

# THE CO-OP Commons

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# Everyone Is Welcome — And We Mean It!

Kenna S Eaton, GM

In the fall issue of *The Co-op Commons*, I wrote about the BIG cooperative difference—our democratic ownership structure—and what that means to our member-owners. I also wrote about the age-old practice of administering a 10% surcharge to anyone shopping at the Co-op who isn't a member and noted that we are one of possibly only two co-ops in America that still assess this fee. Increasingly, that surcharge has become a barrier to people who might want to shop here but don't feel welcome. In the article I invited member feedback on the idea of dropping the practice, and this fall the board and I explored the possible risks of removing the surcharge and the potential benefits of being more open. Members who responded supported removing the surcharge, as did the majority of the board. And a member survey we just conducted told us that most of you joined the Co-op for reasons other than avoiding the surcharge. In fact only 4% of respondents said that was why they joined in the first place. The top reasons cited? Our support of locally produced foods as well as organic food and production. Awesome news!

So beginning January 1, 2017, we will welcome everyone to our store and encourage all of them to join us—but we will no longer assess a surcharge. Please tell your friends and family—especially the ones that believe that you must be a member to shop here—that we have changed, and let's get everyone eating more locally produced and organic food!

## Why Be A Co-op Member?

### LOCAL FOOD

Support our local food system.

### CONNECT

with community and support neighboring farmers & producers.

### COOPERATION

Own a cooperatively run business. Your Co-op Card is honored at most other co-ops

### SAVE UP TO 20%

through our special order program. Ask at the Member Services Desk for details.

### TAKE 10 % OFF

most products at our twice yearly Member Appreciation Days.

### TAKE 25 % OFF

Better World Cub (roadside assistance for cars & bikes)

### SPECIALTY DIETS

We have many options, including gluten-free, vegan, and vegetarian, if you require special foods or supplements.

### COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES

1. Voluntary & Open Membership
2. Democratic Member Control
3. Member Economic Participation
4. Autonomy & Independence
5. Education, Training & Information
6. Cooperation Among Co-ops
7. Concern for Community

### MEMBER DIVIDENDS

Each year the board determines if we can distribute a member patronage dividend—in cash, a store credit, or a donation to a local nonprofit.

### GIVE BACK

while you shop. Your Co-op donates to local organizations.

### TOUR YOUR STORE

Let us introduce you to the unique products our Food Co-op offers.

### INVEST IN A COOPERATIVE ECONOMY

After an initial fee, pay as little as \$2 every month you shop until you've accumulated \$100 in your account. \$100 of your \$105 investment is fully refundable, and there are no other fees.

### RUN FOR OFFICE

Elections are held annually, positions on the Board run for three years, and there are opportunities for temporary appointments.

### DEMOCRATIC VOICE

Every member-owner has an equal vote. The Food Co-op is run for the benefit of its member-owners and our community.



**THE FOOD CO-OP**  
Your Cooperatively Owned  
Grocery Store

### ASK YOUR CASHIER FOR A MEMBER FORM.

A \$5 one-time nonrefundable fee provides you with a member number and 2 membership cards (designated owner/voter and one household member). You may share the membership with other household members, even visitors to your home from out of town.

# Give Back to Your Community—Run for the Board

As a cooperative, we rely on our member-owners to participate to ensure that we remain a healthy and vital organization. One way you can participate is by running for our fun, cooperative, and collaborative board. We are always on the lookout for people who care about our local food system and community and who are able to work and play well with others for the benefit of The Food Co-op we all love. We asked Board Treasurer David Wayne Johnson—who enjoys being on the board so much he ran for a second term in May!—to write a few words about why he chose to be on the board:

*When I was asked to run for a position on the Co-op's Board of Directors in 2013, I had to ask myself some questions. Would I have the time for it? Would I benefit from it? Would I be making a difference in the community?*

*I felt good enough to answer those questions “yes,” and I'm glad I did, because I've had a tremendously positive experience serving on the board these past 3 ½ years, for the following reasons: The time commitment is manageable, due in large part to the great support staff who keep us organized and using our time as productively as possible. The work is fun, engaging, challenging, and rewarding, both personally and collectively. We do get some compensation through a stipend, but the real benefit is knowing that we are making a positive difference in our Co-op and community while developing our skills at collaborative governance.*

Election season will soon be upon us, so pick up a candidate packet at the Member Services Desk after February 22 and come to a board meeting to see what we do!



## Time to Renew The Food Co-op Strategic Plan

Another way you can participate in your cooperative is by attending board meetings, and over the coming year, we will be doing some exciting work. Our five-year Strategic Plan wraps up in 2017. The plan has been very useful to both the board and the general manager in focusing our work, and while we've agreed that we don't need a whole new strategic plan, we do want to tweak it here and update it there. So over the next year, we will be reviewing and revising our, and we welcome member-owner input. So keep an eye on the Board's board and The Food Co-op website for more information as it becomes available. You can also visit with us in the alcove (dates and times to be determined) or attend the relevant board meetings. The first discussion on the Strategic Plan is scheduled for the February 7 board meeting. See you there!

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OPEN DAILY 8am-9pm

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SUBMISSIONS of interest to the community are gladly accepted. Please drop off articles for consideration at The Food Co-op c/o The Co-op Commons or email [info@foodcoop.coop](mailto:info@foodcoop.coop). Include your contact information. Submissions may be edited for length or content.

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are the writer's own and do not necessarily reflect The Food Co-op policy or good consumer practice.

