



# Middlebury Co-op Newsletter

Open 7 Days A Week, 8 to 7  
Nine Washington Street  
Middlebury, VT

December  
2016

## Pecans

The pecan tree is an amazing feat of nature! Under favorable conditions, the deciduous tree can grow over one hundred feet tall and live for over a thousand years. Its trunk diameter can measure six feet, and its limbs have been found to spread out over one hundred feet. An adult well developed tree can produce over 100 pounds of nuts annually!

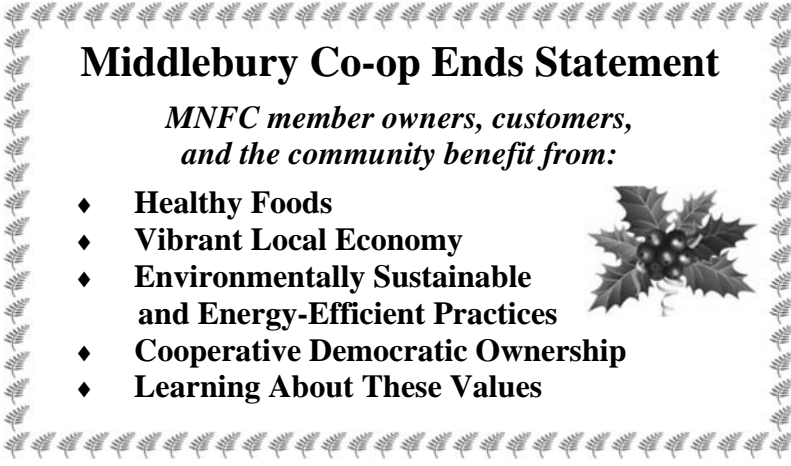


The word pecan is derived from the Algonquin Indian word *pac-can*, which refers to all nuts that “need a stone to crack.” Around 1670, French fur traders brought the nut from the territory of the Illinois Indians to the eastern coast, where it was first known as the Illinois nut. The pecan tree is indigenous to the Mississippi River basin, Illinois, Kansas, and Texas. After the pecan was brought east, it took until the 1850s for the *Centennial* pecan variety to be developed. The Centennial is now considered the beginning of the nut's cultivation. It was a slave named Antoine, who by using a grafting method called top-working, grew the wild pecan into a more fruitful plant. Today there are over 500 varieties of pecans, with Antoine's *Centennial* as their ancestor.

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THE STAFF AND BOARD  
OF THE MIDDLEBURY  
NATURAL FOODS CO-OP  
WISH EVERYONE  
A HAPPY  
HOLIDAY SEASON !



### **Middlebury Co-op Ends Statement**

*MNFC member owners, customers,  
and the community benefit from:*

- ◆ **Healthy Foods**
- ◆ **Vibrant Local Economy**
- ◆ **Environmentally Sustainable  
and Energy-Efficient Practices**
- ◆ **Cooperative Democratic Ownership**
- ◆ **Learning About These Values**



## *Dear Members and Friends of Middlebury Co-op*

December is like a big box filled with a variety of treats that we call holidays. They include St. Nicholas Day (Dec. 6th), Santa Lucia Day (13th), my daughter's birthday (13th), Full Moon (14th), Winter Solstice (21st), Christmas Eve (24th) Christmas Day (25th), Hanukkah (25th), St. Stephen's Day (26th), Kwanza (26th-Jan 1st), New Year's Eve (31st), and probably several others I am not aware of. For most of us the holiday season means spending time with family and friends, along with good food, spreading a feeling of joy, mutual support and wellbeing. It also adds a bit of stress. Stress has its value as it provides energy and alertness. Too much stress, however, can be destructive. So... watch out. Take care of yourselves during these demanding weeks and find ways to unburden and let things be for a while.

At the Co-op, we'll do our best to provide you with the good food you are looking for. You'll be happy to hear that in the Produce department we still have a variety of fresh local veggies for you: winter squash, cabbage, beets, carrots, onions, potatoes, turnips, rutabaga, and maybe even spinach — all Vermont grown. We carry nuts in the shell and chestnuts this month, and a variety of wonderful nuts in the Bulk department, along with all your baking needs.

