

Free

CO-OP NEWS

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CO-OP

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All articles, columns and letters are the expressed opinion of the author and not of North Coast Co-op.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters must include your name, address, member #, and telephone #. Letters should be kept to a maximum of 250 words and may be edited. We regret that we may not be able to publish all letters due to limited space. Email your letters to co-opnews@northcoast.coop or send them to: Co-op News, 811 I Street, Arcata, CA 95521.

Letter from the Editor

by Laurie Talbert, Marketing & Membership Coordinator

LAST YEAR AT THIS TIME THE CO-OP was soliciting input from members for a new five-year strategic plan. Hundreds of you completed surveys, attended meetings or participated on a member committee to ensure that the plan reflected the interests of the membership. The plan was passed overwhelmingly at the Annual Membership Meeting & Celebration last October. As our new fiscal year starts, we begin work to accomplish the goals set out in the plan. We will continue to rely on you, our members, to provide your creative ideas and share your experiences so that your needs continue to be reflected in the work that we do. Co-op News will be a resource for soliciting your feedback and your resource for regular updates on progress made toward the plan goals.

Here are a few things we will need your help with over the next year:

- As part of the strategic plan goal to develop the Co-op as a community hub, a member engagement plan will be written this year. We'll be

asking you what it means to be a member and how the Co-op can become a more integral part of our community.

- The Co-op's members and customers will be asked to complete a Customer Satisfaction Survey. It will be an invaluable tool for measuring where the Co-op can focus energies to meet customers' needs.
- Other information will be gathered to create baselines to measure the achievement of plan goals. How do our customers use durables in the stores? How many of you use the seating areas for a meal? How do you travel to the Co-op?

Of course, you don't have to wait to share your ideas with us. The Co-op welcomes input from our members at any time. Send your thoughts to membership@northcoast.coop or join us at monthly Member Action Committee meetings. And if you want to take a look at the full five-year strategic plan, it is available on the Co-op's website, or we'd be happy to send you a copy. ■

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Cover: Kiya Villarreal, Sustainability Coordinator, on a North Coast Co-op Zagster bicycle. Photo by Zev Smith-Danford

Co-op Holding Steady, Ready for Lift Off

by Melanie Bettenhausen, General Manager

AFTER REPORTING THIS WINTER THAT WE TURNED A CORNER toward profitability, I wondered if our sales increases were due to holiday cheer and worried that they would not last into the spring and throughout the year, especially given that the economic future of our area is still unknown. January and February sales were disappointing during the government shutdown, but we have seen a strong upward trend in March. The major driver of those increasing sales we attribute to the new food bar at our Eureka location, as well as some recently added menu items at both stores. Customers can now enjoy hand-made chicken pot pies, value-priced burritos and hot cinnamon rolls at both stores. In Arcata, we now have fried chicken on Fridays. If you haven't tasted it yet, give it a try, but get there early – the fried chicken is only available from 3-5pm and it goes fast. All our freshly prepared hot food and salad bar options are made using mostly organic ingredients and made with loving care. It's a difference you can taste!

While we have been delayed in carrying out the major renovation of our Eureka store, we have found ways of making incremental improvements to meet our shoppers' insa-

table demand for the Co-op's high quality, freshly-prepared food. The sandwich ordering station has moved around the corner and now faces the new food bar, leaving the main aisle open for customers to get to the food bar, meat department, specialty cheeses, cold

“...we've got the bull by the horns and we're ready to take on whatever challenges come our way.”

beverages and access the rest of the store. A new juice bar will be added soon in Eureka (already in Arcata) and signature sandwiches are coming soon to both stores. Visit, try the food, and let us know what you think about the changes!

We continue to do all of this with less staff. Over the course of six months, we went from 230 employees to 189. We laid off six employees between late September and mid-October and lost many more through attrition (when an employee voluntarily leaves, and we do not fill the position). We've also maintained reduced schedules (30 minutes per day) for staff in most departments. This continues to be a hardship for employees and is probably a main contributor to so many leaving, but it is

also part of how we've managed to survive our financial crisis and continuing cash crunch. With the sales lift we have seen in March, we will cautiously add labor where not having it creates a worse problem (ex: no bakers means no bread which means reduced sales). When you are next in one of our stores, let an employee know how much you appreciate their hard work and dedication. Those who have stayed have carried us through with their passion for the Co-op and their deep knowledge of our products and our customers.

While we have pulled through this rough patch by improving operations, we still have the issue of C-Share repurchases to address. When there were members tabling in front of our stores making accusations of embezzlement (not true) and news articles pointing to mismanagement, we received dozens of requests from Fair Share members who wanted us to buy back their C-Share investments. This is completely understandable, given that the picture painted looked so dire. As a consumer-owned cooperative, it is our responsibility to share with our 18,000 members how we are doing financially—transparency is [Continued on page 4]



Bourke, Deli Production Sr. Clerk, cooks Co-op chicken pot pies in Arcata.



Customers making sauce, grain, and protein choices at the new food bar in the Eureka store.

[Continued from previous page]

key—but it has its drawbacks. At the height of the rumors that the Co-op would be closing (it won't be), the repurchase requests exceeded \$300,000 (out of roughly \$2 million). Not all of these requests are related to fears about the Co-op's financial status. We have members who are making investments in property, or settling estates of deceased family members.

Many of you chose to invest in the Co-op in its time of need—and we thank you! The fact remains, however, that any gains we have in building cash will be eroded by the need to repurchase more than \$300,000 worth of shares over the course of the next few months. The board has been monitoring this situation and recently raised the C-Share dividend rate from 2% to 2.65% APR. This resulted in another roughly \$50,000 in new C-Share investments. They will be considering further increases to the dividend rate as the rates at other institutions rise. They will also be reviewing proposals brought by staff to take a loan on the Arcata building (which we own) for cash needs and capital expenses such as retrofitting our refrigeration systems to accommodate environmental regulations around refrigerant gases.

And so, we have this double-edged sword. By being transparent, we risk generating more rumors and fears about the Co-op's financial situation. On the other side, we could potentially garner the cash investments we need from members to fully access the road to financial recovery. The hardest part, in my mind, is simply keeping members informed with accurate information. In our small community, it is easy for misinformation to spread quickly, or for the lack of information to spread fear. I encourage members to get their information directly from the Co-op. Read *Co-op News*, read board minutes on our website or in stores, attend board or committee meetings, and correct misinformation when you hear it.

Now that we are holding steady in sales, and with the changes we are making to delight our shoppers, we are ready for lift off. If you've been reading *Co-op News* these last few quarters (or possibly for decades), you've noticed that the Co-op experiences rough patches and setbacks, but then recovers. Sometimes drastic measures are needed, but that is par for the course in business, especially for an institution that has survived 45 years in a rural community. We do not know what awaits us in this roller coaster political and economic environment, but we've got the bull by the horns and we're ready to take on whatever challenges come our way. In fact, we already have.

Now more than ever, we need Member Economic Participation, cooperative principle #3. As our early investing members become older and have greater need for their investment elsewhere, investment from our newer members ideally will create stability for our working capital. If you are a member and have not become Fair Share yet, please consider doing so at this time. Your investment of \$300 in Sustaining B-Shares will allow you to begin investing in, and earning dividends on, C-Shares. This is a fantastic way to support much of what you love about our community.

One of the things that makes this community so amazing is our cornucopia of local, organic produce. The Co-op has had a strong hand in the start-up and ongoing success of many local farms. We have done this by engaging farmers annually. Each winter we sit down with each farmer and determine what and how much they will grow for the



Members have shown support for North Coast Co-op by wearing “Support the Co-op” buttons, available for purchase at the registers.

Co-op. New this year, we are increasing our orders to ensure we have enough local, organic, delicious produce to use in our Deli recipes. It's not as simple as placing an order when you need it. There is much pre-planning on the part of the farmer. They must consider the capacity they will have, the yields they will need for all of their accounts and the risk they are taking in doing more for the Co-op. We appreciate that they go through this process with us each year and that we can count on their dedication to being stewards of the soil and the land! When you invest in the Co-op, you are investing in our local food system and a healthier planet.

We truly live in a unique place. Navigating through this challenging financial time has magnified the importance of the Co-op in our community. We buy from more than 200 local vendors, 25 of them farmers, as well as local distributors. We are major accounts for out-of-the-area produce distributors who source from small, family farms—sometimes cooperatives, always organic—and have a positive impact on the food system. Our employees spend a good chunk of their paychecks on local products and services. By the Co-op's very existence, we are able to participate in a regenerative economy. That's something worth investing in!

