Blue Heron Bakery

by Peter Kirbach and James & Kamla
Skutt-Kakaria

The Blue Heron Bakery was put into
grocery gear in 1977 by Greg
Reinemer, Carmela Courtney, and Teri
Turner. Created with the ideas of
creating good food, non-hierarchical
working conditions, planetary
consciousness, and support of local
businesses, the bakery is still turning
out high-quality organic baked goods.
It is located in its original building on
the banks of Mud Bay, west of
Olympia. Although it has received an
out paint job and a recent interior
remodeling, it is still the same place
that provided inspiration for the
founding members.

Eight years ago, the first ovens were
moved into the building and the
bakery went into business supplying
whole-grain bread to the Co-op and a
handful of restaurants around town.
The original retail sales were enough
to pay the members sometimes a
dollar a day. It was not long before
they were able to pay themselves fifty
cents an hour, increasing the pay to
minimum wage after three years. We
who joined the collective in the recent
past would like to offer our full
gratitude to the founding members for
their hard work and perseverance
during the early struggles. The
wages at the bakery today are
designed to be fair and equal, support
our families, allow us to take vacations
and rests, and not put the collective
out of business.

The original anarchy of the bakery
progressed to our current
semi-organized business structure, a
fact that the Co-op staff will testify to.
The business today supports a total of
twenty-six adults, children, and
unborn babies. The workers are as
follows: Robin Bergman, Anne
Hunter-Anderson, Margie and Harry
Bowron, Doug Martin, Steve and Peter
Kirbach, James Skutt-Kakaria, Margo
Murphy (bookkeeper), Doug
denHerder (granola), and Doris Faltys
(substitute). The group finds itself
balancing in the middle between
extreme anarchy (Peter) and extreme
organization (Margo, Margie and
Anne), as we strive to maintain a
successful, socially conscious business
in the midst of a grossly warped
society.

The collective structure implies no
boss, and our decisions are made on
the consensus basis. We seek to work
in an atmosphere of mutual respect,
recognizing the gifts each member has
to bring to the bakery. The fact that
we are American adults always makes
communication a challenge, as we are
brought up in a society which tends to
discourage true and honest verbal
exchange. Another objective of ours is
to encourage a flexible work schedule,
Editor—
I really think the newsletter should report honestly what the issues are surrounding the decision to not buy from Nutrasource. It’s not enough to simply say, “For several reasons…” or “For details contact a staff person.” You don’t have to write pages about it either, but you should at least truthfully represent the staff’s political issue with Nutrasource. Otherwise, the newsletter is being dishonest by not printing all the facts.
Thanks for your attention!
— Paul Fink

Seeking Reader Opinion:
Flyers in the News?

Diane Gruver
Every issue of the Co-op News mailed to you is stuffed with a coupon flyer (which we hope you use and enjoy, by the way). But how would you feel about receiving flyers from other organizations?

The News Editorial Board is soliciting member opinions on this subject because we need to know what you think in order to develop a policy concerning non-Co-op stuffers.

Some background information may help you. A new Olympia organization, the Alliance, which the Editorial Board sees as endorsing principles consistent with the Co-op philosophy, asked if they could include an informational flyer, to be stuffed in this issue. Though at first it seemed possible, several logistical and policy concerns sprang up, and we decided to run a regular announcement in this issue, rather than include a flyer.

But, the issue is now open, and we need to develop consistent guidelines addressing the issue. We have no policy regarding several issues: Who could and couldn’t stuff a flyer? Members only? Commercial businesses? Political and social service groups? And, “just any” group, or would we have guidelines concerning the type or focus of groups we would accept? Would we accept only community group and event flyers, or advertising as well? And, would the groups contribute to the cost of the mailing, and if so, how would we determine that cost? Would different kinds of groups be charged different rates?

It’s also important to mention that every new member indicates when signing up whether or not they wish to receive mailings from other organizations using the Co-op’s mailing list. In the near future, our mailing labels will be coded so that we can know whether or not such a flyer should be sent to members. In this way, our policy can really reflect the desires of the membership, catering to both those who want outside mailings and those who don’t.

The Co-op News is not a commercial publication, and we do not currently accept advertising, though we do run announcements for Olympia area groups and events. To offer groups, individuals, or businesses a place to stuff flyers would be a major change, whatever the particular policy we develop. It is up to us to decide to develop a specific set of guidelines for stuffing flyers, or to decide that stuffing a flyer will only be an option for the Co-op itself. In either case, we may want to develop a more formal “Announcements” column.

If you are interested in this issue, have comments or ideas, or can think of angles on the issue not mentioned here, please contact the editorial board through the News by dropping off written comments in the Newsletter basket in the front office at the store, or by writing to us, care of the Co-op.

Paul—
You have raised some interesting points in your letter. Because of deadline, space and what I would call ethical restrictions, we were unable to print the details concerning the reluctance in dealing with Nutrasource. While I do not specifically think this was “dishonest,” I agree that Co-op members do have a right to know the reasons behind such decisions at the store.

In the next issue, we hope to feature an article addressing how the Co-op
cont. on page 15

Statement of Purpose and Goals of
The Olympia Food Co-op

The purpose of the Olympia Food Co-op is to contribute to the health and well-being of people by providing wholesome food and other goods, accessible to all, through locally-oriented, not-for-profit cooperative organization. We strive to make human effects on the earth and its inhabitants positive and renewing. Our goals include:

• Provide information about food.
• Make good food accessible to more people.
• Increase democratic process.
• Support local production.
• See to the long-term health of the business.
• Assist in the development of local community resources.

Editor — Diane Gruver
Design & Layout — Penny Martindale
Contributors
Staff Photographer — Sam Van Fleet
Bulk Mailing — Andrea Winship

MAILING POLICY — The News is mailed to members quarterly. We mail one copy to each address on file, unless additional copies are requested. To receive or copy, leave your name and address (including your zip code) at the Address Change desk. If this is in addition to another copy for your household, be sure to tell us the name of the person whose name is on the current mailing label. Otherwise, that name will be automatically cancelled when we do a mailing address check on the computer. Thanks!
Recycling and Food Co-ops: Why do they go together?

