover during two Co-op **CLEAN-UP DAYS** in May and June.

RIGHT: Lemur and Colleen work on whittling down the pile.



at the Co-op and first generation immigrant from Korea, she is excited to invite people who speak English as their second language to join the Co-op community—and to convince them to volunteer.

Eunsil has been doing outreach to immigrant and foreign exchange organizations and educational programs, including Centro Integral Educativo Latino de Olympia (CIELO), the EF International Language School at Evergreen, St. Martin’s College English as a Second Language (ESL) program, and the Refugee and Immigrant Service Center. She has given several presentations about the Co-op, during which she shares the history of the Co-op, its mission statement,

membership options, and volunteer opportunities. Eunsil shares the benefits of volunteering at the Co-op. Volunteer experience at the Co-op builds job experience (both for immigrants and for exchange students who can use it on a resume when they return home). Eunsil is committed to the Co-op’s mission of encouraging economic and social justice.

continued on page 7

CLEAN-UP DAYS PHOTOS: Andy, Kim, Lemur & Tasha take a well-deserved break for some hot dogs.

Volunteer Events

The Co-op relies on volunteer cashiers, stockers, cleaners, and others to help run the stores. Be a weekly volunteer in the store! Attend a **Volunteer Intro Tour** (V.I.T.). Come tour the store and learn about volunteer opportunities at the Co-op. If you are interested in volunteering, please attend this 1-1/2 hour orientation. This is the first step to getting a weekly shift. Call the stores to sign up.

Cleaning Parties happen several times per month at each store. They’re a great way to volunteer three hours of time and get to know your Co-op. Help us get the stores looking spic & span. Come help us scrub, wipe, wash, polish and clean the stores after they’re closed. Snacks will be provided for all cleaning parties, and you are encouraged to bring music you’d like to listen to.

August-September 2005

Save the Date for **Fall Inventory**. Volunteer where you really count—Co-op Inventory. Inventory is a fun and easy way to help out your Co-op. The next inventory will be Friday, September 30 at 7 p.m. We do inventory at both stores four times a year. Please join us for food, friends and fun, while we count everything in the store.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31	1 August	2 Eastside V.I.T., 6:30pm	3	4 Eastside Cleaning Party, 9pm	5	6
7 Eastside V.I.T., noon Westside Cleaning Party, 8pm	8	9	10 Westside V.I.T., 6:30pm	11 Eastside V.I.T., 6:30pm	12	13
14 Westside Cleaning Party, 8pm	15	16 Eastside V.I.T., 6:30pm	17 Eastside Bulk Cleaning Party, 8:30pm	18	19	20
21 Eastside V.I.T., noon Westside Cleaning Party, 8pm	22	23	24 Westside V.I.T., 6:30pm	25 Eastside V.I.T., 6:30pm Eastside Cleaning Party, 9pm	26	27
28 Westside Cleaning Party, 8pm	29	30 Eastside V.I.T., 6:30pm	31	1 Sept Eastside Cleaning Party, 9pm	2	3
4 Eastside V.I.T., noon Westside Cleaning Party, 8pm	5	6 Eastside V.I.T., 6:30pm	7 Westside V.I.T., 6:30pm	8 Eastside Cleaning Party, 9pm	9	10
11 Harvest Party, 3pm Westside Cleaning Party, 8pm	12	13	14	15 Eastside V.I.T., 6:30pm	16	17
18	19	20 Eastside V.I.T., 6:30pm	21 East Bulk Clean Party, 8:30pm Westside V.I.T., 6:30pm	22 Eastside Cleaning Party, 9pm	23	24
25 Westside Cleaning Party, 8pm	26	27	28	29 Eastside V.I.T., 6:30pm Eastside Cleaning Party, 9pm	30 Fall Inventory, 7pm (both stores)	1 October

For more information about volunteering at the Co-op, please contact Amanda or Eunsil at the Eastside store, (360) 956-3870 or Rebeca or Tatiana at the Westside store, (360) 754-7666. Or stop by either store to get more information, fill out a volunteer application, or sign up for an upcoming event.

Volunteers *continued from page 6*

She believes it is important to share the Co-op's good food at low cost philosophy with more people.