I'm really excited about the progress we've made these last few months and the view of the horizon as we take off this year. Thank you for investing in us as we fly into the Co-op's long-term future. ■

Sustainability Snapshots

by Kiya Villarreal, Sustainability Coordinator

The long journey to the landfill

WE'VE ALL SEEN THE RECOLOGY TRUCKS hauling away full bins of trash. Stop by stop they pick up one full bin after another and drive off into the distance. Well 'off into the distance' isn't just a little ways in this case. The trip doesn't end after the trucks leave the curb. The landfill-bound haul makes a trip in Recology trucks and is dropped off at Humboldt Waste Management Authority (HWMA). From HWMA the trash is contracted for hauling with Bettendorf Trucking and begins a northbound journey ending at Dry Creek Landfill in Oregon.

Dry Creek is doing its part with best-practices for environmental protection with a system of collecting methane gas from its landfill to then become usable electricity for about 3,000 homes in the area.

While this system is making the best use of landfill waste, and I congratulate Dry Creek on their responsible innovation; prevention is still the best system for reducing waste. So, the next time you're in the Co-op, I invite you to try out shopping using your own containers to save some packaging from taking a big trip to Oregon.



What's the deal with bulk tofu?

YOU MAY HAVE HEARD the whispers of tofu being available some way somehow in the Co-op and that it is both local AND package-free. It's true, dear friends, it's so very true! Both store locations have been offering local bulk tofu for many years.

Tofu Shop tofu is delivered to the Co-op waste-free and is stored waste-free. If you choose, it's even available for purchase waste-free. Locally produced organic tofu is delivered in food-grade reusable buckets that we return for sanitizing and refilling. Inside the food-grade buckets are tofu blocks submerged in water. Each block is about a pound of delicious extra-firm locally produced tofu! You also get a discount if you bring your own container to the deli counter and keep the whole journey package free.

Zero-Waste Beach Clean up

THE NORTHCOST ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER and North Coast Co-op are working together to make this year's Coastal Cleanup Day Zero Waste. The Co-op is collecting empty bulk bean, grain and coffee bags from our Bulk departments and food-grade buckets from our Deli. Instead of serving just a single use, they will be handed out to volunteers to collect trash during this year's Coastal Cleanup, replacing the plastic bags that have been used in the past.

"The Northcoast Environmental Center would like to thank the North Coast Co-op for providing materials to aid in the effort to host a completely Zero-Waste Coastal Cleanup Day for Humboldt County on September 21st 2019!" -Northcoast Environmental Center



Fourth Quarter Board Meeting Recaps

January, February and March board meetings

by Colin Fiske, Board President

YOUR NORTH COAST CO-OP Board of Directors has had a lot on its plate recently, and our meetings are always packed with important discussions and decisions. I'd like to extend my sincere thanks to all the members and employees who have attended our meetings and offered their comments to the board over the last few months. For those of you who didn't make it to a meeting, here are some of the highlights.

FACING FINANCIAL CHALLENGES

As Co-op members are probably aware, the Co-op has faced significant financial challenges over the last six months. Sales have been significantly lower than prior years, and our available cash on hand has slipped below comfortable levels. This has been a constant topic of discussion at board meetings, where the board has received updates from staff and provided direction for additional steps to take.

Thanks to the hard work of staff and the support of Co-op members and the board, there has been significant progress made toward addressing our financial challenges. We have informed our members about the issues and asked them to spend and invest more at the Co-op—and the numbers show that they've heard us and stepped up in a big way. We have lowered our expenses as much as we

can while working to minimize and mitigate the impacts on employees and shoppers. We have adopted much more aggressive cash management strategies. We've invested in new prepared foods capacity in Eureka, and early sales numbers show this investment paying off. We've worked to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of all aspects of our operations. We're not in the clear yet, but we're in a much better place than we were a few months ago.

ENSURING SAFETY AND SECURITY

Employees from the Eureka store attended the board's February meeting to discuss concerns around security, now that we no longer have security guards present in the store. The board discussed this issue extensively and continues to do so. At the March meeting, the board approved a recommendation from the Member Action Committee to "direct staff to address safety concerns with actions that can be implemented in the short term, including improved lighting, better camera placement and placement of security mirrors."

General Manager Melanie Bettenhausen updated the board about plans for sensitivity/de-escalation training for staff from John Shelter of New Directions, and about the financial and logistical difficulties associated with bringing security guards back to the

stores. The safety of the Co-op's employees, members and shoppers is a top concern for the board and the management team. If you have additional questions, concerns, or suggestions about this topic, please let us know.

FREE ADVICE?

At its meetings in January, February and March, the board discussed a proposal from National Co-op Grocers (NCG) to send an advisor to us free of charge, who would provide advice to improve our financial situation. The board was interested in the possibility of free advice, but many board members had concerns about hidden strings that might be attached to the proposal. With that in mind, the board sent the proposed contract with NCG to our attorney for review, seeking the following assurances: (a) we wouldn't be obligated to follow any advice NCG might provide, if we disagree with it; (b) the goals of the relationship would align with our own financial benchmarks; and (c) there would be maximum transparency and oversight of the NCG advisor by the board.

At the March meeting, the board reviewed our attorney's suggested revisions to the proposed contract and voted to send it to NCG along with a request for references from other co-ops which have entered into a similar arrangement. If NCG accepts our terms and

BOARD OF DIRECTORS & COMMITTEE MEETINGS

April Meetings

Board of Directors Meeting

April 4 • 6pm, Inn at 2nd and C (139 2nd Street in Old Town Eureka)

Member Action Committee

April 10 • 5:30pm, upstairs in the Arcata Store (811 I Street)

Earth Action Committee

April 10 • 6:45pm, upstairs in the Arcata Store (811 I Street)

Policies & Procedures Committee

April 17 • 6pm, upstairs in the Arcata Store (811 I Street)

May Meetings

Board of Directors Meeting

May 2 • 6pm, Arcata Playhouse (1251 9th Street, Arcata)

Member Action Committee

May 8 • 5:30pm, upstairs in the Arcata Store (811 I Street)

Earth Action Committee

May 8 • 6:45pm, upstairs in the Arcata Store (811 I Street)

Policies & Procedures Committee

May 15 • 6pm, upstairs in the Arcata Store (811 I Street)

June Meetings

Board of Directors Meeting

June 6 • 6pm, Location to be Announced

Member Action Committee

June 12 • 5:30pm, upstairs in the Arcata Store (811 I Street)

Earth Action Committee

June 12 • 6:45pm, upstairs in the Arcata Store (811 I Street)

provides references, the board plans to make a final decision about the advisor proposal at its April meeting.

THE BEST PERSON FOR THE JOB

General Manager Melanie Bettenhausen's current contract expires in November of this year. At the end of 2018, in consideration of the many challenges currently facing the Co-op, Melanie recommended that the board open a full General Manager search. Melanie plans to re-apply, and the board may or may not re-hire her. Either way, we will have ensured that we have the best available person filling this critical position.

Discussion of the General Manager search process is ongoing at board meetings this year. In January, the board appointed an ad-

hoc committee to create a work plan for the search. In February, the board approved the work plan as well as a proposed budget for the search and appointed a Search Committee. The Search Committee consists of Treasurer James Kloor, Secretary Leah Stamper, Board Member Cheri Strong, and myself.

In March, the board discussed and tentatively adopted lists of high-priority competencies, skills, key experiences and personal attributes of an "ideal candidate" for the General Manager position. The board is scheduled to adopt a final "ideal candidate" profile in April, and the job will be posted in May.

OPEN BOARD SEAT

Board of Director's member Mary Ella Anderson resigned in February, leaving a gen-

eral-member seat open. The board put out a call for letters of interest in the position and plans to consider appointing someone to fill the seat at its April meeting. Any appointed board member would serve only until the scheduled fall election, unless they were re-elected by the members.

FINAL THOUGHTS

The Board meets the first Thursday of every month at 6pm, alternating between Arcata and Eureka. Members are always welcome, and full meeting minutes from each meeting are always available in the next month's meeting packet. ■

Good food needs good leadership

Co-op elections are just around the corner!

This fall, there are two open General Member-Director seats and one open Employee Member-Director seat on the Co-op Board of Directors with terms beginning November 2019 and running through October 2022.

- ✓ Represent our thousands of members
- ✓ Support our local food system
- ✓ Provide direction by setting policies

If you think you may be interested in running, our current board members would love to meet you. Meet the Board before the June or July board meetings to learn more about serving on the Co-op board. Application packets will be available at Customer Service in the stores starting June 4. Applications for candidacy for the General Member-Director seats are due on August 13.