By Suvia Judd

The other day I read that the use of plastic bags in grocery stores has recently been increasing 15 to 20 percent annually. This is part of a general increase in the use of plastic. (Organic Gardening, Nov., 1985)

Now, I'm a person who usually reuses plastic bags one to five times, and paper bags until they wear out, but I realized that I haven't been making the most of my opportunities to reuse and recycle. That made me think about all the opportunities to recycle at the co-op (see below). Then I started wondering, "Why does recycling go with food co-ops?"

Here are my thoughts.

Recycling and Reuse

People recycle and reuse containers to save trees (paper), oil (plastics), minerals (glass and metal) and land (for landfill space). So recycling is a way of using resources more efficiently. When we recycle, we are taking control of our own lives, by using what we really need, instead of what industries want us to need, for their benefit.

People also recycle to save money, by selling recyclable materials to a recycler, and by buying food in bulk in reused containers, thus avoiding packaging costs.

Food Co-ops

The reasons why people organize food co-ops are similar to the reasons why we recycle — taking control of our own lives. In the simplest kind of food co-op, a buying club, members order food wholesale in bulk, and split the labor of dividing it up, thus controlling what they buy, and avoiding paying a retailer for labor, packaging, advertising, and profit. (The next step of greater control would be growing our own food.) As co-ops get larger, they get more like stores, and we delegate much of the work to paid staff. Even in a medium sized co-op like ours, however, we have control through voting for board members, voting on bylaws changes, working for a discount, making suggestions, organizing member initiatives, and by owning a piece of the co-op through member dues. This is a lot more control than we have at the supermarket.

Food Co-ops and Recycling

Food co-ops, by selling food in bulk, offer people the chance to avoid excess packaging and to reuse containers. So co-ops automatically support conservation of resources. And, in a larger sense, food co-ops and recycling go together because they both offer opportunities for us to use what we really need, neither wasting energy and resources, nor needlessly enriching others who do so. Co-ops and recycling are ways to take control of our own lives.

Opportunities to Recycle at our Co-op

There are lots of opportunities to recycle and reuse containers at our co-op. When you are shopping, you can:

1. buy in bulk,
2. provide your own container,
3. use donated paper bags, plastic bags, glass or plastic containers, and egg cartons.

You can also:

1. donate clean bags, containers, and egg cartons,
2. recycle aluminum cans, reusable glass, and newspaper in the bins in the parking lot.

In addition, the co-op recycles its cardboard boxes, and gives its vegetable garbage to the Evergreen State College Organic Farm.
Handling Grievances at the Co-op

Alan Brisley-Bown

This September the Olympia Food Co-op's Board of Directors appointed an ad hoc Grievance Committee to draft a proposal for a grievance policy for the Co-op. The Board wants to spell out the steps for members and staff-persons to take when they feel they've experienced a serious breach of their rights at the Co-op. In the process of working out a grievance earlier this year it became clear that no guidelines existed to help people know where to go with a grievance or what to expect from the Co-op in terms of a response.

The following proposal is intended to spell out a grievance procedure rather than to define what constitutes a grievance, or to spell out a Co-op "Bill of Rights." So, as far as this proposal is concerned, if you feel you have a grievance, you should follow the procedures here outlined. Originally the drafted policy attempted to define the difference between a complaint, a conflict around policy or mission, and a grievance. It became clear that such a definition depends upon spelling out member and staff rights and responsibilities, a much larger task that setting up a grievance procedure, and one which the Board intends to undertake next year. So for now we will have to depend, if there is a question, upon the judgement of the Board of Directors as to whether someone is pursuing a grievance or whether their issue is a matter of policy which should be aired and resolved in a different way.

The question has come up: What is the bottom line in terms of both authority and responsibility in dealing with a worst-case grievance? As spelled out in our by-laws, the ultimate responsibility for the outcome of a grievance as it effects the Co-op rests with the Board of Directors. The Board is responsible for firings if they should ever become necessary, and has the power to take away someone's membership. And if the membership ever feels abandoned by the Board of Directors, the membership can remove the Board at the ballot box. These are obviously last resorts to irresolvable difficulties.

The Board of Directors will take up both the grievance procedure and the task of writing a broad statement of rights and responsibilities in February, hopefully completing the work next summer. We are looking for help from the membership, especially on the "statement of rights" project. So, if you have energy, ideas or concerns, please contact any Board member or leave written notes in Alan Brisley-Bown's box in the front office at the Co-op.

DRAFT

Olympia Food Co-op
Proposed Grievance Policy

(Drafted by Alan Brisley-Bown and Debbie Janison, Ad Hoc Grievance Committee.)

[1] The Board of Directors has ultimate responsibility for resolving grievances between members of the Olympia Food Co-op.

[2] It is not a board responsibility to referee all instances of interpersonal conflict in the Co-op. Primary responsibility for conflict resolution lies with the parties in conflict.

[3] Grievance proceedings may begin after honest efforts to resolve a conflict at the immediate interpersonal level have reached an impasse or have failed altogether. In such cases, the following steps may be taken to seek resolution of the conflict:

[3a] A Grievance Committee will be established by the Board consisting of two Board members. The Personnel Manager shall serve as an advisor to the Committee at the Committee's request. Meetings of the Grievance Committee will be closed to members who are not parties to the grievance or its potential resolution.

Powers of the Grievance Committee in include:

- Autonomy to solve grievances on behalf of the Board.
- Authority to delegate the resolution of any grievance to any other appropriate entity within the Co-op.
- Authority to seek professional mediation assistance.
- Access to the Co-op's legal counsel if necessary and cost effective.

- Authority to ask any member of the Co-op for help in resolving any grievance.
- Ability to return any grievance to the Board for resolution.
- Responsibility for bringing before the Board any grievance for which the Board has legal responsibility.