It is difficult to navigate both a new language and a new community at the same time. Most of the ESL students at Evergreen and St. Martin's are exchange students here for a short period of time. As foreign students in the U.S., sometimes it is difficult to overcome isolation in the community they are visiting. Becoming part of the Co-op gives them an opportunity to meet people and learn more about Olympia.

"We give them [exchange students] a chance to be exposed to more of the U.S. culture," Eunsil said. "Both groups [students and immigrants] get a chance to practice English."

When asked why this outreach work is important to her, Eunsil declared, "I have a passion for this work. . . It reminds me of my situation and my family's situation when we first came to America. As a first generation immigrant, I had a hard time adapting to this culture."

Eunsil described how difficult it was to immigrate to the United States without speaking English fluently. She recounts helping her parents with simple tasks such as banking that English speakers take for granted.

Eunsil is eager to extend a welcoming hand to immigrants and visitors who speak

English as a second language. She emphasizes that the people she is making connections with are "very capable, very strong people. They just need guidance."

She wants them to know: "There are options. You can survive this country a little easier than what I had." Her experience gives her insight into what non-fluent English speakers experience in the United States.

"When I went to the EF program presentation, most of my presentation focused on the meanings of words," Eunsil said.

Because the students were still learning English, simply explaining the basics of the Co-op took the better part of an hour. She explained the mission statement, discussing the meaning of terms like egalitarianism, consensus, and collective.

"As a non-native English speaker, I know what these people are going through during that one-hour lecture," she explained with a laugh.

Eunsil also brings bilingual staff and volunteers to presentations as translators. "Having Paty [a Co-op staff member] and Bruce [a working member] there as Spanish-speakers made people much more comfort-

able," Eunsil said. Thus far, Eunsil and other Co-op folks have been well received at the groups she has visited.

"They are actually very excited and they ask a lot of questions," Eunsil reported. She is not only committed to sharing the Co-op with new people, but she is excited to see the Co-op community embrace and reflect multiple cultures.

"We learn from each other," Eunsil points out. She talked about the importance of different cultures meeting and interacting.

"A more diverse culture allows us to share information about food," she points out.

"We can share the foods of our cultures with one another and learn about food from people whose culture it comes from. . . [and] apparently there's some people [on staff] who want to practice their Spanish."

"Having diverse people working in the stores can reduce every-day discrimination because members see more people who speak English as a second language, and people of color," Eunsil said. Encountering more diverse people in our community

continued on page 9



CLEAN-UP DAYS PHOTOS: Andy hauls yet another load of mulch.

Summer Fun at GRuB

By **Emily Hicks**, GRub Events Coordinator

GRuB (Garden Raised Bounty) recently enjoyed one of our most successful springs to date. In Thurston and Mason Counties, our Kitchen Garden Project provided over 110 free vegetable gardens for low-income people (which will feed over 350 people, nearly half of whom are children). Many people were at the heart of our garden-building efforts, including over 50 volunteers and teens employed in GRuB's employment program.

"The growing season is young, but already we are thrilled with the great food we've been growing. . . as a working single mother, I don't always have a lot of time for gardening. Having GRuB install my garden has made a big difference," one 2005 Kitchen Garden Project Recipient reported.

Now summer is upon us, and our focus shifts to our youth employment program. Currently, 19 local teenagers are employed in GRuB's Cultivating Youth Employment Pro-

gram. This summer, these students will be growing and distributing fresh produce for the Thurston Food Bank, running our CSA programs, touring local farms and gardens, and ultimately developing their leadership skills through meaningful engagement with their community. Check out our website (www.goodgrub.org) about summer activities and ways you can become involved in the GRuB family.

To help celebrate our annual accomplishments and stories, make sure you're in town this September! GRuB's annual Seafood at the Schmidt fundraising event will again take place at the historic Schmidt Mansion in Tumwater on Sunday September 18th (4-7pm). Join us for an evening of local seafood, pasta, garden fresh vegetables, music, and a silent auction. All proceeds to benefit GRuB's community programs. Advanced tickets can be purchased at the GRuB office or by calling (360) 753-5522. Tickets are \$25 per adult and \$60 for a family of four.