**W**e need a bigger pair of pants. When I was hired six years ago, a construction project was underway to add much-needed storage to the south side of our building, to house our kitchen walk-in cooler and freezer. Following on the heels of that project, we added a dining room, enclosed the south entrance, and finished the courtyard with pavers, picnic tables, and a flower/veggie garden. All these projects had been in the works for many years.

Yet even while working on those projects, we recognized that the back rooms of our Co-op were in desperate need of expansion. Yes, the projects we did eased the congestion and helped us feel like we had gotten a bigger pair of pants, but it didn't solve the larger logistical problems created by inadequate storage and working space for our staff.

You may recall we first started discussing this next level of need with our member-owners at a forum in January 2015. Then followed two years of work by the board, myself, and members of our Co-op who had expertise in planning or construction, looking at the options we had for relocation versus staying in our current site. Turns out we were already in the best location in town for a grocery store like ours. It also turned out that we would put ourselves in a less risky financial position by growing in place. This information made our decision to stay and expand on-site relatively easy, and we announced the decision to our member-owners in September 2016.

Since then staff and I have been working with the Development Co-op, which is part of our buying co-op, the National Cooperative Grocers (NCG), to craft plans for a modest expansion on-site that would allow us to meet those persistent needs of our staff and member-owners.

As those of you have been through remodeling projects know, this stuff takes time. Often it takes longer than you think, is more complex than expected, and can cost more than planned. We're hoping to be different. For one reason, if nothing else, this is your Co-op and we can't afford to risk your investment in this grocery store. For that reason alone we need to be fiscally prudent. So we won't get the store of

my dreams, or maybe yours either. But we will get a larger store, with a better workspace for staff and more storage for product, plus an improved, slightly larger retail space. What else can you expect?

- You can expect to get a sneak peek at those plans in February–Place and date TBD.
- You can expect to know what we are planning to do and how much it will cost before we do it.
- You can expect that we may come to you asking you to support this expansion by voting to secure financing, and that we will give you a chance to invest in your locally owned, cooperative grocery store.
- You can expect that we will be “under construction” for approximately nine months, and we will remain open throughout the process.
- And you can expect that we will do our best to resolve as many of the problems as we can without altering the essential character of the store we all love.

Questions? Comments? Please feel free to email us at [expansion@foodcoop.coop](mailto:expansion@foodcoop.coop), drop us a comment card, leave a suggestion in the binder located at the board's board, or call and tell us what you think.

Thank you for being a member-owner and for supporting the best darn grocery store in town!



# What the Staff Had To Say

Ian Carver, Editor

“This is a long time coming, I am very excited. I think it couldn’t come at a better time.”

—Tracy



As you have more than likely seen, we are getting ready to conduct a renovation of our wonderful store. It is a project that has been in the works for many years, trying to decide if we should move or expand in our current location has been a process in and of itself. Now that the decision has been made to stay at our current location and expand our footprint, I wanted to get a feel for what our amazing staff thinks about the renovation and what it means for the store and their particular departments.

Keep in mind that our staff are well aware of the upcoming project but have yet to see any concrete plans as far as what the new store will look like. We have spent a great deal of time talking about departmental needs and will take them under a great deal of consideration before any plan is 100% approved.

The majority of the staff I spoke with mentioned that having more behind the scenes working space was of great importance to them. “I am most excited about having more room to do my job as well as the extra storage space, congestion in the back end tends to be an issue,” said Layne Day the store Receiver. If you have ever been in our back

rooms it doesn’t take long to realize how crowded it can get, especially when product is being brought in and inventoried. Layne and the rest of the staff that works in receiving can rest assured knowing that we are very aware of the issues they are going through and that we fully plan on improving the spaces to help streamline their work.

Our produce department is another area that does an outstanding job bringing our members top notch, local and in-season produce items year round while doing so in a small space. I asked Laura Llewellyn, our Produce Manager what her thoughts on the renovation were in regards to her department and she had this to say. “Having expanded storage will allow us to have less products out of stock. When we order, we currently have to take into account what will actually fit in our space. It [the expansion] will hopefully allow me to buy and sell more products from our local farmers and supplies and maintain larger inventory levels.” We work very hard to make sure you are getting the best produce from local farms and suppliers, having expanded produce storage will allow us to increase our order volume from local farmers.

The last department I spoke with was food services. Our deli is a very busy department that consistently turns out delicious meals every day of the week and they do so while practically working on top of each other. I usually eat at least one meal a day that is prepared by our deli and I am always amazed at the quality and consistency of what they turn out. I sat down with Tracy Nichols our Food Services Manager to find out her thoughts on how the renovation might help her staff and department. “Our staff will be able to work more efficiently. Which is a very good thing because we will have a larger hot and cold bar along with more items that need to be prepared.” What Tracy is referring to is a larger hot bar and the addition of a full salad bar which will require additional effort on the part of her crew to maintain.

Overall our staff are very excited about this project and what it will mean to each department as far as working conditions go. I spoke with many more of our staff who all mentioned how much they are looking forward to this and can’t wait to see the finished product. “This is a long time coming, I am very excited. I think it couldn’t come at a better time,” said Tracy.

# Winter Warmings by the Soup Pot



Laura Llewellyn,  
Produce Manager

**Winter and Soup.** There are few words in my world that are equally synonymous. I love being inside by the fire making a pot of soup on a grey winter day. Being the secondary cook in my household, it's just about the only thing I cook for half of the year.

Several years ago I had a soup business on Bainbridge Island, called The Soup Garden. We grew produce and turned it into soup to sell at the farmer's market. Every week we walked the fields to find inspiration for that week's recipe. No two soups were the same, but more often than not they started with the same ingredients; potatoes and leeks. It's amazing the variation you can come up, starting with the same base.

