

Hours:

MONDAY – FRIDAY
7:00 – 8:00

SATURDAY 7:00 – 8:00

SUNDAY 9:00 – 7:00

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MAY 2008

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The Birds and the Beans...

by Ruth Ann Smalley

Preserving diversity and promoting small farmers through cooperative coffee

May 10th is International Fair Trade Day!

- **All Day at the Co-op** – Coffee and chocolate samples from Equal Exchange
- **2–3:30 pm** – Photos and stories from Chiapas: HWFC education coordinator Karisa Centanni will discuss her recent trip to Mexico, where she met coffee farmers at the CESMACH cooperative. (See related articles on page 4–7).

“There is a direct relationship between the loss of cultural diversity and the loss of biodiversity. Wherever Indigenous peoples still remain, there is also a corresponding enclave of biodiversity.”

– Winona LaDuke, *All Our Relations*

The coffee farmers of CESMACH cooperative and their home in the cloud forest brilliantly exemplify LaDuke’s point. In March, HWFC education coordinator Karisa Centanni traveled to Chiapas, Mexico with an Equal Exchange delegation. Along with seven others from consumer co-ops all over the United States, plus three worker-owners from Equal Exchange, she went there “to see the whole process” of coffee growing, and “to learn from the farmers.”

Equal Exchange is a Boston-based, worker-owned Fair Trade cooperative. Describing itself as “a self-sustaining but not wealth-accumulating enterprise,” Equal Exchange is a high volume importer of coffee and chocolate, and has recently begun developing domestic Fair Trade partnerships as well. Coffee is big business: It is the “third most common import in the U.S., behind oil and steel, respectively. The U.S. consumes about one-third of the world’s coffee” (“Birds and Coffee”). Of that quantity, Equal Exchange imported more than 3.69 million pounds in 2004 alone.

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Adolfo and his family with HWFC’s Karisa Centanni at a coffee cooperative in Chiapas, Mexico during an Equal Exchange tour in March.



What's the Scoop?

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NEWS at a glance



by Nancy Ellegate

The HWFC Board of Directors met on Tuesday, April 1.

Strategic Planning

A financial mini-retreat was scheduled for late April regarding funds for the new store. The Loan Task Force will develop materials to present to potential donors and intends to extend fund-raising activities into the fall. One idea discussed was asking members to donate

continued on page 3

More time to shop on Sundays!

Starting May 4, Honest Weight will open one hour earlier and close an hour later on Sundays. The Co-op’s new Sunday hours are 9 am to 7 pm.

Behind the Co-op

Board of Directors

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 Vice-President: Susan Weinrich 794-0897
 Treasurer: John Godfrey 274-7996
 Secretary: Jim Monsonis

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 Strategic Planning Lynne Lekakis 427-7386
kandl@capital.net
 Collective Management Team representative Cindee Lolik *cindee@hwfc.com*

Collective Management Team (482-3312+ext.)

Operations and administrative coordinator: Cindee Lolik (x116)
 Member coordinator: Nate Horwitz (x104)
 Outreach coordinator: Jessica Allen (x120)
 Education coordinator: Karisa Centanni (x113)
 Finance manager: Alfred Bouchard (x107)
 Assistant finance manager: Jennifer Felitte
 Personnel administrator: Hoby Ebert
 IT coordinator: Lexa Juhre (x101)
 Front end manager: Katie Centanni (x109)
 Assistant front end manager: Erica Peters
 Grocery managers: Nancy Reich (x119)
 Grocery floor managers: David Aubé, Garrett French, Joe Marra, Hakim Steward, Nick Weber, Lee Wilson, Russell Ziemba
 Produce manager: Nick Bauer (x102)
 Assistant produce managers: Gayle Anderson, Steve Lamica
 Produce assistants: Ariel Callaschai, Jamie Felitte, Stacie Halloran, Amy Languish, Elizabeth Schaefer, Karen Starr, Hakim Steward, Jesse Strock
 Bulk manager: Bob Linn (x106)
 Assistant bulk manager: Leigh Nowicki
 Bulk assistants: Walter Fick, Thomas Gillespie
 Cheese manager: Gustav Ericson (x118)
 Cheese assistants: Cheng-Hua Lee, Ken Runquist, Jesse Strock
 HaBA manager: Kathleen Boehning (x122)
 Assistant HaBA managers: Mitchell Liberman, Lynne Sims
 HaBA assistants: Neelima Baird, Rebecca Hein, Kevin Johnston, Carolyn Matthei
 Meat manager: Chris Kemnah
 Food service manager: Nicole Bailey (x108)
 Assistant food service manager: Laura Pederson
 Cooks: Lori Doyle, Nick Foster, Sue Ellen Lewanick, Karin Maag-Tanchak, Carolyn Matthei, Michael Natcharian
 Night manager: Michael Ferrandino
 Floor managers: Christopher Kuhn, Amy Pagano, Cathryn Russell
 Maintenance: Arielle Ellis, Jamie Greenwood, Steve Kroeger
 Shift managers: Elyse Bryan, Sonya Dewitt, Jenny Ruggiero, Craig Willis, Phalcore X



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How to contact the Co-op... Postal mail – Honest Weight Food Co-op, 484 Central Ave., Albany NY 12206 • Phone – 518-482-2667 (482-COOP) • E-mail – *email@hwfc.com*
 Website – *www.hwfc.com* or *www.honestweight.coop*

More Ways to Recycle

The Co-op is now collecting 6 oz. and 32 oz. yogurt containers for the Terracycle program, where the containers will be decorated and then used as nursery planters. Please deposit *clean* containers in the appropriate recycling bin by the courtesy desk.

The Co-op is collecting cell phones and inkjet cartridges for a program to support the Hamilton Hill Arts Group, the only arts organization in the Capital District serving the African-American community. Please deposit in the Techno-Trash receptacle near the courtesy desk. Be sure to erase all data (address book, pictures, etc.) before donating cell phones or other data-containing devices *anywhere*.

The Co-op also collects cell phones *with* battery chargers for Equinox. Please band them together and place in the Techno-Trash receptacle near the courtesy desk. Be sure to remove all data before donating cell phones.

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NEWS AT A GLANCE, from page 1

the tax rebate checks the federal government will be sending out soon.

Personnel

Recommendations from the Personnel committee and the Collective Management Team have been incorporated into the dispute resolution process that has been in development. These emendations are intended to shorten the time the process takes. The Board approved the plan pending successful review by the Co-op's attorney. The Governance Review committee will also review the policy once the attorney OKs it.

Energy Task Force

This group's next goal is to look for grants connected to energy use for the new store.

Collective Management Team

Staff members will be visiting several other co-ops to observe their operations.

The operations and administrative coordinator brought in reusable shopping bags designed by a member and made from recycled plastic bottles. [These have since gone on sale in the store.] Cotton and mesh bags for use with produce and bulk items will be coming. Staff will also look into the possibility of selling stainless steel coffee mugs.

Fair Trade Visit

The Co-op's education coordinator reported on her trip to a Fair Trade coffee plantation in Mexico. This visit was made possible through the Equal Exchange organization.

Finance

A meeting in early April was expected to focus on financial forecasting for the new store. Sales are good so far this year.

Membership Meeting

Plans for the April membership meeting and the Board elections were discussed.

Recognition of Departing Directors

The Board recognized those members whose terms were coming to a close in April.

Minutes

Minutes of all meetings are available at the Co-op. Minutes of the most recent Board meeting are posted on the bulletin board. They are also available on the Co-op's website as password protected files. See instructions on the website (*www.hwfc.com*) for obtaining a password. (See the Meetings section and go to Board Meetings.)

Upcoming Board Meetings

The next Board meeting has been set for Tuesday, May 6 at 5:30 pm in the Co-op Community Room. Several new Board members were elected in April, and the Board will devise a schedule for the coming year after new and returning members have had a chance to confer. Meeting dates are posted on the Co-op's website (*www.hwfc.com*).

Note: News at a Glance is a summary of the meetings of the HWFC Board of Directors.

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for Coop Scoop article submissions

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2. If you are submitting a typed document, the deadline is the 10th of the month, at store closing time.
3. Handwritten copy is *NOT* accepted without prior approval.
- 4. If you are submitting on computer disk, the deadline is the 10th of the month at store closing time. We can accept Windows/DOS diskettes, or Mac disks if they are HD 1.4MB format. (Note that older Macs cannot produce this format.) **HARD COPY MUST BE SUBMITTED** with your disk! Please call the Editor for further details about how to type and save your text.
5. Please e-mail your article to *both* fordtrupin@verizon.net and trupinjet@gmail.com.

All articles are printed at the discretion of the Editor and Editorial Board. It is a policy of the *Coop Scoop* only to print articles that have been signed.

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COOPERATIVE COFFEE, from p.1

"Buying Fair Trade is an important step," Karisa asserts. "But understanding the bigger issues, the effects of 'free trade' and NAFTA [North American Free Trade Agreement] — the environmental and social destruction — is also necessary. It is important to educate folks about the need to raise the bar for small farmers everywhere."

Karisa's experiences in Chiapas provided a great opportunity for gaining this understanding. With a full time staff of only eight, CESMACH works with about 335 general assembly members, each representing a family of farmers. CESMACH stands for *Campesinos Ecológicos de la Sierra Madre de Chiapas*. "Embedded in their name is a reference to their work on behalf of the rainforest," explains Karisa. She was struck by their intense relationship with their land. Because they live in a buffer zone at the edge of the UNESCO-protected El Triunfo rainforest, only organic agriculture — including corn, beans, coffee and cows — is allowed.

The farmers "act as a human barrier between the outside world and the rainforest," Karisa notes. "Big Pharma" would love to acquire their holdings. According to Trans Fair USA, "CESMACH was awarded the 2003 Ecological Merit award by the Mexican government for its efforts to protect endangered plant species."