2019 Election Timeline

June 4, Tuesday: Applications available for open seats.

June 6, Thursday: Applicants are invited to Meet the Board prior to the June Board of Director's meeting

July 11, Thursday: Applicants are invited to Meet the Board prior to the July Board of Director's meeting

August 13, Tuesday: General Member-Director applications due by 9pm!

September 25, Wednesday: Election begins!

October 12, Saturday: Annual Membership Celebration & Meeting

October 16, Wednesday: Election ends at 9pm.

October 23, Wednesday: Election results posted

November 7, Thursday: First board meeting for new directors!





What is your favorite Co-op house-made food?



“Cheese rolls... used to be hot pockets!”
Barbara, Bayside
Member for 38 years.



“Popcorn Tofu.”
Susann, Manila
Member for 3 years.



“Co-op made bread.”
Howie, Bayside
Member for 38 years.



“Biscuits and Gravy.”
Laurie, Eureka
Member for 7 years.



“Bomb Broccoli Salad.”
Karen, Arcata
Member for 1 year.



“Mushroom Spinach Lasagna, Bakery products, always knowledgeable & friendly staff!”
Katherine, Eureka
Member for 1 year.

The first six members to answer our featured question and let us take their picture get a \$10 gift card. Look for our table in Eureka this Summer—you could be featured next!

Local Produce Guide April | May | June

<i>Greens</i>	April	May	June	Farm
Assorted Greens	●	●	●	Little River Farm
Chard Varieties		●	●	Wild Rose Farm
Collard Greens		●	●	Wild Rose Farm
Dandelion Greens		●	●	Wild Rose Farm
Kale Varieties		●	●	Wild Rose Farm
Radicchio			●	Flora Organica
Spinach	●	●	●	Wild Rose Farm



<i>Root Veggies</i>	April	May	June	Farm
Beet Varieties			●	Wild Rose Farm Willow Creek Farms
Fennel		●	●	Flora Organica
Kohlrabi Varieties			●	Rain Frog Farm

<i>Squash</i>	April	May	June	Farm
Asst. Summer Squash			●	Willow Creek Farms
Green Zucchini			●	Pierce Family Farm
Gold Zucchini			●	Willow Creek Farms
Sunburst Squash			●	Willow Creek Farms



<i>Lettuce</i>	April	May	June	Farm
Butter Varieties			●	Organic Matters Ranch
Green Leaf			●	Organic Matters Ranch
Green Oakleaf			●	Organic Matters Ranch
Red Oakleaf			●	Organic Matters Ranch
Red French Crisp			●	Organic Matters Ranch
Romaine			●	Organic Matters Ranch



<i>... and more!</i>	April	May	June	Farm
Artichokes	●	●	●	Earthly Edibles
Asparagus	●	●	●	Henry Rose
Broccoli			●	Earthly Edibles
Green Beans			●	Willow Creek Farms
Romanesco			●	Organic Matters Ranch
Wheatgrass	●	●	●	Flying Blue Dog



<i>Herbs</i>	April	May	June	Farm
Cilantro	●	●	●	Wild Rose Farm
Dill			●	Rain Frog Farm
Italian Parsley			●	Pierce Family Farm



<i>Mushrooms</i>	April	May	June	Farm
Lions Mane	●	●	●	Mycality Mushrooms
Oyster	●	●	●	Mycality Mushrooms
Shiitake	●	●	●	Mycality Mushrooms



Weather may affect produce availability

<i>Where's your farmer?</i>			
Rain Frog Farm <i>in Blue Lake</i>	Organic Matters Ranch <i>in Freshwater</i>	Pierce Family Farm <i>in Orleans</i>	Earthly Edibles <i>in Korbel</i>
Wild Rose Farm <i>in Blue Lake</i>	Mycality Mushrooms <i>in Fairhaven</i>	Flora Organica <i>in McKinleyville</i>	Flying Blue Dog <i>in Willow Creek</i>
Henry Rose <i>in Orleans</i>	Willow Creek Farms <i>in Willow Creek</i>	Little River Farm <i>in Bayside</i>	Trying something new? Ask for a sample!



Red cabbage

Yellow onion skins

Sumneric

Hibiscus

Beets

Beets

Paprika

Red onion skins

Natural Egg Dye Guide

Dyeing eggs is a fun spring activity to do with children and friends (or on your own!). While many people are familiar with store-bought kits, creating your own egg dyes is a fun project in itself! Natural dyes are a simple and chemical-free alternative to most store-bought dyes. Best of all, they can be made with foods and spices you may already have stocked in your kitchen!

INGREDIENTS/TOOLS NEEDED:

- Dye Materials
 - Shredded or chopped produce – 2 to 3 cups
 - Red beets (pale pink)
 - Yellow onion skins (orange)
 - Red onion skins (deep brown)
 - Red cabbage (blue)
 - Or try avocado skins (pink), carrot tops (yellow), or blueberries (blue-grey)
 - Tea bags – 6 tea bags
 - Hibiscus (jade green)
 - Or try chamomile or Red Zinger tea (various shades)
 - Spices – 2 TBSP
 - Turmeric (yellow)
 - Paprika (ecru)
 - 2 cups water
 - 1 Tablespoon vinegar per cup of dye color
 - Pots for simmering ingredients and boiling eggs
 - Mesh strainer
 - Small bowls or mason jars
 - White eggs
 - Coconut or olive oil (optional – for adding luster to eggs)
- Optional – for natural plant pattern
- Small leaves or flowers
 - 2-3" section of panty hose or 4" cheese cloth
 - Small rubber band



Tips

- If you want more vibrant eggs try another round of dye. After your first round of egg dyeing, let your eggs dry and add to the dye again for a more vivid shade!
- For the advanced egg dyer – try dipping in two different colors for unique hues! After your first round of egg dyeing, let your eggs dry and add to a different dye again for a more vivid shade!



We tested out six different natural dyes, with beautiful results. The dye takes to each egg differently, so even within the same jar of dye, you will get different results. We also taste tested each egg (Yum!) and none of the natural flavors of the dyes carried over to the eggs.

DIRECTIONS FOR BOILING EGGS:

1. Add eggs to a medium pot and cover with cold water. Bring pot to a boil. Once it's rolling turn off the heat and cover the pot. After 10 minutes, place eggs in a bowl of cold water and let sit until they're cool to the touch.
2. Drain bowl and replace with warm, soapy water. Gently rub eggs with a washcloth or your thumb to remove oils that prohibit natural dyes from adhering as effectively to the egg shell.

DIRECTIONS FOR MAKING NATURAL EGG DYE:

1. Bring dye materials and water to a boil. Turn heat down to low and simmer, covered, for 15-30 minutes until desired color is reached. Keep in mind that the eggs will be several shades lighter so it's best to go for deep, rich hues.
2. Remove liquid from heat and let cool to room temperature.
3. Pour dye through a mesh strainer into bowls or mason jars and add 1 Tablespoon of vinegar for each cup of dye liquid.
4. Lower hardboiled eggs into dye and place in fridge until desired color is reached. Let sit overnight for best results.
5. When the eggs are ready, scoop them out with a spoon and gently rinse. Once rinsed, place on a drying rack or an upside-down egg carton.
6. Naturally-dyed eggs have a matte finish. If you'd like to add a little luster, rub with a drop or two of coconut or olive oil.

CREATING A NATURAL PLANT PATTERN:

Before adding eggs to your dye, take a small leaf or flower and lay it flat to your egg. Take your panty hose or cheese cloth and wrap it firmly around your egg and leaf. Secure with rubber band around the excess cloth on the back side of the egg. Once secured, lower egg into dye.

From Coop to Co-op

**By Zev Smith-Danford,
Graphic Design Coordinator**

Photography by
Zev Smith-Danford & Caitlin Fowler,
Graphics & Marketing Coordinator

NESTLED BETWEEN THE SMITH RIVER and the Pacific Ocean in Crescent City lay the fertile green fields of Alexandre Family Farms. The farm is a multi-generational family operation founded on the values and practices of parents Blake and Stephanie and growing through the work of their now-adult children Joseph, Christian, Vanessa, Dalton, and Savanna.

Alexandre Family Farms began as a conventional dairy farm in the early 1990's but the family began work in 1999 to become fully organic. "My mom became passionate about going organic," said Christian Alexandre, who now manages the egg production on

the farm. With the early passion for organic and sustainable practices from their parents, the Alexandre children "grew up with it. We didn't question it." Creating a farm and operation that focuses on maintaining organic values became a fundamental aspect of the farm. By 2001, their first dairy farm was certified organic. Alexandre Farms is now a USDA Organic farm producing 100% organic and pasture-fed milk, eggs, yogurt, beef, and pork.