Check out our holiday cheeses — we have several new delights, which you will only see during these holiday weeks. And don't forget our holiday baked goods! Of course, there will be lots of chocolate! We have Hanukkah candles and colorful Mole Hollow candles for you.

Our fundraising campaign has been successful, even though at the time of this writing we have not reached our one million dollar goal. The response from our membership has been phenomenal! Some of you are able to invest financially, others help with their patronage support. We sincerely thank you!



The US election is over. We have a new President-Elect. Many of us, with good reason I think, are surprised, shocked, and deeply concerned with the new direction we may be headed. When leaving the Co-op late last night, I noticed someone had chalked colorful hearts onto the Co-op walkway, along with sayings such as "Keep an open heart, even if you are scared" or "Love will always win." I am happy to see this sentiment in our Co-op community. Happy Holidays!

*Reiner*



## Staff Interview

with

# Angela Carvallo

### **Angela, why Middlebury Co-op?**

My boyfriend Patrick and I recently settled down in Crown Point, across the lake. When we wondered where the jobs were, people told us: Middlebury! So I discovered the Co-op, started out as a sub several months ago and now work in the Grocery department.

I have some experience working with food. When I lived and went to school in Portland, Oregon, I worked for Whole Foods, assisting at the Front End, in the Grocery and Bakery departments.

### **Whole Foods is a very successful natural foods chain, sometimes in competition with local cooperatives. From your experience, how do the two places compare?**

For me Whole Foods was a decent employer. It's just that they are big. Everything was minutely tracked, from details of the time clock to tracking any kind of activity. What I found at our Co-op is a sense of community, within my own department and across departments. From the very beginning people were kind and eager to get to know me

and wanting to hang out with me.

When I worked at Whole Foods, it sometimes felt like being treated as a child. You were simply told what to do, not always knowing why and not having anything to do with the results of your actions. Here at Middlebury, I am involved in receiving product, bringing it to the shelves and helping customers find what they need. I am involved in the entire process. I see results. I see the whole picture.

I also value having a specific work schedule rather than learning about my hours only two weeks in advance. All in all, though, Whole Foods was a fair employer and I learned a lot.

### **Are you new to Vermont?**

I had lived in Vermont before, in West Townsend, doing an internship on a farm. I grew up in Florida. I'm not used to the long winters yet. And the growing season is short!

### **I've never been to Florida. What is it like there?**

[laughs] Florida is an interesting

place. Hot, crazy, unpredictable, and sinking.

**Sinking?**

Yes, Florida is slowly sinking into the rising sea.

**You have worked with food in various capacities.**

Yes, I am passionate to know where our food comes from. I would love to contribute to a more sustainable food system. My dream is to homestead. But I know it's not easy to grow food in this area, with a rather short growing season.

At the moment, Patrick and I live off the grid. I like being less dependent on electricity. I'd love to grow much of my own food some day.

**What are some of your favorite foods these days at the Co-op?**

Pizza! Whenever I smell pizza being made at our Deli, I am the first one to show up. I am also crazy about *Green Rabbit* sourdough bread. It arrives every Friday and is truly a special bread and worth every penny. Patrick chooses to be gluten free, but he finds this bread easily to tolerate.

**What do you think about our Co-op expanding?**

I think it's a good thing we're expanding. Our sales are huge; but we are lacking backstock space. The construction period will be tough, though. Perhaps stressful at times.

**How do you deal with stress yourself, Angela?**

I take a moment to myself. I go outside. Breathe. I actually welcome some of our repetitive tasks, when I can turn

off my busy brain and just do what needs to be done.

At home I like down-time and working on projects that make me feel productive. These days I am learning how to build a bicycle-powered battery reserve. I also like reading books.

**What books do you read these days?**

*Practical Permaculture* by Jessi Bloom and Dave Boehnlein is one of them. It's a very practical guide to agriculture... very hands-on and holistic. It deals with climate change and the challenges of pollution and water scarcity. It's really eye opening.

I am also a fan of Will Bonsall, who wrote the *Essential Guide to Radical, Self-Reliant Gardening*. I like Bonsall's seed scattering and seed saving projects... anything that empowers people to be in control of their own food sources.

