

MIDDLEBURY
NATURAL



MIDDLEBURY CO-OP NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2015

MIDDLEBURY NATURAL
FOODS CO-OP

COME JOIN OUR 39TH Annual Meeting!

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3, 5:30-7:30PM
AT



Find Out What's Next For Your Co-op

ENJOY
FLATBREAD, SALAD, DESSERT & DRINKS
ON US!

Everyone
Welcome!



The Middlebury Co-op Newsletter

A Monthly Publication of the
Middlebury Natural Foods Cooperative
1 Washington Street, Middlebury, Vermont 05753

Editor - Reiner Winkler

Printed at *The Little Pressroom*, Middlebury, Vermont.

The purpose of the MNFC Newsletter is to provide a means of communication between the Co-op and its membership. Its aim is to provide a forum, which promotes an awareness of social, health-related, political, economic, technological, and environmental issues as they relate to food and other products sold by the Co-op. In addition, the Newsletter provides a medium to introduce the Co-op and its products and services to the general public. The format is intended for educational debate and discussion. Your letters of opinion and article submissions are welcome and encouraged. The views expressed in the MNFC Newsletter do not necessarily reflect the policies or beliefs of the Middlebury Natural Foods Cooperative as a whole.



**Call 802-388-7276, or e-mail us at mnfc@together.net
Visit our website at Middleburycoop.com
Or Like us on Facebook**

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,

Good news! Lots of local produce is showing up at the Co-op Produce department! Local Greens, local radishes, local spinach, asparagus, tomatoes, and hopefully later this month local strawberries! Of course, there have been local apples, apple cider, and local mushrooms for a while. Enjoy! This June we will promote four companies that stand out because of their excellent business practices: Arrowhead Mills (known for organic innovation), Niman Ranch (humanely raised meat), Neighborly Farms (Vermont organic cheese), and Tierra Farm (all organic nuts and dried fruit). *Why choose a cooperatively run grocery store?* asks Board President Jay Leshinsky. Read his Thoughts on page 10-11. Included is also an update on the Vermont GMO labeling law (pages 8-9).
Happy June! *Reiner*

Chunks of Energy

Chunks of Energy are popular year-round. They are especially sought after during the hiking, traveling, and camping season. Chunks of Energy are bite-sized energy bars, made with nuts, seeds, fruit, sweetened with honey or maple syrup. Several varieties are considered a raw food item. They come in handy when you need good sustainable energy. Varieties include:

Raw Cocoa Goji, made with organic dates, organic sunflower seeds, organic raisins, organic cacao powder, organic apricots, organic sesame seeds, organic coconut, organic goji powder, and natural flavors.

Raw Chia Orange, made with organic dates, organic cashews, organic sesame seeds, organic coconut, organic raisins, organic chia seeds, organic cocoa butter, and organic orange extract.

Raw Lemon Pomegranate, made with organic date paste, organic sunflower seeds, organic raisins, organic cashews, organic apricots (may contain organic rice flour), organic sesame seeds, organic coconut, organic lemon juice concentrate, organic poppy seeds, organic lemon extract, organic pomegranate powder, and organic maca powder.

Also available are **Chocolate Paradise**, **Cranberry Apricot**, **GORP**, and more.

During the month of June, *Chunks of Energy* will be on Sale in the Co-op's Bulk Foods department.

Arrowhead Mills Boulder, Colorado



Arrowhead Mills (AM) has been one of America's most successful organic baking brands since 1960.

The AM story has its roots deep in the Texas Panhandle, where Frank Ford — a pioneer in organic farming — founded the company half a century ago. Frank believed that pesticides and herbicides polluted the food chain, so he set out to farm organically grown corn and wheat. He ground his harvest into flour using a stone mill — which is still in use today — and then delivered it to local stores from the back of his pick-up truck. As word spread about organic farming, health stores around the country began ordering organic flour from the fledgling *Arrowhead Mills*. Soon, what began as a small, local company sprouted into a national business that now occupies a 20-acre site, complete with offices, manufacturing, labs where they do diligent gluten free testing, warehouse and grain-storage facilities. Today, their parent company is the *Hain Celestial Group*, one of the nation's largest natural and organic food companies.