Rainforest Habitats Threatened

Plants aren't the only threatened species to benefit from their care. The region is home to a rich variety of rare species. CESMACH farming methods are particularly important to birds. Organic and shade-grown coffee makes a huge difference: "In eastern Chiapas ... biologists found that traditionally managed coffee and cacao plantations support over 150 species of birds." Conversely, "the diversity of migratory birds plummets when coffee is converted from shade to sun. ... Studies in Colombia and Mexico found 94-97% fewer bird species in sun grown coffee" ("Birds and Coffee").

CESMACH provides a model of the environmental benefits of small farms, especially when we consider the bigger picture. Biologist Bridget Stutchberry notes that migratory songbird numbers are dropping in the U.S. because "the birds are being poisoned in their wintering grounds" by pesticides that are "either restricted or banned in the United States." Although we've regulated these chemicals here, our own eating patterns contribute to their use elsewhere: "Since the 1980s, pesticide use has increased fivefold in Latin America as countries have expanded their production of nontraditional crops to fuel the demand for fresh produce during winter in North America and Europe."

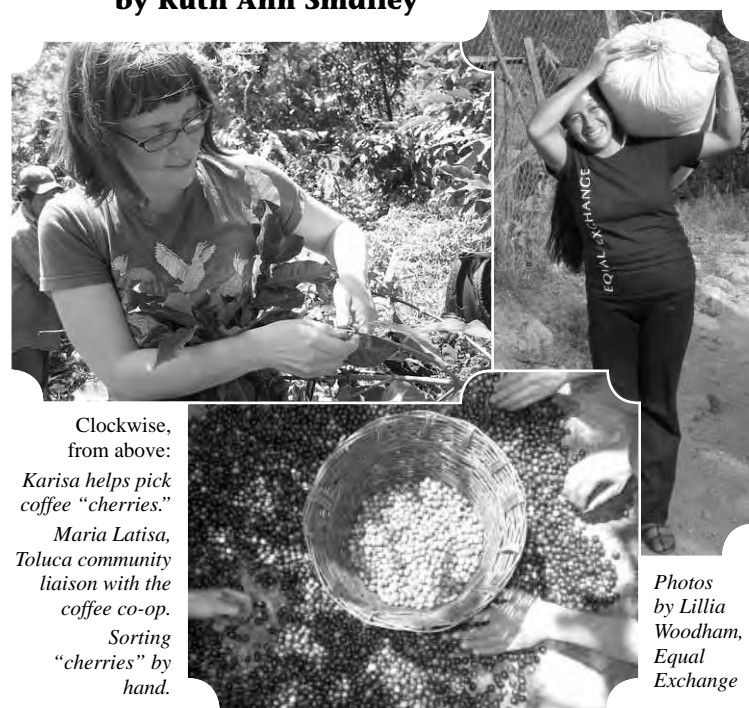
Nontraditional crops under industrialized agriculture equals massive habitat destruction. Birds are the indicator species, as "a single application of a highly toxic pesticide to a field can kill seven to 25 songbirds per acre" (Stutchbury). Fortunately, Fair Trade supports the efforts of small farmers to withstand market pressures. Just as CESMACH members living in the El Triunfo buffer zone can act as a protective barrier for the rainforest, Fair Trade prices and premiums act to stabilize farmers' incomes. Russell Greenberg of the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center notes that through Fair Trade agreements, the "farmer is given some sort of a buffer against fluctuating commodity prices" ("Birdsong and Coffee").

How Equal Exchange Helps

Equal Exchange has gone a step further, supporting CESMACH and other cooperatives by providing funds for special

Eating Economically at the Co-op

by Ruth Ann Smalley



Clockwise, from above:
Karisa helps pick coffee "cherries."
Maria Latisa, Toluca community liaison with the coffee co-op.
Sorting "cherries" by hand.

Photos by Lillia Woodham, Equal Exchange

social or environmental projects of the farmers' cooperative's design. The Fair Trade premium is essential, because coffee growing is hard enough in the best of times. Equal Exchange, committed to fostering direct communication and relationships with farmer-owned cooperatives based on honesty, has been the forerunner of encouraging social change in the Fair Trade marketplace.

Climate change and detrimental economic and agricultural policies are the rock and the hard place squeezing CESMACH farmers. The Mexican economy is hardly thriving: The top contributors to its GDP are oil, migrants' remittances and drug trafficking. NAFTA has undermined both social and market structures even further (see Phyllis Robinson's article on page 6). In a country littered with billboards for genetically modified (GM) corn and battered by increasingly severe floods and hurricanes, coffee farming is a strenuous occupation.

Karisa got a taste of this during her visit. The delegation arrived "post high harvest," so activity was not actually at its peak. There is roughly a three-month window when coffee can be harvested before the six-month rainy season arrives. Then it becomes difficult to leave the community, even for supplies or health care. Coffee trees need pruning, maintenance and replanting. During the harvest, every single bean, or "coffee cherry," must be brought down the mountain by human power. Karisa accompanied the men and teenagers at the task. Most of the women stay behind, engaged in domestic

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How can Co-op shoppers support our farmer-partners' efforts to "green" the planet?

Equal Exchange's **Small Farmer Green Planet** fund returns money directly to farmers at the center of environmental preservation! For every purchase of their 12-oz. package of *Organic Love Buzz* coffee, they will donate 20 cents apiece into the fund. This money will go directly to farmer-partners in Mexico, Nicaragua and Colombia to support their reforestation, organic conversion and environmental protection efforts. Equal Exchange also donates 25 cents per pound of all purchases of *Co-op Blend* into the fund. This year, Small Farmer Green Planet projects are taking place at CESMACH and CIRSA (both co-ops in Mexico), one co-op in Nicaragua, one in Colombia and one with Rooibus farmers in South Africa.

Honest Weight carries many blends of Equal Exchange's fairly traded and organic coffees, in addition to organic chocolate bars, hot chocolate and baking cocoa. Coffee blends that include beans from the CESMACH cooperative include: **Mind, Body & Soul; Love Buzz; Breakfast Blend; and French Roast.**

labor, having risen at 3 am to make tortillas and meals for the day.

"Picking beans means scaling the mountain," Karisa says. "They ran up — we were winded." The coffee is grown in the cloud forest, along with bananas, limes, oranges and other foods for the farmers' own use. There is also a unique industry under development: palm trees for fronds to sell to supplement their income. After a 20- to 30-minute hike, harvesters must carry the freshly picked cherries — about 20 pounds per person — back down the mountain in baskets strapped onto their waists.

The processing that follows is equally labor intensive. The cherries must be "wet-milled" — depulped and fermented in water — then drained and dried. "It's time consuming and backbreaking," Karisa says. "Motorized and hand-cranked equipment cuts the time, but it is still difficult." And since the harvest happens only once a year, the farmers only get paid once a year.

Many of the farmers can barely read and write, and those children whose parents can afford secondary school must walk an hour and a half each way for their education. Many of the men in the region must resort to migrant work in the North.

Supporting Strong Communities

Fair Trade prices and premiums play an important role in

the farmers' efforts to make a living. CESMACH farmers are working on food sovereignty programs with Heifer International, setting up honeybee- and chicken-raising operations. They also have plans to establish more home gardens.

Despite the hard conditions, the devastations of weather and the stress of missing family members doing migrant labor, community life appears strong. Karisa was impressed by what she saw: "A lot of respect for one another, respect in families. Kids take care of each other and the men are very 'hands-on' in family life. People's roles, while limiting in some respects, seem to simplify daily life."

Fair Trade is an essential component in the continued livelihood of the CESMACH farmers and the well-being of the land they love. However, Fair Trade and the farmers' hard work alone cannot ensure the health of the songbirds' natural migration routes between the North and South. Fair Trade and the farmers alone cannot ensure that the men of their communities won't have to become unwilling migrants to the North. A greater public awareness is needed to address the forces at work here. To truly "think globally and act locally," we must recognize the larger implications of that inextricable link between organic, shade-grown, Fair Trade coffee farms and our familiar barn swallows. Because in this way, global is local.

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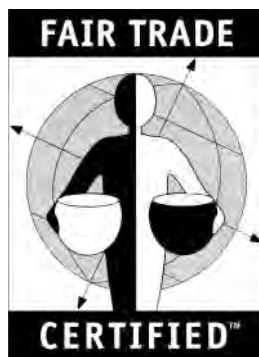
How free trade destroys farming communities and causes massive waves of immigration

by Phyllis Robinson
Equal Exchange

"You can build the Berlin Wall. You can build the China Wall. The U.S. can build a wall any size it wants. But they will never be able to stem the migration north as long as farmers are hungry and have no way to support their families." – Gabriela Soriano, CIEPAC

In January, I took a group of Equal Exchange staff to visit our trading partners in Chiapas, Mexico. Before traveling to the cooperatives, we met with local organizations in San Cristóbal to learn how small-scale farmers are doing. Our first meeting was with the Center for Economic and Political Research for Community Action (CIEPAC), a very active organization devoted to research, analysis, education and action. Gabriela Soriano talked to us about the current political and economic realities of the region

In Mexico, there has long been a disregard for — and even open aggression against — the indigenous people, dating



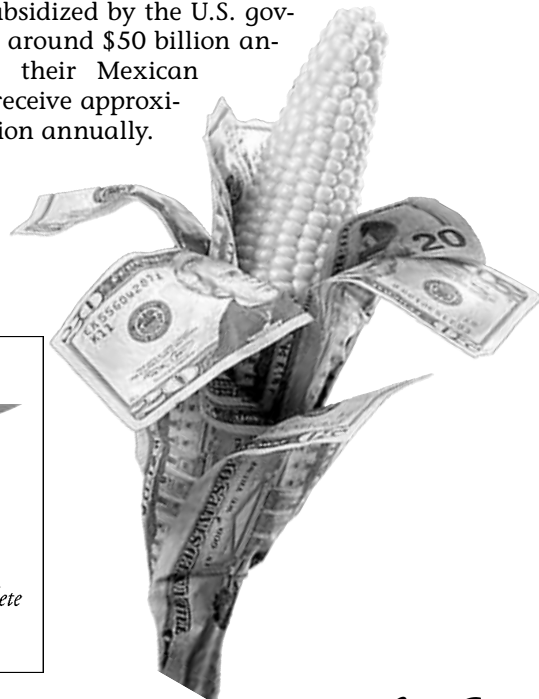
back to Columbus. In recent times, however, no other event has done more to destroy indigenous farming communities, deprive small farmers of their livelihoods and force millions of Mexicans to risk their lives crossing the border in search of work than the 1994 signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

Supporters of NAFTA claimed that by eliminating tariffs on Mexican products, they would be cheaper to U.S. and Canadian consumers. This would help Mexican manufacturers and, in turn, would create jobs and strengthen the Mexican economy.

