

VIROQUA FOOD COOPERATIVE

P E A  S O U P

MARCH/APRIL 2015

Third Annual

P6 TAILGATE PARTY

Saturday, March 21, 10am-2pm

Celebrate Spring with Local and Cooperative Producers

Are you interested in meeting some of the wonderful local, co-op, and small producers that supply the VFC with great Principle Six (P6) foods and products? Join us for our 3rd Annual P6 Producers Tailgate Party on Saturday, March 21.

For the Tailgate Party, we're setting up a big heated tent in our parking lot that will have a variety of P6 producers sampling the foods they grow and products they produce. Enter to win a P6 product prize basket. Even hang out with a life-size P6 Equal Exchange Banana! In true tailgating fashion, our deli kitchen is offering a P6 lunch from our patio grill, featuring **Wisconsin Meadows** grass-fed burgers.

P6 Producers in Attendance:

Austin's Rush Creek Farm is owned and operated by Brian and Carolyn Austin in Ferryville, Wisconsin. They produce a wide variety of pickles and jams in their on farm commercial kitchen using produce grown on their farm.

Deep Rooted is a certified organic farm and greenhouse, owned and operated by Tiffany Cade and Jimmy Fackert outside of Viroqua in Westby, Wisconsin. They specialize in growing organic slicer and cherry tomatoes.

Driftless Brewing Company is owned and operated by Michael Varnes-Epstein and Christopher Balistreri in Soldiers Grove, Wisconsin. They aim to make a wide variety of craft beers using as many local ingredients as possible.



Equal Exchange is a worker-owned cooperative that is based in West Bridgewater, Massachusetts. Through their business, they build long-term trade partnerships that are economically just and environmentally sound to foster mutually beneficial relationships between farmers and consumers. They offer a variety of organic fair trade products, including coffee, tea, bananas, avocados, chocolate, candy bars and more.

McCluskey Brothers Organic Farms is a small, diversified, certified organic farm, owned and operated by Patrick McCluskey in Hillpoint, Wisconsin. They produce a variety

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of 100% grass-fed organic cheeses that we offer at VFC.

Nami Chips is owned and operated by Nami Culter of La Crosse, Wisconsin. She produces raw, gluten free, vegan, dehydrated veggie chips in four delicious flavors: Original, Black Pepper, Tomato Basil and Apple Cinnamon.

Organic Valley/Organic Prairie is a mission driven farmer-owned cooperative based out of La Farge, Wisconsin. They produce a variety of certified organic dairy products, produce, meats and soy products.

Simply Bee Natural is owned and operated by Bonnie Kreckow in Winona, Minnesota. She is a clinical herbalist who produces a variety of herbal remedies

and body care using recipes developed through years of experience.

Seed Savers Exchange is dedicated to preserving and promoting America's culturally diverse but endangered garden and food crop heritage for future generations through seed saving. They are located in Decorah, Iowa. Learn more about this inspiring non-profit on the next page (3).

Wisco Pop is locally owned and operated by Austin and Hallie Ashley and Zac Mathes in Viroqua, Wisconsin. They produce craft brewed soda pop in three flavors: Root Beer, Ginger and Cherry. Their sodas feature locally produced sweeteners (honey and maple syrup) and fresh organic juices.



Come to the P6 Tailgate Party and hang out with a life-size P6 Equal Exchange Banana!

VFC & DRIFTLESS FOLK SCHOOL SCHEDULE OF DISCOUNTED CLASSES



Have you heard the birds chirping? Yes, it's true! Spring is right around the bend. Along with chirping birds comes more sun, green foliage and the release of the **Driftless Folk School's Spring/Summer 2015 Catalog!** Twice a year, the Folk School releases their catalog that announces their upcoming classes, gatherings and events. Their programming aims to support healthy, sustainable communities and personal development by providing meaningful educational opportunities and inspiring lifelong learning for individuals and families.