As AM has grown, brand and product line have grown too. Over the years, AM has added hot and cold cereals, as well as delicious pancake, waffle, cake and brownie mixes; nut butters; seasonal products; and gluten-free products — all of which are all-natural and entirely free of chemical pesticides and herbicides.

At the Cop-op you'll find a wide variety of AM products in our baking and cereal aisles, for example, Oat, Buckwheat, and Pastry Flour, an All Purpose Baking Mix, and Vital Wheat Gluten.

You will also find Gluten Free Rice and Shine Cereal, Amaranth Flakes, and Gluten Free Maple Buckwheat Flakes. All organic and therefore GMO free!



During the week of **June 4 — June 10**, Co-op members will receive a **20% discount**, in addition to their regular member discount, on all *Arrowhead Mills* products.

Niman Ranch

Bolinas, California



Niman Ranch began in the early 1970s on an eleven acre ranch in a small coastal town just north of San Francisco. The cattle were raised using traditional, humane husbandry methods and given wholesome all-natural feeds. Before long, *Niman Ranch* beef became a favorite in local grocery stores and at San Francisco Bay Area restaurants.

Today, the *Niman Ranch* network has grown to include over 700 independent American farmers and ranchers. Whether they're raising hogs, cattle or lamb, they all share *Niman Ranch's* dedication to the strictest protocols and the belief that all-natural, humane and sustainable methods produce the best possible flavor.

- ⇒ Niman Meat is raised humanely by the largest network of U.S. family farmers and ranchers (700 and growing)
- ⇒ Niman Meat is grown without antibiotics or added hormones
- ⇒ Niman Meat is fed only the finest all vegetarian feeds
- ⇒ All animals are raised outdoors or in deeply bedded pens.

Niman Ranch offers a complete line of fresh beef, pork, lamb, poultry, cage-free eggs and a variety of smoked and cured meats. *Niman Ranch* is leading the industry in sustainable and humane agricultural practices.

Source: www.nimanranch.com

During the week of **June 11 — June 17**, Co-op members will receive a **20% discount**, in addition to their regular member discount, on all *Niman Ranch* products.

Food as Medicine

Clinical Herbalist, Emily French, founder of *Sweetgrass Herbals*, will offer classes this spring and summer on a variety of issues, including **Food as Medicine** (classes in August and September in Lincoln, Vermont). She will also address the issue of **Lyme disease** and its treatment (**Lincoln, Sunday June 28, 9-12**). For more information and registration, contact Emily at emily@sweetgrassherbals.com.



Neighborly Farms

Brookfield, Vermont

Established as an operating dairy farm more than 30 years ago, Rob and Linda Dimmick along with their three children Bobby, Bailey, and Billy are continuing the tradition on the family farm. Nestled in the rolling hills of Randolph Center, Vermont, *Neighborly Farms* decorates the countryside with its red barn and white post and beam farmhouse built in the 1800s. The farm operates on 168 acres with cropland and grazing fields to support the dairy and a sugarhouse for producing pure Vermont maple syrup. The clean and tidy barn is home to 48 Holsteins — the black and white cows that symbolize rural living at its very best.

Rob and Linda are continuing the family farming tradition because they have a passion for the land and animals. The farm is a totally organic farm. This means the farm is run in complete harmony with the land and the animals; no antibiotics, no hormones, and no commercial fertilizers. Just pure and natural techniques that keep the cows healthy and happy and the dairy products wholesome and chemical free. It means that the cheese produced at *Neighborly Farms*, ched-dars, feta and Monterey Jack are pure and natural. And the best part? The organic cheeses taste great too!

Come visit the farm! Rob and Linda will show you the cows at milking time and how they make the cheese. Sample the cheeses, syrup, and other fine Vermont products and you'll see for yourself how good organic dairy products can be. We're sure you'll agree that happy healthy cows make tasty healthful cheeses.



During the week of **June 18 — June 24**, Co-op members will receive a **20% discount**, in addition to their regular member discount, on all *Neighborly Farms* products.