[3b] The Personnel Manager is to be the first mediator of any grievance to which a working member or a paid staff is a party. The Personnel Manager must take action on each grievance raised. She/he may attempt to negotiate a resolution acceptable to each party within 2 weeks of receipt of the grievance, or, the grievance must be sent to the Grievance Committee. If the Personnel Manager is a party to the conflict, the grievance may go directly to the Grievance Committee. Grievances which do not involve a working member or paid staff may go to either the Personnel Manager or the Grievance Committee.

[3c] If the conflict is not satisfactorily resolved with the assistance of the Personnel Manager, either party to conflict may request that the Grievance Committee of the Board hear the case. This will be done by forwarding a letter to the secretary of the Board of Directors requesting that the case be heard. Such a letter should name the parties to the conflict, steps that have already been taken to resolve the conflict, a brief description of the nature of the conflict, and contact information for the petitioner.

[3d] The secretary of the Board will forward all requests for grievance hearings to the Grievance Committee within one week of receipt of a request for hearing.

[3e] The Grievance Committee will ask each party to the conflict to provide a written statement describing their position and one or more acceptable alternatives for a resolution. The Committee will be responsible for negotiating a resolution acceptable to all parties. The Grievance Committee may ask third parties to assist in mediation.

cont. next page
The Food Co-op now employs about 80 working members in exchange for discount credit for store labor tasks. In 1983, as a member of the Co-op Board of Directors, I began encouraging the Co-op staff and board to organize these workers further, outside of training and work shifts. This year, I gave up store work and took on this task as a 'worker member organizer,' in exchange for discount credit.

In the course of four meetings, worker members discussed issues like the creation of a new customer service worker position for working members at the Co-op, childcare for the Co-op, creation of staff-worker forums, how working members can help to solve in-store problems, should workers receive discount credit for attending meetings, and balance-of-power issues at the Co-op.

Previously, working members have been trained to work in the Co-op in different work capacities: opening the store, closing the store, stocking, cashiering, or cheese packaging. Training manuals were drafted to explain the work details for different work areas. In 1983, a working member co-ordinator was hired to consistently schedule workers to cover these work shifts.

These steps towards working member development were good and necessary, but in 1983, it was clear that just organizing workers by training and work shifts left out a whole area of possible dynamic development for working members. Working members also need to get to know each other, participate in self-management processes, help make decisions and changes for the betterment of the Co-op, and help develop innovations to more efficiently run the Co-op.

Throughout the USA, businesses large and small are using innovative self-management techniques to help increase sales for their businesses. In their June, 1985 issue, Mother Jones reported on the ten best and ten worst of US businesses. An inspirational case study is W.L. Gore and Associates, INC., of Delaware, producer of Gortex products, with 4000 employees. New workers at Gore's company are given an initial three months after being hired just to decide what they most want to do to help the company. Gore and Associates sales are growing by over 40% per year. Quoth W.L. Gore, "...people given freedom with the necessary creative restraints become unbelievably enthusiastic, energetic, and creative, achieving things that seem virtually inconceivable."

This example is removed from our present structure and capacity, but with a collective effort, I'm sure we can develop similar techniques. My short term goal for working member meetings is to create a council of working members. This council would meet to discuss working member development at the Co-op, call periodic meetings of the working membership as pertinent issues arise, and have a representative from the working member council to regularly attend Board of Director meetings. This process could help build the foundation for a more vibrant, dynamic and growing organization.

Interested in more information? Working member meetings and minutes will be posted in worker journals, and on the bulletin boards at the Co-op, or call Tom Nogler - 754-4608.

cont.

[3f] The Committee will report back to the Board on any grievance still in mediation 30 days after the date the Committee received the grievance.

[3g] If after attempting resolution through the Grievance Committee, a satisfactory resolution has not been achieved, either party to the grievance may appeal directly to the Board.

Mmmm...Blue Demon's croissants filled with Cascadian Jam. They're available at the Co-op!
Daphne Tomchak

What you may ask, is an 'organic' carrot? Shoppers at Safeway stores aren't faced with this added dilemma of choosing between organic and non-organic produce.

What is organic produce? Until April of this year, when the Washington State Legislature passed Substitute Bill No. 297, there was no legal definition. The Bill defines organic as grown without chemical fertilizers, pesticides, growth stimulants, hormones, antibiotics, arsenics and any other chemicals manufactured by man. The Bill also regulates the certification of producers who claim to be organic farmers.

Why consider buying organic produce? According to Frances Moore Lappe in *Diet For A Small Planet*, pesticide use doubled from 1966 to 1976, reaching 600 million pounds of active ingredients. In the nine years since then, pesticide use has continued to climb. The health risks to consumers are not known in detail, but it's a safe bet that poisonous chemicals aren't too good for you. Certain pesticides, such as DDT (which is reported again being sold in the Midwest), can concentrate in the body. Nursing mothers, for example, can unwittingly pass toxic doses to their babies.

While the human health risks of pesticides and other chemicals may not be very easy to determine, the damage to environmental health is much more obvious. Besides killing "bad" pests, insecticides kill off other species. Ironically, sometimes the predators for the pests are also killed, so that even more insecticides are then required. Birds are an excellent example of this. Bees, primary pollinators of so many crops, are also killed by certain chemicals.

Herbicide and chemical fertilizer usage also greatly upsets the environmental balance. Chemical farming treats the soil as if its only purpose is to space plants apart. The soil then becomes depleted. Ground water becomes contaminated.

Additionally, while a certain crop, such as corn, may have a vast number of genetic brothers and sisters, chemical farmers choose just a few strains that do well under their growing and harvesting techniques. Little attention is paid to matters such as taste and nutritional superiority (eaten any tennis ball tomatoes lately?) to the depletion of the vegetable gene pool. The last point is especially crucial. Future generations of a crop may become too weak to survive new diseases and pests, particularly as the pests themselves are mutating in response to pesticide usage.