In 2004, the Alexandre family took a trip to Pennsylvania to learn the farming practices and techniques of Mennonite farmers.

The children of the Alexandre family watched the children of the Mennonite farms managing their farm's poultry egg operations and were inspired. Once back on their own farm in Northern California, the Alexandre family children, teenagers at the time, built their first mobile hen house and created Alexandre Kids Eggs.

Two years later, the eggs were picked up for sale at their first large grocery store, North Coast Co-op, first in the Arcata store and shortly after in the Eureka store. Blake Alexandre drove down to the Arcata store to pitch the kid's eggs to [Continued on page 14]



Top left: Christian Alexandre shows Alexandre Family Farms' egg cleaning and processing line, where 5,000 eggs can be processed an hour. Bottom left: Eggs on a canvas belt underneath nesting boxes. Right: Young chickens, before they are ready for outdoor coops, inside a heated barn.

[Continued from previous page]

Dairy Department Head Josiah Pumpkin. “Working with the Co-op became a benchmark for all other organic stores,” Christian Alexandre said.

Alexandre Farms’ location is a part of what makes them so special. With green grass growing 365 days a year and a temperate climate, the animals can be grass-fed year-round. The chicken coops are moved every Tuesday and Friday, allowing for fresh grass for the chickens and for regrowth in the places the coops previously rested. The unique mobile hen houses were designed by Christian Alexandre, who was first inspired by the coops he saw on the Mennonite farms as a teenager. Now in their 4th version of design improvements, the large mobile coops can house 3,000 to 5,000 birds each. Having reached their long-term goal of 18 coops in rotation, they now have more than 50,000 birds on the property.

Thirteen years after their eggs were first placed in the stores of North Coast Co-op, Alexandre Family Farms continues to grow and expand. But even with that growth, the focus on sustainable and organic practices remains central to the family business – and it is still very much a family business. “Everyone in the family plays an important and different role,” Christian Alexandre said. All five of the Alexandre children graduated or are currently attending California Polytechnic University’s Agribusiness Program, the same program Blake and Stephanie Alexandre went through and where they first met. When asked what he is most proud of about the farm, Christian said, “It would have to be family. Working together and trying hard every day”. ■



Top: Christian Alexandre shows a herd of Roosevelt elk that live on the property. Middle Left: Callie and Christian in front of one of the 18 mobile coops on the farm. Middle Right: Alexandre Family Farms products available for farm employees and visitors by donation. Bottom: Hens roaming freely around their coop at Alexandre Family Farms in Crescent City, CA.

Flipping the Script on GMO Labeling

by Laurie Talbert, Marketing & Membership Coordinator

UP UNTIL THIS POINT, COMPANIES SHARING that their products are certified organic or Non-GMO have taken on the responsibility of labeling their packages for consumers. Consumer organizations like the Non-GMO Project have been pushing for decades to get mandatory labeling of genetically modified foods. It's finally here. The National Bioengineered Food Disclosure Law passed the U.S. Congress in July of 2016 and directed the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to establish a mandatory standard for disclosing foods that may be bioengineered. The details of that standard were released in December 2018.

The standard requires that food manufacturers, importers and some retailers properly disclose when a food product includes bioengineered material. The term bioengineered in labeling is intended to replace the current terms 'Genetically Modified Organism', 'GMO' and 'Genetically Engineered'. Bioengineered foods are those that contain detectable genetic material that has been modified through laboratory techniques, that does not occur naturally and cannot be created through conventional breeding.

The new standard will be implemented in January 2020 with companies complying voluntarily until the end of 2021. Starting in 2022, the labeling standard will become mandatory. The approved labels have been released, so you may begin seeing them as early as this spring. The expectation is that rather than calling out when a food doesn't contain bioengineered material, the new labeling will make it clear when a food IS bioengineered. However, food produced by very small food manufacturers (those with less than 2.5 million in annual sales), and food served in restaurants, food trucks, trains, airplanes or similar establishments will not be required to bear bioengineered food labels, even if the product has bioengineered ingredients.



These symbols (and other types of disclaimers) will begin to appear on packages in 2020 to indicate the presence of GMOs in food.

The labels shown here are not the only disclosure option for food producers. Additional options for identifying an item as bioengineered or containing a bioengineered food ingredient include a printed statement on the product, an electronic code (such as a QR code) for consumers to scan for additional information, or an invitation to text to a phone number to receive product information. Not everyone is happy with the new mandatory labeling, stating it doesn't go far enough. Consumer groups such as Just Label It, Food and Water Watch and the Center for Science in the Public Interest are unhappy with the



The current Non-GMO Project label on products at North Coast Co-op new standard, stating that introducing the new term 'bioengineered' and allowing manufacturers to use electronic codes or text messaging as an alternative to a visible label are intended to confuse consumers and hide bioengineered ingredients, particularly from consumers who don't have access to cell phones or live in rural areas where good cell service is lacking.

Additionally, because the disclosure is required based on testing of the product and detectable levels of modified genetic material, highly processed foods may not contain detectable levels, despite using food ingredients that are bioengineered. In these cases, the labeling could distinguish that the product is 'Derived from Bioengineering'. Such labeled foods wouldn't contain detectable levels of modified genetic material, so the disclosure is voluntary rather than mandatory. The Center for Science in the Public Interest agrees with the decision to disclose that highly processed ingredients can be labeled as "Derived From Bioengineering," but disagrees with the USDA's decision not to mandate that disclosure.

The Co-op's Non-GMO policy ensures consumers know what they are buying, regardless of the new standard:

- We will allow products on our shelves that are non-organic, and non Non-GMO Project verified as long as they are labeled as such. This will apply to the new bioengineered labels.
- We will not promote products that are at high risk for containing GMOs on end caps or in stacks.
- We work to ensure that all Co-op private label products are free from ingredients that are at high risk for containing GMOs.
- We will not include products that are at high risk for containing GMO ingredients in our Co-op Basics program.
- We will not carry products that are themselves, nor contain ingredients made from, genetically engineered animals.

Because of their dissatisfaction with the new standard, the Non-GMO Project will continue its work to support labeling of organic foods as Non-GMO. Consumers will soon have two options to help them understand what they are buying – one identifying when a product is free of GMOs and a new, second line of defense helping to identify when a product does contain bioengineered ingredients. ■

22 Years of Giving and Exciting New Investment Opportunity

by Emily Walter, Administrative Assistant

THE COOPERATIVE COMMUNITY FUND (CCF) is more than 20 years strong, awarding more than \$500,000 to local non-profits since 1998. CCF is a permanent endowment established and directed by members of North Coast Co-op, which awards grants to support projects and the work of community organizations in Humboldt County. Through collaborative grant making the CCF seeks to strengthen the community by emphasizing projects and activities that promote democratic cooperative principles, community development and food security.

This year, the Co-op granted over \$15,000 to 16 local organizations. This year's CCF check ceremony was held on Tuesday, January 29, 2019 at the Ten Pin Building in Arcata. The following organizations were awarded:

- **Arcata House Partnership** "Food Security for Emergency Shelter Program Clients"
- **Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria** "Tribal Berry Garden"
- **Boys & Girls Club of the Redwoods** "Youth Food Security"
- **City of Arcata Recreation Division** "Fun with Food"
- **Cooperation Humboldt** "Food Program Support"
- **Diane Cathey Center Breaking Barriers** "Green Project"
- **Dream Quest Willow Creek Youth Partnership** "Garden to Teen Program"
- **Food for People** "Reducing Waste and Increasing Food Security through Food Recovery"
- **Fortuna Adventist Community Services** "Education Garden"
- **Healy Senior Center of Southern Humboldt** "Nutrition Program"
- **Humboldt Area Center for Harm Reduction** "Growing Skills by Growing Food: A Peer Led Container Garden and Food Preparation Program"
- **Humboldt Senior Resource Center** "Local Harvest for Senior Health"
- **Northern California Indian Development Council, Inc.** "Annual Northwest Intertribal Gathering and Elders Dinner"
- **Redwood Coast Montessori** "Garden to Classroom Project"
- **Redwood Community Action Agency** "Hungry for Security"
- **The Sanctuary** "Donation Dash – Food Security Through Waste Diversion"

CCF donations can be made at registers when buying your groceries. Shoppers can choose to round up their grocery bill total or donate any amount they choose. If every shopper rounded up to the nearest dollar think about how many more local non-profits we could fund and the positive impact it would have in Humboldt County! In addition to rounding up, the ten-cent charge for paper bags at the Co-op gets donated directly to CCF. Thank you to all the shoppers who have rounded up their purchases in support of this important program.