Tierra Farm

Valatie, New York

Tierra Farm is a Certified Organic manufacturer and distributor of nuts and dried fruits, located 20 miles south of Albany, New York. Their customers consist mainly of cooperatives and independently owned grocery stores that value working with an employee-owned, environmentally conscious company that manufactures its own products.



Tierra Farm started as a diversified organic vegetable farm in the Finger Lakes region of New York. The organic nuts and dried fruit portion of the business started in 1999, as a way to generate income during the slower winter months.

One of their core values has been to cultivate strong relationships with the best organic farmers in the world. Every year *Tierra Farm* purchases an increasing amount of their nuts, seeds and dried fruit directly from the farms, some of which they have worked with for over a decade. Their level of knowledge and communication with their farmers allows them to preserve their organic integrity and ensure fair business practices throughout the supply chain.

Tierra Farm offers exceptional value through outstanding quality at prices that are fair both to the consumer and to the farmer. Their products are made without added oils or refined sugars, in their peanut-free facility. They manufacture the products they sell: they dry roast and flavor nuts and seeds, blend trail mixes, grind butter, cover nuts and fruits in chocolate, and roast fair trade coffee. Everything is made in small, hand-crafted batches to preserve freshness.

Tierra Farm handles only certified organic products which are grown without synthetic pesticides, genetically modified organisms, or chemical fertilizers. This helps sustain biodiversity, conserves fresh water, and enhances the soil. They generate over 70% of their electricity from solar panels and recycle over 60% of their waste. Their boxes are made from recycled cardboard and their deli cup containers from over 50% recycled material - both are recyclable after use.

During the week of **June 25 — July 1**, Co-op members will receive a **20% discount**, in addition to their regular member discount, on all *Tierra Farm* products.



Vermont's GMO Labeling Law... Update...

In May of 2014, the Vermont Legislature passed Act 120, the law that requires labeling of food sold in Vermont that is produced with genetically engineered (GE) foods, also known as genetically modified organisms (GMOs). In passing Act 120, the Legislature tasked the Attorney General with developing rules to implement the law. These rules provide clarity on the scope and reach of the law, including specific requirements for labeling food.

Rule-making is a public process and the Attorney General's office worked from last summer through early March to gather information from the public via surveys and public hearings. They then used the information gathered from the public to write the rule. The final steps in the rule-making process will play out during the current legislative session as the final rule proposed by the Attorney General's office has to be reviewed and approved by the Legislative Committee on Rules. They expect that the final rule will be in place by July 1, 2015, a full year before the labeling law goes into effect.

In June of 2014, a collection of trade

associations representing giant food producers filed suit against the State of Vermont to challenge the labeling law on the basis that it compels commercial speech in violation of the First Amendment. Though not granted their motion to be official defendants, Vermont Public Interest Group (VPIRG) and the Center for Food Safety (CFS) joined the State of Vermont in defending the labeling law in a participatory role. VPIRG and CFS are represented by the Environmental & Natural Resources Law Clinic at the Vermont Law School. The State of Vermont has hired a firm from Washington D. C and several attorneys from the Vermont Attorney General's Office are also working on the case in defense of Act 120.

The State filed a Motion to dismiss the case on August 8, 2014, asking the Court to throw the case out. In September, the Plaintiffs filed a Motion for a Preliminary Injunction, asking the Court to temporarily stop implementation of the law until the full case is decided. On Jan-

January 1st, 2015, Chief Judge Christina Reiss of the U.S. District Court of Vermont heard arguments on the two motions. This hearing covered two main areas: the ‘merits’- whether Vermont’s law is constitutional under the First Amendment, Supremacy Clause, and Commerce Clause; and “irreparable harm”- whether the Plaintiffs will suffer irreparable harm if the Judge does not issue a preliminary injunction. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Judge said that she would take the matters under advisement and will likely enter a written decision on the motions within the next few months.

The Vermont Food Fight Fund was established by the Vermont Legislature in April 2014 as a special fund to support the State’s implementation, administration, and le-

gal defense of its landmark first-in-the-nation GMO labeling law. Donations to this fund will help Vermont establish its labeling law and mount a powerful defense against the corporate interests suing our state. If you wish to help Vermont win the food fight, please visit www.foodfightfundvt.org. For more information and updates on this process visit VTRightToKnow.org.