Opponents of NAFTA argued that the effect on small-scale farmers would be devastating: Eliminating agricultural tariffs would force small subsistence farmers to compete with U.S. farmers, who receive enormous government subsidies and whose technology is far superior.

Gabriela spoke about the impact NAFTA has had on rural and indigenous communities throughout the country. "If you take 1,000 U.S. corn farmers, you can imagine that they probably have 1,500 tractors amongst them," she said. "Now take 1,000 Mexican corn farmers — maybe they have 10, possibly 15 tractors. How can they compete?" Not only do U.S. producers have technological superiority, but they are heavily subsidized by the U.S. government — at around \$50 billion annually, while their Mexican counterparts receive approximately \$5 billion annually.

Fourteen years after NAFTA went into effect, the



critics have unfortunately been proven right. Small-scale corn farmers, unable to compete with subsidized U.S. corn entering the country, have indeed been losing their businesses. According to the Interhemispheric Resource Center, from 1994 to 2004, 1.3 million small farmers went bankrupt. Mexico went from a country producing almost all its own corn (in 1993), to one that was 42% dependent on foreign corn (2004).

Even more sadly, while corn producers are losing their businesses, Mexican consumers are paying higher prices for corn products such as tortillas — an important staple of the Mexican diet. The corn manufacturing sector is becoming increasingly concentrated by a few transnational corpora-

"There used to be one bus a day leaving [Esquintla, Chiapas] heading north. Now, four buses a day go to the border.... And each is packed with our young boys. Today, with the conditions the way they are, the youth are becoming our biggest export."

– Miguel Angel Barrios Bravo,
Indigenous Ecological Federation of Chiapas,
one of Equal Exchange's trading partners

tions that are strong enough to control prices. When I visited Mexico in January 2007, the newspapers told stories about riots and demonstrations following yet another rise in tortilla prices. The price had climbed 60% in one year. Altogether, from 2000 to 2006, prices rose between 180% and 200%.

In addition to agricultural and trade policies that favor agribusiness over small-scale farmers, NAFTA also forced the Mexican government to make changes to the country's constitution. For the first time since the Mexican Revolution, communal land (*ejidos*) can now be parceled off and sold to the highest bidder. This privatization of communal land has dealt a huge blow to indigenous communities. Land that was held communally for generations is being lost — as is an entire culture and traditional way of life

for many indigenous communities. Poor farmers, faced with rising food costs and with no way to make a living, are offered the "opportunity" to sell their few acres.

The small amount of money farmers earn is often what helps them pay a "coyote" to take them across the border, where they face physical danger, psychological trauma and open hostility in the United States. According to CIEPAC, before NAFTA, roughly 30% of Mexicans lived in poverty. Today, that figure has risen to 50%. Migration to the U.S. has tripled since 1994, as more farmers find it impossible to make a living. Each year, approximately half a million Mexicans migrate to the U.S. Last year, that number reached close to 600,000, with all evidence pointing upward.

On the U.S. side of the border, immigration reform has become a hot political issue. Plans for the construction of a 700-mile wall to keep Mexicans out of the United States will cost approximately \$6 billion. Yet, when we discuss how high to build the wall or how to keep undocumented immigrants from obtaining driver's licenses or taking our jobs, how is it possible that public discourse rarely mentions how our trade agreements and agricultural policies are pushing small farmers off their land, away from their families and out of their communities? What do we expect? If you take away someone's livelihood and stack the deck heavily against them, take their land and erode their culture, what choices do they have?

Phyllis Robinson is education and campaigns manager for Equal Exchange.



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Rebates

So it looks like all of us (90% of us, any-
 way) are going to get a tax rebate, to
 "stimulate" the lagging economy. What
 should we/you do with it? The quick
 and easy answer: Spend it at the Co-op,
 of course!

But let's look at this rebate idea in a
 little more depth and think about it a
 little. Not all spending has the same
 impact on economic activity. A long
 time ago, the British economist Keynes
 recognized that a dollar can have dif-
 ferent "multiplier" effects when spent. If
 it goes to corporations who take their
 profits and run, or goes to increase for-
 eign production, or becomes income to
 wealthy people who may just save it
 rather than re-spend it, it may have lit-
 tle local impact. Conversely, if the dol-
 lar goes to a local business that employs
 local people who in turn spend their in-
 comes locally, it may have an economic
 stimulus far beyond its initial amount.
 Not all spending is equal.

In fact, a flat-out tax rebate is just
 about the least effective way the na-
 tional government could stimulate the
 economy. Roughly 40% of all goods
 and services purchased in the U.S.A.
 are imported. State and sales taxes will
 take another chunk. (The rebates will
 not be considered as income and taxed
 federally, as happened in 2001.) So if
 people go out and spend their rebates
 on things produced abroad and sold
 nationally by corporations, they will be
 stimulating the profit margins of these
 corporations. The local impact, on jobs
 or income, will be minimal — some in-
 crease in low-paid clerical jobs at the
 local malls, maybe — and what hap-
 pens to these jobs when the stimulus is
 all spent? There are a dozen different
 ways this amount of federal expendi-
 ture would be better used, but this is
 not the time or place to make a case
 for them. However, one quick example
 would be construction jobs to fix New
 York's deteriorating bridges and roads.
 What comes to mind right away is the
 billboard on Interstate 787 that I see
 frequently, which reminds us how dan-
 gerous our bridges are.

But the legislation has been passed
 and soon we'll be getting the checks.
 To some Co-op members they will be a
 welcome addition to very tight budgets.
 I would encourage you to spend the
 money, even within a tight budget that
 has little discretionary room, in ways
 that build the local economy. Perhaps

A Director's Chair

by Jim Monsonis



some needed home repair (the repair
 company will in turn likely spend their
 income locally). Perhaps on education
 and training — the more skilled the lo-
 cal work force, the better off we'll all be.
 Perhaps buying from local farmers, or
 a CSA share, or a local business. And,
 yes, spend as much as you are able to at
 the Co-op, on local products if you can,
 and not on the fancy imports.

Or perhaps your budget is not as tight
 and you can exercise some choice. Re-

member that HWFC will soon be com-
 ing to the members and shareholders
 and asking them to invest in a new
 store. Five thousand shareholders times
 \$600 each is three million bucks, al-
 most a third of the total amount we
 need to borrow. Think about it, and if
 you can, set it aside until we ask you for
 a loan. Loaning to ourselves may be the
 most "stimulating" (in all the senses of
 the word) thing we could do with the
 money.

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More than "skin deep"...

Finding Healthy Body and Cosmetic Products

by Charlotte Vallaey
The Cornucopia Institute

For years, consumer advocacy groups that are part of the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics have reported on toxic chemical ingredients and residues in beauty and body care products, revealing that this notoriously under-regulated industry is rather liberal with its use of possibly carcinogenic and other toxic synthetic ingredients.

Consumers with an interest in avoiding unnecessary toxic exposure believed they had found refuge in body care products made with "natural" and "organic" ingredients.

But what few consumers know is that, unlike organic claims on food, body care products often use the word "organic" on labels of products that are based on conventional and petrochemical ingredients. Body care products may freely use the word "organic," but may only use the green "USDA Organic" seal on products that are made with at least 95% certified organic agricultural ingredients and contain no toxic or suspected carcinogenic or synthetics.

A recent report by the Organic Consumers Association (OCA) reveals that this distinction — between many body care products using the word "organic,"

and those actually bearing the green "USDA Organic" seal — is significant. Using an independent testing lab, OCA analyzed various "organic" and "all-natural" beauty and body care products for residues of one particular toxic chemical: 1,4-dioxane.

While some of the self-proclaimed "organic" and "all-natural" products tested contained up to 30 parts per million 1,4-dioxane residues, all of the USDA-certified organic products (with the green seal) were found to be completely free of these residues. Products certified under the German BDIH "natural" program were also clean.

The International Agency for Cancer Research classifies 1,4-dioxane as a probable human carcinogen and it is banned from all cosmetics and personal care products — natural, organic and conventional — in Europe. Unfortunately, there is no prohibition against the use of suspected carcinogens in body care products in the United States.

Scientists disagree over the level of carcinogenicity of this chemical. Some suggest that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has overestimated this chemical's potential cancer risk, while other scientists caution against the use of any chemical that is listed as a carcinogen in laboratory animals, including 1,4-dioxane.

As with most chemicals, we will not find an easy answer or a clear verdict. Scientists have a very rudimentary understanding of thousands of chemicals and their effects on our health and our bodies. Our ability to produce chemicals and our understanding of how they affect the environment and public health rarely progress simultaneously. As with DDT and PCBs, we humans tend to figure out how to produce and widely distribute a chemical before we fully understand its impacts on health and the environment.

A Wise Precaution

And yet, while scientists disagree about the health risks of 1,4-dioxane, you and I have been slathering this chemical on

ourselves and our children — often every day. As a consumer, doesn't it seem only a wise precaution to question the sanity of this? The U.S. Food and Drug Administration requires manufacturers to remove 1,4-dioxane from products only if there is demonstrated harm. But why should the burden of proof be on the unsuspecting consumer?


This question becomes especially salient when we consider that residues such as 1,4-dioxane are simply unnecessary in our body care products. Plenty of companies with a true interest in the values of organics use only environmentally friendly ingredients that are safe for humans. These companies include those that market USDA-certified organic products, like Dr. Bronner's and Terressentials, and others that are not certified organic, like Burt's Bees and Tom's of Maine.