We are excited to announce that starting in 2019 the Humboldt Area Foundation (HAF) implemented a new option for socially and environmentally responsible investments. After review of this new investment option the CCF Gifting Committee agreed to move the CCF investments held by HAF into this new investment that is more in line with the principles and values of the Co-op. ■

2019 CCF Grant Recipients



Staff Picks

We asked members of the Co-op team to share a product they are excited about. Here's what they want you to know about what's in our stores!



Raven
Deli Clerk, Eureka

"I'm excited about making lattes. And excited about getting the new juice station."



Karan
Deli Clerk, Arcata
North Coast Co-op
Chipotle Hummus



Diane
Cashier, Arcata
Farmhouse Culture
Gut Shots



Lindsey
Produce Clerk, Eureka
Revive Kombucha



Stephanie
Senior Clerk, Eureka
North Coast Brewing
Laguna Baja
Mexican-style Dark Lager



Karl
Bulk Department
Head, Arcata

Rainbow Quinoa
grown in Blue Lake
by Wild Rose Farms



Featured Produce: Cilantro

by Joey Beasley & Paul Wright, Produce Department Heads

EASILY CONFUSED WITH FLAT-LEAF PARSLEY in appearance, cilantro's pungent, spicy smell gives it away.

Cilantro can be polarizing, as different people may perceive the taste differently. Those who enjoy it say it has a refreshing, citrus-like flavor, while those who dislike it may characterize it as having a soapy taste and smell.

What we commonly refer to as cilantro is the leafy green portion of the plant, and coriander is the dry fruit, or seed of the plant. In other areas of the world, the plant leaves are known as fresh coriander and

the seeds as coriander seeds.

Organic cilantro is available at the Co-op year-round. Wild Rose Farm supplies the Co-op with local cilantro through the spring and summer. It starts appearing in the stores in April or May, depending on the weather and the year's crop. When selecting a bunch, look for one with unwilted leaves in medium green.

Cilantro can be stored in the refrigerator for a week or more. Simply cut the stalk ends and stand upright in jar of water. Change the water every couple of days and remove any wilted or yellowing leaves.

All parts of the Cilantro plant are edible, but the fresh leaves and coriander seeds are used most in cooking.



Cilantro Chimichurri

Fresh cilantro leaves are common in South Asian chutneys and salads, in Chinese and Thai dishes and in Mexican cooking – particularly in salsas and guacamole. Chimichurri, a fresh herb condiment from Argentina, is traditionally made with parsley and is most often used as a sauce over grilled steak. This cilantro version packs a punch, and like the original, can also be used as a marinade for steak, chicken or seafood.

INGREDIENTS

- 4 garlic cloves
- 1 cup fresh cilantro
- 1 cup fresh flat-leaf parsley
- ½ cup chopped white onion
- 2 Tablespoon white wine vinegar
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- ½ teaspoon red pepper flakes
- ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
- ½ teaspoon salt
- Coarsely ground black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

Place garlic in food processor; pulse until finely chopped. Add cilantro, parsley, onion, vinegar, oregano and pepper flakes. Add olive oil in a thin stream and process until smooth. Add salt and pepper. Refrigerate, covered, up to 1 week. Makes 1 cup.



Bring on Breakfast

Overnight Chilaquiles

by Laurie Talbert, Marketing & Membership Director

CHILAQUILES ARE A TRADITIONAL MEXICAN DISH of fried tortillas bathed in red sauce. They can be baked or simply cooked on the stovetop. There are as many variations as there are mornings to enjoy them. This overnight version using tortilla chips is my family's favorite for a holiday morning brunch.

Sauce Ingredients

3 large tomatoes
2 jalapeño, seeded
½ medium white onion
2 cloves garlic, peeled
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp ground cumin
1 TBSP vegetable oil
1 cup chicken or vegetable broth

Chip Base Ingredients

½ medium white onion
Olive oil
1 lb chorizo, ground
11oz bag tortilla chips, thick
6 eggs
1/3 cup Cotija cheese
1 avocado
Cilantro to garnish

Instructions:

① Make the sauce by chopping tomatoes, seeded jalapeños, onions, and garlic. Put in blender with salt, cumin and oil. Blend to a chunky liquid. Pour into a medium saucepan and cook over medium high heat for 5 minutes. Reduce to low and add broth. Cook an additional 5 minutes. Set aside.

For the base:

② Finely chop onion. Add a drizzle of olive oil to a skillet. Sauté onions until they start to soften. Add chorizo and brown, using a spatula to break the meat into small pieces. Remove from heat. Drain any excess oil. Add sauce into pan with chorizo and stir to incorporate.

③ Place chips in large, oven-proof dish, or into single serving dishes. Pour saucy chorizo mixture over chips. Using tongs, toss the chips in with the sauce. It's okay if they break as you toss them. Cover and place in the refrigerator for at least two hours or overnight.

④ Heat oven to 400 degrees. Bake the chilaquiles for 20 minutes, until heated through and beginning to crisp around the edge. Remove from oven and crack eggs onto top of chips, spaced apart. Cover with aluminum foil and return to oven. Cook an additional 10-15 minutes, or until egg whites are set. Sprinkle with Cotija cheese, fresh avocado and cilantro. Serve.

Chilaquiles are what you make them. The only givens are the chips and the sauce. Substitute shredded chicken for the chorizo. Use chorizo tofu to make them vegetarian or skip the protein all-together. Trade the red tomatoes for tomatillos for a tangier green sauce. Fry your own chips. Add a Mexican shredded cheese blend for some stringy, cheesy goodness. Want extra spice? Double the jalapeño or use chipotle peppers in the sauce.



Bring on Breakfast

Mixed Herb Scones with Sharp Cheddar

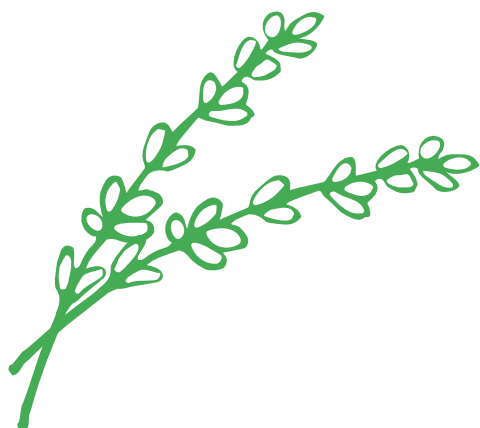
by Jolie Harvey, Outreach Coordinator

The fresh herbs in this savory scone recipe make them perfect for a spring morning. They are great on their own or as part of a brunch menu. For a hearty breakfast sandwich, split one open and add ham and more cheese.



Ingredients

2 cup all-purpose flour
 1 tsp baking powder
 ½ tsp salt
 ¼ tsp baking soda
 1 stick, (8 TBSP) butter, frozen
 1 cup sharp cheddar cheese, grated
 ½ cup fresh herbs, chopped (dill, parsley, cilantro, thyme – your choice)
 ½ cup sour cream
 1 large egg



Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees and set oven rack to the lower-middle of your oven.
2. Mix flour, baking powder, salt, and baking soda in a medium bowl.
3. Grate 1/3 of the stick of butter on a cheese grater and toss it with the flour mixture to coat. Repeat with the remaining butter tossing it in 1/3 of the stick at a time. Once all the butter is tossed in the flour, work it in a bit more to cover all the butter.
4. Add grated cheese and chopped herbs.
5. Mix sour cream and egg with a fork until smooth. Add to the bowl stirring with the fork until the dough begins to form into large clumps.
6. Use your hands to press the dough into a ball. It will feel dry but will form together as you press it. If needed, flick a little water into the dough and continue shaping until the dough sticks together in a ball.
7. Place on a lightly floured surface and pat into a circle about ¾" thick.
8. Cut the dough like you would a pie, creating 8 triangular slices.
9. Place the scones on a lined baking sheet and bake until golden, 15 to 17 minutes.
10. Cool for a minimum of 5 minutes before serving.

Shop by Bike at the Co-op

by Caitlin Fowler, Graphics & Marketing Assistant

Why bike to the Co-op?

There are lots of reasons to bike to the Co-op. Using your bike in place of a car for transportation is a fun way to save money, get exercise, contribute to a cleaner environment and make yourself feel good! Both Co-op locations also have plenty of bike racks for our shoppers and members, making parking your bike simple and easy. We know it's important to our shoppers to support environmentally friendly transportation methods. By choosing to bike to the Co-op you're helping us shape better bike friendly policies!