With the release of their new catalog, VFC is excited announce our continued partnership with this great community organization. **The catalog features 25 of their cuisine, farming/gardening, and homesteading classes at a discount to VFC Owners.** Start paging through the new catalog and make plans to attend one, two, or three classes to hone or learn a new skill or hobby through the wonderful community that is the Driftless Folk School.

The Driftless Folk School's newest

catalog features over 90 courses/ events in a variety of genres, including: alternative energy, animal husbandry, blacksmithing, craft, cuisine, farming/gardening, homesteading, natural building, natural world, music/dance and woodworking. There is sure to be a class for everyone.

To learn more and/or register for a class, pick up a catalog or simply check it out on their website www.driftlessfolkschool.org or contact DFS at registrar@driftlessfolkschool.org

VFC owners receive a \$10 discount on the following listed classes:

Alternative Bee Keeping

Saturday, March 14
Instructor: Charlie Keonen

Eating Year-Round from the Garden

Saturday, March 28
Instructors: Larrisa Walk & Bob Dahrse

Beyond the Veggie Garden

Saturday, March 28
Instructors: Larrisa Walk & Bob Dahrse

Fruit Tree Grafting

Saturday, March 28
Instructor: Rikardo Jahnke

Restorative Pruning of Old Apple Trees

Sunday, March 29
Instructor: Lowell Rheinheimer

Wholesome Grain-Free Baking

Sunday, April 12
Instructor: Laura Poe

Raspberry Fields Forever

Sunday, April 12
Instructor: Dan Johnson

Baking with Sourdough Bread

Saturday, April 18
Instructor: Jacob Hundt

Unleash Your Soil's Fertility

Saturday, May 2
Instructor: Brian Wickert



PRODUCER PROFILE: SEED SAVERS EXCHANGE

We're sure that many of you are eagerly awaiting the disappearance of snow and the thaw of the soil to make way for the 2015 gardening season. In fact, it's time to pick up seeds so you can start planning and dreaming about your 2015 garden. For that reason, we thought it would be a great opportunity to learn more about one of our P6 seed suppliers, [Seed Savers Exchange \(SSE\)](#).

Seed Savers Exchange may be a household name when it comes to organic heirloom and open pollinated seeds, but there is a lot more behind this amazing non-profit than their glossy seed packets and full color alluring seed catalog.

Seed Savers Exchange was founded in 1975 by Diane Ott Whealy and Kent Whealy. Diane's grandfather gifted the couple some seeds from two garden plants: Grandpa Ott's morning glory and German Pink tomato. These seeds were brought by Grandpa Ott's parents when they immigrated from Bavaria to St. Lucas, Iowa in the 1870's. The gift of these seeds gave Diane and Kent the idea of starting a seed exchange where seed saving gardeners and farmers across America could exchange them with others, thereby preserving and making available many heirloom varieties that were disappearing.

That year, Diane and Kent, along with 30 others from around the United States participated in **The True Seed Exchange**, which allowed them to trade and share seeds amongst the group. This publication is now known as the Seed Savers Exchange Yearbook and is a cornerstone of the organization.

In 2015, Seed Savers Exchange celebrates its 40th Anniversary, and there is a lot for this organization to celebrate! In the time that has gone by, SSE has found a home at Heritage Farm, just north of Decorah, Iowa. This 890-acre farm is nestled among sparkling streams, limestone bluffs and century-old white pines, and features the SSE Lillian Goldman Visitors Center (education center and

demonstration garden), Preservation Gardens, Historic Orchard and a herd of Ancient White Park Cattle. Additionally, they have become an extremely important non-profit member-supported organization that preserves and shares America's culturally diverse, but endangered garden and food crop heritage in a variety of ways. Some of the ways include: maintaining a seed bank, offering their yearly Seed Savers Exchange Yearbook, Seed Savers Exchange Seed Catalog and offering many educational opportunities.

Seed Savers Exchange Heritage Farm is home to one of the largest seed banks of its kind in North America. It houses over 20,000 varieties of heirloom and open pollinated varieties of vegetables and herbs that have been donated by gardeners and farmers across North America. SSE preserves and maintains all of these varieties by growing and saving seeds for each variety about once every five years.