GRuB workers combine outdoor enjoyment with meaningful, skill-building work. Area youth make community contributions by participating in GRuB's Kitchen Garden Project, and grow, harvest and distribute food through Thurston County's Food Bank and the organization's CSA.

ABOVE: Mina and Richard prune tomatoes.

LEFT: Tony displays the fruits of his labors after a hot day harvesting garlic.

Staff Collective Restructuring Update

By **Harry Levine**, Staff Member

In the last issue of the Co-op News, we introduced the membership to the Staff Restructuring process. We outlined the analysis of the issues facing Staff. We reported our desire to make this a transparent process and informed the membership about the notebook in each store that details the restructuring timeline and process and documents all the work that has been done. If you are interested, ask any Staff member and they will get you the notebook for your perusal. Eliza Welch and I are co-coordinating this process and would be happy to hear your comments, questions, or concerns. We can be reached at 357-1106 or by emailing olyfoodcoop@juno.com

In this issue, we'd like to share the first piece of the restructuring – a newly created and consented upon Purpose, Vision, and Values Statement for Staff. In order to create a new system, we felt we needed to get on the same page in the same book by clearly identifying the purpose of the Staff Collective. In essence, we wanted to establish a strong and clear backbone so that we may effectively build upon it.

We offer to you, (drum roll please)... the Staff Collective Purpose, Vision, and Values Statement!

Our Purpose

The purpose of the collective is to operate the stores of the Olympia Food Co-op as specified in the bylaws and by guidance of the Board of Directors, to provide service to members and customers, and to create a dynamic and healthy workplace.

What We Are Working Toward

The Olympia Food Co-op Staff is working to become a fully empowered workforce, where staff feel fulfilled in their contribu-

tions and are maximizing their potential. We will all enjoy our work, and everyone's work styles will be fully incorporated and valued. The staff will be well educated about our products and services, and we will provide ample consideration and care to our volunteers, our shoppers, and ourselves. We will be an operating example of a consensus-run collective that uses volunteers for operations. All areas of the stores will be 100% staffed at all times, and all volunteer positions will be filled by volunteers.

What We Care About

We are committed to ourselves as individuals and workers and to the collective as a whole.

We value a diverse workforce comprised of unique individuals, honoring the creativity, knowledge, importance, and perception that each person brings to our collective. We commit to, listen to and learn from one another with compassion, and we value conflict resolution as a positive force for learning and growth.

We embrace a workplace that encourages individual and collective empowerment. We believe in consensus decision-making and a non-hierarchical work structure, and we embrace these inherent responsibilities and freedoms. We have pride in our hard work, and we are proud to be workers. We strive for accessible structures and transparency in our power relationships.

We embrace our work against oppression within our collective, our world, and ourselves. We believe in ongoing education for ourselves as individuals and for the collective as a whole. We value our health and safety and promote safe and healthy work habits. We value scheduling systems that balance the needs of the workers and the needs of the organization. We believe in equitable compensation, a livable wage, and the need for social and economic justice throughout the world.

We are committed to the Members of the Co-op

We value providing healthy, organic, locally produced foods, and other products. We honor ourselves and our shoppers by providing excellent customer service and



safe, sanitary stores. We respect and honor members' suggestions, access to, involvement and participation in the work of the Co-op. We believe that members should be encouraged to work in their store, and we appreciate the contributions of all volunteers and members.

We are committed to Our Community and Our World

We value an active and positive role in our greater community, especially to support and promote local producers. We want to support other collective and cooperative endeavors, honoring our part in the cooperative movement's past, present, and future. We utilize and encourage the use of environmentally sustainable methods, products, and efforts to achieve sustainability. We value reducing and reusing resources and treating our work environment and equipment with respect.




Agreements and Accountability

We fulfill our commitments to all of the above through shared realistic agreements and definitions of how we will work together. We expect each other to live within our agreements, and when we do not, we agree to address this occurrence effectively and respectfully. We rely on our ability to give and receive constructive feedback and to be responsive to everyone in the organization. We expect sensitivity and awareness of the harmful effects of oppression in our society, and we agree to work toward understanding the impact of our actions on others. We value accessible, effective planning, and evaluation systems that enable us to grow in our work individually and collectively.