I imagine you all have heard of mirepoix. Often used as a cooking base for soups, stocks and stews. The traditional ratio is two parts onion, one part carrot and one part celery. Onions and celery can't reliably be sourced locally during soup season. However we should have a local variation available for most of the winter- leeks, carrots and celeriac.

**Base** Start with leeks, carrots and celeriac. Chop them up to roughly the same size (for the celeriac peel the outside with a knife). Sauté them in olive oil or butter until the leeks turn translucent. Cook slowly on low heat for the best results. Add a generous amount of salt and as much pepper as you like. Use this as a base for the following soups.

**Potato Leek** Add potatoes and a sprig of thyme to the above base. Add water or stock, just barely covering the potatoes. Boil until the potatoes are soft. Remove the thyme stems (all the leaves should have fallen off.) Puree with cream until the desired thickness (or really thinness) is reached.

**Nettle, Sorrel, Potato Leek** I must credit Judith Weinstock of Food Muse Catering for this delicious variation. Make Potato Leek soup as described above. Just before pureeing add nettles and sorrel (or lemon juice).

**Potato, Apple, & Onion with Gorgonzola Cheese** Add lots of onions to the base. Add apples and potatoes with stock or water (again barely covering the vegetables). Cook until potatoes are soft. Add a small amount of mustard. Puree half the soup, add some milk and mix both halves together. Serve each bowl with gorgonzola cheese crumbles.

**Roasted Squash** Roast a Hubbard, Buttercup or Kabocha squash (cut in half, place face up on a baking sheet and bake at 375 degrees until soft all the way through). Meanwhile start with your base and add ginger and garlic. Add a small amount of potatoes with stock/water and boil until soft, then puree. Scoop the squash out and puree while hot with stock or cream. Mix thoroughly together, add stock/cream till desired thickness is reached and add a touch of allspice.

**Two Beans and Garden Greens** Cook white and Anasazi beans. Sauté base and add Padron (medium hot) peppers. Add potatoes and cover generously with stock. Boil until potatoes are soft, and mix in beans. Add chopped kale. Simmer for a short while. Finally toss in some chopped spinach a few minutes before serving.

If you are the kind of person that prefers specific measurements when it comes to recipes – now is your chance to branch out! The ratio of soup ingredients primarily affects the texture. If something is too thick add more liquid. If sometimes too thin, you can always make a rye (add rye to a small amount of soup working your way towards slowly thickening the whole soup).

Once your soup is cooked, taste it! You probably need to add more salt. After that my top three secret soup ingredients are vinegar, soy sauce and mustard. (Not to be added all to the same pot).

And remember soup always taste better the next day!

# Spotlight on Staff

## Paul Davis – Kitchen Lead

**Passions:** Paul is passionate about a great many things such as fly fishing, skiing, cooking, art, landscaping and spending time with his daughter. It quickly becomes apparent that his first choice in all of those activities is the last one, spending time with his daughter. The things he enjoys doing with her are snowboarding, camping, fishing and other outdoor activities. Something you may not know about Paul: Paul is very easy to talk to and seems to be very extroverted, however what you may not know is that Paul is actually an introvert. “I enjoy working with others but really enjoy just being by myself,” said Paul. I guess that is why most of the outdoor activities he enjoys are ones you do alone.

**Family:** Paul has one daughter who is 14 years old. Her name is Ella and he describes her as your typical teenage girl. She is very much into sports and plays sports as much as possible. She is very involved with her friends and her school.

**Places Lived:** Paul was born in Boulder, CO. but has lived in Fort Collins, CO., Port Townsend and Chile South America. Paul was in Chile for eight months while building a golf course. He said that golf course design was a bit of a new concept down there so he went down with his father’s company to do the build with locals. He lived on a small farm with some of the crew from the build during his time in Chile. As a cook, Paul said there was a lot of great food in Chile, but his two favorite things to eat there were the empanadas and BBQ.

**Goals:** Paul’s biggest goal is to raise a positive, loving and compassionate child. When it comes to his professional goals, Paul had this to say, “I’m happy to be back

in the food industry, so my goal here is to continue to learn more about the culinary world of the Co-op and to help create and expand our culinary outreach to our members.” Paul has many other small goals, such as finishing projects around his house and learning to bow hunt. He would also like to pursue his art and to become more artistic.

**Music:** Paul enjoys almost all types of music, ranging from country and hip-hop to jazz blues. He says it all depends on his mood and the way he is feeling to help decide what to listen to.

**Movies/TV:** “I really like documentaries because I enjoy learning, especially documentaries related to history,” Paul said. He also enjoys a good mystery series such as the new versions of Sherlock Holmes. His favorite movie is “A River Runs Through It,” not a surprise for a guy that likes to be alone and fly fish.

**Previous Jobs:** Before coming to The Food Co-op, Paul worked in golf course maintenance at McCormick Woods Golf Course. He also worked at the co-owner of the Public House, he was a kitchen manager at the Silverwater Café, was a dining room chef at the Fort Collins Country Club and of course worked in golf course construction.



# Anniversaries

Anniversaries are calculated from date of most recent hire for paid employment and may not reflect previous years of employment or work as a volunteer.

