



Greens and Grains

An educational and informative publication of the Valley Food Co-op

Winter, 2009

Local Foods Coalition Update

From Liza Marron

The increased availability of local food in any area is a direct function of the demand from local consumers. Most of us are not accustomed to asking about food origins, but it's easy enough to do.

First: in grocery stores, when the cashier asks if you found everything you were looking for, you could say, "Not really, I was looking for local produce." (from *Animal Vegetable Miracle A Year of Food Life* by Barbara Kingsolver with Steven L. Hopp and Camille Kingsolver...highly recommended read).

The San Luis Valley Local Foods Coalition is providing such a voice. At the printing of this newsletter the 2009 Local Foods Guide should be available in print and electronically. It was created to highlight local producers willing to market their products locally. This project of the Coalition was done in collaboration with San Luis Valley producers, The San Luis Valley Regional Medical Center, LiveWell Alamosa and the San Luis Valley Heritage Tourism.

A proposal to the USDA Community Food Projects grant program was accomplished in November and is another exciting project of the Coalition, again in collaboration with the San Luis Valley Regional Medical Center and others. The proposal involves the creation of a local distribution center with a community kitchen and local foods deli. Cathy Morin of the SLVRMC was the master crafter of the work that will increase opportunities for the farm-to-institution initiative at the hospital in addition to creating a better local foods system for the San Luis Valley.

Among the members of the food coalition is the Alamosa Community Greenhouse and Gardens. At the December coalition meeting it was announced that the film "The Power of Community - How Cuba Survived Peak Oil" will be shown Saturday, January 23rd at TSJC, 10 AM. This film will also be shown in Del Norte at Wildwood Sounds on Sunday, January 24th, 2:30 PM. When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1990, Cuba's economy went into a tailspin. With imports of oil cut by more than half – and food by 80 percent – people were desperate. Cubans share how they transitioned from a highly mechanized, industrial agricultural system to one using organic methods of farming and local, urban gardens.

Another highlight of the meeting was the announcement from nutritionist and Coming Alive steering committee member Jodi Birkofer that the 17th annual SLV worksite exercise challenge "Coming Alive" would feature local food recipes and local exercise opportunities. To join this New Years worksite exercise challenge – please call Kathy Pachelli at 587-1062. The deadline to do so is the end of December.

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From Board Member Stephen Smilack

Dear members:

Following are some of my thoughts regarding the current state of the Co-op.

Economically, we are in difficult times. I feel the Co-op needs to change the way it does business by developing new revenue streams and saving up enough capital to move into our own building/premises. Basically, we have turned into a retail health food outlet. We are now facing very stiff competition from City Market and will shortly begin to see diminishing sales figures and lower savings. Unless we change our business model and management style, the future does not look very bright.

For two years I have made bonafide offers to: 1) buy and gut/refurbish a commercial building, 2) buy commercial land and build a green building for the Co-op, 3) participate financially in the purchase of a commercial building with a viable kitchen facility, and 4) work for free for three full days a week for several months. However, the board and management have repeatedly voted to maintain our present course.

At the last board meeting Roy Kiefer who has been Co-op stalwart and board member resigned. I wish to thank him personally and publicly for his endless hours of volunteerism; he will be sorely missed. My own service on the board is about to come to an end as well.

In my opinion, what the Co-op needs is a whole new board of directors and new full-time management to revitalize the spirit and vision of the Co-op, to strengthen it to compete more effectively in the marketplace. The Co-op needs to become a powerhouse in the Valley that can truly represent the green and sustainable part of our community.

I wish you all the best of luck.

Retired ... Roy-of-all-trades

After a number of years as a Valley Food Co-op Board member, Roy Kiefer has decided to resign.

Roy has dedicated himself to many varied projects at the Co-op, demonstrating his skill with painting, construction and maintenance. Roy has also devoted many hours to Valley Food Co-op research, including researching possible new locations for the Co-op. In addition, Roy volunteered as a board member through several terms.

On behalf of the staff and members of the Valley Food Co-op, I wish to thank Roy for his hard work and selflessness.

Submitted by Sahndra Stewart, VFC Co-op Staff Member

New GMO Shopping Guide

From: Institute for Responsible Technology
www.nonGMOShoppingGuide.com

The site features:

- Tips for Avoiding GMOs along with 16 food Product Categories listing both GMO and Non-GMO brands.
- There's a section called Why Should I Avoid GMOs.
- Also How Can I Help, which gives everyone ways to help end the genetic engineering of our food supply.
- A Pocket Guide is available as a download or to order and share with friends.

Fifty-three percent of Americans say they would avoid GMOs if labeled, let's make the Non-GMO Shopping Guide hugely popular and quickly achieve the tipping point. Remember, when Europe achieved its tipping point of consumer rejection, within a single week nearly every major food company committed to stop using genetically modified (GM) ingredients.

Local Foods Coalition Update (from page 1)

The next local foods coalition meeting will be Friday, January 8, 2010 at the Valley Wide Health Systems Administration Building, 128 Market Street. For more information, please call Lurette at 588-9417 or Liza at 587-1034.

Happy Holidays and a Healthy New Year!