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is everyone's business

Bylaws *continued from page 5*

Board committee, or to the Board itself. Of course, there is also the option of holding a special meeting of the membership. This is all already in the existing Bylaws. The member initiated ballot procedure is something extra designed to give members even more involvement in governance of the Co-op than we already have.

Since the Board received the committee's proposal, we've held several special meetings to consider their suggestions and make revisions. The Board agrees that the collaborative work of the committee and the Board should be voted on by the membership, and this will occur during the fall election cycle.

The proposal will be introduced before the elections first by making it available in both stores in the beginning of September this year, and then by publishing the whole proposal packet in the October newsletter. Members will be asked to vote on the Bylaws Revisions during the Annual Board Elections. The voting period will be from October 15th through November 15th.

We want to make sure you are well informed before you vote! We'll be hosting two member forums, one on September 10th, and one on October 20th, to answer your questions and hear feedback. Outside of these forums, questions and comments should be made in writing; this is so that we all have something to refer to, and to minimize misinterpretation.

Please refer to the sidebar for contact info. Remember, we as members all own and operate the Co-op together; that's what makes our Co-op so unique. Should the Bylaws be changed? If so, how? You decide. Get involved, get informed, and vote!

Bylaws Revision Timeline

November 2003

Ad-Hoc Bylaws Committee chartered by the Board of Directors, committee formed and meetings begin

July 2004

Membership forums held, feedback solicited, meetings continue

December 2004

Bylaws committee submits proposals to Board

January – June 2005

Board meets for special sessions to review and revise proposals

September 1st 2005

Proposed Bylaws revisions in both stores

September 10th 2005, 10am-Noon:
Membership Forum

October 1st 2005

Newsletter published with Bylaws revisions

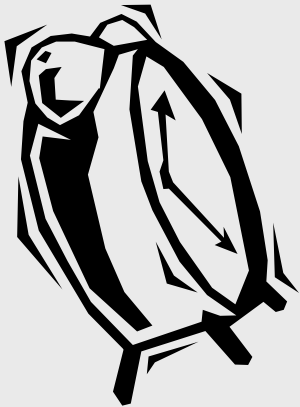
October 15th 2005

Voting period begins

October 20th 2005, 7-9pm
Membership Forum

October 23rd 2005
Annual Membership Meeting

November 15th 2005
Voting period ends



**Questions? Comments?
Let's hear 'em!**

Send us a letter

Olympia Food Co-op (Attn: Bylaws)
3111 Pacific Ave SE, Olympia, 98501 or
921 Rogers St. NW, Olympia 98502

Use the Bylaws notebooks in each store

Westside: Working Member station
Eastside: Bookcase in front of Staff register

email us

ofcbylaws@gmail.com

**visit our on-line forum for
discussion of Co-op Bylaws**

<http://www.olympiafood.coop/forums/viewforum.php?id=14>

Ad-Hoc Bylaws Committee:

Charter: *To thoroughly examine the Bylaws with regard to member involvement in governance culminating in a proposal to the Board that addresses whether bylaws changes should be proposed to the membership.*

Members: *Board:* Shon Forsyth, Ron Lavigne; *Staff:* Eliza Welch; *Members-at-Large:* Jason Baghboudarian, Ann Butler, David Lavender, Lea Mitchell

Volunteers from Across the Globe *continued from page 7*

means increased awareness of different cultures. Eunsil hopes that this awareness will lead to acceptance and celebration of difference. She points out that our mission statement calls for us to work toward an egalitarian society.

When asked to name the biggest challenge facing people in the United States who speak English as a second language, Eunsil did not hesitate: "Discrimination."

"When people have a problem with speaking English, people [whose first language is English] always look at them as not smart, as having a learning disability. This is not true." She gives an example of the EF students at Evergreen—they are

actually college students, which defies many people's assumptions about them.

"If you see someone who doesn't speak English well, respect them. They are a smart person," Eunsil said. "Coming to this culture and facing challenges, this is bravery."

Eunsil has some tips for helping people who speak English as a second language feel more comfortable. "Take a bit longer. Talk slowly. Be a little patient. When you get to know this person, you will be able to communicate better."