**Where do you see yourself in the future?**

[laughs] Well, five years ago I had no idea where I'd be in five years. I want to be as self-sufficient as possible, independent of the water system and electric grid. I'd love to be homesteading. I do hope to find myself in a positive and lasting situation; but I am also open to change. So... the future? I don't know. Right now it feels good to be here!

**Thank you, Angela!**



# Fennel Gratin

Fennel is a wonderfully versatile vegetable. You can slice raw fennel and use it for a crisp salad. It goes well with shaved or grated parmesan. You can also drizzle a little balsamic vinegar over it and roast it until it gets sweetly caramelized. The following recipe will give you a nice comfort food or an excellent side dish for the holiday season (or any other time...)

2 pounds fennel bulbs (about 3-4 bulbs)	2 teaspoons fresh thyme
Salt	1/2 cup shredded mozzarella cheese (about 2 ounces)
3-4 tablespoons olive oil	Chopped fennel fronds, for garnish
1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese (about 2 ounces)	
1/2 cup bread crumbs (herbed or plain)	

- ⇒ Cut off the fronds and stems of the fennel and put them aside (if you have left over fronds, add them to your homemade soup stock). Cut the fennel bulbs into quarters, then 1-2 inch pieces; discard the woody cores.
- ⇒ Grease a casserole pan with a tablespoon olive oil and preheat the oven to 375°.
- ⇒ Boil the fennel in a medium pot of salty water for 5-6 minutes, or until the fennel is just about tender. Drain well and toss with a tablespoon of olive oil.
- ⇒ Mix the parmesan, thyme and bread crumbs, then mix half of that mixture with the fennel. Add the fennel to the casserole in an even layer. Top with the mozzarella cheese, then the rest of the parmesan-bread crumb mixture. Drizzle 1-2 tablespoons of olive oil over the top.
- ⇒ Bake the casserole covered for 20 minutes. Take the cover off and bake until the cheese is browned, about 15 more minutes. Let the gratin rest for 5 minutes before serving.
- ⇒ Garnish with chopped fresh fennel fronds.

**Source:** Elise Bauer at [www.simplyrecipes.com](http://www.simplyrecipes.com)



## December Member Deals

Check out our Member Deals for the month of December!  
For further information about the companies and their products,  
go to our website at [www.middleburycoop.com](http://www.middleburycoop.com).

Middlebury Co-op members receive a **20% discount** on  
all of the company's products during the week they are featured.



**December 1—7**

### **Trois Petits Cochons**

*Les Trois Petits Cochons* (“the three little pigs”) has produced award-winning, all natural pâté and charcuterie since 1975 by crafting small, handmade batches using high-quality ingredients.



**December 8—14**

### **Bionaturae**

*Bionaturae* is dedicated to organic nature.  
Enjoy organic pasta and authentic traditional Italian food!



**December 15—21**

### **Cabot Creamery**

The *Cabot Creamery* is a Vermont cooperative, widely known for its world-class cheddar and fine dairy products.



**December 22—31**

### **Niman Ranch**

*Niman Ranch* offers meat made from cattle raised the traditional way, using humane farming methods and providing wholesome all-natural feeds.

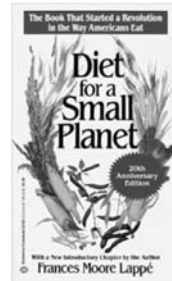


## Frances Moore Lappé Brings Hope to the Middlebury Community

Nadine Canter Barnicle

In late October, I, along with a few other Board members attended a talk by Frances Moore Lappé at Middlebury College. Lappé had started a revolution in the 1970s by examining what Americans eat, in her ground-breaking book, *Diet for a Small Planet*. She has published many other books and has continued to be a prolific leader in the food world winning the *James Beard Foundation Humanitarian of the Year* award in 2008 for her global influence on the way people consider food, agriculture and nutrition.

That fall evening, Lappé had me hooked from her first words, “Hope is what we become in action together.” For more than an hour this vibrant, intelligent 72 year-old human proceeded to validate all that we do at the Middlebury Natural Foods Co-op each and every day. We are in *action together*, a *cooperative* made up of individuals with a common mission and purpose. Our work creates food choices that support sustainable food systems by using collective buying power to reduce our reliance on the industrialized food machine.