The Cornucopia Institute encourages all companies marketing themselves as "organic" or "all natural" to take the necessary steps to remove these chemicals and residues from their products. "Organic" and "all natural" labeling can be useful marketing tools only as long as consumers can trust these claims and are not turned off by findings of potentially dangerous chemical residues. These companies should reformulate their products, or else drop "organic" and "all-natural" claims. In response to the OCA report, many companies in the natural foods marketplace have indicated that they are now doing just that.

In the meantime, consumers can use OCA's lab results (www.oca.org) to learn which companies can be trusted, and which use petrochemicals and questionable synthetics. The surest way to distinguish safe and truly organic products from the others is the presence of the little green seal that states "USDA Organic."

Charlotte Vallaey is a farm and food policy analyst at The Cornucopia Institute (www.cornucopia.org), a leading organic industry watchdog.

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May Calendar

5/2,16,23,30 HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "Knit & Stitch," with Margaret Black and Beverly Petiet. 12-2pm, Co-op Community Room. For more info, call 482-2667.

5/2,16 HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "Reflexology," with Laura Lee Ross. 9:15am-12pm. 15-min. sessions, Co-op Community Room. For more info, call 482-2667.

5/3,17,24,31 HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "Aqua Chi," with Anthony & Karen Segretto. 2-4pm. Free 20-min. sessions, Co-op Community Room. For more info, call 482-2667.

5/3,24 HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "Energy Medicine," with Ruth Ann Smalley. 4:30-7:30 pm. 30-min. sessions, Co-op Community Room. For more info, call 482-2667.

☺ 5/3 MAY DAY SALUTE TO U.UTAH PHILLIPS, with George Mann, Julius Margolin, Graham & Barbara Dean, others. (*U. Utah Phillips will not be performing.*) Activist folk. Sat., 7:30pm at Proctors 440 Upstairs, Schenectady. \$21. Tix & info: www.eighthstep.org, www.proctors.org ES

☺ 5/4 21st ANNUAL SPRING BENEFIT BRUNCH to support Capital District Community Gardens. Specialty dishes from local restaurants, silent auction, children's activities. Proceeds used to transform vacant lots into community gardens. 10am-2pm, Hudson Valley Community College, Troy. \$20/advance, \$25 at the door. More info: 274-8685 or www.cdgc.org.

5/5 HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "A New Earth Discussion," with Peggy Steinbach. Group explores the book, *A New Earth* by Eckhart Tolle. 7:45-9:45pm, Co-op Community Room. For more info, call 482-2667.

5/6,20 HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "Get Your Knives Sharpened While You Shop!" with Vince Manti & Derek Burns. 5-knife limit (no serrated blades). 5-7pm, outside the Co-op Community Room. For more info, call 482-2667.

5/6 HWFC BOARD OF DIRECTORS. 5:30-7:30pm, in the Co-op Community Room. All members welcome. Confirm date, time, location with the Co-op: 482-2667.

5/7,18,28 HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "Feldenkrais," with Diana Wells. 5/7: 1:30-4:30pm; 5/18: 2:30-4:30pm; 5/28: 1:30-3:30pm. 45-min. sessions, Co-op Community Room. For more info, call 482-2667.

5/10 HERDMAN, HILLS & MANGSEN. Contemporary folk. Sat., 7:30pm at Proctors GE Theater, Schenectady. \$21. Tix & info: www.eighthstep.org, www.proctors.org ES

5/11 HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "Reiki," with Karen Reach. 3-6pm, Co-op Community Room. For more info, call 482-2667.

5/11,24 HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "Animal Card Reading," with Sequana Skye. 10am-1pm. 30-min. sessions, Co-op Community Room. For more info, call 482-2667.

5/14,28 HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "Healing Touch," with Richard Sahr. 3:30-6:30pm. 1-hr. sessions, Co-op Community Room. For more info, call 482-2667.

5/14,28 HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "Antioxidants, Free Radical Oxidative Stress, and ORAC & HORAC Values," with Karen Segretto. 7-8:30pm, Co-op Community Room. For more info, call 482-2667.

5/15 CHRONIC PAIN SYNDROME. Techniques and supplements to reduce headaches, chronic back pain, fibromyalgia. 7:30pm, Center for Integrative Health & Healing, 388 Kenwood Ave., Delmar. Free. Reservations: call the Center at 689-2244.

5/17 MEDITATION FOR WORLD PEACE. 6-7:30pm, Meditation Center, 184 Central Ave, Albany. Free. Info: 438 4180.

5/18 HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "Garden Planning & Planting" with Sandy Winn. 12-2pm, Co-op Community Room. For more info, call 482-2667.

5/20 HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "A Holistic Approach to Exercise," with Paul Jensen. 5:30-6:30pm, Co-op Community Room. For more info, call 482-2667.

5/21 HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "Reiki," with Jeanne Marie. 1-5pm, Co-op Community Room. For more info, call 482-2667.

5/21 HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "Sugar Blues," with Rich Neuman. 6:30-7:30pm, Co-op Community Room. For more info, call 482-2667.

5/25 HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "Reiki with Raven." 12-5pm, Co-op Community Room. For more info, call 482-2667.

5/27 HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "The No-Diet Diet," with Paul Jensen. 5:30-6:30pm, Co-op Community Room. For more info, call 482-2667.

5/29 SELF-HYPNOSIS, with certified hypnotist George Guarino. Use self-hypnosis to manage your weight. 7-9pm, Albany Public Library, 161 Washington Ave.. Reservations: george@HypnosisWorksWell.com or www.HypnosisWorksWell.com.

5/30 HOLLY NEAR, with EMMA'S REVOLUTION (Pat Humphries & Sally O). Contemporary folk/pop. Fri., 7:30pm at Proctors GE Theater, Schenectady. \$25. Tix & info: www.eighthstep.org, www.proctors.org ES

ONGOING EVENTS

MONDAYS

BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT for Indigo/Crystal Children, with Mary E. Qualters LCSW. Last Monday, 7-8pm. Chakra Garden, Center for Mind/Body Healing, Albany. Info: 456-0310, thechakragarden.com/calendar.

CAPITAL DISTRICT MULTIPLE CHEMICAL SENSITIVITY & ENVIRONMENTAL ILLNESS Support Group. 4th Monday, 7pm. Coping with environmental, chemical and occupational illnesses. At Bountiful Bread, Stuyvesant Plaza, Guilderland. Info: Terry, 785-1117; or Donna, 372-8783.

HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "DIY Bike Maintenance," with Willem Heydendael. On-site repairs and instruction. 5:30-7:30pm, outside the Co-op. 482-2667.

HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "Financial Investment Workshop," with Jim Williams. 11am-2pm, outside the Co-op. 482-2667.

POLICY FOR CALENDAR LISTINGS

There is a charge for all calendar listings of classes and workshops for which the fee is more than \$5. HWFC members receive one 4-line listing free of charge. The charge for all other listings for fee-based classes and workshops is \$3.00 for the first four lines (approx. 25 words), and \$0.75 for each additional line.

ALL ADS MUST BE PRE-PAID (make checks payable to HWFC, not Coop Scoop). Send payment with your listing to: **Coop Scoop Calendar, c/o Susan Palmer; email: scoopcalendar@earthlink.net.**

Calendar listings will be accepted for publication based on appropriateness and general interest to the Co-op community.

☺ HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "Spanish Language Immersion" with Yuliana De los Santos. All ages and skill levels. Bring any materials you're using to study Spanish. 4-5:15pm, Co-op Community Room. 482-2667.

KRIPALU YOGA FOR BEGINNERS. 7:15-8:45pm at the Yoga Loft, 540 Delaware Ave., Albany. \$15. Contact Jim Whiting: 542-3068, or freewebs.com/james0360.

LUNCHTIME & EVENING MEDITATION. 12-1pm & 6-6:30pm, Meditation Center, 184 Central Ave, Albany. Free. Info: 438 4180.

VIPASSANA BUDDHIST Practice Group (Insight Meditation). 7:30pm in Colonie. For experienced and beginning meditators. Free. Info: 438-9102 or email bjp1088@verizon.net.

WOMEN'S GROUP, with Mary E Qualters LCSW. 1st and 3rd Mondays, 6:30-7:45pm in the Chakra Garden, Center for Mind/Body Healing, Albany. Info, 456-1071, thechakragarden.com/calendar.

☺ YOGA FOR KIDS. 5pm at Lunar Mist Healing Arts, 307 Hamilton St., Albany. Ages 4-7. More info: Jen Winders, 456-1417.

TUESDAYS

ALBANY FOLK DANCERS. 7:45-9:45pm. Instruction provided, beginners welcome. No partners needed. Albany Jewish Community Center, 340 Whitehall Rd. \$4. Info: 489-7996, or online at jnsavitt@yahoo.com.

BUDDHIST LECTURE & MEDITATION. Every Tuesday, 6pm. 727 Madison Ave., Albany. Please call 392-7963 for more info.

CAPITAL TOASTMASTERS. Communication, public speaking, leadership training. 2nd & 4th Tuesdays. 6pm. Center for the Disabled, 314 S. Manning Blvd., Rm.511, Albany. Info: Stephanie Jubic, 852-6733.

CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION/SUPPORT GROUP. Open to all. \$10-12/evening. 6:30-8:30pm. FLC

HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "Chair Yoga," with Carol Young. 11:15am-12:15pm, Co-op Community Room. 482-2667.

HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "Chair Massage," with Glenn LaPorte. 15-min. sessions, 12:30-2pm, Co-op Community Room. 482-2667.

HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "Chair Massage," with Ed Thomas. 2-5pm. 15-min. sessions, Co-op Community Room. 482-2667.

INFERTILITY Support Group. 3rd Tuesday. 7:15-8:45pm at Bellevue Women's Hospital, Schenectady. For more info: 346-9410.

