



NEW MANAGER BRINGS A WEALTH OF EXPERIENCE TO FFC

As the co-op continues to expand, so does our management team and staff. We are happy to welcome Sean Farber as our second Assistant General Manager. A Brooklyn native who grew up in Atlanta, he has worked within the cooperative movement at a time of continued growth and increasing competition from organic retail chains. Sean has helped smaller natural food stores develop strategies to stay competitive and improve the quality of their products and services. Collaborating with local vendors to bring distinct products to the market is a core method he has employed. Sean spent several years living in San Francisco, where he recognized that a significant number of new natural brands are introduced on the west coast. He developed promotions to get these products into the hands of his customers first.

Sean later returned to Atlanta and worked at Sevenanda, a co-op established in 1974, where he most recently served as General Manager.

He joined Atlanta's Local Food Initiatives Steering Committee and through these networks, he partnered with Truly Living Well, an urban farm that teaches farming to at-risk youth. With the co-op, Sean co-hosted a few events with the Atlanta Bicycle Coalition that benefited the Atlanta Beltline Project, a public transit project developed to connect urban neighborhoods and provide green space in the city.

Sean became familiar with our co-op through his co-op's membership in the National Cooperative Grocers Association (NCGA), which comprises more than 120 co-ops in 32 states that work together to optimize their resources and better serve natural

food co-op consumers. In addition to his broad responsibilities as Assistant General Manager, Sean has specifically been focusing on some early projects including finalizing work on our new website, as well as setting up and managing our Facebook page and Twitter account. We expect that our use of social media will improve our marketing and promotions, while improving communication with our members and the broader community.

Sean has also been helping department managers analyze and reset some of our departments -- with many more to come. For example, he recently worked on the dairy and pet food departments and, in conjunction with our other Assistant Manager, Tom Valentino, he has helped to expand and improve the deli menu and

operations. In mid-2012, Sean will also be leading a large project to change our cash register Point of Sale system to one that is more efficient and suitable to our needs.

Sean's broad co-operative and natural food retail experience and interest in community make him a strong addition to our co-op's talented management team.



Board President's Letter

At a time when Occupy Wall Street has dominated the news, my recent reading has underscored the important role that co-ops play in the economy and in communities. According to Robert Putnam in his book "Bowling Alone", we have seen an isolation and disengagement of Americans from their community. There is much distrust in mainstream politics, business, and financial institutions. We have observed decreasing involvement in social clubs, religious institutions, dinner parties, and just plain socializing and visiting with friends.

John Restakis in his book "Humanizing Economics" points out that what separates cooperation from other economic systems is that it generates capital through trust that is regenerated and repaid to its constituents, it encourages volunteerism and socializing, and its goal is for the collective benefit of the member/owner.

In her November 18th posting on the Huffington Post entitled "Get Occupied with the Co-op Movement," Emily Kennedy describes the little noticed "global movement that's demanding a democratic economy. The one that's unsatisfied with the corporate business model and the way that banks dominate the system. The one that's been occupying the social change arena since 1844... the cooperative movement."

As Kennedy points out "the co-op model is an alternative to serving that single, profit driven bottom line, the one that leads to the centralization of capital in fewer and fewer people's hands ... and (that leads us) to relinquish control of economic, environmental and social issues that affect our communities." Co-ops attend to the triple bottom lines of profit, the community, and the environment.

The United Nations has designated 2012 the International Year of the Co-op. Our co-op, along with others across the country, will be looking for ways to celebrate this milestone event. We are proud to be a part of the cooperative movement and hope that this will be a year when the value of cooperatives around the world will receive greater attention.

Leslie Dreifus

RECIPE: PHILADELPHIA CHEESE STEAK SANDWICHES FOR EVERYONE

BY DEB SINER

A couple of months ago I took my darling husband down to Philadelphia to revisit some favorite places from when I lived there...the Ben Franklin Institute (a fabulous science museum, complete with giant, walk-through heart), Eastern State Penitentiary (a museum now), and Reading Market, ending with South Philly and a genuine Philly cheese steak from one of the masters. It was incredibly tasty, but of course a mass of white bread, grease, and not-quite-cheese as well as flavor.

I wondered if I could make a version that was equally delicious, but (1) healthier (2) vegetarian (3) vegan and maybe even (4) kosher. Yes, I could and did. Here's the result - a great, quick meal, especially when you're at the stove for 3 days straight getting ready for that big holiday meal.



The Bread: Use whole wheat flat bread instead of the empty, puffy white roll. The Co-op has two great ones right now. Nature's Wrap whole wheat lavash is a big rectangular piece of flatbread. Cut it in half for two sandwiches. Rudi's Bakery has a 7-grain wrap, circular. Again, cut each piece in half for two.

The Cheese: Use sliced cheese, cheddar or Swiss or American. Vegan Rice cheese comes sliced and melts beautifully.

The Meat: Thin sliced beef is the original flavor. Minute steaks are available from the Sunday Market beef guy. The Co-op has sliceable chunks (sirloin, flatiron eye round), which you can cut into 1/8" slices. Hint: easy to slice when partially frozen. For vegans: Westsoy Seitan strips or Lightlife Smart Strips, steak style, are excellent.

The Recipe for 4

- Put 4 portions of bread in a very low oven. Put 2 slices of cheese on each slice of bread, so that they melt.
- Cut one large onion and one pepper into strips. Mince 1 or 2 garlic cloves. Sauté at medium heat until cooked.
- Add meat or "meat" to the pan. Use ¾ - 1 pound of actual meat, or 1 package of either meat substitute. Cook for only a minute.
- Divide pan contents into 4 portions and place 1 portion on each slice of bread. Roll the bread up around the contents. Use a toothpick to keep it rolled. It's ready! Pretty and yummy!