Lappé went on to ask, “why are we together creating a world that we as individuals would never choose?” Of course she was not referring to the Coop and our more than 4,000 members – but she did say that all too often we are all guilty of holding on to cultural frames that prevents us from seeing solutions. She is urging all of us to move away from a scarcity mindset that perpetuates our sense of powerlessness. We need to acknowledge that “wealth is infecting our political system” and that humans need connection and meaning to feel empowered. She stated that our brains need to create new pathways to see new possibilities by focusing not on what we *have*, but on what we *do*.

Many of her messages were not “new”, but her framing felt refreshing to me. For instance in developing nations when women are empowered through education and the availability of simple resources, they can create food production enterprises, shifting the culture thus improving mortality rates and decreasing domestic violence. Lappé brought us these stories from her travels and research.



Lappé asked us to think about how we find the courage in our own “everyday” lives to demand choices, build community to nourish ourselves, and each other. She encouraged us to rethink our relationship to fear and power, and return to our “first principles” to find meaning and develop mutual accountability. Lappé made so much sense! She has re-inspired me to find optimism to take back our democracy and live it every day. I left that talk so very proud of our Co-op and its fearless management team and staff. Together and as individuals we must focus on living up to high standards so we may come to expect high standards from the leaders and systems we have created. As Lappé stated, we will have “bold humility when we rethink fear and power, and expect surprises.” I await those surprises with hope and dare I say, humility.

Nadine Canter Barnicle  
is a member of our MNFC Board of Directors

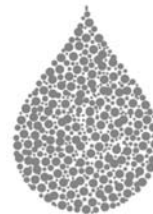


**Frances Moore Lappé**

“We’re just a drop in the bucket,  
and that’s meaningless.”

*But we say, ‘No, wait a minute. If you have a bucket, those raindrops fill it up very fast. Being a drop in the bucket is magnificent.’*

*The problem is we cannot see the bucket. Our work is helping people see that there is a bucket. There are all these people all over the world who are creating this bucket of hope. And so our drops are incredibly significant.*



— Frances Moore Lappé

**Pecans continued from page 1**

Pecans are a very American plant and nut. About 350 million pounds are grown annually in the United States alone, covering easily 80 percent of the world pecan trade. Limited amounts are now grown in Israel, South Africa and Australia. Europe so far has shown little enthusiasm for the nut.

The fruit of the pecan tree, like that of the walnut, is enveloped in a hard woody husk, which opens when ripe, releasing four oblong nuts with edible, oily kernels of excellent flavor. Pecans with their sweet pulpy texture have so many uses it's impossible to list them all. Toasted or raw they are great in all kinds of salads, breads, desserts, smoothies, burgers, stews, and soup. You can enjoy them right out of hand, of course, and use them for one of the most decadent desserts around: pecan pie. You find pecans in ice cream, chocolates, pralines, granola, and trail mixes. While you won't find pecan oil in food stores, you may chance upon it as an ingredient in soap and massage oil.



Pecans have a fat content of nearly 70 percent. They are high in calories. Overall, pecans contain 70% monounsaturated fats, 12-15 % carbohydrates, 9-10 % protein, 3-4 % water and 1.5 % minerals. They are a great source of vitamin B6, which plays an important role in converting the amino acids from consumed proteins into a usable form for the body. Pecans have been found to support a healthy nervous system. It comes as no surprise that pecans, in helping the body to regenerate damaged cells and diseased hearts, are listed amongst the four healthiest nuts (the other three are walnuts, almonds, and Brazil nuts).

### **Here are some interesting facts about pecans:**

- ◆ In Texas, the pecan tree became the official state tree in 1919.
- ◆ There are over 70 million wild pecan trees in Texas (I wonder who counted them??).
- ◆ In one of his horticultural endeavors, Thomas Jefferson transplanted some pecan trees from the Mississippi Valley to his home in Monticello. At that time he presented some of the trees to George Washington, who planted them on March 25, 1775 at his Mount Vernon home. Washington referred to pecans as "Mississippi nuts." Three of those original trees still thrive on the property at Mount Vernon. The pecan was a favorite nut of both presidents, who frequently snacked on handfuls of them. In fact, George Washington was said to frequently carry pecans in his pocket.