Cargo Options

Whether you plan to carry a little or a lot, there are many cargo options to choose from for carrying groceries back home after your trip to the Co-op!



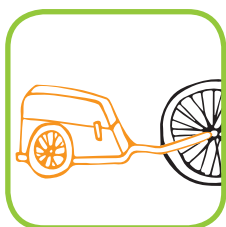
Front Basket

- Good for small loads of groceries, can interfere with steering if there is too much weight
- Some baskets detach and come with handles, doubling as a hand basket



Rear Rack

- The weight of groceries won't interfere with steering
- Consider using bungee cords to help stabilize larger loads of groceries
- A crate can be attached in place of a basket or pannier on a rear rack



Trailer

- Great for hauling large amounts of groceries
- More cumbersome than other options, and can take getting use to



Backpack

- Best for short trips and smaller loads
- Consider a backpack with padded shoulder straps and a chest strap for comfort and stability



Panniers

- Most are easily attachable to a rear rack
- Effective way to carry heavy groceries

Safety Considerations

- Wear a bike helmet
- Lock your bike
- Make sure your tires are fully inflated
- Make sure your bike fits you! Adjust your seat to your height or stop by a local bike shop for a professional fitting
- Bike defensively and make sure to follow traffic laws
- Use bike lights at night. Wear bright clothing to be extra visible!
- Make sure all attachable cargo methods are secured to your bike
- Take quieter streets or bike trails when possible
- When unable to avoid, be careful at intersections and crossing bridges

Resources:

humbike.org/

www.hcaog.net/sites/default/files/bike_map_update_2018_map_side_outlines_4_18_18.pdf

www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/dmv/detail/pubs/brochures/fast_facts/ffd137

We are taking steps to becoming a more car-optional Co-op!

The Co-op is looking for ways to encourage our shoppers to make their trips to the stores carbon-free. One step toward this effort was the completion of a transportation survey, where we gathered data from our Arcata shoppers about how they arrived at the store. Our Earth Action Committee has also asked the Co-op to complete a national Bike-Friendly Business Application which has given us the chance to re-

view our bicycle amenities and realize there is more that we can do to encourage bicycling to the stores. One option we are researching is to encourage car-free shopping with incentives. We'd love to hear your ideas as we begin to talk about an awesome rewards program. Send your thoughts to info@northcoast.coop.

Arcata Bike Routes to the Co-op



From the Sunny Brae area

- Bike up Samoa Boulevard and cross the bridge over Highway 101.
- Turn right at F St.
- Turn left at 7th St.
- Turn right at I St. and continue until you reach the Co-op.

From Alliance and North Arcata

- Ride down Alliance Rd. until you reach the start of the Waterfront Bike Trail (First turn after passing M St.)
- Continue down the Bike Trail until you reach 9th St.
- Turn left on to 9th St. and cross K St.
- Turn right on to J St. and continue until you reach the Co-op.

From HSU

- Reach 14th St. then cross the bridge and continue until you reach J St.
- Turn left on to J St.
- Continue on J St. until you reach the Co-op.

Eureka Bike Routes to the Co-op



From Myrtle Ave.

- Bike up Myrtle Ave. towards the West Ave. Intersection.
- Turn right on to West Avenue.
- Take another right on to Tydd St. to gain access to the Waterfront Bike Trail.
- Cycle along the Bike Trail and across Waterfront Dr.
- Turn left at C St.
- Turn right at 3rd St. and continue down 3rd St. until you reach the Co-op.

From Southern Eureka:

- Reach G St. then continue through 6th St. and 7th St.
- Turn left on 3rd St and continue until you reach the Co-op.



Bike Maps Key

Bike Trail

This is a separate path intended for cyclists and non-motorized users. Usually features a paved riding surface.

Street Route

These streets are shared by motor vehicles and cyclists and may have higher traffic volumes depending on time of day and may have uneven pavement.

An Egg-splanation of Labels

What your egg carton is telling you

by Caitlin Fowler, Graphics & Marketing Assistant

The Co-op strives to provide its members and shoppers with environmentally and socially responsible product choices. Eggs are no exception! Egg cartons are labeled with a variety of terms that describe the condition and quality of the eggs, and the chickens from which they were produced. With all these different labels, it can be difficult to know which eggs to choose. To help our customers, we have put together a quick guide to help unscramble the mystery around common egg carton labels.

COLOR

Egg color is determined by the breed of the hen. Generally, white hens lay white eggs and brown hens lay brown eggs although feather color doesn't directly impact egg color. There is no significant nutritional difference, though brown eggs tend to be larger.

ALL NATURAL

Eggs labeled "All Natural" don't contain artificial ingredients or added color and are minimally processed. This label doesn't indicate how the chicken was raised.

CAGE-FREE

These eggs come from hens that don't live in cages but stay indoors with unlimited access to food and water. In California, all chickens must be able to fully extend their limbs and turn around freely.

FREE-RANGE

These eggs are from cage-free hens that have access to the outdoors. There are no regulations on how long they stay outside or what qualifies as outdoors. However, for eggs that are also labeled "Certified Humane" egg-laying chickens must have access to at least two square feet of outdoor space for up to six hours a day.

ORGANIC

Certified organic eggs follow USDA guidelines and regulations regarding feeding and housing of hens. These eggs must come from Free-Range hens that have access to the outdoors and are fed organic feed.

VEGETARIAN DIET

Eggs are from hens fed a vegetarian-only diet. Chickens are natural omnivores and foragers, so this label won't be seen on eggs from hens that are pasture-raised and free-range because they have access to the outdoors.

PASTURE-RAISED

This label is typically used to describe eggs that are produced from hens that are provided shelter and who have regular and extended access to the outdoors, more space than free-range chickens and a more natural life and diet. There is no federal regulation for this label, so exact environments can vary from farm to farm.

OMEGA-3

Hens are raised on an Omega-rich diet. These eggs typically test with a higher amount of Omega-3 with levels that can be from 100mg-300mg compared to the typical level of 30mg.

NO HORMONES

Hormones are prohibited to be given to poultry raised for commercial egg production in the United States, so no eggs labeled for sale will contain hormones. This is a voluntary and optional label used by some egg producers.

NO ANTIBIOTICS

These chickens are not given any type of antibiotics during their lifetime. Certified organic eggs must be antibiotic free.

GRADE AA, A OR B

Grades are given to eggs based on quality factors like defects, freshness and appearance. Grade AA is the highest grade and is given to eggs that have thick, firm whites and high round yolks. Grade A eggs are similar to Grade AA eggs but their whites may be less firm. Grade B eggs have thinner whites and wider yolks.

FERTILE

These eggs were laid by hens who may have mated with a rooster. These eggs, if incubated, may have led to chicks, but refrigeration stops the growth process. There is no known additional nutritional benefit to fertile eggs.

CALIFORNIA SHELL EGG FOOD SAFETY COMPLIANT (CA SEFS COMPLIANT)

This is a state regulation that is part of The Egg Safety and Quality Management (ESQM) Program. This label ensures eggs sold in California come from hens that have enough room to lie, stand, turn around and spread their wings without touching another bird. Eggs must also have a quality grade of AA, A or B and maintain a temperature of 45 degrees or less.





From the Co-op News Archive, April 1976

START NOW TO GROW YOUR OWN

Excerpts from article originally written by Bill Coit

WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO PROVIDE YOURSELF with an abundant supply of fresh, tasty, nutritious vegetables – free from residues of chemical fertilizers and pesticides? Wouldn't it be nice to work outdoors, in cooperation with nature, on a productive activity which is also relaxing and centering? And at the same time, make yourself more self-sufficient, help undermine corporate growing, and increase the world's food supply? You can accomplish all these things, and probably save some money on your food bill too, by having a vegetable garden. This article will tell you how.

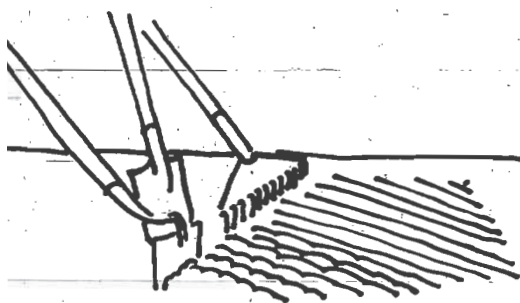
Assuming that you have some land available to garden, a small plot of land about 10' x 10' will do, the first step is to decide which vegetables you like and which are suitable for the season and the area in which you are gardening. Root vegetables like carrots, turnips and radishes, and leafy vegetables like lettuce, chard and spinach can be planted in the spring – now is a good time. Warmth and sun-loving vegetables like tomatoes, squash, peas, beans and corn can be planted in May and should receive a good deal of direct sun.