**Organic Farmers**

Earl Butz, the infamous former Secretary of Agriculture, described the trend in farming: "Get big or get out!" The recent plight of farmers demonstrates the folly of this course of action. Organic farms are much smaller operations because they rely more on manual labor and less on

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**Slow Progress on Defining the Organic Standards Law**

The harvest and fire warning kept attendance low at the August 27th meeting on Washington Agricultural Committee (WAC) rules for the state organic standard law. Verne Hedlund, with the food and dairy division of the state Agriculture Department, chaired the meeting. Don Norman, Steve Buxbaum, Lillian McDonell, Gordon White, Elaine Stannard, Olympia Co-op representative Cosette LeCiel, and Tim Sweeney were in attendance. White was the only farmer.

The following points were made during the meeting:

- Rules should facilitate the flow of organic produce between western states;
- Producers of organic products should register with the state;
- The retailer can facilitate registration with pre-prepared registration forms;
- Standards listed in the Tilth Producer's Coop manual will be used as a guide for specific do’s and don’t’s;

Another meeting is necessary to allow more farmers to be involved.

The meeting was not a formal rule-making step. Mr. Hedlund is attempting to pull together an acceptable proposal before submitting us to the formal WAC process.

You may direct ideas and questions to Mr. Hedlund at (206)753-5042 during office hours.

You can reach Ken Jacobsen at (206)527-1896. Ken is a PCC Board of Trustees Member and the Sixth Representative for the forty-sixth district, and the initiator of the organic standards law.
organic?

care about. Chemicals and appurtenant machinery. Dan Dittrich, and organic cherry farmer in Eastern Washington, admits that many of his fellow farmers probably consider him foolish for pursuing organic farming. But Dan has a strong belief in maintaining the environment, and a revulsion of huge, chemical corporation-run farms.

Despite the interest in organic produce, farmers like Dan have a great deal of trouble selling their crops. Many states and almost all foreign countries will not accept some organic produce, for fear of infestation. Chemical farms have large brokerage firms who buy their crops and may even help in financing, harvesting, and packaging the product. For the most part, the organic farmer is forced to spend his time performing these and other tasks no directly related to farming. The formation in 1982 of the Farmers Wholesale Cooperative (FWC) has helped organic farmers to market their produce. Unlike the chemical farmers who only grow the food, the FWC members are involved in decision making and distribution of their products. By omitting so many middlemen, the costs go down. They also remain more closely tied to their crops. All these things ultimately benefit both the farmer and the consumer.

Organic Produce

Organic produce has certain problems. It tends to be slightly more expensive (ranging to vastly more expensive for out-of-season items). It can often look like the ugly step-sister next to non-organic produce. And it is not always available. All of these problems can be improved by one simple expedient — INCREASED DEMAND BY CONSUMERS. Because organic farmers must spend a great deal of time searching for markets and delivering small quantities to several places, their product has to cost more. Organic produce has a shorter shelf life than non-organic, so increased demand will insure fresher (and more nutritious) produce. Also, consumers have been conditioned to believe that the aesthetic properties of produce (such as the blemish-free, spherical tomato) equals superiority.

Experience has taught many of us that this is not so. The uniform shape of a fruit can simply attest to its chemical hormones.

Non-Organic Produce

While organic produce may look less inviting to our jaundiced eyes, it's really what you can't see that can hurt you. There are categories for pesticides and other chemicals which range from 'least dangerous' to 'highly dangerous', but the consumer has no way of knowing what was used on his/her apple. Even organic produce devotees admit to buying some non-organic produce, saying they wash it well before eating. Chemists suggest washing with a mild detergent (biodegradable) as water isn't really sufficient: That method seems difficult for things like lettuce. Some consumers use a highly diluted solution of chlorine bleach to remove pesticides. However, nothing can rid food of systemic chemicals, which enter plant tissues.

During the winter, we find ourselves relying heavily on California for our organic supply. Availability will be sporadic. It varies from week to week mainly due to weather conditions.

Here is a list of the organic "old faithfuls," and their origin.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>California</th>
<th>Washington</th>
<th>Mexico</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oranges</td>
<td>Apples</td>
<td>Bananas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lettuce</td>
<td>Carrots</td>
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<td>Tomatoes</td>
<td>Beets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grapefruit</td>
<td>Pears</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemons</td>
<td>Jerusalem</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avocados</td>
<td>Artichokes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabbage</td>
<td>Potatoes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zucchini</td>
<td>Chard</td>
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<td>Garlic</td>
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<td>Chard</td>
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This list represents a good variety from which to choose. To expand this list of organic produce there has to be a demand for it. Farmers then will respond accordingly, and plant larger crops.

Help the environment, the farmer, and yourself; EAT ORGANIC!
which provides challenge and enables us to learn new skills. Most members work approximately three shifts per week, allowing time for families and fun, and to avoid worker “burnout,” a typical feature of American employment. Not having to answer to a “boss” is also a feature of the collective that encourages the development of personal authority and allows us to maintain a positive attitude towards work.

We are proud of supplying high-quality baked goods using the best organic ingredients wherever possible, to help support our fellow whole-grain collective, the Fairhaven Cooperative Mill in Bellingham, which supplies us with the finest of fresh, organic, whole grain flours which go into all our breads and sweets. Other ingredients for our products come to us from the Starflower Trucking Company, a collective business based in Eugene, Oregon. We all wish to maintain a loving relationship with the planet, thus all our products are made with organic ingredients wherever possible, and we use no chemicals, preservatives, etc. We also try to provide foods which take into account those customers with allergies, and we accept special orders to fulfill specific needs. The bakery also produces custom-made cakes for parties and special occasions. In addition to buying locally (Farmers Wholesale Cooperative, Country Cider Mill), we also sell our products in a variety of local markets. During the summer months we are involved in the Olympia Farmer Market.