Seed Savers Exchange was founded upon participatory seed preservation through their Seed Savers Exchange Yearbook. Through this publication, members of SSE may list and purchase seeds directly from other farmers and gardeners. Today, members list over 19,000 unique varieties through the Yearbook as a way to keep open pollinated and heirloom varieties circulating in the hands of gardeners and farmers today and into the future.

The most visible way that Seed Savers Exchange is preserving our garden heritage is through their yearly offering of the Seed Savers Exchange Seed Catalog. Each year, they release this 100+ page catalog

that features 600+ varieties of heirloom and open pollinated seed varieties that are available for purchase by the general public. These are the same varieties of seeds that can be found on our seed racks in our seed department.

SSE also aims to educate others about the importance and practice of seed saving and seed preservation. They do this through hosting numerous events at Heritage Farm, including a Spring Garden School, Heritage & Heirloom Apple School, Summer and Fall Seed Saving School, Annual Conference and Campout, Tomato Tasting Festival and a Fall Harvest School. In addition to their work at their headquarters, they do presentations at a variety of venues, festivals and events around the United States to get more people interested in seed saving and creating public seed libraries and seed banks.

To learn more about SSE, check out their website www.seedsavers.org and/or visit Heritage Farm this summer during one of their fun and educational events they host at Heritage Farm near Decorah (<http://s.coop/1v7tz>).

Next time you are at the VFC, check out all the amazing varieties of seeds from Seed Savers Exchange on our seed racks in our produce department. You can rest assured that each purchase of SSE seeds helps support their mission of preserving open pollinated and heirloom seeds for future generations.

Seed Savers Exchange is part of the P6 program at the VFC because:

Local: Seed Savers Exchange is located in Decorah, Iowa about 48 miles from VFC.

Co-op/Non-profit: Seed Savers Exchange is a non-profit organization.

Small Producer: Seed Savers Exchange is a member-supported and non-profit organization. Their seeds are delivered by mail to VFC.

REINVENTING THE VFC DELI

Andrew Anderson, **Store Manager**

It's been a gigantic year and half for the VFC Deli. These departments (four in all: deli, bakery, meat and cheese) have gone through incredible growth and change. Through this time of transition, the deli departments have continued to grow in sales and produce more product from scratch to meet the ever growing needs of our owners and customers.

Fresh and prepared foods are the fastest growing sectors in the cooperative grocery world, which exacerbate the challenges of keeping up with training and production. Working through these trials takes time, commitment and perseverance to come to fruition. With a solid team, improved resources, added training and a shared vision for the future, the VFC Deli is reinventing themselves.

A Solid Team

While turnover is inevitable in any business, the food and beverage industry has the highest rate in the United States. The VFC Deli is not immune to this statistic, but under the leadership of Waleed Mahmoud, we've built a core group of committed staff that continue to grow the department and work through the everyday challenges of running the business, all the while anticipating the needs of the future. Our bakery, prepared foods, meat and cheese staff members, (21 in total), work in tight quarters to bring you your favorite foods; wonderful scones, delightful hot bar, fresh meats and beautifully aged cheeses. It's these amazing individuals, working together to bring you the freshest food, that make our deli something special.

To offer another layer of leadership and support, the deli added the instrumental role of an Assistant Deli Manager, which has been filled by Jamie Cermak. We are so pleased to have Jamie's experience and oversight for the coffee bar, sandwich bar and retail floor. Along with a delightful group of dedicated employees, Jamie and his team are working hard to bring consistency and a smile to each and every customer that steps up to their counter.

Improved Resources

During the recent addition of our secondary receiving bay/back stock, freezer and cooler, the deli underwent its own remodel to assist in supporting their growth. Behind the scenes, we took an unorthodox approach to our confined space by moving our staff breakroom offsite to increase space for dry-goods-storage and offices, thus freeing up valuable square footage in the kitchen for three additional prep stations.