"The staff and volunteers are very supportive and I'm so happy this organization actually has concern for this group of people," Eunsil said. "I'm so glad we have staff and members that speak other languages fluently, which leads to a more welcoming environment," she said.

Eunsil recalls Tomoko, an exchange student from Japan who volunteered as a stocker during the spring.

"When I saw Tomoko laughing and enjoying herself, I felt so good," Eunsil said.

Eunsil encourages bilingual volunteers to volunteer at the Co-op to help the Co-op be more welcoming to non-fluent English speakers. If you want to help extend a welcome with Eunsil (whether you are bilingual or not), please contact her at the Eastside store at (360) 956-3870.

CLEAN-UP DAYS PHOTOS:
Howard dumps the one millionth load of mulch.



CLEAN-UP DAYS PHOTOS: *Colleen spruces up the bike shed.*



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Halsema-Yogurt Cake

2 eggs
1-1/2 cups cream of wheat
1-1/2 cups sugar
1/4 cup butter, melted
16 oz. Plain yogurt
Juice of 1/2 lemon
1/2 teaspoon baking soda

To make the cake: In a large bowl, beat eggs well. Combine the cream of wheat and sugar; add to eggs along with the butter, beating well. Reduce mixer speed and gradually add yogurt. Combine lemon juice and baking soda; add to batter. Bake in a greased 13 x 9 inch baking pan at 375° F for 25 to 30 minutes, or until golden brown. While warm, drizzle with syrup, below.

Syrup

1-1/2 cups sugar
1-1/4 cups water
Juice of 1/2 lemon and rind
Combine syrup ingredients, including lemon rind, and boil gently 10 minutes. Drizzle cooled syrup over warm cake. Cover tightly to steam about 1 hour. Delicious served same day topped with whipped cream and sliced strawberries, peaches, or blueberries.

Reprinted courtesy of *The Grecian Plate*, a compilation by the Hellenic Ladies Society.

The Wide Wide World of Dairy

By **Maureen Tobin**, Staff Member

Dairy products are easily recognizable to most of us—Americans eat so much dairy that it constitutes 25% of caloric intake in the average diet. Yet even with this kind of familiarity, the Co-op gets lots of questions about dairy products, their nutrition, and the terms used in the industry. Read on, and even the most avid milk drinker is sure to learn something new.

Dairy products commonly refer to foods made from cow's milk, but can also be made from milk of sheep, goats, water buffalo, yaks, horses, and camels. There are over 30 types of products made with milk, many of them originating in parts of Europe, although consumption of milk predates recorded history. Cows were domesticated around 9000 BCE in Libya, and India's Ayurvedic history dates to around 6000 BCE, incorporating milk consumption as important to a healthy life.

Milk is the basis for all other dairy products and is rich in protein, fat, calcium, vitamins A, B, D, and phosphorus. Milk today usually undergoes pasteurization, a heating process that kills microorganisms (raw milk is hard to find, and the FDA has not been supportive of proponents who believe raw milk to be healthier). Most milk is also homogenized, which forces fat globules to become very small and remain evenly dispersed throughout the milk, preventing separation of the cream layer. Milk is available in non-homogenized forms, as well as with many different levels of fat content. Protein and calcium levels remain almost the same regardless of which version of milk you choose.

Cream is the fat skimmed off the top of milk (or separated with machines). **Sour cream** and **crème fraîche** are cream that has been fermented with lactic acid cultures (bacteria).

Buttermilk is a concentrated milk (some of the water removed) that is traditionally the liquid left over from making butter and is often cultured. **Condensed milk** is concentrated by evaporation, and sweetener is added, while **evaporated milk** has had less water removed and is not sweetened.

Butter is mostly milk fat, made by churning cream for long periods of time. **Ghee** is clarified butter, made by gentle heating of butter and removing the solid matter.

Cheese is produced in at least a thousand different varieties, and many a book has been written about the art of cheese. It is made by first culturing milk with bacteria, then separating it into curds (the soft solids) and whey (the liquid). **Whey** contains protein, vitamins, and minerals and is used to make ricotta. The next step for fresh curds is to be aged and ripened in many different ways, using special molds and bacteria, herbs, spices, etc.