The Co-op Connection

Use your Co-op membership card to receive valuable discounts at a number of Middlebury businesses and services. Naturopathic physician and acupuncturist **Karen Miller-Lane** offers a 10% discount on your first visit to *Natural Medicine of Vermont* (located at 50 Court Street) and \$5 off any subsequent visits.

Dr. Miller-Lane uses diet and nutrition, acupuncture, western and Chinese herbs, gentle body work, hydrotherapy, and counseling. She also specializes in women’s healthcare, immune support, and chronic illness issues. Call 388-6250 for more information.





Why Choose A Cooperative Grocery Store?

by Jay Leshinsky

In my President's Report for the 2015 Annual Board Meeting I shared my thoughts on the increasingly competitive natural and organic foods marketplace. At the same time that cooperatively owned food stores face challenges unlike any time in their past, the creation of the largest number of "start-up" consumer owned food co-ops since the 1970s is under way. Some start-ups are developing in rural areas where the existing supermarkets are not offering many healthy food options. But many more are starting in urban and suburban areas where start-ups face highly capitalized chains that are already established in those communities. Why are hundreds (sometimes thousands) of community members willing to invest their money in such a risky enterprise as a cooperatively owned grocery store?

At a recent regional cooperative meeting I had the chance to ask some founders of New England start-ups why they chose a cooperative model for a food market. The responses produced a consistent list of reasons: local and community ownership, democratic decision making, new markets for local food producers, social justice, living wages, diversity, and environmental sustainability. Not surprisingly these are the very same reasons listed by founders of cooperatives that started in the 1970s. As I listened to further discussions at the regional meeting, I heard start-up founders saying that addressing the social and economic issues tied to food were critical to a healthy community. They chose a cooperative model because they believed that addressing social and cultural needs and aspirations through an economic entity was the very essence of why cooperatives were created.

The start-up discussions also produced lots of questions. How does an association of thousands of members meet the "common" needs of the members? What is the relationship of the cooperative to the rest of the community? Do certain needs and aspirations (economic) conflict with others (environmental)? So much has changed on our planet, in our

community and with MNFC itself in the last 40 years! Since the creation of MNFC in 1976 the cooperative values remain our motivation and guide posts. So we are constantly challenged to develop operational strategies that work within the parameters of the world in which we live, but also move us toward our long term goal; to create a thriving

*...hospitality, kindness,
and generosity...*

community that reflects and promotes our cooperative values. I think those values are elegantly summed up in the long term goal of the Wheatsville Food Co-op in Austin, TX: *to be a thriving community centered on hospitality, kindness, and generosity.*

As MNFC approaches its 40th birthday, the Board of Directors will continue to re-evaluate our vision for the years ahead. Our Management Team will be thinking creatively about how best to meet our operational challenges. Our member-owners will continue to tell us when we are on course and when off course and suggest ways to improve. Can food cooperatives live up to our ideals and remain vital in 2016 and beyond? For thousands of people in hundreds of communities starting new co-ops the answer is *yes*. Perhaps one key reason is the cooperative message of hope and community transformation. Is this the cooperative competitive advantage? That may be a lot to ask of a grocery store but, if successful could be quite a gift to the community.

Jay Leshinsky is a member of our Board of Directors

When shopping at the Co-op, remember...

...you can help by bringing your own bags and containers! Bring reusable bags for mesclun, lettuce, or brussel sprouts; a used paper bag works well for mushrooms. In Bulk, ziplock bags are great for sugar, flour, and salt. If you bring your own jars for honey and maple syrup, you will pay significantly less (ask a staff member for assistance); bring your own bag for coffee beans and your own mug for freshly brewed coffee at our Deli. And... don't forget your own canvas bag.



Bringing your own bags and containers is less convenient. But it's worth the effort. Totally worth it! By shopping using your own containers you set a great example for others. Co-op staff members are often inspired by customers and their creative re-use of bags and containers.