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE CO-OP

The United Nations General Assembly has passed a resolution, proclaiming the year 2012 as the International Year of Cooperatives (IYC). The United States is joining countries around the world to celebrate the benefits cooperatives deliver to the communities that they serve.

The theme of the International Year of Cooperatives is “Cooperative Enterprises Build a Better World.” The UN resolution recognizes that the cooperative business model is a major factor of economic and social development, promoting the fullest possible participation in the economic and social development of people in both the developed and developing world, and that, in particular, cooperatives contribute to the eradication of poverty. The resolution also encourages all governments to create a more supportive environment for cooperative development, particularly when it comes to securing finances for capacity-building.

Worldwide, over 800 million people are members of cooperatives. The economic activity of the largest 300 cooperatives in the world equals the 10th largest national economy. What sets the cooperative model apart from others is that all cooperatives, whether they are small farmers or large consumer-owned entities, share the values of democracy, solidarity, equality, self-help and self responsibility, creating businesses that serve the greater good as opposed to maximizing profit for the very few.

The International Year offers the cooperative community an unparalleled opportunity to promote co-ops, to raise public awareness of the contribution they make to social and economic development, and to promote the formation and growth of cooperatives.

FFC Introduces New Wellness Product Line

This summer, the co-op introduced liquid herbal extracts known as tinctures under our private label. The inviting assortment, featuring extracts from acai to yohimbe, faces the service desk in the wellness department. FFC commissioned its line from Vitality Works, Inc., a New Mexico based vendor that manages a clinic “focusing on herbalism and holistic pro-tocols.” Working with small farms, they are committed to providing products derived from herbs that are certified organic, ethically harvested from the wild, and/or selectively imported. Therefore, our tinctures are free of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and pesticides.

As liquids, tinctures retain vital elements that could be lost in the drying process involved in producing tablets. Vitality Works harvests herbs at the premium point in their growth cycle and processes them within hours to preserve their potency. Produced in one-, two-, or four-ounce bottles with convenient droppers, the tinctures can be readily absorbed in water, juice, or, depending on the product, even food or warm beverages. Since they do not have a gelatin coating, no animal products are used in their production and they are easy to digest.

Working with clients at their clinic has enabled herbalists at Vitality Works to create blends that respond to targeted needs. For instance, versions of the popular herb Echinacea supplied for our co-op include the single herb, enhanced formulas, and a



children's option. Tinctures are also offered that are alcohol-free, using vegetable glycerin and raw New Mexico Clover honey to replace alcohol after processing. This method is used when creating children's options, non-addictive sleep aids using herbs like kava and valerian, and other extracts like “liver detox.”

The FFC line also includes syrups, oils, breath fresheners, complex vitamins, and extracts

that are not featured in other brands found in the store. The natural sweetener, Stevia, which our store offers in gluten-free flavors including orange, peppermint, and chocolate, is among the liquid alternatives of popular items. Other supplements derived from easily recognized sources include fennel and ginger. While they are traditionally used as flavor accents, these herbs are said to have other benefits including easing digestion. Formulas available that build upon single herbs include Ginseng Master and Ginger Zinger Cough.

Our co-op and Vitality Works recommend consulting a physician before using tinctures to treat ailments. Some supplements warn against use during pregnancy and are not appropriate for children. Visit the wellness department to learn more about our tinctures, which are on sale this fall for 30 percent off, on top of membership discounts and reduced store brand pricing. Used as advised, they may provide relief for common concerns from a trusted source.

Co-op News

New Website

The co-op now has a new and improved website which provides a greener way to receive our newsletter and sales flyer and much more! Find us at www.flatbushfoodcoop.com. You can also follow us on Facebook and Twitter to get daily updates.

FFC in the Community

On September 8th, the first day of school, volunteers from the co-op were ready bright and early to greet students with organic apples at three neighborhood schools, PS 217 on Newkirk Avenue, PS 129 on Cortelyou Road, and P.S. 249 on Caton Avenue.



Upcoming Events

Sunday, December 4, Annual Membership Meeting: 1:00 -3:00 p.m. at Prospect Park Temple Isaac, 1419 Dorchester Road (at Marlborough Road).

Holiday Delights and Gifts

Each year, our co-op provides seasonal specials like pre-cooked organic and Kosher turkeys and frozen Tofurkeys in preparation for festive occasions. Other specialty foods shoppers can look forward to finding include gourmet dairy items like Devon cream and Mascarpone cheese, and ready-made pies, including a new vegan pumpkin option (pies may be purchased whole or by the slice). For the first time, we can also present our family and friends with gift cards to share all that our store and dozens of other US co-ops have to offer year round. Look for these cheerful cards and news about seasonal products and activities at the checkout lanes.

Flatbush Food Co-op Values

A Democratic Structure

We embrace a cooperative culture that includes ownership and opportunities for participation by our members, a work environment that involves and empowers our employees, and a positive, respectful shopping environment.

Community

We value and seek to build our cooperative community of staff, members, and shoppers, embracing the diverse community where we are located and supporting and aligning ourselves with the global cooperative community.

Socially Responsible, Environmentally Sound Practices

We support sustainable agriculture, the consumption and use of organic products, and the fair and ethical treatment of workers in the production process.

Education

We seek to educate ourselves and the broader community about cooperation, health, nutrition, and environmental issues.

Contributors

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Disclaimer

The views expressed in these newsletter articles represent those of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Flatbush Food Cooperative.