Cottage cheese is cheese curds that are not fully drained and pressed so that some whey remains. Pressed cottage cheese becomes hoop cheese, farmer's cheese, pot cheese, or queso blanco. **Cream cheese** is made by adding cream to milk and curdling it, forming a rich cheese meant to be consumed fresh. It is basically an American version of the **French Neufchatel**, which is made only with milk.

Rennet is an enzyme found in the stomach of cows, the most common curdling agent used in cheese making. It is still the most popular agent in Europe, but many producers in the U.S. use commercial rennet, produced from genetically modified yeast or bacteria that yields consistent quality. In the Mediterranean region, **cynara** from wild thistles is used in place of rennet for cheese making.

Yogurt and other cultured milk products were probably the first milk foods to be made by people and may well be the best for you. Milk is cultured with *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* and *Streptococcus thermophilus* (and sometimes others) and allowed to ferment. It is the presence of beneficial bacteria in yogurt that is responsible for many of the health benefits.

Kefir is made from lactic acid-producing bacteria similar to yogurt and also yeast complexes.

Soured milk is similar to yogurt and kefir but made with different bacteria and resulting in a slightly different taste.

Many people cannot consume milk products due to allergies to casein (the protein) or intolerance to lactose (the milk sugar). When milk is cultured, however, lactic acid decreases the amount of lactose, so many people who are lactose intolerant can tolerate yogurt. Eating yogurt increases friendly bacteria in the GI tract and can help with diarrhea, constipation, colitis, and other disorders, as well as increasing absorption of minerals and synthesizing of B vitamins. Some studies have shown that eating yogurt can lower cholesterol levels in the bloodstream. The yogurt must contain live active cultures to get these benefits, which are destroyed if yogurt is pasteurized after culturing.

Goat's milk has a different fat structure than cow's milk and is considered by many to be more digestible. It is also naturally homogenized, avoiding the need for

mechanical processing. Goats are usually healthy animals and graze more freely than most cows, eating a larger variety of plants and possibly passing on more nutrients as well. The availability of goat milk products has been growing in recent years, and the Co-op hopes to also expand its goat milk and cheese selection.



The inhumane treatment of dairy cows in factory farming conditions has led many to forgo milk. Cows can live 15-20 years in natural conditions, but on modern farms cows are often slaughtered after 4 years. Add to this the prevalent use of antibiotics and rBGH (recombinant bovine growth hormone), and today's milk supply does not seem so healthy. Use of rBGH has changed the dairy industry dramatically: in 1940 cows averaged 2.3 tons of milk production per year, today some cows yield 30 tons per year. This hormone is linked to cancer in humans and frequent damage and infections of the udder, which can pass into milk.

What can you do to ensure you're getting good quality dairy products? There is a strong and growing movement in the Northwest back toward family farms, where cows are allowed to live freer lives without drugs. There are several growing dairies in our local area as well, including Twin Oaks Dairy and the Estrella Family Creamery. Organic standards do not allow the use of hormones and antibiotics, and the Organic Valley brand is a cooperative of family farms that is joining forces to change inhumane and harmful industry practices. Supporting this type of local production can help bring about change and ensure healthier dairy products.

Proper intake of calcium in the American diet is often considered only possible with eating dairy products. This is something of a myth considering how much milk most people consume, and we still have widespread calcium deficiency problems such as arthritis and osteoporosis. It's not that milk isn't a source of calcium, but the problem seems to be absorption in the body, which requires adequate magnesium, phosphorous, and vitamins A, C and D. Other factors such as salt, alcohol, and caffeine consumption can draw calcium out of the bones. The best answer seems to be eating a balanced diet and adding several good sources of calcium, such as tofu and kale. The body cannot live on milk alone.

Want to try making yogurt for yourself?

Yiaourti-Greek style homemade yogurt

3/4 cup instant, nonfat dry milk
1 quart whole milk
2 Tablespoons yogurt starter



continued on page 11

In top of double boiler, dissolve dry milk and whole milk. Heat until milk mixture comes almost to a boil, stirring occasionally. Remove pan; cool about 30 minutes or to 115 to 120 degrees. (A sure way to test is to stick a finger in the hot milk until you can count to 20.) Do not allow milk to get any cooler. Stir starter yogurt and 1/2 cup whole milk together and blend into pan of milk. Pour into containers of a commercial yogurt maker and incubate for 12 hours; or pour into a bowl, cover with a heavy towel and place in a warm place about 6 to 8 hours. (A gas oven with pilot is often just right, or place a saucepan of hot water

in the oven to raise the temperature.) When thickened, place 4 thicknesses of paper towels on top of yogurt to absorb the water. Cover bowl with aluminum foil and refrigerate. Replace paper towels as needed. Yogurt will keep up to 7 days. Makes 8 cups.