We have had, and hope to continue a beneficial working relationship with the Olympia Food Co-op. Originally the only bread sold through the Co-op was bread from the Blue Heron bakers, and although they include the products of other bakeries today, we still have the only bread made with organic flour. We invite everyone who has a consciousness concerning pesticides and chemical poisoning to try our bread and enjoy it, knowing how much love went into its creation. We encourage the support of the local Co-op, but if you ever need organic whole-grain bread at two o’clock in the morning, feel free to stop by Black Lake or Tatwater Mark’n’Pak, or Bayview Market downtown.

If it were not for the patience and encouragement of the Olympia Food Co-op through the years, it is very questionable whether the bakery would have stayed in business. We offer heartfelt thanks to the members for their support and wise judgement in their choice of baked goods. Our wholesale bread market generates one-third of our income, of which the co-op is more than half. The other two-thirds comes from retail sales (come to the bakery!) and our wholesale granola sales.

Our granola is made at DougdenHerders Corner Bakery. After a year and a half of stirring granola, poor Peter was about to have a nervous breakdown. It was at this time when we were so full of granola that we couldn’t move through the bakery, that Greg came back with the proposal to make granola at the Corner Bakery. Well, we couldn’t refuse, so he took the granola away and we have room to move again. Eventually, through a couple of changes, Doug came to be making our granola, and we invite you to try it, because he does an excellent job.

Another person who is behind the scenes and who helps to keep our business running in the incredible Margo Murphy, who brought a semblance of order to our totally chaotic bookkeeping situation. She often sits in our office with a confused look on her face, mumbling about the miracle it is that we are still financially solvent. Yet, we are still in business, and we invite you and your friends to stop in and try our food. We would also like to invite people in local organizations working to make the world a better place, to come to us for food donation for the purpose of fundraising.

The Blue Heron Bakery is actively involved in the Collective Whole Grain Education Association, an organization of collectively owned and operated whole-grain bakeries throughout the U.S. and abroad. The C.W.G.E.A. has enabled BHB to become international in scope, while still allowing us to retain our support of local businesses. We sell the Associations whole-grain bakers cookbook, entitled Uprisings, which includes recipes from the member bakeries.
Welcome.

A Tour of the Blue Heron Bakery

We members of the bakery collective would like to thank all of you that have supported us throughout the years and who continue to do so today. We also want to extend our support to member Steve Kirbach, whose mate Morna Childers is awaiting the birth of their second child.
Gardening Begins Now!

Gary Kline

Now is the time for Maritime gardeners to begin work on next season’s garden. In late January, the Co-op will bring in gardening supplies, and seed racks from Territorial Seeds and Abundant Life, with start’s soon to follow. But before you plant, you can be preparing your garden for the upcoming growing season.

January is the time to review seed catalogs and order your seeds and to plan your garden by measuring the plot and drawing a map to show where and where crops will be planted. I suggest using graph paper and a scale of 1 inch = 4 feet.

Winter is an ideal time to prune grapevines, apple and other fruit trees. Save some of the limbs for garden stakes, pea or bean poles, and so on. Burn the remaining branches and vines near the vegetable garden, and spread the ashes over the plot to supply some potassium and calcium to the soil, or use wood ashes in making compost. I like to be out pruning when the robins first begin welcoming spring.

January is also a good time to clean and sharpen garden tools and to build or repair coldframes and cloches, and to make up potting soils.

Soil Preparation

Ideally soil preparation should have been accomplished last fall and a cover crop such as vetch and rye or ryegrass sown last October, however, early spring is not too late.

Many garden publications warn you not to work your garden or plant crops too early. However, this advice needs qualification for our maritime climate situation, because some crops do best when planted relatively early, i.e.: beginning in April. Thus it is advantageous to prepare a part of your garden in February or March, provided you have suitable soil and weather conditions.

February would be a good time to take samples for a soil test. I do not recommend using amateur kits. Instead, contact the County Extension Service or use the Organic Soil Testing Service advertised on page 21 of the 1986 Territorial Seed Catalog.

In the absence of a soil test which gives specific amounts of soil additives to apply, you can use the following as a guide. For every 1000 square feet (an area 25’ x 40’, or 33’ x 33’) spread 1.50 lb. bag of lime, 1.40 lb. bag of dolomite, 3 or 4 bags (40 or 50 lbs. each) of rock phosphate, and 1.50 lb. bag of greensand (or use 25 lbs. of wood ashes) and till it into the top 3” of soil. These fertilizers should suffice for 4 years. Each year add 1 50 bag of seedmeal (corn, soybean, or sunflower) or 1 80 lb. bag of crabmeal (for nitrogen) each spring and 10 lbs of kelp meal for trace elements.

If your garden is not adequately fertilized, spread one or two inches of cow or horse manure on it as early as possible.

If you are starting a new plot, strip off all the soil and compost it; otherwise, you can smother it with a deep layer of mulch and leave it until next plant potatoes under this. Do not till in grass or you’ll have endless headaches as it re-emerges.

Sandy (“light”) soils can be worked (spaded, tilled, etc.) earlier in the year and sooner after rains than clayey (“heavy”) soils. Loams would be intermediate between sand and clayey soils in workability. Raised beds prepared the preceding fall will dry out and warm sooner than ground level plots.

You can test when soils are dry enough by turning up a shovel of topsoil. If it looks shiny and slick along the slice, it is too wet. Trying to work it could damage soil structure and lead to brick-hard topsoil.

Another way to test soil readiness is to squeeze a handful into a ball and drop it from waist height onto hard ground. If it doesn’t fall apart, the soil is still too wet.

Other than soil preparation and fertilizing, there is not much you can or should do out in the vegetable garden between January and late March. However, if you had planted certain varieties of root and cole crops (parsnips, carrots, leeks, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, broccoli) you might still be harvesting them through March.

Planting the Garden

There is no single best time to plant all the vegetable crops at once, and this would be a mistake resulting in failure of several crops. The best source of information on precisely when to plant and what varieties of the different crops to sow can be found in the 1986 Territorial Seed Co. Catalog, available at the Co-op, or by writing to Territorial Seed Company, P.O. Box 27, Loran, Oregon, 97451. The Territorial Seed Catalog also contains a wealth of information on planting, fertilizing, pest control, harvesting and more.