The next step is to plan the layout of your garden and prepare the soil for planting. Choose a sunny spot, ordinarily on the south or west side of your land, an area away from trees, with water easily available.

Unless we have a very rainy spring, your soil should have dried out enough to work with by early or mid-April. California soil, generally, and this is true in most parts of the north coast, has a high clay content and needs to be thoroughly worked – by turning over and breaking up the soil and then adding organic soil amendments. If you live near the ocean, like Manila or Samoa, your garden will probably have sandy soil. Adding soil amendments to it will stabilize the soil

and improve water retention. Both types of soil need organic matter – humus provided by soil amendments. Manures, compost and mulches are good sources of humus.

Except for tomatoes and onions, your



vegetables can easily be grown from seeds. Hybrid seeds are usually superior to non-hybrids in terms of yield and disease resistance. The Arcata (and Eureka) Co-op has a good selection of seeds. You will also need some basic tools for preparing the soil, planting and tending your vegetables; these include a shovel or spade, rake, hoe, hand trowel and weeding tool.

To plant vegetable seeds, dig six-inch-deep furrows three feet apart, and use the soil from the furrow to make a bed on each side.

The furrows can be used as irrigation ditches and the spaces between them will be wide enough to allow you to tend your vegetables. Now make a long, shallow ditch on each bed using your finger or the corner of a hoe. Follow your seed package directions about how deep and how thickly to seed. When seeds are in the bed, cover them with loose earth and press down lightly.

Your seeds must have sufficient water in order to germinate properly so keep the ground moist but don't overwater which may cause seeds to rot. If rainfall is not adequate, water with a fine mist spray from a hose nozzle. After the seeds have germinated and the plants are maturing above ground, change to watering by irrigation.

After you have prepared the soil and planted the vegetable seeds, much of your work is done. But remember that regular maintenance of your garden- watering and weeding- will insure a good crop and will also minimize such potential problems as pests and disease. ■



Third Quarter Financial Statement

by Barney Doyle, Controller

NORTH COAST CO-OP closed Fiscal Quarter 3 2019 (FY19) on December 22, 2018. Combined sales in the second quarter for the Arcata and Eureka stores were \$8,593,834, bringing year-to-date net sales to \$25,807,866.

Year to year: Third quarter FY19 sales were down \$302,950, a 3.4% drop compared to the third quarter of Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18) and Cost of Goods Sold were slightly lower (-\$9,843), resulting in a significantly lower gross margin. Despite lower Payroll Expenses in the third quarter FY19, Total Operating Expenses were higher compared to FY18 due to

higher Benefits and General & Administrative and Occupancy Expenses, so Total Expenses slightly exceeded gross margin, but with Other Income (primarily coupon rebates being received), the result was a Net Income Gain of \$8,139 for the third quarter of FY19, bringing year-to-date net income to a negative \$581,720 or 2.3%. The Co-op's assets were less at the end of third quarter FY19 compared to FY18 by \$898,655, due to less cash-on-hand and lower inventory.

Quarter to quarter: Third quarter sales increased from second quarter FY19 by

\$64,045, and with lower Operating Expenses, the Co-op showed a Net Income profit of \$8,139. Member Total Equity decreased to \$3,448,823 at the end of third quarter 2019, a decrease of \$33,780 under second quarter 2019. As previously stated, the Co-op recently raised the Dividend Rate from 2.00% to 2.65% and we are fortunately seeing members increase their investment in the Co-op. Please call our Membership Coordinator at 707-822-5947 ext. 434 if you are interested in becoming more invested in the Co-op. ■

North Coast Cooperative, Inc. Unaudited Financial Statements

Fiscal Year 2019 • Quarter 3 Ending December 22, 2018

INCOME STATEMENT

Quarter 3 Ending December 22, 2018
Fiscal Year 2019

Net Sales Revenue	8,593,834
Cost of Goods Sold	5,424,635
Gross Margin	3,169,199
Payroll & Benefit Expense	2,234,888
General & Administrative Expense	531,402
Occupancy Expense	403,016
Total Operating Expenses	3,169,306
Net Income from Operations	(107)
Other income (expense)	8,246
Total Income Taxes	-
Net Income (Loss)	8,139

BALANCE SHEET

Quarter 3 Ending December 22, 2018
Fiscal Year 2019

Assets:	
Current Assets	1,962,592
Property & Equipment	3,272,228
Other Assets	525,563
Total Assets	5,760,383
Liabilities:	
Current Liabilities	1,981,937
Long-term Liabilities	329,623
Total Liabilities	2,311,560
Member Equity:	
Current Owner Shares	4,030,543
Retained Earnings	(581,720)
Total Member Equity	3,448,823
Total Liabilities & Equity	5,760,383

Organic Certification

by Alisha Hammer, Merchandising Manager

THE CO-OP HAD ITS ANNUAL ORGANIC inspection with California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF) in early November. It was our thirteenth year going through this process! Here at the Co-op, we are committed to maintaining and ensuring the organic integrity of products – starting from when they are received from our vendors until they get to the registers and ultimately as they leave with our shoppers.

All our employees sign affidavits after they have read and understand what the definition of certified organic means. Staff that handle certified organic product also receive extra training within their department to maintain the integrity of products. This means that organic products do not comingle with conventional products when displayed out on the retail floor and when they are stored in backstock. On the retail floor in the bulk department, organic items are always placed over conventional items so that if there is any spillover, the conventional items are not falling into bins that contain organic product. In produce, in the rare cases when we carry conventional products, certified organic items are displayed either apart from conventional produce, or with a physical barrier separating the items.

Once a year, CCOF representatives visit both of our store locations and verify that we are compliant with their standards. The inspector works with the Merchandising Manager to verify that we have current documents for all vendors that are certified organic. These documents include a certificate from the third-party certifier and their Organic System Plan (OSP), both of which must bear a date from within one last inspection. There are many certifiers that a vendor can select from, including, but not limited to CCOF, Quality Assurance International (QAI), Organic Certifiers, or Oregon Tilth. After the inspector has looked at the documentation, it's time to visit the departments to observe practices and ask


questions of staff. The inspector is making sure that employees understand and can demonstrate the organic handling practices within their department.

Another step in the inspection is to do an audit trail/mass balance comparison. This entails looking at invoices to determine a baseline of how much product was purchased within a certain timeframe, and then comparing it to the actual sales of that product. The items selected for the audit must have both an organic and conventional option and the audit looks at items from two different departments. The inspector is checking to make sure that the quantity of organic sales does not exceed what we have purchased. This is to ensure that we are not purchasing a conventional product and then reselling it as organic. As the years have progressed, it has been more difficult to select a conventional product in produce as we have very few items that are not certified organic! This year, Singing Dog Vanilla in the bulk department and tomatoes in the produce department were used. Some of our local farmers are not certified organic, even though they follow organic practices on their farm. These are some of the products that are displayed with a physical barrier between our certified organic items, or on a separate display.

After the inspectors gather all the pertinent information, they send a report to CCOF. If there are questions, or more documentation is necessary, we are asked to send this in before CCOF will renew our certification. The Co-op has met all the requirements for recertification and addressed follow-up questions and will have received our organic certification renewal by the time you read this.

Although this process takes time and money, we want to assure our members and shoppers that we are maintaining the integrity of organic product from when we take possession of it, until it leaves our store. For more information about CCOF, you can visit their website www.CCOF.org. ■





Wellness Wednesday

All Co-op members and shoppers receive
10% off the entire Wellness Department,
every first Wednesday of the month at
North Coast Co-op!

May
1

Jun
5

Jul
3



Co-op Kids Corner

Activity Contest

Enter our Co-op Kids Activity Contest for a chance to win a **\$10 Co-op Gift Card** and a **Co-op Kids lunch box!**

Decorate the helmet in honor of bike month and turn your entry in at Customer Service at either Co-op location by **June 14** to enter.

One winner from each age group will be drawn!