To thicken yogurt or make yogurt cheese:

Line a strainer, colander, funnel, or plastic drip coffee maker (that sits on a cup) with dampened cheesecloth, muslin, napkin, towel, or paper towels. Spoon yogurt into strainer and place over a bowl.



Cover the strainer with plastic wrap and place in fridge. Allow to strain for a couple hours for thicker yogurt or overnight for a cream cheese-like consistency.

Yogurt cheese can be spiced up and used for dips and spreads, or sweetened and used in desserts.

Some of the Co-op’s Product Buying Guidelines relative to purchasing animal products include:

From the **Statement of Purpose**: “providing wholesome food and other goods, accessible to all... make human effects on the earth and its inhabitants positive and renewing.”

From the **Goals**: “Make good food accessible to more people... Support local production... See to the long-term health of the business.”

From the **Long Range Plan**: Increase the diversity of the product line... increase the diversity of the membership... increase our support for local businesses and organizations producing items purchased by the Co-op.”

Two product lines have been addressed by member ballot. Sale of meat products was limited to naturally or organically raised meat products with some consideration also given to quality of life issues in the raising of the animals...

1. Special Dietary Needs & Desires/ Cultural Considerations: Many Co-op members have special dietary needs and restrictions. The Co-op is committed to carrying products that are low/no salt/sodium, low/no fat/cholesterol, non-dairy, wheat/gluten free, vegetarian/vegan, etc. Co-op members also come from a diversity of cultural backgrounds and lifestyles. Therefore, the Co-op will carry foods that reflect those lifestyles such as kosher foods, Asian

and Macrobiotic foods, and other appropriate culturally specific foods. Lastly, Co-op members’ daily lives and access to money vary greatly. Therefore the Co-op will carry some healthful convenient food options and options for low-cost, healthful foods.

2. Meat & Poultry: The Co-op will carry naturally and organically raised meat and poultry.

Lastly, we believe in making choices available to our members rather than trying, through our buying procedures, to control what people eat. Therefore, we prefer to err on the side of flexibility rather than rigidity.

Complete text of the Product Buying Guidelines are available at both Co-ops. Please ask a staff person if you would like to see them.

Organic Standards Definition Update

By **Maureen Tobin**, Staff Member

Organic refers to foods that were grown, raised, or processed according to standards that are sustainable and humane and do not use chemicals and other harmful substances. To be labeled organic, the product must contain 95-100% organic ingredients and be certified by an accredited agency.

Some examples of organic regulation:

- Specific rules regarding which substances used in production and processing are allowed or prohibited, by recommendation of the National Organic Standards Board
- Land can have no prohibited substances applied to it for at least 3 years before harvest
- Prohibit the use of genetically modified organisms (GMO’s), irradiation, or sewage sludge in organic production

- Prohibit antibiotic and synthetic hormone use in organic meat and poultry
- Require 100% organic feed for organic livestock

In 2002, new USDA regulations under the National Organic Program (NOP) went into effect governing the labeling of foods produced using organic agriculture. These regulations were developed to ensure that organically labeled products meet consistent national standards. The requirements apply to the way the product is created, not to measurable properties of the product itself. Today, all agricultural products labeled “organic” have been verified by a certification agency as meeting or exceeding USDA standards. Washington, California, and Oregon have all had organic certification programs for many years, and most western producers are still using these state agencies’ certification programs. There is no require-

ment to use the USDA seal, which is why many products still use a state’s certification information.