- ◆ The Native American Indians made pecan milk by pounding the nuts with a mortar and pestle before adding water and stirring them into a nourishing beverage. Pecan milk was an ideal energy food for their infants and elders because it was so easy to digest.
- ◆ Pecan pie may have originated in the backwoods of Georgia or Alabama, where even the poorest of families had the pie's basic ingredients of corn syrup and pecans in their pantries.
- ◆ Pecans are harvested in the fall. The ripened fruit falls off the tree and must be gathered without delay to avoid spoilage. Before shipping the nuts must be dried for about two weeks in a well ventilated area.
- ◆ Because of their extended root system, pecan trees require a lot of space and water supply.
- ◆ Pecans could improve your love life. If the body does not get enough zinc, it may have difficulty producing testosterone – a key hormone in initiating sexual desire in both men and women. Pecans provide nearly 10 percent of the recommended Daily Value for zinc.
- ◆ Albany, Georgia, which boasts more than 600,000 pecan trees, is the pecan capital of the U.S. Albany hosts the annual National Pecan Festival, which includes a race, parade, pecan-cooking contest, the crowning of the National Pecan Queen, and many other activities.
- ◆ Pecans come in a variety of sizes – mammoth, extra large, large, medium, small and midget. They also come in several forms including whole pecans, pecan halves, pieces, granules, and meal.
- ◆ There are over 1,000 varieties of pecans. Many are named for Native American Indian tribes, including Cheyenne, Mohawk, Sioux, Choctaw and Shawnee.
- ◆ Some of the larger pecan shellers process 150,000 pounds of pecans each day. That's enough to make 300,000 pecan pies!
- ◆ Before a shelled pecan is ready to be sold, it must first be cleaned, sized, sterilized, cracked and finally, shelled.

**Sources:**  
 Whole Foods Companion, by  
 Dianne Onstad;  
[www.vegetariansinparadise](http://www.vegetariansinparadise)



# Pecan Salad

*Here is a recipe you may want to try. A truly spectacular salad, this dynamic combination offers a dramatic burst of color along with pungent savory flavors tastefully balanced with sweet accents. The success of this salad relies on advance preparation of the balsamic vinegar reduction, the caramelized pecans, and the marinated tofu. If these items are prepared a day ahead, the salad can be assembled quickly.*

## **Balsamic Vinegar Reduction**

4 tablespoons balsamic vinegar reduction

## **Caramelized Pecans**

2 tablespoons maple syrup

24 raw pecan halves (about ½ cup)

## **Marinated Tofu**

¼ cup Bragg Liquid Aminos or soy sauce

1 tablespoon umeboshi plum vinegar or red wine vinegar

½ pound firm or extra firm tofu

## **Salad:**

4 leaves kale, finely shredded

½ head Boston lettuce, torn

1 red bell pepper, julienned

½ yellow or orange bell pepper,  
julienned

12 snap peas or snow peas

1 apple, cored and chopped

5 radishes, sliced

½ cup currants or other raisins

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

## **Balsamic Vinegar Reduction**

Measure ½ cup balsamic vinegar, and pour it into a small saucepan. Simmer uncovered over medium-high heat for about 12 to 15 minutes until reduced by half, to about 4 tablespoons. The vinegar will become slightly thickened. Cool and store in the refrigerator.

## **Caramelized Pecans**

Put the maple syrup into an 8 to 10-inch non-stick skillet and bring to a boil over high heat. When the syrup begins to bubble, add pecans and toss with a wooden spoon to coat completely. Stir for 1 to 2 minutes until all liquid is absorbed. Turn off heat, and immediately pour coated pecans onto a dish to cool. When cool, break apart the nuts that have stuck together. Set aside.

### **Marinated Tofu**

Create a marinade by combining Bragg Liquid Aminos or soy sauce and the vinegar in a plastic storage container. Crumble the tofu into the marinade, and stir to coat evenly. Cover container, and refrigerate for at least 2 hours or overnight, tossing occasionally.

### **Assembling the Salad**

Combine the salad ingredients in a large bowl and toss with extra virgin olive oil. Sprinkle crumbled tofu over the top. Drizzle balsamic vinegar reduction over the tofu. Top with caramelized pecans and serve. Makes 4 to 5 servings.