Recipes from the VFC Cooking Class

BROCCOLI WALNUT SALAD Serves 6

1 large bunch broccoli, chopped
½ cup shredded carrots
2 Tablespoons raw cider vinegar
2 Tablespoons raw agave nectar
3 Tablespoons cold-pressed flax or unrefined sesame oil
¼ teaspoon dry mustard
¼ cup chopped raw walnuts

1. Whisk together the vinegar, agave nectar, oil and mustard.
2. Toss with broccoli and carrots and serve immediately or marinate for one hour, stirring often, to soften the broccoli somewhat.
3. Top with chopped walnuts before serving.

This recipe is: DAIRY-FREE, GLUTEN-FREE, VEGETARIAN, VEGAN, RAW AND GOOD FOR DIABETICS.

FOR ALL DIETS EXCEPT RAW: Maple syrup may be substituted for the agave nectar.

CANDIED SWEET POTATOES Serves 8-10

3½ pounds sweet potatoes, scrubbed
1-inch knob of ginger, peeled and thinly sliced, or grated, optional
6 Tablespoons butter
Salt and freshly milled pepper
½ cup maple syrup
½ cup unsweetened apple juice

1. Boil potatoes until tender, but still firm when pierced with a knife. When cool enough to handle, cut lengthwise into slices about ¾-inch thick.
2. Preheat oven to 375°.

3. Butter a large, shallow casserole or baking pan.
4. Make a single layer of the potatoes in the pan and scatter a few ginger slices over, dot with butter, season with salt and pepper and drizzle some of the syrup on top.
5. Repeat until all the potatoes are used, and then pour in the juice.
6. Cover with aluminum foil and bake for 1 hour, until very soft. If the oven is set at a lower temperature, simply bake longer.

This recipe is: GLUTEN-FREE, VEGETARIAN AND GOOD FOR DIABETICS IN MODERATE AMOUNTS. FOR DAIRY-FREE AND VEGAN: Substitute margarine for the butter.

This recipe is not suitable for: RAW.

Organic Can Feed the World

People's Food Sovereignty Now!

Most of the world's food is not produced by industrial megafarms. 75 percent of the world's food is produced by 1.5 billion small farmers.

The hunger problem is not caused by low yields. The world has 6 billion people and produces enough food for 9 billion people.

There are now 1.02 billion hungry people in the world (nearly 50 million in the US). At the same time, there are 1 billion people who are overweight, many who are obese and suffer from diet-related diseases.

Hunger and obesity are the result of the overproduction of toxic junk food, the scarcity of healthy organic food, and injustice in the way farmland and food are distributed.

While many of the world's leaders discussed the food crisis at a UN Food Summit in Rome, farmers...took part in demonstrations outside the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) headquarters and met at an alternative forum, People's Food Sovereignty Now! The 642 participants (more than half women) from 93 countries represent the more than 1.5 billion small farmers who produce 75 per cent of the world's food.

(Excerpted from the People's Food Sovereignty Now! Declaration, November 2009. For full article see: Organic Transitions at organicconsumers.org)

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Housecleaner wanted

587-3702

Request for Inventory Volunteers

Sat., Jan. 2nd: inventory the Co-op back stock of bulk items; get the store ready to count. Volunteers can sign up for a two-hour shift from 10 am until 4 pm.

Sun., Jan. 3rd: weigh all of the bulk items in the store. Volunteers can sign up for a two-hour shift from 9:30 am until 3:30 pm.

Members earn double working member hours by helping with inventory.

Member Appreciation Days:

Friday, January 15, 2010

Monday, February 15, 2010

Monday, March 15, 2010

From Kitchen Gardens International

1: number of new kitchen gardens planted at the White House this year—AP

1943: the last time food was grown at the White House—White House

20 million: the number of new gardens planted in 1943—LA Times

40%: percentage of nation's produce coming from gardens in 1943—LA Times

7 million: estimated number of new food gardens planted in the US in 2009—NGA

\$2000: amount of savings possible per year from a 40' x 40' garden—KGI

90%: percentage of fruit/vegetable varieties lost in the US the last 100 years—CNN

3500: number of vegetable varieties owned by Monsanto—Monsanto

18,467: number of new small farms counted in the last agricultural census—USDA

4,685: number of farmers markets nationwide—USDA

4,100: number of Wal-mart stores and clubs in the US—Wal-mart

187,000 ft² : average area of a Wal-mart superstore—Wal-mart

60,112 ft²: average area of a farmers' market—USDA

390 parts per million: current level of CO₂ in the atmosphere—NOAA

31%: percentage of human-caused greenhouse gas emissions attributable to food and agriculture—IPCC

10 calories: average amount of fossil fuel energy required to produce 1 calorie of food energy in industrialized food systems—Cornell

29,100 calories: estimated fossil fuel calories required to produce one order of Outback Steakhouse Aussie Cheese Fries—Men's Health

1 billion: number of hungry people in the world in 2009—FAO

9.1 billion: projected world population in the year 2050—US Census

70%: percentage increase in global food production required to feed that projected population—FAO

70%: percentage of world's fresh water used for agricultural purposes—UNESCO

1.8 billion: number of people expected to experience "water scarcity" in the year 2025—UNEP