KEY TO LISTINGS

- CDGC Capital District Community Gardens
40 River St., Troy • 247-8685
 - CDGLCC Capital District Gay & Lesbian
Community Council
322 Hudson Ave., Albany • 462-6138
 - ES The Eighth Step at Proctors
423 State St., Schenectady • 434-1703
 - FLC Family Life Center
20 Elm St., Albany • 465-0241/449-5759
 - MCCD Mothers Center of the Capital District
715 Morris St., Albany • 475-1897
 - RFFP Regional Food & Farm Project
295 Eighth St., Troy • 271-0744
 - WB Women's Building
79-81 Central Ave., Albany • 465-1597
- ☺ For children & families

We welcome submissions to the calendar. To have an event listed, call or send information by the 10th of the month to: Susan Palmer, e-mail: scoopcalendar@earthlink.net.

To list an event in the *Peace Community Calendar* published by the Social Justice Center of Albany, call Rezsine Adams at 462-0891.

KRIPALU YOGA FOR BEGINNERS. 7:30-9pm at the Center for Integrative Health & Healing, 388 Kenwood Ave., Delmar. \$15. Contact Jim Whiting: 542-3068, or freewebs.com/james0360.

LUNCHTIME & EVENING MEDITATION. 12-1pm & 6-6:30pm, Meditation Center, 184 Central Ave, Albany. Free. Info: 438 4180.

TRANSMISSION MEDITATION Group. 7:45pm. Info: 765-4079.

WEDNESDAYS

BETHLEHEM TOASTMASTERS. We help you overcome the fear of public speaking and more! 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 7:30-9pm. Info: Jim, 439-7625; <http://bethlehem.freetoasthost.com>.

GENTLE YOGA. 10-11:30am at the Yoga Loft, 540 Delaware Ave., Albany. Contact Mary Sloan: 459-8216 or synthesis@nycparrr.com.

☺ HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "Natural Family Support Group," with Elisa Grimm, Lauralee Holtz, Meg Breen, Liza Feldman Vinci. Children's story-time follows discussion. 10am-1pm, Co-op Community Room. 482-2667.

KARUNA TENDAI DHARMA Center. Every Wednesday. 6pm. Buddhist lectures and meditation, followed by potluck dinner. Call 392-7963 for more info.

LUNCHTIME & EVENING MEDITATION. 12-1pm & 6-6:30pm, Meditation Center, 184 Central Ave, Albany. Free. Info: 438 4180.

MEDITATION. 6-7pm. Center for Natural Wellness, 20 Mall, 2080 Western Ave., Guilderland. All are welcome; donations appreciated. To register: 869-2046.

MEDITATION, with Healing Practitioner Beth Netter MD. Introduction for beginners, practice for experienced. 7:30-8:30pm, Center for Integrative Health and Healing, 388 Kenwood Ave., Delmar. Info, 689-2244.

MOM AND BABY YOGA. 10-11am, Albany Jewish Community Center, 340 Whitehall Rd. \$15 per class. Info: Beth Monaco, 689-0039.

SANT MAT MEDITATION. Every Wednesday, 7pm. Learn about meditation on inner light and sound. Also come for a vegetarian dinner. Free. Call 758-1906 for directions.

☺ SARATOGA FARMERS' MARKET. 3-6pm. High Rock Park, High Rock Ave., Saratoga Springs. Locally grown produce, pasture-raised meat, free-range/

pasture-raised eggs, local raw honey, baked goods, homemade soaps, on-site masseuse, live music and more! Info: 893-2669 or Bluemoodndressing@aol.com.



THURSDAYS

FARM & FOOD RADIO SHOW. 4th Thursday on WRPI-91.5FM, 8-9am. Info: Regional Farm & Food Project, 426-9331.

☺ HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "Natural Family Support," with Elisa Grimm, Lauralee Holtz, Meg Breen & Liza Feldman Vinci. Children's storytime follows group discussion. 10am-12pm, Co-op Community Room. 482-2667

IN THE SPIRIT Radio Show. Interviews and music. WRPI-91.5FM, 2-4pm. Info: 393-9979.

KRIPALU YOGA FOR BEGINNERS. 7-8:30pm at the Center for Integrative Health & Healing, 388 Kenwood Ave., Delmar. \$15. Contact Jim Whiting: 542-3068, or freewebs.com/james0360.

LUNCHTIME & EVENING MEDITATION. 12-1pm & 6-6:30pm, Meditation Center, 184 Central Ave, Albany. Free. Info: 438 4180.

LUNG CANCER ALLIANCE. Advocacy group meeting on 2nd Thursday, 10am, at the American Cancer Society, 260 Osborne Road, Loudonville. For info, call 482-3142.

MEDITATION. Open to everyone in need of a quiet and sacred space in life. 5:45-6:45pm. St. Paul's Episcopal Church, State & 3rd Sts., Troy. Free and all are welcome. Info: 273-2106.

MOTHER TO MOTHER. 2nd & 4th Thursdays, 10am-12pm. FLC

SITTING MEDITATION. 7-8pm, Shambhala Meditation Center of Albany, 879 Madison Ave., Albany. Free. Info: 375-7041 or www.shambhala.org/center/albany.

WOMEN'S CREATIVE PROCESS GROUP. Use art play and a supportive group to tap into your creative potential, relax, have fun! No previous artistic experience needed. Thursday evenings at The Artist Studio, Delmar. More info: Lorraine, 482-5428; heart2art07@yahoo.com.

FRIDAYS

BIRTHNET. 2nd Friday. 9:30am. 17 Wilbur St., Albany. Info: Carolyn, 482-2504; or Maureen, 465-5087.

8th STEP CONTRADANCES. Most 2nd & 5th Fridays, 8pm at Albany Hiberian Hall, 375 Ontario St. Instruction at 7:45pm. \$10 admission. Info: call 489-9066 or pstix1@nycparrr.com.

HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "Chair Massage," with Paul Jensen. 2-5pm. 10-min. sessions, Co-op Community Room. Info: 482-2667.

☺ HWFC HEALTH & WELLNESS SERIES: "Math Tutoring: Drop-in Sessions," with PJ de Barros. For all ages and skill levels; no appointment needed. 5:15-8pm, Co-op Community Room. For more info, call 482-2667.

☺ MOTHER'S CENTER of the Capital District. Whole-family activities and outings, parent/tot classes and a network of parents for support and socializing. Open drop-in hours: 9:30am-12pm. 475-1897. MCCD

TRI-CITY FOLK DANCERS. 8:30-11pm, Schenectady YWCA, 44 Washington Ave.. Instruction. \$5. More info: 452-1154.

SATURDAYS

KRIPALU YOGA FOR BEGINNERS. 9-10:30am at the Center for Integrative Health & Healing, 388 Kenwood Ave., Delmar. \$15. Contact Jim Whiting: 542-3068, or freewebs.com/james0360.

OLD SONGS CONTRADANCE. 1st Saturday (October-May), 8-11pm at Old Songs Community Arts Center, 37 S. Main St., Voorheesville. Instruction at 7:30. Covered dish supper at 6:30, \$10. Info: 765-2815.

☺ SARATOGA FARMERS' MARKET. 9am-1pm. High Rock Park, Saratoga Springs (see Wednesdays). Info: 893-2669 or Bluemoodndressing@aol.com.

☺ TROY WATERFRONT FARMERS' MARKET. 10am-2pm, Uncle Sam Atrium, Broadway (betw. 3rd & 4th Sts.). More info: 321-5749 or www.troymarket.org.

SUNDAYS

☺ ALBANY FRIENDS MEETING (Quakers). Worship without liturgy, 11am. 727 Madison Ave., Albany. Refreshments and conversation at 12:15. 436-8812.

☺ FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY. Mindfulness Meditation, 9am. Sunday Service, 10am. Coffee Hour, 11am. 405 Washington Ave., Albany. 463-7135.

SANT MAT MEDITATION. Every Sunday, 9:30am. Learn about meditation on inner light and sound. Followed by vegetarian lunch. Free. Call 758-1906 for directions.

SUNDAY CELEBRATIONS. Center for Creative Life, Church of Religious Science. 11am. 1237 Central Ave., Colonie. Social time follows the celebration. 446-1020, or www.CenterForCreativeLife.org.

SUNDAY GATHERINGS. We come together to honor our relationship to self, neighbor and God. 10:30-11:30am. Coffee and tea follow. Still Point Interfaith Retreat Center, 20 Still Point Rd., Mechanicville. Info: 587-4967 or stillpt423@aol.com.

SUNDAY MORNING FLOWING YOGA. 10:30am-12pm. Yoga with devotion. Flowing workout, not too hard, not too easy, for all levels with experience. With Nancy Polachek at HeartSpace Holistic, 747 Madison Ave., Albany. 689-4714, www.heart-spaceholistic.com.

OTHER EVENTS

☺ ALBANY PINE BUSH DISCOVERY CENTER is now open! Hands-on learning for all ages. Free and all are welcome. Closed Mondays. More info: 456-0655 or www.albanypinebush.org.

CENTER FOR NIA AND YOGA. 4 Central Ave., Albany (at Lark St.). For class schedule, registration and special events: www.nia-yoga.com, casey@nia-yoga.com, 463-5145.

HELP WANTED. Yoga instructors for a rapidly growing studio in Guilderland Center. Currently seeking Vinyasa/flow, Pi/Yo and pilates instructors. Must be able to start in January. Paid per class, must have insurance. Contact Andrea@orendayoga.org or call 861-5714.

HERBAL MEDICINE, SPIRIT HEALING, WILD FOOD & WISE WOMEN. Free moonlodges, exciting classes, work weekends and empowering events. Visit www.sunweed.com or write PO Box 64, Woodstock NY 12498. pd4

LUNAR MIST HEALING ARTS. Space rented hourly for healing arts practitioners and poets. 307 Hamilton St., Albany. Free parking. More info: Constance Morgan, 426-1402.