You can get a head start on planting and eventual harvesting by starting certain crops indoors or “under glass” for transplanting as soon as suitable weather arrives. You can use coldframes, greenhouses and cloches for this, waiting till the soil temperature warms up to a minimum of 50 degrees. Leeks and onions should be started in flats or large flower pots in January. Broccoli and other cole crops may be started indoors in February. Tomatoes should be started about March 1st and peppers 2 weeks later. Squash and cucumbers may be started about April 15th.

In low lying areas within a mile or two of Puget Sound, you can begin planting peas, scallion onions, lettuce, spinach, cabbage and broccoli about April 1st. More inland areas of Thurston County should wait until mid-April. Warm weather crops should wait until May and June.

This article assumes a fairly large garden that will be used for several years, to justify the expense of a soil test and investment in long term, slow-release fertilizers and soil amendments. But much of the information will be applicable to small plots as well. Good luck!

Information for this article was compiled by Diane Gruer from notes prepared on short notice by Gary Kline. Gary lives on a two acre farmlet outside Olympia, where he operates Blake Lake Organic Farm and Garden Store as a part-time business. It specializes in organic fertilizers, natural pest controls, and cover crops and garden seeds. The store is located at 4711 Black Lake Boulevard S.W. For additional information, call Gary at 357-6236.
HELLO!
New Faces at the Co-op

Kim Landshut-Boone-Moore

I am originally from Washington, but have moved around the states at least a dozen times. I became interested in bookkeeping when my parents bought their own business (Boone’s Black Lake Grocery) and my Mom taught me to keep all the books. To further my knowledge in Accounting, I then took courses at Mills College in Oakland, California, and at South Puget Sound Community College. I enjoy being the new bookkeeper for the Co-op, but am especially happy to be able to work in the store as well. With seven years of retail sales experience, I feel I have some good ideas to contribute to the Co-op along with learning new ideas from the great staff here. My interest include: ceramics, listening to music, cooking, and all crafts, and being very organized. My main goal in life right now: learning all aspects of business well enough to own/run my own business successfully!!!

John Konovsky

I came to Olympia and the Co-op via Indiana (where I grew up on a corn and soybean farm), Seattle and Japan. I returned from Japan in July after living in a very rural, seacoast village for two years; there, I taught English and organized tours, and learned how to make charcoal, catch 10,000 salmon at once, wade through gushy paddies planting seedlings, and eat anything and everything.

I have been involved with the collective process in Japan, a country that runs on consensus, at the Phinney Street Co-op in Seattle, and at the Food Co-op at Earlham, a small Quaker college in Indiana which I attended. I worked for several years in a small drug store and helped with the family farm and businesses. I intend to learn about all aspects of store operations, but feel a special kinship with garden seeds, macrobiotics, and books.

My interests include sliding down snowfields in the Beartooth Mountains of Montana, word processing on my Kaypro, biking to work, sitting in hot water, and chasing the delightful, but elusive Rana cascadae, Western Washington’s most exciting frog. In my spare time, I hope to hone my gardening skills and go on some serious, but short-lived (in order not to miss work) adventures. Presently, I live in East Tumwater with my partner Anne, 2 good friends, a dog, and their baby-to-be.

Cindy Dollard

Well, hello... I must say, first of all, that it's great to be a part of providing quality food to the public, and to be working with a real quality group of people in the process. As far as "who I am in 200 words or less": I have lived a rich life thus far and have many stories to tell. The Northwest runs in my blood and has settled in my bones, and I'll likely be around this area for the duration. Four years as a working member at the Co-op have given me a lot of ideas about things I would like to see happen at the Co-op. Mostly, though, I am wide open and ready to learn as much as possible. I have studied herbs, nutrition, and the healing quality of body movement for several years, but you can be sure I'm always ready for more talk on the subject. Please ask questions and share information. I guess that about takes care of it... See you at the store!
Finance Report

Beth Hartmann

Financially, 1985 is coming together nicely for the Co-op. At the end of September, net income for the year to date totalled $6,804.34, a respectable figure for a year originally budgeted as a loser.

Financial performance in third quarter (July through September) was excellent. This is the slowest time of year at the Co-op and in past years we’ve lost between $2,000 and $7,000 during the same period. This year we earned $24.92, not much, but a dramatic improvement, nevertheless. Sales growth for third quarter was 10.3% over third quarter 1984, much better than the projection of 5%.

The operating budget for 1986 was approved by the board of directors on Dec. 2. There are a few significant increases in expenses for 1986. The labor budget was increased from $9,000 a month to $10,250. This increase will cover more staff hours, a small raise and a reserve fund to cover the cost of training new staff members when there is turnover. The conferences and training budget was increased by nearly $2,000 so that substantial outside training can be provided to all the new staff and board members. The insurance expense increased by nearly $5,000 for the year due to upheaval in the insurance industry.

Despite these significant increases, budgeted net income for 1986 is $525.00. Hopefully, this can be improved upon during the year.

Allocating of money for new equipment and remodeling fall under the capital budgeting process which will begin in January. The next financial report will include a summary of those plans for 1986.

INCOME STATEMENTS
September 30, 1985

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<th>Third Quarter</th>
<th>1985 year to date</th>
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<td><strong>Total revenue</strong></td>
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<th><strong>Expenses</strong></th>
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<td><strong>Staff cost</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Taxes</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Total expenses</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Net Income</strong></td>
<td>$24.92</td>
<td>$6,804.34</td>
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Board Report: All A-Board

The Co-op proudly congratulates Jan Fields, Nancy Pringle, and James Skutt-Kakaria, winners in the Board of Directors’ elections. The three were elected to one year terms.

We fondly bid adieu to Steve McLellan and Debbie Janison, both leaving the Board after serving 1 year. Steve was instrumental in rewriting the Co-op By-Laws, and also helped create the Co-op News Editorial Board. Steve also served on the Personnel Committee. Debbie served on the Building Committee and played a big part in researching and negotiating the building purchase. She also collaborated with Board member Alan Brisley-Bown in creating a proposed Co-op grievance procedure. We thank you both for your time, patience, and good humor for your part in the Co-op.