We didn't stop there. The final touches are still being implemented, but the coffee bar has a fresh new look along with new equipment to accommodate the growing demand for freshly prepared sandwiches and coffee. We upgraded our Panini press to a Merry Chef Oven to allow for faster cooking and an expanded menu. We also added a double coffee brewer to meet the needs of our coffee connoisseurs and increase production efficiency of local, organic and P6 coffees.

While lots of restaurants and food service establishments purchase food that comes pre-portioned, packaged and preserved to ensure freshness, our deli is producing radically different food that is prepared from whole foods and fresh produce. Throughout the year, we source from more than 140 local producers that serve our Co-op. We strive to bring you the best tasting prepared foods, and by refining our existing space, we are finding new and innovative ways to continue bringing you this high quality food.

Training

Old systems don't work with new paradigms. With improved resources, the deli staff has learned an entirely new way of doing business. Everything – from when we start our mornings, how we plan and prepare our hot bar, to how we purchase – has changed. And with these changes comes training. Our goal is for a seamless transition between old systems and new, but inevitably things don't go as planned. Our deli staff continually show us that with dedication and perseverance any challenge can be met with positive results.



At the VFC we know that sufficient training and clear expectations are at the foundation for a successful business. That's why training is on-going. We are always looking for opportunities to enhance what we do and learn new ways of doing things. We value what we don't know so that we can find new ways to bring our customers even better food, even better service and our trademark "VFC Experience" that we yearn to give each and every person that sets foot in store... and I mean everyone!

Shared Vision

It all starts with a vision. We asked our owners, staff and community through a variety of different avenues what their vision is for the future of the VFC. We heard you say that the heart of the Viroqua Food Cooperative is what you experience when you shop here and that our primary focus should be on expanding our core retail services. Across the country, co-ops are expanding to offer more for their shoppers. We consistently see a large focus on fresh and prepared foods with expanded meat, cheese and deli/bakery. This vision for the future of our own deli is why reinventing ourselves is so important. Creating a solid foundation is critical in order to prepare for these coming changes.

With a solid team, improved resources, excellent training and aligning ourselves with a common vision for the future of the VFC, we are setting the stage for something great! I am so proud of the VFC Deli Team and how far they have come! Go Co-op!



THINGS WE LOVE



Rainbow Gardens Potting Soil

Simply the best potting soil for starting transplants. The first time I used this soil, the health and vigor difference of all my seedlings was amazing. They were dark green, stocky, and just plain beautiful. Last spring I had to hold my tomato seedlings – and even with the extra two weeks in pots, the Rainbow Garden Potting Soil had plenty of nutrition to keep them growing strong. For one of the most important times in a plant's life, you can't do better than starting them in Rainbow Gardens Potting soil – your green thumb just got greener! You can thank me later!

-MIKE

FEDCO Seeds

I am so happy we get to carry Fedco Seeds at a Basics \$1.99 price! There are 28 popular varieties of certified organic seeds from a P6 seed cooperative from the northern climate of Maine. Even though they are only white boring packages, the seeds inside will delight, nourish and inspire you.

-ARWYN



Seed Savers Exchange Jimmy Nardello Sweet Pepper Seeds

This pepper turned me, a self-proclaimed sweet pepper hater, into a sweet pepper lover! They have a super thin skin, thin walls and are oh-so-sweet. They are perfect snacks in a lunch and are super great for dipping in hummus, guacamole, salsa, etc. Best of all, the seed is organic and produced locally in Decorah, Iowa by Seed Savers Exchange!

-BJORN

Seed Savers Exchange Purple Basil Seeds

I can not live without my edible sunny window boxes full of flowers, herbs and most importantly – purple basil. Not only is it gorgeous with flowers and other herbs, but you can and should pick and eat it up.

-LINDA



LIVING OUR MISSION

OUR MISSION: *The Viroqua Food Cooperative combines a commitment to natural foods, superior customer service and the building of a cooperatively run business. We emphasize selling organic and local foods and products to promote the long-term health of individuals and the environment. As owners and as a center for community, we offer the opportunity to create together a work of enduring value.*

Jan. 7: General Manager Jan Rasikas attended the P6 National Board of Directors meeting.