- 22 years**  
Shirley Beck, Gale Wallis
- 16 years**  
Aaron Carver, Karolyn Boyd
- 15 years**  
Anne Steurer  
Deborah Schumacher
- 14 years**  
Dan Goldstein
- 11 years**  
Layne Day, Teresa Swindell
- 10 years**  
Rob Robbins
- 9 years**  
Abigael Crecca
- 8 years**  
Layne Day, Chandra Wright  
Deborah Vanderbilt
- 6 years**  
Kenna Eaton, Mario Gonzalez,  
Crystal Neu
- 4 years**  
Jessica Haynes, Benjamin Lichty
- 3 years**  
Lisa Jensen
- 2 years**  
Cara Leckenby, Dorothy Hoffman
- 1 year**  
Julie Donah, Daniel Peters,  
Lawrence Cain

# Hearty Thank You

Employees may be nominated by managers, team leaders, peers, or Co-op members for exceptional work performance, customer service, efficiency, or supporting another team.



September  
Tammy  
Franklin



October  
Stephanie  
Burgess



November  
Barbara  
Lytle



**Tamee B.**

**CAULIFLOWER CHEESE SOUP**

All of our soups are good on a cold day but especially the cauliflower cheese soup. Our soups warm the soul and elicit good feelings whenever you are enjoying them.



**Laura**

**OMETEPE COFFEE**

This Bainbridge Island roast is so good — the perfect balance of roasty and flavorful! We have recently started carrying it based on my request. This company is part of a sister organization with Ometepe Island in Nicaragua.



**Liz**

**PURE ARGAN OIL**

Treat dull winter dried hair with cold pressed, organic Argan oil to help restore it's shine!



**Cha**

**FRESH GINGER AND TURMERIC FROM KOLO KAI ORGANICS, HAWAII**

Shred about a teaspoon of each, bring to a boil and strain out, add honey and cream. The turmeric is a natural anti-inflammatory and ginger is warming.



**Dylan G.**

**DUNGENESS RAINSHADOW DARK ROAST COFFEE & ORGANIC CHOCOLATE BROWNIE MIX**

Cold winter days were baking days for my family. Now that I'm a couple thousand miles from home, warming up with some hot coffee and oven-fresh brownies brings me back to the nostalgia of being with my family on these cold winter days.



# Questions About Carrageenan

Deb Shortess

## A Food Co-op Product Research Committee Report

### What is Carrageenan?

Carrageenan—an extract from red seaweed—is used by food manufacturers to thicken dairy products (and nondairy substitutes), tenderize and bind deli meats, and keep liquids like chocolate milk or salad dressings from separating (so you don't have to shake them). It can also show up in nutritional drink supplements or bars, baby formula, and even pet food.

Since it is derived from seaweed, you might think carrageenan is safe to ingest, but many studies have found it can cause inflammation, which in turn can lead to all sorts of health problems, from inflammatory disease to cancer. The essential problem seems to be that while the pure derivative itself may not be harmful, when it reacts with the acids in our stomachs, it may degrade, causing inflammation in our gastrointestinal system.

### Should I Avoid It?

Some carrageenan is probably not harmful to healthy adults, but infants, the elderly, cancer survivors, and people with colitis or other inflammatory illnesses may want to avoid products that include carrageenan. Most products at The Food Co-op do not contain carrageenan, so it's easy to find carrageen-free options. However, making such choices can be a little complicated because carrageenan can show up in organic as well as conventional products, and a single manufacturer might have some products with and some without carrageenan. Most organic producers are working to remove carrageenan, but your safest bet, if you are concerned, is to check the ingredients list on the label because by law it must be listed.

### Finding Carrageenan-Free Products

Many producers have already eliminated or never used carrageenan. In the dairy case, for instance, Nancy's, Organic Valley, and Straus Family Creamery, as well as local dairy



### NOTE:

The National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) is currently reviewing whether to continue to allow carrageenan in organic products, so you can contact the NOSB with your comments if you have concerns about carrageenan.

producers like Mystery Bay or Flying Cow, do not use carrageenan. For yogurt, also look for Maple Hill Creamery, Redwood Hill Farms, Stonyfield, Wallaby Organic, and White Mountain. In the ice-cream section, Alden's, Julie's, Straus, and Three Twins are all carrageenan free. If you are purchasing nonorganic dairy, be sure to check the label. Also check nondairy substitutes, which often have carrageenan in order to give the "mouth feel" of dairy.

### Check the PRC Binder

Please see the Product Research Committee binder at the front of the store (under the Board's board by the bathrooms) for a list of producers showing which use and which do not use carrageenan. The list comes from Cornucopia (a farm policy research group), and we highlighted the products on the list The Food Co-op carries. You can also look online at <http://www.cornucopia.org/shopping-guide-to-avoiding-organic-foods-with-carrageenan/>.

### About the PRC and Our Reports

The Food Co-op's Produce Research Committee includes staff, board members, and owner-members, and it is led by Deb Shortess, our SIPS manager (a great acronym for Store Inventory, Pricing, and Systems). Deb has been with the Co-op for more than 25 years, and she's famous for her extensive knowledge about the products we carry. The PRC investigates questions about products suggested by store staff, committee members or brought to us by member-owners. Most issues are complicated so they take a while to research, but when we have answers, we write reports for The Co-op Commons and compile the results in binders set out at the front of the store, under the Board's board. If you have any questions you'd like us to investigate, send them to [deb@foodcoop.coop](mailto:deb@foodcoop.coop). And if you are interested in helping us with our projects, come to our meetings the first Tuesday of each month at 3 pm at The Co-op Annex (2110 Lawrence St.).