☺ MISS PEGGY'S MUSIC ROOM. Enroll now for Spring 2008! An enjoyable and supportive environment. Lessons in piano or voice, individual or small group. Classes for parents and children and Orff Ensembles. Info: 458-2927, misspeggysmusic.com or misspeggysmusic@aol.com.

The Effects of Farm Subsidies on Small Farmers

by Suzanne Fisher

Jack Hedin, an organic farmer in Minnesota, tells a compelling story of how he fell victim to the federal farm subsidy program. Hedin's article "My Forbidden Fruits (and Vegetables)," appeared in the March 1st edition of *The New York Times*. He rented 25 acres from two conventional farmers to obtain more space to meet the rising demand for locally produced organic fruits and vegetables. After plowing under the alfalfa that was growing there and planting watermelons, tomatoes and vegetables, he learned in July of that growing season that the land he had rented was subsidized for corn. He would have to pay the full retail cash value of the crop planted on the land in question as a penalty for growing something other than corn (or the other four kinds of heavily subsidized crops) on this particular piece of land.

Hedin suggested the blame lay with large growers in California and Florida who would benefit from the demise of the small farmers like himself. They have courted the politicians who helped the farm subsidy program to evolve into the largest form of taxpayer-supported, corporate welfare our nation has known. In his article, Hedin suggests that those who have an interest in locally grown, organic produce might want to encourage their senators or representatives in Congress to support changes in the Farm Flex program, currently under consideration, that would allow different types of crops to be grown on subsidized lands.

In response to Jack Hedin, one critic noted that the Farm Flex program only applies to those farmers growing for fruit and vegetable processors, not for direct sale fresh to consumers or produce markets. Furthermore, this same critic was of the opinion that the subsidy program has actually discouraged large growers of fresh produce from competing with those like Hedin for space on produce market shelves, because they would be penalized just like he was (www.correntewire.com/the_chastisement_of_zucchini).

Given the vast number of acres in Minnesota that must be subsidized, one can see why Hedin feels that he is sense-

lessly being denied access to space for farming to supply a market that needs increasing amounts of what he knows how to grow. On the other hand, his critic sheds light on Hedin's misunderstanding of the Farm Flex program, and this misunderstanding is really just the tip of the iceberg for American taxpayers and voters.

How Farm Subsidies Work

In order to write letters to politicians and know which way to vote, we all need to understand more about how farm subsidies affect our economy and the food supply that is available to us. This is not easy, because the history and politics of farm subsidy policies are immense, with nuances that could fill volumes. Still, some basic facts are helpful in getting a grip on the current state of affairs.

Farm subsidies have been with us since presidents Hoover and Roosevelt introduced them as a means of helping farmers, which in turn was meant to ensure a reliable supply of food for our nation. Over the years, farm subsidies have been shaped by the commodities market and big business to benefit corporations and owners of large farming operations, some of whom "farm" by hiring out all the labor or even renting the land to those responsible for the actual work.

Farm subsidies cost taxpayers \$16 billion a year, most of which is given to large agribusiness farms and corporate farming entities. At the same time, two-thirds of U.S. farmers making much less money receive no direct government support. Current legislation subsidizes 25 farm products; of these, corn, cotton, wheat, rice and soybeans make up 90% of the total produce funded. Not eligible for support are fruits, vegetables, meats, poultry, nuts and hay.

Subsidies and farm support are paid out in several ways. The least costly of these is the *Conservation Reserve Program*, which offers landowners 10- to 15-year contracts to keep environmentally sensitive ground in grass or trees.

Another method, *direct payments*, consists of fixed an-

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nual subsidies based on the historical performance of a farm. These can be doubled for multiple owners. That is, duplicate payments can be made to a farmer, a spouse and other owners of the property in question — doubling, tripling or even further multiplying the amount paid.

Counter-cyclical subsidies are automatic payments that occur when market prices fall below a set level. Other forms of support include government purchases of dairy products and taxes on imported products, as well as tax relief and pilot programs for U.S. farms.

Reforming the Farm Bill

The last incarnation of the Farm Bill, enacted in 2002, was originally set to expire March 15 and did not include the 2008 crop year. This legislation was recently extended for 33 days by the Bush administration, which also said that if there were no new bill by then, the current law would be extended for one more year.

Direct-payment and counter-cyclical subsidies are currently under scrutiny, as Congress and the present administration struggle to reach an agreement on how much to increase spending on farm subsidies and how to reform the current law. One of the reforms are being considered in the 2007 Farm Bill would set a limit on how much adjusted gross income (AGI) a farm is allowed to bring in and still receive taxpayer support.

Currently, a farmer can make \$2.5 million in adjusted gross income and still receive support from the government. If the farmer receives 75% or more of his income from farming, he is then allowed to make even more money and still receive government assistance! The administration originally wanted to cap the 2007 AGI at \$200,000, but has since moved to a \$500,000 limit. Congress has been unwilling to reduce this limit below \$1 million.

Imagine an individual in any other profession claiming welfare benefits, while making an adjusted gross income of \$2.5 million or even \$1 million! Such an individual would be able to contribute generously to campaign funds for those running for the House of Representatives or the Senate.

Other changes being considered are the elimination of payments to multiple owners, except spouses, as well as the total amount being spent on farm subsidies. The administration has agreed to increase overall farm support to \$6 billion, while Congress has come up with a \$10 bil-

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lion dollar figure. The president has stated that he will veto any bill that raises taxes for the Farm Bill.

Administration officials have also mentioned changes in the size of farms that can receive government support. Secretary of Agriculture Ed Shafer said that farms under 20 acres will not be considered eligible for subsidies, because he views them as "hobby" farms rather than serious producers. He apparently has not toured small farms that use intensive methods and/or green houses to produce tremendous amounts of produce on small plots of land. Of course, most of these farms would not be eligible for subsidies anyway, because they are not growing one of the 25 subsidy-eligible crops.

The Best "Fix" of All?

All of these facts only hint at the complexity of what is called "farming" by the politicians who supposedly represent our interests. Reform of the Farm Bill is definitely needed, but it looks doubtful that any significant change will happen, even if Congress and the White House can agree on their numbers. Perhaps dropping all subsidy programs entirely would be the best fix of all. Certainly, writing letters to members of Congress cannot hurt.

In the meantime, *not* supporting those farming entities receiving our tax dollars already makes the most sense. It seems safe to say that the farmers from whom Honest Weight purchases its local produce are not supported by the government. Look for local produce at the Co-op and any other market you frequent and, whenever possible, go out of your way to buy from small local farms everywhere.

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May Flours

by Lisa Vines

Wow! Have you noticed the dramatic increase in the price of wheat flour?

Ever loyal to the bulk department, I wondered a bit as I continued to scoop wheat flour into my plastic containers. What's going on?

Here's what's happening: In 2004, wheat went for \$4 a bushel; on April 7, 2008, wheat prices hit \$13 a bushel. The United States exports more wheat than any other nation; the current weak dollar means that more countries can buy more American wheat. Adding to the problem, inclement weather affected crops in the Midwest, so there was less wheat to harvest. Compounding the issue of wheat's availability is that many American farmers are turning from wheat to corn, which is now more profitable — ethanol is proving to be a valuable fuel source.

Marketing 101: Supply & Demand

More people want our diminishing supply of wheat. And, to top it all off,

gas prices continue to increase. Wheat is not a local crop, and it has to get transported to Albany using carbon fuels. (I've heard that if one is to be a true locavore here, one has to forgo all wheat products....)

And so, food prices are increasing for a number of reasons — hence the uncomfortable rising prices in the bulk aisle. Wheat prices affect other costs, as well. Newspaper articles mention pizzeria owners around the nation bemoaning having to raise the cost of a slice of pizza. Other flours have also been affected by the weak dollar as bad weather, increased interest in ethanol, and carbon footprints continue to drive up prices.

Good news, perhaps — if there's a good crop of winter wheat, prices might decrease soon.

Solutions in Bulk

Wheat flours, *Coop Scoop* readers might be pleased to know, are not the only flours available in bulk. Of course, nothing beats wheat flour for baking bread. Wheat contains proteins that produce gluten, necessary for producing dough that can incorporate the air pockets caused by fermenting yeast or by the chemical reactions of baking powder and liquids.

But many flours can supplement wheat when baking. Flours made of buckwheat, millet, oat, potato, rye, soy, brown rice, garbanzo beans (chick peas), white rice and tapioca — just to name a few — are all available in the bulk aisle. There, Co-op shoppers will also find pre-made mixes: a six-grain blend, as well as one for pancakes. The former is a mix of wheat, barley, rye, corn, millet and buckwheat (which is not a member of the cereal family, and is best known in its kasha form). The latter mix contains buttermilk solids; and to prepare pancakes one adds only water and a little oil, making it perfect for camping trip breakfasts.

Our recipes take a different approach this month. Instead of focusing on the outcome (the dish), these recipes give Co-op shoppers ideas for how to use a couple of flours.

Other Sources

Crescent Dragonwagon, Passionate Vegetarian. 2002. New York: Workman.
Allan Chernoff. 2008. "A slice of pizza gets pricier." CNN Money (March 19). http://money.cnn.com/2008/03/19/smbusiness/Chernoff_pizza.

Garbanzo Bean Flour → Hummus

This flour could be named "almost instant hummus." Make a paste of the flour with water, cook for a few minutes, remove from heat and add tahini, lemon juice, salt and garlic.

Nate's Pakora Vegetable

1 cup chickpea flour (besan)
2 TBS oil
1 tsp ground cumin
1½ tsp salt
½ cup water
1 potato (each)
1 small cauliflower
2 cabbages
5 spinach, sliced
1½ cup onion, sliced

Preparation:

Boil the potato until just tender, peel and chop finely. Finely chop the cauliflower and onion. Shred the cabbage and spinach. Mix the first five ingredients well.

Let the batter rest ½-hour in a warm place. Add the vegetables and mix in evenly. Deep fry in oil heated to 375°. Drain on paper towels and serve immediately.