The labeling regulations are now very specific. Products labeled as “100% organic” must contain (excluding water and salt) only organically produced ingredients. The label “organic” can only be used if the product contains at least 95% organic ingredients, and the product must have this amount to use the term organic on its front display. Products that contain 70% organic ingredients can use the phrase “made with organic ingredients” on their front display. Otherwise the term organic can only show up in the ingredient list. These requirements carry some weight, as a penalty of up to \$10,000 can be levied on any person who knowingly sells or labels as organic a product that is not produced and handled in accordance with the NOP regulations.

*The rules governing national organic standards, and information about them, can be found at **www.ams.usda.gov/nop***

*Another site with lots of information is **www.organicconsumers.org***

Free School

Community Kitchen Classes:

The Community Kitchen is a series of classes co-sponsored by The Olympia Free School and The Olympia Food Co-op. We are always looking for new class ideas. If you would like to share your knowledge with others on cooking, nutrition, or healthy living please contact: Beth@olympiafreeschool.org.

All classes are free of charge. To register please sign up at any of the Community Kitchen info boards at either Co-op, on-line at: www.olympiafreeschool.org, or by calling 352-4165.

Growing Sprouts

Tuesday, **August 16th**
6-8pm • Fertile Ground
Guesthouse 311 9th Ave.

Sprouting is creating a garden in a glass jar. Tend it for 3 days, and you have fresh harvest with two to ten-fold the vitamins, and the joy of watching it grow before your eyes. Most of us are familiar with mung and alfalfa sprouts; come try your hand at rice, fenugreek, flax, and sesame.

Using *Sprout Garden Indoor Grower’s Guide to Gourmet Sprouts* by Mark M. Braustein as our guide, we will explore the world of sprout possibilities. Maybe you, too, will gain the praise of your friends as the best sprouter they know.

Robin Landsong has germinated hundreds of thousands Native Plants seeds for Environmental Restoration. Now her career is in Human Restoration specializing in Craniosacral Therapy. She loves teaching people ways to increase their self health care. She is looking forward to this class to share her excitement about sprouting with others.

Gluten- and Dairy-Free Quick Meals:

Tuesday, **August 23rd**
6-8pm • Fertile Ground
Guesthouse 311 9th Ave.

Come learn how to make some simple gluten- and dairy-free meals that are nutritious and easy to prepare.

*Class facilitated by **Patti Brandt** who has prepared gluten- and dairy-free meals for herself and her family for over thirteen years.*



Co-op News

A bi-monthly publication for members of the Olympia Food Co-op and its surrounding communities

August / September 2005



Left Foot Organics: More than Local Produce

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What is it?



If you're 10 or under, fill out this form and put it in the *What Is It?* box in the front office. Please enter once per newsletter. Guess correctly, and you'll win a \$1.00 gift certificate to spend at the Co-op!

Remember that the deadline is **September 1st**. A winners list will be at both Co-ops where you can ask for your coupon. Print neatly!

The Answer(s) to last issue's *Food Quiz* were: **Pineapple** and **Bananas**!

Congratulations: Quinn J., Emily K, Marina R., Azariah, Ben B.

What is it?

Deadline: September 1st, 2005

Name _____

Age _____

Guess _____

Where do you want to pick up
your gift certificate?

☐ Eastside

☐ Westside

Harvest Party

**Sunday September 11th, 3 - 7 pm,
Priest Point Park, main shelter area**

Mark your calendars! The Co-op is having its first annual Harvest Party! Join the Co-op Community in celebrating local production with everyone who makes the Co-op happen: farmers and local suppliers, staff and working members, and all the members who have loyally shopped at the Co-op for 28 years. We'll be having a big potluck with food from both our local farms and your home gardens, music, games for kids big and small, treats, and prizes.

The Harvest Party will be at Priest Point Park, main shelter area, Sunday September 11th from 3-7pm. Parking is limited, and carpooling is encouraged. There will be organized carpooling from downtown and the stores.

What we need: Please come; bring your family and friends! Please bring a potluck dish, and if you have a home garden, bring the most original-looking vegetable your garden has produced—we'll be having a little contest.

We need volunteers! We're looking for help with making food, set-up and clean-up, transportation, music at the event, coordinating games for kids, and much more. Contact Tatiana or Rebeca at the Westside, 745-7666, or Amanda or Eunsil at the Eastside, 956-3870, if you can volunteer.

If you have other questions or ideas, contact Maureen at the Eastside, 956-3870.



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