Jan. 8: Bjorn Bergman, VFC Outreach Coordinator, attended a Viroqua Chamber Main Street (VCMS) board meeting.

Jan. 15: A public screening of "Fed Up", a documentary about the impact of sugar in our society, was held at The ARK.

Jan. 17 & Feb. 21: VFC Board Members hosted Coffee and Conversation with the VFC Board in the VFC seating area.

Jan. 21: VFC mailed out Patronage Refunds to qualifying owners, totaling \$14,000.

Jan. 20 & 27: Bjorn Bergman participated in conference calls to help plan FairShare CSA Coalition's Bike the Barn Driftless.

Jan. 25-28: GM Jan Rasikas attended National Co-op Grocers (NCG) Board of Directors meeting.

Jan. 28: Bjorn Bergman attended the VCMS Quarterly Breakfast.

Feb. 4: VFC Management Team met with Dave Blackburn of NCG Cooperative Development.

Feb. 2: Bjorn Bergman attended a VCMS board meeting and training.

Feb. 19: Bjorn Bergman was on WIZM 1410am La Crosse "Coulee Region Cooks" sharing seasonal recipe ideas.

Feb. 26: A public screening of "To the Moon," a film documenting the journey of Co-cycle, a youth bicycle tour of cooperatives in the United States, was held at The ARK.

Feb. 26-28: VFC Staff Members Arwyn Wildingway, Katie Lamb and Mike Tuszynski attended the Midwest Organic Farming Conference in La Crosse.

CO-OP COOKS

Laura Poe, Front End Staff
& Sampling Assistant

Local carrots are still available, and what better way to celebrate them than with carrot cake! This is one of my favorite desserts and it is a total crowd-pleaser. Plus, it is perfect for those on gluten-free or grain-free diets, but

everyone loves it of course. The carrots lend a natural sweetness, as well as a healthy dose of fiber and beta-carotene, a potent anti-oxidant. So grab some local, organic carrots and get baking!



GRAIN FREE CARROT CAKE WITH CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

CAKE INGREDIENTS

- 1½ cups almond flour
- 3 Tbsp coconut flour
- ¼ tsp sea salt
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp ground dried ginger
- ¼ tsp nutmeg
- ¾ tsp baking soda
- 3 eggs
- 3 Tbsp coconut oil, melted
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 tsp orange zest
- 4 Tbsp orange juice
- ½ cup maple syrup
- 2 cups grated carrots, packed
- ½ cup raisins
- ½ cup shredded coconut
- ½ cup walnuts, chopped

CAKE DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly grease 9" round cake pan.
- In large bowl, combine almond & coconut flours, salt, spices & baking soda. Stir to combine.

- Create a well in center of dry ingredients. Add eggs, vanilla, orange zest & juice, along with maple syrup into center. Stir to incorporate wet & dry ingredients together until just mixed.
- Add carrots, raisins, coconut & walnuts. Stir well to evenly distribute throughout batter.
- Pour cake batter into prepared pan & spread to create even surface.
- Bake for 40-45 minutes, rotating pan halfway through cooking. Cake is done when lightly-browned on top & inserted toothpick comes out mostly clean. Be careful not to overcook as this will dry out cake.
- Let cake cool completely before frosting.