If you’d like to catch your new Board in action, hop on down to the Urban Onion Restaurant, located at Legion and Washington. The date is January 30th at 7:00pm. Be there or you’ll miss it!

by Harry Levine
Saying Bye-Bye Is Hard To Do

Harry Levine

The Co-op is bidding farewell to Beth Hartmann and Tim O’Connor, both of whom are leaving for different pastures. Both have dedicated the best years of their lives to the Co-op.

Beth got a job at the Fourteen-Ounce-Olde-Dokie Co-op (that’s “F.O.O.D.”) 1 month after it opened on Columbia Street. She has seen dozens of staffers come and go in the past eight years, not to mention mega changes in the Co-op. A self-taught bookkeeper, Beth is widely respected in the Northwest Co-op scene as an astute financial manager. Her financial and retail skills will be sorely missed, as well as her sense of humor and expressive style. Hailing from the L.A. area, Beth’s claim to fame was growing up across the street from Tom Selleck, and working at the answering service to the stars (she spoke regularly with Jack Nicholson). Beth, a well known cleanliness freak, when asked why she is leaving the Co-op, responded, “After 8 years, its time for a change, ya know!”

Tim has worn a number of different hats in his 3 years at the Co-op. His background as an Eagle Scout prepared him for all of the Co-op’s challenges. His shrewd maneuvering as merchandising manager helped the Co-op maintain solid financial footing. Tim is leaving the Co-op to manage the Corbett location of Nature’s, a Portland natural food chain. Tim will be missed for his attention to detail, ability to keep on top of things, and his sense of humor. Known as the “King of Rice Cakes,” Tim accumulated nicknames as fast as the Bhagwan accumulated followers. These include, “The Little Guy,” “Dr. Chuck,” and “Zippy” (acquired for his fast paced work and not the shape of his head.) Tim worked so hard at the Co-op that his daughter Caitlin believes she was born at the Co-op.

Beth and Tim, your skills and personalities will be missed. We hope your time at the Co-op nurtured you and helped you grow. Thanks for you time, knowledge, and love. We’ll miss you.

Co-op Suppliers: Shari Basom

by Camille Bianchette

This story first appeared in the August, 1985 issue of the Central Co-op Newsletter, and is reprinted with the permission of the author.

Magazines carried by the Olympia Food Co-op are also supplied by Shari Basom’s Small Changes.

The person next to you on the bus glances at your magazine and asks, “What are you reading?” If you bought it at Central Co-op, you’re probably reading a magazine supplied by Shari Basom, otherwise known as Small Changes, a periodical distributing company.

Why “Small Changes”? “Small is me — I’m 4’11½’’.” Changes are what the magazines I sell are about,” explained Shari. “I like to think that small changes have a large effect over a period of time. The periodicals I distribute help people become more health conscious, more politically and environmentally aware, and more conscious of the needs of other people.

Shari Basom is Small Changes, receiving some help with the business from her three children, aged 9, 12 and 14½, and her partner, David. Beginning in 1976 she helped write and distribute nationally Healing Yourself, an herbal health book produced by a class at Country Doctor Clinic. Shari then thought of trying to increase the availability of health-oriented magazines such as Vegetarian Times, East/West, Well Being (now defunct) and Yoga Journal. By writing directly to these publications she learned how periodical distribution works — and since these specialty magazines had no distributor, they were happy to work with her. Showing the publications to all the co-ops, health food stores and magazine stores in town, Shari received a good response.

Gradually the number of her accounts increased and she added more periodicals to her list. The business was small enough to allow her time to raise her family.

After her divorce she returned to school for a masters in psychology, and then concurrently maintained Small Changes and a job in recreation therapy for psychiatric patients. Eventually, feeling burned out with psych work, wanting to devote herself to one job, and experiencing a greater demand for specialty magazines, Shari expanded Small Changes to a full time operation in 1984. Since that time she has increased her periodicals list from 47 to 90 titles in the areas of health, politics, environment, women and children. She has also expanded her list of accounts — now numbering 125 — to stores and businesses throughout Washington, Oregon, Idaho and parts of British Columbia.

“I like travelling around and meeting all the people I supply,” Shari said. “This gives me a picture of the people and the place, and what might sell there. This contact is one of the best things about my business.”

Shari is continuing to look for interesting publications, contacting them directly to determine their terms and whether they have a distributor. “I had to convince Sierra magazine to distribute; they were strictly a magazine for members of the Sierra Club. Now they distribute throughout the country.”

Distribution is competitive: 15 distributors supply Seattle with periodicals. Shari said she sometimes feels pressured; while she intends to be businesslike, she’s determined to remain “small time,” to maintain personal contact with her clients, and “to avoid that hard-edged male business ethic.” She’s looking into computerization to help ease her workload.

Even though she works more at Small Changes than she would in a 9-5 job, Shari thinks it’s worth it. “As long as I can balance the business with my own life, I don’t mind working hard. I think the world needs it.”
Nora’s Mom’s Rice Custard Casserole

This is a version of a kitchen sink casserole — “everything but the…”

Rice
Parsley (lots)
Onion(s)
Cottage cheese
Grated cheese (cheddar, parmesan, jack, havarti, whatever — also sour cream or cream cheese that needs to be used up)

Left overs — steamed vegies, etc.

Eggs — 3 or 4
Milk — 3 or 4 cups
Basil
Thyme
Marjoram
Tamar or salt

Cook the rice in the usual amount of water. This can be done earlier in the day, or the day before, or use last Monday’s leftover rice. I cook for 6 people, so I use 4 cups cooked rice.

Chop the parsely and onions — as much as you want, and a lot is good. Add this to the rice. Add the cottage cheese, grated cheese and any other cheese-like products.