# Our Producer Mt. Townsend Creamery

Ian Carver



Ryan Trail of Mt. Townsend Creamery

What did I know about cheese before my visit with Ryan Trail, Founder and CEO (Cheesy Executive Officer) of Mt. Townsend Creamery? I knew that cheese can be made from a variety of different kinds of milk, I knew that it involves mold and lastly I knew that it is delicious. So needless to say, I really didn't know much about cheese and how it is crafted. I say crafted because the people at Mt. Townsend don't just make cheese, they craft stunning edible works of art.

My visit to Mt. Townsend began in the middle stages of the cheese making

process. I was led into a room so hot and humid that it was reminiscent of a sweltering jungle. I couldn't even take photos for the first twenty minutes or so until my camera lens acclimated and stopped fogging up. Trail explained to us that they were currently making Cirrus cheese. Cirrus is one of their nine types of cheeses. It is a Pacific Northwest soft-ripened cheese. We watched as large vats of semi-solid curd was cut into small cubes. It was explained to us that the size of curd cut helps determine if the cheese is going to be drier or softer. The slurry of curd and whey was then poured down a waterslide looking device that allowed all of the curds and whey to disperse evenly into specially made cylindrical containers from Germany used for making soft cheeses. The containers allow them to equally portion out the curd as well as begin the process of removing water from the curd. We watched this process play out multiple times as stack after stack of cheese curd made its way to the next step in the process.

It was explained that once the majority of the moisture was removed from the curd the special containers full of curd would be moved to a temperature controlled environment where it will sit as the fermentation process completes. Trail discussed what would happen in a biological sense while the cheese sits but to tell you in this article would require me to use words that I don't understand so therefore I decided to refrain from acting like I know what I am talking about and just say that it is a biological process. Trail mentioned that by the next morning the cheese will be

ready to be salted and demolded before it is transferred to the ageing room where soft-ripened cheeses like Cirrus will sit for about ten days. During this ten days the cheese wheels will develop a coat of Penicillin Candidum (white mold used to ripen and flavor soft-ripen cheese varieties). "It's a biological process, it's not like chemistry, it's not like manufacturing and just putting something together. It is a little bit of everything, there is a lot of microbiology at play..." said Trail. We looked at rack upon rack of fuzzy, ghost white, pillow soft looking cheese wheels quietly waiting for their turn to visit places like The Food Co-op and eventually your house.

After we toured a little more of their surgically clean facility and saw some of their guys packaging up some delicious Fromage Blanc cheese we then had an opportunity to sit down with Trail to discuss Mt. Townsend's relationship with The Food Co-op. Trail mentioned that The Food Co-op was one of the first places they ever sold their product. He went on to tell us how much he and his family have had a long personal relationship with The Food Co-op. "The Food Co-op is a huge hub for the community and it feels really great to be part of that," mentioned Trail.

By the end of our tour and conversation with Trail, I can safely say my cheese knowledge and appreciation for what it takes to craft this amazing product has improved exponentially. If you want to try some of Mt. Townsend's outstanding cheeses you can pick some up from The Food Co-op or at Mt. Townsend's facility located at 338 Sherman St., Port Townsend. While you

"The Food Co-op is a huge hub for the community and it feels really great to be part of that,"  
—Ryan Trail



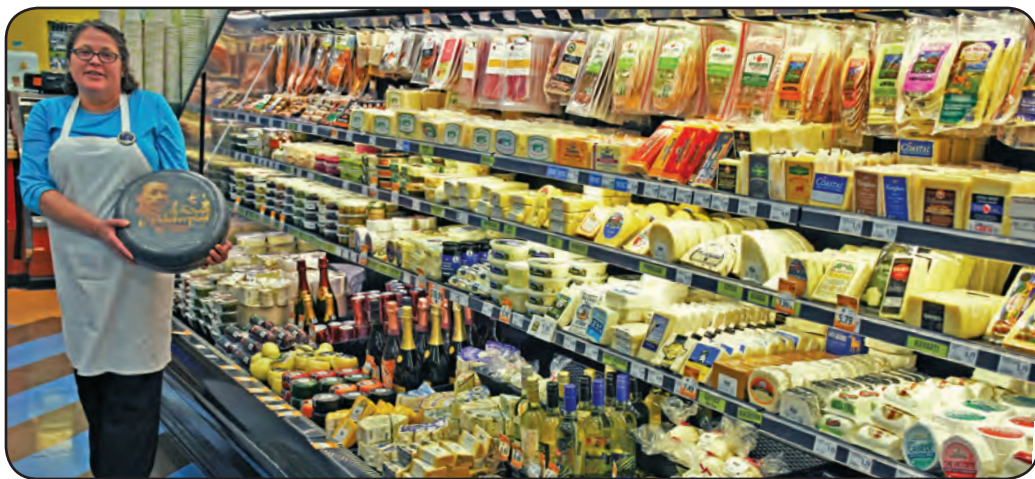
Packaging Fromage Blanc

are there you can also watch the cheese making process as we did. Or, you can also watch the process on the video we made of our tour located on our website or our Facebook page.

I spoke with our resident Cheesemonger, I mean Cheese Queen,



Waterslide of curds and whey



Josephine, the Cheese Queen spreading the love of cheese!

Josephine Holmstedt to figure out a little more about what she thinks makes Mt. Townsend's cheese so special and what their top selling cheese is at The Food Co-op. I had to change her title to Cheese Queen after speaking with her and learning that she is not a fan of the term Cheesemonger because it doesn't sound royal enough for Holmstedt. Back to the questions at hand, Holmstedt said that our most popular Mt. Townsend cheese is actually their Cirrus, the exact cheese we watched them making during our visit. I went on to find out that the reason she thinks Cirrus is our best seller of their brand is because the cheese has a great price point and is very approachable in regards to flavor.