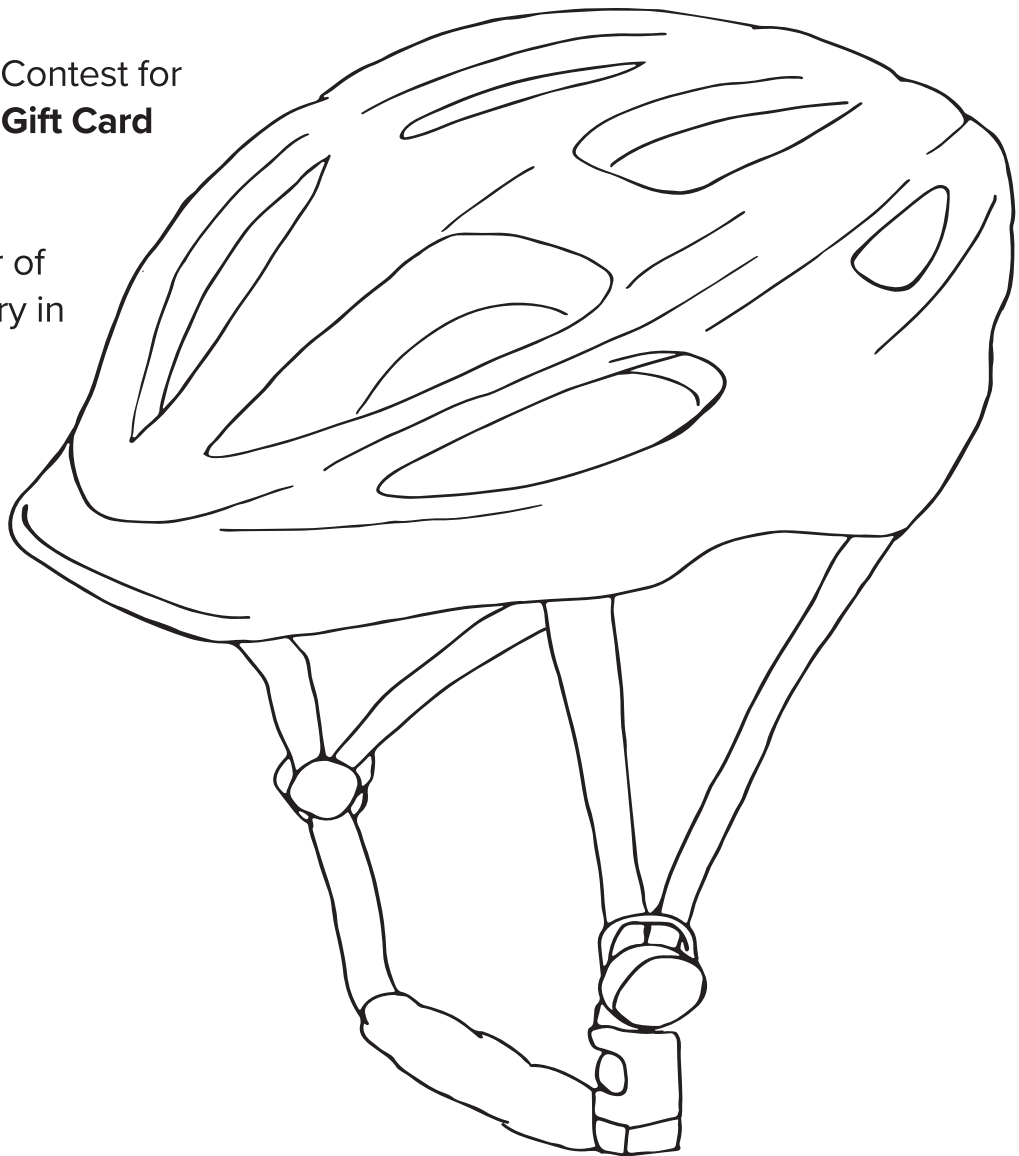
Age groups:

- 5 years and under
- 6 - 12 years old

Full Name:

Phone Number:

Age:



Congratulations to Sydney & Mosiah for winning the Winter Co-op Kids Contest!



Member-Only Coupon

expires 6/30/19

\$5 off
 when you spend
\$50 or more
 before taxes

MEMBER NUMBER _____

Coupon expires 6/30/19; single purchase only; \$50 minimum purchase before tax; coupon may only be used by North Coast Co-op member-owners; limit one coupon per member. Coupon available while supplies last.

Not a North Coast Co-op member? Visit Customer Service to join!



North Coast Co-op Management Team



Melanie Bettenhausen
General Manager



Jason Davenport
IT Manager



Barney Doyle
Controllor



Lauren Fawcett
Food Service Director



Alisha Hammer
Merchandising Manager



Alanna LaBelle
Operations Manager



Travis Morgan
Facilities Director



Michelle Sanders
Human Resources
Director



Laurie Talbert
Marketing & Membership
Director

North Coast Co-op Board of Directors



Colin Fiske
Board President



Robert Donovan
Vice President



Leah Stamper
Board Secretary



James Kloor
Board Treasurer



Cheri Strong
Employee Director



Ed Smith
Employee Director

We love to hear from you!

Whether you have a product recommendation or a comment about our stores, there are many ways to let us know:

ARCATA
(707) 822-5947

EUREKA
(707) 443-6027

info@northcoast.coop

You can also come to either store to speak to Customer Service or write a comment for our in-store comment board.



Calender of Co-op Community Events

www.northcoast.coop/calendar

April

April 3 Wellness Wednesday All Co-op members and customers are invited to enjoy 10% off their entire Wellness Department purchase today, and every first Wednesday of the month, at North Coast Co-op.

April 12-22 Humboldt Green Week A week of events celebrating our environment, supporting

the local economy and promoting music, art, and solutions through action.

April 17-23 Godwit Days This week-long festival celebrates spring bird migration includes events like field trips, workshops, lectures and much more.

April 28-29 2019 California Co-op Conference This year's conference will be held in Sacramento. Conference workshops reveal how cooperatives revitalize and fortify local economies by creating jobs, housing, and locally owned businesses.

May

May 1 Wellness Wednesday All Co-op members and customers are invited to enjoy 10% off their entire Wellness Department purchase today, and every first Wednesday of the month, at North Coast Co-op.

May 9 Arcata Bike to Work Day Energizer Station The Co-op will be supplying coffee and snacks to morning bike commuters.

May 12 Atalanta's Victory Run & Walk In partnership with Six Rivers Running Club, this women's-only walk and run is held on Mother's Day and features 2-mile and 8-kilometer courses. Registration is available online at www.atalanta-run.com.

May 16 Eureka Bike to Work Day Energizer Station The Co-op will be supplying coffee and snacks to morning bike commuters.

May 19 Redwood Community Action Agency Garden Event Join us at the Jefferson Center for this educational event. This event will focus on food security, growing food, composting, and much more.

May 29-June 2 Pony Express Days A McKinleyville celebration that was established in 1968. This week-long event includes a cook-off, dance, parade, festival, games, and more!

June

June 2 Humboldt Tri-Kids Triathlon For kids ages 7 to 18. Participants get to swim, bike and run their way to the finish line and go home with a medal, flowers, goodies, a T-shirt, a tired body, and a boosted self-image.

June 5 Wellness Wednesday All Co-op members and customers are invited to enjoy 10% off their entire Wellness Department purchase today, and every first Wednesday of the month, at North Coast Co-op.

June 15 Oyster Festival A celebration of north coast culture where chefs, merchants, volunteers and guests revel in award-winning oysters and other tasty non-oyster delicacies, local beverages, live local music, and art on the Arcata Plaza.



Member Survey Win a \$35 gift card!

Q: When selecting produce, is organic or local more important to you?



Member Name: _____ **Member #:** _____

Phone #: _____

Enter by June 30, 2019.

Detach this entry form and return it to the Member Survey box located near Customer Service at either store location. Be sure to include your name, contact information, and member number so that we can contact you if your entry is drawn. You can also send your ideas to co-opnews@northcoast.coop with "Member Survey" in the subject line. Must be a member to enter. One entry per member. Co-op employees and their families are not eligible to win.

Oh, my goodness



1. Choose your base 2. Pick your toppings 3. Sauce it up!

**Create a
Goodness
Bowl at our
Eureka Food Bar.**

Mix and match
any ingredients
from our hot bar,
salad bar and
Goodness Bowl menu
for a build-your-own,
one-of-a-kind creation.



**NORTH COAST
COOP**

ARCATA LOCATION

811 I St., Arcata
(707) 822-5947
Open daily: 6am to 9pm

EUREKA LOCATION

25 4th St., Eureka
(707) 443-6027
Open Daily: 6am to 9pm

THE COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES:

Voluntary & Open Membership, Democratic Member Control, Member Economic Participation, Autonomy & Independence, Education, Training & Information, Cooperation Among Cooperatives, Concern for Community