**Source:** [www.vegetariansinparadise](http://www.vegetariansinparadise)

## **Irish Coffee, perhaps, to celebrate the glorious month of December?**

1 teaspoon brown sugar  
1/2 ounce Irish whiskey  
6 ounces good, strong coffee  
1 ounce whipped cream

- \* Place brown sugar in warmed coffee mug.
- \* Add whiskey and stir to dissolve. Add the coffee
- \* Garnish with whipped cream.
- \* If you wish, top with grated very dark chocolate



*Unplug, let be, relax*

# Don't Forget About the Blues

## or The Art of Assembling a Festival of Cheese



Presenting a cheese platter is fun and a lovely gift to your guests. It's also easy! Choose four or five different cheeses, spread them out on a platter and — voilà! Here are a few things you may want to consider:

### Selecting the Cheese

Include a variety of textures and flavors. Most cheeses are categorized as aged, soft, semi-hard, and blue. For a good variety, choose at least one from each group.

For an **aged cheese**, consider a good sharp cheddar (Grafton, Shelburne, or Cabot are excellent Vermont cheddars), Comté (a wonderful French Alpine Cheese), or Vermont's Rupert of the Consider Bardwell Farm.

You'll want a **soft cheese** such as *Blue Ledge Lake's Edge* (an Addison County mild but flavorful goat milk cheese), a nice Brie or Camembert, or Mount Alice (a bloomy rind cheese made in Vermont by the van Trapp family).

For a **semi-hard** or **semi-soft cheese**, look for our Vermont's *Springbrook* Reading Raclette or Drunken Goat (a beautiful Spanish firm mild goat milk cheese).

There are countless outstanding **blue cheeses**. Choose Vermont's Bailey Blue Hazen or our Middlebury Blue or a good English Stilton.

Make sure you leave plenty of room between your cheeses.

You may want to cut a few pieces of cheese in advance. Accompany your cheese selection with slices of baguette or crackers (nothing fancy... plain crackers will do). Bowls of fruit and nuts provide add color. Ripe apples, pears, figs, and grapes are wonderful. Other suggestions to include to your platter are olives, muffaletta, mustard, and quince paste.



### How much to serve?

Three to four ounces of cheese per person works well. Along with fruit, nuts, and perhaps wine or beer, you will win a happy crowd.

### Additional Tips

- ◆ Cheese comes alive at room temperature. Therefore remove it from the refrigerator at least one hour before serving. .
- ◆ Avoid strong-smelling cheese; it can overpower the others on the platter.
- ◆ Label the cheeses with decorative place cards, indicating the kind of milk used (cow, goat, or sheep) and its place of origin.
- ◆ Ask your friends and family to rate the cheese. It's fun to find out what they like best.



### Other amazing cheeses to consider:

- ◆ Delice de Bourgogne is a delicious French soft cheese. Serve only at room temperature.
- ◆ Moses Sleeper is a nice Vermont bloomy rind cheese.
- ◆ Oma is an award-winning Vermont washed rind cheese.
- ◆ Any Vermont *Twig Farm* cheese is a winner.
- ◆ Cambozola, a mild creamy cheese with a bit of blue, is a real crowd pleaser from Germany.
- ◆ Blue Ledge farm chèvres (soft goat milk cheeses) are always popular.
- ◆ Middlebury's *Champlain Triple* is a nice choice for a bloomy rind cow's milk cheese.
- ◆ Saint Agur is just one example of outstanding blue cheeses you'll find at the Co-op.
- ◆ Try the Vermont Orb Weaver Caved-aged cheese.
- ◆ Vermont Tarentaise is a nice cheese made in the Alpine tradition.
- ◆ Red Leicester from England adds a stunning red color.
- ◆ Irish Porter Cheddar has a marbled look.
- ◆ Last not least, try Vermont's Harbison, a soft-ripened cheese with a rustic, bloomy rind. It's a spoonable cheese with a remarkable woodsy and sweet flavor.

When exploring cheese at the Co-op, please don't hesitate to ask for a sample. We *love* showing off our cheeses!

*Reiner*