When asked what her favorite Mt. Townsend cheese was, without hesitation said it was their Fromage Blanc. "The Fromage Blanc is my favorite because it is so fresh and light and you can use it in on so many things. I recently made a delicious appetizer from puff pastries filled with Fromage

Blanc and our sour cherry spread," said Holmstedt.

I could tell by talking with her that cheese is very near and dear to her heart, she glows when discussing all things cheese. So, I had to find out a little more about her passion for cheese. I asked her what it was she loved about cheese and her response was very similar to our Cheesy Executive Officer over at Mt. Townsend. "Cheese is so fascinating because of the process being equal parts science and art. You are working with living things that are constantly changing. Plus I love cheese and the way cheese seems to make people happy, you never see a customer buying our cheeses that is not in a good mood," said Holmstedt.

Hopefully after reading this you can walk into the cheese jungle and feel a little more confident in your surroundings. However, Holmstedt had this to say upon finishing our talk, "even though it can be easy to get lost in the cheese world, I am always here to help guide you through to find your perfect cheese, just ask." So next time cheese finds its way on your shopping list, remember that The Food Co-op has a huge selection of cheese, ranging from local craftsman like Mt. Townsend Creamery all the way to far off European varieties and the Cheese Queen will be there to help you decide what one is right for you.

**W**orking The Food Co-op kitchen, I often found myself giving the newly gluten free staff and members an impromptu tour of the options found in our store. In addition to ready made dinner and dessert options your Co-op carries all the ingredient's you'll need to prepare wheat free offerings to your friends and family this season.

In the kitchen's cold case and hot bar help yourself to seasonal wheat free recipes such as Shepard's Pie and Mushroom Gravy. You can also expect to find Ginger Applesauce, Cranberry Relish and more. All allergens including wheat are listed on kitchen labels and cold case signage for your reference.

Enjoy a dessert. Local baker Anca keeps us in supply of WF sandwich cookies. In a clearly designated fridge the deli keeps Hail Merry Miracle Tarts. Of the many popular flavors, you can now find Egg Nog Mini Tarts and Gingerbread Bites.

Our bulk department has many, many bulk flours. Nash's Farm out of Sequim fills our bins with triticale and teff flours. You may also find white and whole spelt flours, and coconut too.

On aisle 5, Bob's Red Mill and Pamela's provide us with pre-formulated flour mixes. Bob's Red Mill offers a 1:1 baking GF flour, a quick solution replacing wheat flour in your family's favorite recipes. Try Pamela's chocolate cake mix.

**GF** **How do you know if its gluten free? Look for the bold GF tag next to the product's shelf tag. Often a cursory look at the packaging will let you know if the product is certified GF.**

**\*\*Be aware. If you have a severe allergy to wheat, please note that our neither**



**our food service nor bulk departments are certified gluten free. While we do our best to keep all allergens separate you may hear deli staff use the term Wheat Free when referring to our products.\*\***

The challenge of gluten free baking vs. baking with conventional flour is to make delicious food and eat it!

Lacking perspective and experience in the ways of gluten sensitivity I contacted my friend Lauren Cowley, formerly lead of The Food cheese department. Some may remember her booth, Artimus Baking at our local farmer's market. Most recently she developed the wheat free baking program for the Post East, a coffee and juice bar out of Nashville, Tennessee.

Lauren started baking with her mother who has celiac disease. Her advice is to...

*...be open-minded and patient. People bake not because they need to survive but because it's fun! Be confident, baking has been developing for hundreds of years. Start small and remember everyone is different. Some people like cream puffs and some people prefer pies.*

To make a successful baking mix at home be prepared to experiment to your tastes. Most mixes will be a

combination of three flours or two flours and a starch. Buy a kitchen scale. This will aid in substituting one flour for another when you potentially run out of one variety in the middle of a recipe. When experimenting with recipes that absolutely need something to mimic gluten, breads, pizza dough etc., consider using flax seed or psyllium husks to make your recipe cohesive when baked.

### Conversion

<b>1 cup =</b>	<b>140 grams</b>
<b>1 ½ cups =</b>	<b>210 grams</b>
<b>2 cups =</b>	<b>280 grams</b>
<b>2 ½ cups =</b>	<b>350 grams</b>
<b>3 cups =</b>	<b>420 grams</b>

You have many resources when formulating your flours. Blogs, books and YouTube! Lauren's suggested reading is *Blackbird Gluten Free Baking* by Karen Morgan. She raves, "every recipe in that book is amazing!"

These days you can find me slinging fruits and veggies in the produce department. Come find me anytime to walk the store with you. I would be pleased to show you the many gluten free choices available.

# Warming Up

Recipes from the Co-op Kitchen

## Co-op Kitchen Mushroom Gravy

### INGREDIENTS

1 1/3 cup butter  
2 cup onion  
2 cup mushroom  
2 tsp sage and thyme  
2 TB sherry  
1/3 cup Wizards Vegan Worcestershire Sauce  
1/3 cup San-J WF Tamari Soy Sauce  
1 1/3 cup brown rice flour (bulk)  
4 cup stock of your choice

### DIRECTIONS

In saucepan melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onion and mushrooms. Sauté till mushrooms release their moisture and onions are translucent. Reduce heat, sprinkle flour over top stirring till absorbed, add sherry and herbs. Cook two minutes more. Stir in rice flour till flour is mixed in well. Continue stirring and slowly add stock, soy sauce and Worcestershire to pan. You may want to increase or decrease stock depending on how thick you like your gravy.