Buckwheat Flour → Galette

Americans are familiar with the French crêpe, a thin pancake made with wheat flour and egg, covered with a sweet topping and then rolled or folded before eating. Less known are the *galettes* popular in Brittany — savory crêpes made of buckwheat flour, filled with a fried egg, ham, cheese or vegetables. This recipe is from a postcard my friend Mme. Gricourt gave me. The instructions request that one use a wooden spoon for stirring the ingredients.

2 cups buckwheat flour
1 egg
½ tsp salt
Water (at least a cup)

Put the buckwheat flour, the salt and the egg into a bowl and stir. Add the water bit by bit, stirring all the time. The batter should have the consistency of mayonnaise. The more the batter is stirred, the softer the end product will be. Grease the galette pan. (A normal skillet will do — think of these galettes as big pancakes to be filled. They need to cook on both sides.) Pour the batter into the hot skillet and spread it around. These should be thin.

Filling options:

Fried egg
Grated cheese
Cooked vegetables

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Ron Scherer. 2008. "Wheat prices hit record high." *The Christian Science Monitor* (February 27). www.csmonitor.com/2008/0227/p01s05-usec.html.

Galette recipe from postcard, "La Galette de Blé Noir," from Mme. Gricourt. Merci beaucoup!

For more specifics on wheat flours, see "That Bread Recipe" in the April 2007 *Coop Scoop*.

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THE HEALING POWER OF GRAPEFRUIT SEED EXTRACT

by Julie Harrell

This article was originally published in the September 1998 Coop Scoop, a time when the Co-op was still debating whether or not to sell sugar and how new computers affected member productivity.

This month's review is about **grapefruit seed extract**, its microbial properties and the multitude of nontoxic ways humans can use this bountiful product to heal themselves of nagging little fungoid, viral and parasitic guests. First, let me digress for a moment into a subject we are all familiar with, the science fiction movie.

Have you seen *Starship Troopers*? This futuristic space movie is about Planet Earth, long after the millennium, when peace rules with an iron thumb, soldiers protect the Fatherland from enemies within and without, and a cast of toned, muscular, 20-somethings proceed to battle thousands of 10-foot-high scorpion bug invaders who threaten the continuing existence of Earth Kind.

The scorpion things are about to take over Planet Earth. They bomb Argentina, destroy several continents, and brutally dismember any human who dares to attempt to pierce their bug shellac with useless Earth-created firepower. Enter the brave 20-somethings who volunteer to risk life and very literally limb to rocket ship over to the bug's personal home planet and attempt to destroy the brain behind the brawn. This idea came after a brilliant former chess player was promoted to commander in chief of Earth Kind after a bug ate the other guy. The new commander figures out that the bugs must not have minds of their own, therefore can be conquered if their Mother Bug is found.

So, several daring soldiers sneak into a scary bug cave, lose most of their cadre along the way to scorpion stingers and finally locate a pulsating, transgendered blob of smegma that must be the Queen of all gross alien bugs. My husband and I cracked up when we saw it. Twenty feet of blob with a thing hanging out which supposedly stabs and poisons victims. Nasty. Where in the heck did they come up with that, we wondered. The brain gets its thing hacked off, the soldiers save the Earth, and we leave the theatre with a firm impression of the finest bit of Hollywood weirdness since *Alien*.

Not long after that, I was leafing through the April/May issue of *National Wildlife* when I came across an electron microscope photograph of that very same "Brain Bug" from *Starship Troopers*. An article entitled "Are Our Coastal Waters Turning Deadly?" discussed the findings of a North Carolina biologist who said that this parasite, *Pfiesteria*, shoots deadly poison from its long, hanging snout, paralyzes its fish victim, then moves in for a feast of blood. What's really bad is, this parasite is a creation of long-term, large-scale hog farming. It took many years of by-product dumping to grow *Pfiesteria*, which is now killing whales in the mid-Atlantic region and ruining drinking water for thousands of humans and animals.

What does this have to do with grapefruit seed extract?

According to biologist JoAnn Burkholder, the only known method of killing this *Pfiesteria* is chlorine bleach. I believe they have not yet tried grapefruit seed extract. [After writing this article, I called JoAnn up to suggest she try it in the lab.]

The Healing Power of Grapefruit Seed Extract (\$12.95), by Shalila Sharamon and Bodo J. Baginski, states that grapefruit seed extract is effective against 800 bacteria and vi-

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ruses, 100 strains of fungus (including *Candida Albicans*) and a great number of single cell parasites. They say that no known antimicrobial can demonstrate such versatility. And it's completely non-toxic. They offer a little vignette of a man who got too drunk in Mexico, was tricked by his buddies into drinking several ounces of pure grapefruit seed extract (Wow! Taste it and you'll agree it's gnarly...), then lost major worms after he sobered up.

I use it (for over 10 years now) to remove plaque on my teeth, keep the nasties from my gums and to dispose of a fungoid item on my knee, picked up in the warm waters off O'ahu, Hawaii. These applications are just a few, which include worming the goats and dogs, ridding a dubious water supply of possible hog farming by-products (in Virginia), and generally sending any fungoid, viral or parasitic critters I encounter to worm heaven. Even those who reside in innocent disguise on the leafy goodness of mizuna leaves.

Maybe I'm twisted from too much science fiction as a child. Perhaps Hulda Clark is really my guru. It could be that the zoology book from my college freshman years in Oklahoma had too many pictures of parasites. Or perhaps watching an army of Oklahoma ticks march across my bedroom floor at midnight fried my brain — whatever, all I know is, my supreme desire in life is to seek out and find all invisible critters that wreck mammalian immune systems. And I think I've found my completely nontoxic weapon of choice, chosen by alternative practitioners everywhere to treat *Candida* — grapefruit seed extract. Available in the Co-op's HaBA department.

May the force be with you.

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Domestic shortage looms...

American Wheat

by Benjamin Gisin
Touch the Soil

The very thought of America, the land of amber waves of grain, facing a wheat shortage is almost un-American. However, over the last two years a series of events has converged to weaken global food security. America is being asked to export wheat at rates that are drawing down domestic stocks to levels described by U.S. Wheat Associates, the nation's wheat exporting trade group, as "bin bottoms."

In a nutshell, global demand for wheat is outpacing global production capacity. Global wheat production for the year ending June 30, 2008 is estimated at 604 million metric tons (MMT). Consumption for the same period is estimated at 619 MMT, creating a shortfall of 15 MMT. The year before was even worse, with production at 593

February 2007 was \$4.71, which rose to \$10.40 in February 2008 — a 220% increase. A bushel of durum wheat, used for pastas, cost \$16.40 in February 2008, up from \$5.16 the year before — a 317% increase. What's more, the nation's supply of rye is now exhausted and bakers must import rye from Germany and the Netherlands.

As record-high prices squeeze margins for bakers, America's baking industry staged a major food-related demonstration — the "Band of Bakers March on Washington." On March 12, the American Baking Association (ABA) expected more than 50 of the nation's largest baking companies to march on Washington, D.C. The demonstrators planned to hold a press conference and meet with Congressional leaders, agriculture secretary Ed Shafer and White House staff.

The ABA's first goal is to persuade the government to establish a policy that balances domestic supplies of wheat with export demands. Second, the bakers would like U.S. officials to rethink the government's biofuel policies, since the diversion of corn for ethanol production is impacting food security at home and abroad. Third, the ABA argues that non-environmentally sensitive acreage should be removed from the popular Conservation Reserve Program and put back into farming production.

The big question for 2008 will be whether wheat-growing acreage will increase domestically, at a time when three other major crops — corn, soybeans and hay — also command historically high prices. It is uncertain which crops will come out on top in this unprecedented competition for farm acres.

Resources

American Baking Association: www.americanbakers.org
U.S. Wheat Associates: www.uswheat.org

Benjamin Gisin writes and lectures extensively on the promise of local food systems, agricultural sustainability and food security. For more information, visit Touch the Soil magazine: www.touchthesoil.com.



Temporarily storing wheat outside during peak wheat harvest near American Falls, Idaho. At the time this photo was taken in September 2007, most farmers and experts knew that wheat was going to be a special commodity. They just didn't know exactly how special — as it has become the focal point of global food security. [Photo: Touch the Soil]

Despite record-breaking wheat prices, U.S. wheat exports are up over 60% from last year. This is creating a very tight supply situation in the United States, precipitating unprecedented prices for flour and wheat. The low value of the American dollar, relative to other major currencies, has made American wheat attractive and has contributed to the requests from other countries knocking at America's doors for wheat.

MMT and consumption at 616 MMT, a shortfall of 23 MMT. Back-to-back shortfalls in wheat production and dwindling stocks to 30-year lows are converging at a time when demand is robustly increasing.

So as Americans enjoy their favorite breads, pastas and pastries, the price is on the way up as the baking industry adjusts to wheat price shocks. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the price of a bushel of wheat in

MAY AT THE CO-OP

Animal Card Reading

With Sequana Skye. Sunday, May 11 and Saturday, May 24 from 10 am to 1 pm in the Co-op Community Room

All services, workshops, and classes offered at HWFC are free and open to the public.

Half-hour sessions. Though we sometimes feel confused, each of us has all our own answers within. Based in nature and the ancient tradition of Tarot, these card readings tap into our inner knowing, which is present all along merely awaiting our attention. Sequana Skye BA RN has been personally, professionally and spiritually engaged with animals and nature since childhood, having shared these gifts through expressive arts counseling, dream group facilitation and yoga classes.

Antioxidants, Free Radical Oxidative Stress & ORAC/HORAC Values

With Karen Segretto. Wednesdays, May 14 & 28 from 7 to 8:30 pm in the Co-op Community Room

Learn how antioxidants affect the body. Discuss known pro-oxidant substances in our lives. Find out about free radical oxidative stress and how it occurs in the body. Karen Segretto is an alumnus of Hippocrates Health Institute. First of two sessions.

Aqua Chi

With Anthony & Karen Segretto. Saturdays (except May 10) from 2 to 4 pm in the Co-op Community Room

Free 20-minute sessions. The Aqua Chi is a detoxifying footbath that soothes your aching feet and legs, while detoxifying your body through the large pores of the feet. Please sign up only one time per month.