Chop up and add anything else you have around that needs to be used up and seems like it would be good in a rice custard casserole. Left over steamed vegies are especially good.

Butter a casserole dish large enough for what you’ve done. Shallow is better in terms of cooking time — but deep works well too, it will just take longer to cook.

Put the rice-cheese-vegetable mixture in the buttered casserole.

Make the custard, using 1 egg per 1 cup milk. Beat the eggs and add the milk, then add the herbs and salt or tamar to the egg-milk mix.

Pour this over the rice-cheese-vegie stuff in the casserole — loosen up any lumps of rice. The custard should cover the rice mix.

Bake the casserole in a 350° oven for 1 hour or so, or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean.

contributed by Karen Greene

Carob-Sesame Halvah

contributed by Hannah Antokol

While we in Olympia are wading through the rain and scraping ice off our windows, the sap begins to flow in the fruit trees of Israel. This is the time of the year that Jews around the world celebrate the “New Year of the Trees,” or Tu B’Shevat. Tu B’Shevat falls on Jan. 15th this year, or the 15th of Shevat on the Jewish calendar. To celebrate this holiday it is customary to eat fruits and nuts indigenous to ancient Israel, such as almonds, carob, dates, figs and citrus. Here is a recipe from the Jewish Holiday Cookbook that is bound to please children everywhere. All the ingredients are conveniently available at the Co-op.

1/4 c. finely shredded unsweetened coconut
1/3 c. rolled oats, any type
1/4 unsalted sunflower seeds
3 Tbs. tahini
2 Tbs. honey
2 Tbs. carob powder
1/4 tsp. ground cinnamon
About 1/4 c. sesame seeds.

Put the coconut, oats and sunflower seeds in a blender or food processor and process until powdery. Transfer the mixture to a bowl and add the tahini, honey, carob powder, and cinnamon. Mix to form a stiff mass. Knead with your hand or a wooden spoon for a few minutes, or until smooth and malleable. If the mixture is very dry, add a bit more honey or tahini.

Form the mixture into 2 logs, each about 1 inch in diameter and about 6 inches long. Roll each log in sesame seeds so the outside is completely coated. Wrap the logs in plastic wrap and refrigerate for several hours, or until they are firm. (They can be stored in the refrigerator for a week or longer.)

To serve the halvah, cut each log crosswise into slices 1/2 inch thick.

Tofu-Sesame Salad Dressing or Dip

Karen Greene

1/2 - 3/4 c. sesame seeds
1/2 lb. tofu
1/2 c. safflower oil
1 c. yogurt
2 Tbs. tamar
juice of 1 lemon
3 - 4 cloves garlic

Roast the sesame seeds in a cast iron skillet until brown. Set aside to cool.

Cream the tofu thoroughly, then cream in oil, and then the yogurt. The dressing will be thin at this point. Add the tamar, lemon juice, and minced garlic to taste.

Now grind the sesame seeds (a blender will work fine) — but not to a paste.

Add the ground sesame seeds to the tofu-yogurt mixture. The more you add, the thicker the dressing will be.

May be used at once, or refrigerated for a thicker consistency — the ground sesame seeds help to set the dip and make it thicker.

Boscaiola olenea italia
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Olympia Film Society Presents—

_Sorcerer._ January 27 — No, this is not a story about witchcraft and black magic. It is an exciting adventure story of four outlaws, joined by fate in the primitive backwaters of South America. Their job is to drive a truckload of unstable nitroglycerine across 200 miles of wild, rough jungle terrain to light an oil well fire. Directed by William Friedkin, _Sorcerer_ is one of the most visually suspenseful films ever made; guaranteed to keep you on the edge of your seat. Shows Monday, Jan. 27 at 6:30pm and 9:00pm, at the State Theatre, 204 E. 4th, downtown Olympia. Admission is $2.50 for Members/Seniors, and $4.00 for non-members. For more information, call 754-6670.

Fix-it-upper Needed

The Co-op is looking for an experienced handy-person to do basic maintenance and repair in and around the store. This work would be on a semi-regular basis, and the time would earn working member credit. Anyone interested? Please contact Helen at the Co-op.

Spring Newsletter Deadline

The Spring issue of the _News_ will be out at the end of April, and the deadline for all material is April 7th. Watch for notices, or note it on your calendars. Any materials may be dropped off in the newsletter basket in the front office at the Co-op, or mailed to the Editor, care of the Olympia Food Co-op. For information or questions, call the Co-op at 754-7666.

Coming Soon — Local Progressive Publication

The _Alliance_ is a 5-year-old regional networking newspaper based in Portland. Now we are bringing a local edition to this area in March, creating a common forum for all of Olympia’s progressive social service and community activist groups. The _Alliance_ focuses on issues of peace, ecology, the women’s community, bioregionalism, and community sustainability. Each issue includes:

* An attractive 2-color pullout calendar, suitable for hanging (and the only complete progressive community events calendar in town)
* Resource listings describing in detail the current work of local groups
* News and features of local significance, as well as the regional news of the Portland _Alliance_
* “Action Alert” — Things you can do to affect social change
* “One Step Forward” — Focusing on the positive; a monthly progressive success story, where activists made a real difference

The _Alliance_ is FREE (advertiser supported, that is). For more information, please contact Paul Fink at 943-7999, or Doug Riddels at 786-1040.

decides which distributors and producers to purchase from, and also more information about some of the recent large-corporate buyouts and takeovers of the smaller natural food producers and distributors.

In the meantime, please feel free to take Grace’s suggestion, and ask staff about any concerns or questions you have. Members interested in the issue, doing research or writing, please contact me through the Co-op.

— Diane Gruver
Editor
WHAT IS IT?

Under age 10? Leave your name and phone number along with your guess in the newsletter box at the Co-op – the winner receives a small prize from the Co-op!

Congratulations to Milly Donahue for guessing the last What Is It? correctly — they were grapes!

Olympia Food Co-op

921 N. Rogers
Olympia, WA 98502
754-7666
open everyday 9am-8pm

address correction requested