*"I personally make this recipe at home all the time.*

*It's great over homemade French fries and baked cauliflower."*

-Estelle

## Co-op Kitchen Red Lentil Spinach Soup

### INGREDIENTS

2 cup yellow onion  
2 cup carrots  
2 cup celery  
2 TB peeled and minced garlic  
2 TB fresh minced ginger  
2 TB coriander  
2 TB brown mustard seed  
2 tsp cumin  
1.5 tsp turmeric  
1.5 tsp cayenne  
4 cup red lentils  
12 ounce fresh spinach

3 cup Coconut milk

3 quarts water

1 tablespoon salt

2 TB sunflower oil

32 oz vegetable broth

### DIRECTIONS

Sauté veggies in oil until soft.

Add spices and cook for 2 more minutes.

Add broth and lentils.

Cook lentils until soft, about 90 minutes.

Finish with coconut milk, spinach and salt.



## Co-op Kitchen Coconut Chicken Curry Soup

### INGREDIENTS

2 cup yellow onion  
1/4 cup garlic  
1/4 cup ginger  
1 TB Chili flakes  
2 cups carrot  
2 cups celery  
2 cups Russet potato  
1.5 pounds boneless skinless chicken  
2 cups Crimini mushrooms  
1/4 cup lime juice  
1 stalk lemongrass  
1 cube veggie bouillon  
2 cans (13.5 oz) Coconut milk  
Salt | pepper to taste  
2 TB sunflower oil  
1 jar Thai Kitchen green curry paste  
2 TB fish sauce

### DIRECTIONS

Chop onions, carrots, celery, potatoes.

Dice ginger and garlic.

Heat sunflower oil in soup pot until almost smoking.

Throw in onions, carrots and celery to start the sauté. Cut the outer layer of lemon grass off & chop into 2 inch pieces and sauté.

Saute veggies for 10-15 minutes until just tender. Add garlic, ginger, and sauté 5 minutes.

Add chili flakes, veggie bouillon, add chopped potato and diced mushroom.

Add 4 cups chicken stock, coconut milk, and cook on low for 45 minutes.

Finish with lime juice, salt, and pepper.

# Climate Change at the Food Co-op

Kenna S Eaton, GM

**W**ith the recent change in our political administration we can reasonably expect new attitudes towards our nations approach to climate change. What will not change is your Co-op's work in reducing our carbon footprint and efforts towards environmental sustainability.

The Food Co-op has always been active in keeping our impact minimal: reduce, reuse, and recycle being one of our original mantras. Most of that is a reflection of our values and our collective interest in leaving our world a better place for the next generation - our children and their children.

For the past 4 years we have actively been keeping track [measuring and reporting] on our outputs as well as actions towards improvement. We were honored to receive for the past 2 years an award from the EPA for the lowest carbon emissions of any of their participating grocery stores. But frankly we didn't do that work so we could win an award - as nice it is to be recognized for our efforts - we did it because we thought it was the right thing. And because it made economic sense.

I was given a copy of Gary Hirschberg's book *"Stirring It Up- How To Make Money And Save The World"* in which Gary, the CE-Yo of Stoneyfield Farm writes about how and why his company went out of their way to be ecological. He also cites many other companies that took a similar approach to running their businesses (Patagonia, New Belgium Beer, and Ben & Jerry's) and made the case that being



**“...being environmentally sustainable also makes good business sense.”**

**—Gary Hirschberg**

environmentally sustainable also makes good business sense. And it does. Those very same effort we put toward having a smaller waste stream can also save us money in landfill costs. Efforts made towards reducing packaging also save those companies money. Gary argues in his book that “market forces can save the world, instead of destroying it”. Truly the bottom line can be impacted in so many positive ways by ‘doing the right thing’.

I take heart in reading about companies across our country that have taken the step of reducing their waste and environmental impact because it helped their bottom line. I hope that other companies start doing that because they can, and it makes business sense, not because they had to, to avoid paying a ‘carbon tax’ or avoiding other punitive legislation.

This year, The Food Co-op contributed to PUR forest by donating funds to protect acreage in the San Martin Bio Corridor. We purchased enough acres to offset 60 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions equal to from one year of propane usage.

PUR PROJET is defined as "a project that uses creativity and innovation to promote sustainable solutions that advance a common good in the world." They have 30 team members, about 90 project technicians in the field (cooperative partners), 40 projects working in 40 countries and 150 corporate partners.

As the sun lingers at its low point in the daytime sky, nights still long and still in the deepest months of winter, we instinctually turn to warmth and light (especially here in the Pacific Northwest where it can be common to be under the lid of a cloudy grey sky for weeks). These sweet short days, as we turn to firelight and to friends and good food, we may not realize it, but we're embodying 'hygge', an almost untranslatable Danish word and ethic.

'Hygge', (pronounced hue-gah) is incompletely translated as "coziness," but encompasses more than just physical comfort. In the fabric of Danish culture, in deep winters, life is experienced fully by gathering family and friends for good meals, by laughing and loving, by snuggling up under a fuzzy blanket, with a furry friend curled at ones feet, while sipping ones favorite tea (I know! That's a lot!). Helen Russell, author of *The Year of Living Danishly: Uncovering the Secrets of the World's Happiest Country*, says: "Hygge seems to me to be about being kind to yourself - indulging, having a nice time, not punishing or denying yourself anything." 'Hygge' can be that sparkly light of candles and fireplaces, the smell of cinnamon rolls and the flame of brightly woven sweaters. The Danes experience long dark winters, with 17 hour nights and an average temp in the winter landing around 32 degrees (sound familiar?), and 'hygge', the coziness of the soul, goes a long way toward diminishing the harsh outside reality.