Chair Massage

With Glenn LaPorte. Tuesdays from 12:30 to 2 pm in the Co-op Community Room

15-minute personalized sessions. Glenn LaPorte is a New York state-licensed massage therapist. Please sign up for only one session.

With Ed Thomas. Tuesdays from 2 to 5 pm in the Co-op Community Room

15-minute personalized sessions. Ed Thomas is a New York state-licensed massage therapist, a graduate of the Bancroft School of Massage and a former member of the state Licensing Massage Board. Please sign up for only one session.

With Paul Jensen. Fridays from 2 to 5 pm in the Co-op Community Room

Individualized 10-minute sessions. Paul Jensen is a New York state-licensed massage therapist. Please sign up for only one session.

Chair Yoga

With Carol Young. Tuesdays from 11:15 am to 12:15 pm in the Co-op Community Room

Learn simple breathing and stretching exercises to feel good from inside out. Prerequisite: ability to sit and breathe. Carol Day Young PHD is an enthusiastic yogini who began yoga at age 58.

DIY Bike Maintenance

With Willem Heydendael. Mondays from 5:30 to 7:30 pm outside the Co-op

Bring in your bikes for on-site repairs and learn how to make them yourself. Willem wants you to ride your bike more often, so if it isn't working or you have questions about bike maintenance or repairs, please drop by.

Energy Medicine

With Ruth Ann Smalley. Saturdays, May 3 & 24 from 4:30 to 7:30 pm in the Co-op Community Room

Half-hour individual consultations. Energy Medicine offers a range of simple, effective practices for self-help and wellness. Find a personalized set of energy tools — stretches, meridian tracing or tapping, acupressure holding points — to help you balance your energetic system. Ruth Ann Smalley is a certified Donna Eden Energy Medicine practitioner.

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Feldenkrais

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One-on-one 45-minute sessions. Feldenkrais is a method of somatic education that uses gentle movement and directed attention to improve movement and enhance human functioning. Learn to improve your flexibility and coordination, increase your range of motion and rediscover your innate capacity for graceful, efficient movement. Diana Wells is a guild-certified Feldenkrais practitioner. One session per person per month, please.

Financial Investment

With James Williams. Mondays from 11 am to 2 pm in the Co-op Community Room

Are your investments performing in a way that's comfortable and sustainable? Are you a more visual learner (less mathematical) or befuddled by financial jargon? Use the 9-segment style box to clarify the relationship between you and your money. Jim Williams is a longtime teacher, researcher and personal investor.

Garden Planning & Planting

With Sandy Winn. Sunday, May 18 from 12 to 2 pm in the Co-op Community Room

A member of our Co-op gardening team, Sandy Winn grew up digging in the dirt with her grandma in Australia and studying permaculture gardening. Today, her three acres in the Heldebergs are alive with vegetables, herbs, bulbs, annuals, perennials, ornamental bushes, fruit bushes and trees. Don't miss this opportunity to share her knowledge! For both experienced and novice diggers. Class limited to 12.

Get Your Knives Sharpened While You Shop!

With Vince Manti & Derek Burns. Tuesdays, May 6 & 20 from 5 to 7 pm outside the Co-op Community Room

Due to the popularity of this service, please bring in no more than five knives at a time. (No serrated blades, please!)

Healing Touch

With Richard Sahr. Wednesdays, May 14 & 28 from 3:30 to 6:30 pm in the Co-op Community Room

One-hour sessions. Healing Touch is a relaxing, nurturing energy therapy that can benefit many ailments. It is thought to reduce stress, calm anxiety and depression, decrease pain, enhance recovery from surgery, and complement care for neck and back problems. Richard Sahr works with patients at Albany Medical Center through the Healing Arts Department. One session per person per month, please.

Holistic Approach to Exercise

With Paul Jensen. Tuesday, May 20 from 5:30 to 6:30 pm in the Co-op Community Room

Lose fat, make everyday tasks easier, improve your posture, increase your energy level, optimize your health. Learn how a holistic exercise program, designed specifically for you, can help you achieve your health and performance goals. Paul Jensen is a state-licensed massage therapist and the founder/owner of Excellence through Exercise. Please sign up for only one session.

Knit & Stitch

With Margaret Black and Beverly Petiet. Fridays (except 2nd Friday) from 12 to 2 pm in the Co-op Community Room

For knitters, crocheters, quilters and sewers of any skill level, and people who would like to learn. Bring a needlework question or problem; bring your current project for a relaxed time of shared work; or just stop by to see what we're all about! Margaret and Bev are highly qualified to teach a variety of fabric and needlework skills.

MAY AT THE CO-OP

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Free math tutoring while you shop for all ages and skill levels. Homework help, identification and remediation of specific difficulties, suggestions of strategies for use at home. Bring current math assignments or tests, or your practical day-to-day questions. No appointment necessary.

Natural Family Support

Led by Elisa Grimm, Lauralee Holtz, Meg Breen & Liza Feldman Vinci. Wednesdays from 10 am to 1 pm; and Thursdays from 10 am to 12 pm in the Co-op Community Room

Join other families for information and support on topics such as attachment parenting, natural pregnancy and birth, breastfeeding and natural family living. A children's storytime will follow group discussion.

A New Earth Discussion

With Peggy Steinbach. Monday, May 5 from 7:45 to 9:45 pm in the Co-op Community Room

Group is discussing the book *A New Earth*, by Eckhart Toole, over the course of 10 weeks. Transcending our ego-based consciousness is not only essential to personal happiness, but also the key to resolving conflict worldwide. View the online chapter lessons conducted by the author, followed by discussion.

The No-Diet Diet

With Paul Jensen. Tuesday, May 27 from 5:30 to 6:30 pm in the Co-op Community Room

Lose fat while maximizing your energy and health! Learn how to follow a diet that is right for your metabolic type. Paul Jensen is a certified nutrition and lifestyle coach and metabolic typing advisor

Reflexology

With Laura Lee Ross. Fridays, May 2 & 16 from 9:15 am to 12 pm in the Co-op Community Room

Free 15-minute sessions. Spot reflexology can revitalize and relax weary soles. Laura Lee Ross is a certified reflexology practitioner through the Laura Norman School of Reflexology. One session per person, please.

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echinacea

A flower border with **echinacea**, or “purple coneflower,” as it is commonly known, creates a lovely stand of color in the garden from summer through fall. Besides being a favorite of gardeners, it is a popular hangout for humming birds, bees and butterflies. Meaning “spiny” or “hedgehog” as derived from the Greek, its name refers to the roughly formed seed head.

Echinacea has also been called “snake root” because native Americans used the thick, dark root to treat snake bites. In fact, it was referred to as a general cure-all. The Plains Indians used varieties of echinacea to treat sore throats, insect bites, mumps, measles and toothaches. They formed it into poultices and mouthwashes to treat all kinds of maladies. Early settlers soon learned its value and it became popular up through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for

many maladies, including scarlet fever, malaria, syphilis, diphtheria and blood poisoning. At one time, as a tincture, echinacea was a staple in just about every medicine cabinet. With the advent of antibiotics, however, it fell out of favor for a time. It has once again emerged as an important remedy and today, it is one of the best selling herbs in the U.S.

Known as an immune system stimulator, echinacea is a staple in treating colds, flu and infections. Its mild antibiotic properties are helpful for staph, strep and yeast infections. Studies have shown that it improves the migration of white blood cells to kill toxins in the blood stream. Echinacea contains an enzyme that destroys the barrier between hostile organisms and healthy tissue. Studies have shown it to be useful to counteract the effects of radiation

therapy, a time when reduced white blood cell count can lead to infection. Echinacea’s antibacterial properties stimulate wound healing and are beneficial against herpes, eczema, ulcers and burns. Its anti-inflammatory properties can relieve lymphatic swelling and the symptoms of arthritis.

If the echinacea product is of a non-cultivated high quality, it may cause a tingling sensation on the tongue. Unfortunately, it is becoming harder to find uncultivated varieties. Echinacea should generally not be given to children under two years of age. For young adults and those over 65, start with a low dose and gradually increase.

The Co-op carries echinacea in the following forms: in bulk, tinctures, capsule and tincture combinations and singles, and tea.

Reiki

With Raven. Sunday, May 25 from 12 to 5 pm in the Co-op Community Room

Raven offers personalized Chi Therapy Reiki, an ancient energy healing practice that promotes well-being and health. Check session schedule on Community Room door and Co-op bulletin board.

With Karen Reach. Sunday, May 11 from 3 to 6 pm in the Co-op Community Room

Half-hour sessions. Reiki is a process that allows life force energy to flow, bringing about a state of relaxation that helps maintain wellness or enhance the body’s ability to heal. One session per person, please.

With Jeanne Marie. Wednesday, May 21 from 1 to 5 pm in the Co-op Community Room

15–20 minute sessions. The Usui system of Reiki employs a hands-on approach that facilitates healing by using “universal life energy.” Jeanne-Marie Rimlinger is a level 2 Reiki practitioner trained in the Usui system.

Spanish Language Immersion

With Yuliana De los Santos & Jacqueline Burton. Mondays from 4 to 5:15 pm in the Co-op Community Room

Our team of Spanish speakers will assist students of all levels, basic to advanced, with Spanish language and Latin American culture. Bring any questions and materials that you’re using to study Spanish, and enjoy working with others toward the same language goals.

Sugar Blues

With Rich Neuman. Wednesday, May 21 from 6:30 to 7:30 pm in the Co-op Community Room

Learn to overcome your cravings for sweet foods. Find out why we crave sugar, how we can satisfy our sweet tooth in a healthy way, which sugar alternatives are safe to enjoy, and the difference between primary and secondary foods. Rich Neuman is a graduate of the Institute of Integrative Nutrition with more than 25 years of experience in holistic health education.

MAY AT THE CO-OP

All services, workshops, and classes offered at HWFC are free and open to the public.

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