Good news! We can consciously choose a winter-busting 'hygge' lifestyle for ourselves, and do as the Danish do (not a bad population to emulate - they're found to be among the happiest people in the world, by some measures). We can consciously choose to construct comfort and closeness - to invite companionship and to pay attention to what makes our hearts open wide. Take a moment to ask yourself if increasing

“Hygge seems to me to be about being kind to yourself - indulging, having a nice time, not punishing or denying yourself anything.”  
—Helen Russell

any of these things might enhance your winter-life (at least until we can get out and dig in the gardens again).

## 5 Ways To Add 'Hygge' To Your Winter:

**Light!** Add sparkle: Candles, strings of lights, ornaments that reflect light and prisms that hang in your window and reflect rainbows on the ceiling, firelight - make the dark work for you as a backdrop for the flickering of winter lights (go ahead - keep those holiday lights up as long as you want!).

**Family and friends!** Gather for game night with your best friends, start a "Sunday soup" tradition and invite the neighbors, celebrate the end of the week with a cozy hot-cocoa family movie night.

**Soft and cozy!** Pull out the Flokati (ultra fluffy!) rug, cuddle under a blanket with your kiddo, look for soft, plush, fuzzy-cozy blankets and pillows to add to your living room and bedrooms (an invitation to relax!), cuddle your fur-family. Personally, I've added two kittens to my life this winter!

**Heavenly sounds!** Whatever music makes your heart soar, turn it on, get under a blanket or in a hot bath, and let the sounds soothe. Let music make the mundane, heavenly: let it hum in the background as you're doing the dishes. Bonus points if there are candles involved!

**Good food!** There's a reason this is soup season! Warming foods - rich spices - special once a year "treats" - all are comfort foods in one way or another, and comfort is what it's all about! Settle in with your favorite tea, relish some downtime in the kitchen preparing a delectable dish, and then SHARE IT (again - bonus if there are candles involved)!





# CO-OP COOKS 2017

Classes by Sidonie Maroon,  
local chef, arts educator  
and food writer. Read more at  
[www.abluedotkitchen.com](http://www.abluedotkitchen.com)

## March 11, 2017 POTS OF GOLD CHICKEN PHO

Vietnamese Chicken Noodle Soup and The Art of Asian Stocks —dedicated to local Spring Rain pasture raised chicken.

Few foods give more all-around pleasure than good homemade soup, and they feature in every cuisine around the world from gumbo and potages to chowders. Learn to start right with stocks, build with fresh, local and seasonal ingredients, and garnish in style.

## April 8 DAWN OF FLAVOR

Home cooking from the Spice Islands of Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore using fresh, seasonal and local produce.

Take a foodie journey to the tropical archipelago that lies between Thailand and Australia, home of

nutmeg, cloves, galangal and turmeric, and some of the most wonderfully spiced dishes on the globe.

We'll venture into family kitchens using authentic recipes for a full range of sambals, dipping sauces, street foods and classics like gado-gado. Learn to grind spices and chilies, make flavoring pastes, and know when a curry is fully cooked. Start your love affair with unforgettable food from the islands that have lured spice seekers for centuries.

## May 13 FRENCH FARMHOUSE COOKING

Capture the authentic cuisine du terroir, the rustic and richly flavored farmhouse cooking that is the foundation of French cuisine and the fountain of inspiration for good cooks everywhere.

In a celebratory feasts we'll range from using wild spring

greens to making crisp salads. We'll create warm tarts, and learn other French farmhouse favorites using our fresh, local and seasonal foods.

## June 24 CULINARIA ITALY Emilia Romagna

Italian cuisine is not one thing but a vast variety of flavors and styles that vary region to region. It's changing geography from north to south give a profusion of foods, each place with its own traditions and specialties.

Come and cook a sumptuous Italian feast from Emilia Romagna to the North, using our fresh, local and seasonal produce.

## July 8 GLORIOUS FOODS OF GREECE

Follow the inroads made by Diane Kochilas' cookbook, *The Glorious Foods of Greece*, a magnum opus of Greek cuisine, travel beyond the familiar moussaka into the country's diverse regions where the customs and foodways have remained intact for eons.

Cook the earthy mountain regions of Macedonia and surrounding areas. Learn the techniques that will help you to open up the possibilities our fresh, local, and seasonal fare.

## August 12 MEXICAN REGIONAL SAMPLER

The flavors of Mexico are fresh, bold and delicious. Come and cook the soul-satisfying dishes of Oaxaca. Travel inside the hearts and kitchens of Mexico's home cooks.

*"For all its complexity Mexican food is primordial – it speaks on a gut level. It's no wonder, carried in its DNA are slow simmering flavors of the indigenous kitchen."*

—Rick Bayless

## Sept 23 CLASSICAL TURKISH COOKING

*"One should not pass over these things, simply saying they are food. They are in reality a complete civilization."*

—Abdulah Sinasi  
Camlicadaki Enistemiz  
(1944)

Turkish food is one of the world's foremost foodways. Its taste and depth place it alongside French and Chinese cooking but its simplicity and healthiness give it its own special appeal. Try your hand at this vibrant cuisine, presented against the backdrop of Turkish culinary history and with perfect timing for our peak summer crops.

For more info and tickets see [www.foodcoop.coop](http://www.foodcoop.coop)