FROSTING INGREDIENTS

- 1 8oz. block full fat organic cream cheese
- ¼ cup butter, softened to room temp.
- ¼ tsp vanilla extract

- 2 Tbsp maple syrup
- ½ tsp orange zest
- 2 Tbsp orange juice

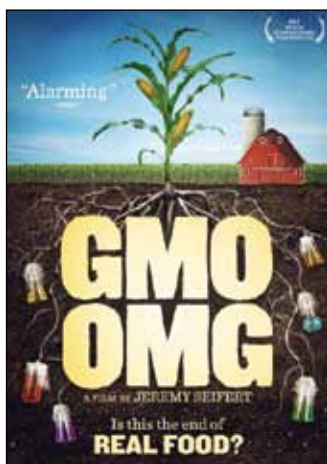
FROSTING DIRECTIONS

- Cream together butter & cream cheese until fluffy & smooth.
- Add in vanilla, maple syrup, orange zest & juice. Mix with strong fork or electric beaters until all ingredients are well combined & frosting is creamy.
- Spread evenly on top of cooled cake.
- Garnish with extra chopped walnuts & serve.

DAIRY FREE ALTERNATIVES

The cake itself is dairy free but you could make the frosting without dairy by substituting 1¼ cups organic palm shortening at room temp. for butter & cream cheese (non-hydrogenated, like Spectrum brand). Simply add 2 tsp lemon juice & pinch of salt to recipe for better flavor. Taste it to see if it needs a little extra maple syrup & adjust to your preferences.

FREE DOCUMENTARY SCREENING **GMO OMG**



The Viroqua Food Co-op is hosting our third **FREE** public documentary screening at The Ark. We welcome you and your loved ones to join us to view the film while enjoying free organic popcorn provided by VFC. Learn more about the screening we have planned below.

GMO OMG

Thursday, March 19, 6:30-8:30pm

Location: The Ark

Run Time: 93 minutes + short discussion following the film

Description: Concerned father Jeremy Seifert is in search of answers. How do GMOs affect our children, the health of our planet, and our freedom of choice? And perhaps the ultimate question, which Seifert tests himself: is it even

possible to reject the food system currently in place, or have we lost something we can't gain back? These and other questions take Seifert on a journey from his family's table to Haiti, Paris, Norway, and the lobby of agra-giant Monsanto, from which he is unceremoniously ejected. Along the way we gain insight into a question that is of growing concern to citizens the world over: *What's on your plate?* A short discussion about the film follows screening.

Learn more about the film: www.gmofilm.com

GET READY TO GARDEN!

Arwyn Wildingway, Assistant Produce Manager & Master Gardener

We know you love fresh locally produced clean food – that’s why you’re an owner at the Viroqua Food Co-op. Of course you’ll have the most connected and primal relationship with your food if you grow it yourself. We give you the awesome opportunity to bring ethically grown seeds and plants to your garden. Support healthy economics when you purchase seeds from High Mowing Organic Seeds, and P6 producers Seed Savers Exchange (NPO) and Fedco Seeds (cooperative.)

We are fortunate to carry 13 varieties of certified organic seed potatoes from Vermont Valley Community Farm in Blue Mounds, WI. And we count our blessings as numerous as the local greenhouse plant suppliers!

As the weather warms, look for more details about the following events. We’ll have kids activities, garden advice, and special deals throughout the planting season.



SAVE THE DATES!

Earth Day, April 22: SOIL SALE

May 9: Green House Open House

Every Saturday at 1pm,

May thru June: Master tips from a Master Gardener

Feel free anytime to bring your questions to me or other VFC staff members, as we will do our best to help you make this year’s garden a success!

VFC’s 1% WEDNESDAYS

We donate 1% of the Co-op’s gross sales to one of the top nonprofit organizations selected by VFC Owners. We also place donation jars at each cash register to accept donations from shoppers throughout the month for that same organization.



Marketing Mgr. Charlene Elderkin presents a \$295 check to Trina Erikson for the McIntosh Memorial Library



Charlene Elderkin presents Kadie Brueggen with a \$325 check for Couleecap

OWNER DISCOUNT DAYS

10% off

No coupon necessary, discount taken at register, for VFC owners only.

March 24-26 (Tues-Thurs)

10% off PLANTS & SEEDS

April 21-23 (Tues-Thurs)

10% off ALL PRODUCE

Remember to cash your Patronage Check by April 21, 2015!

Patronage Refund checks expire 120 days from date issued.



P6 MICROLENDING INITIATIVE RECIPIENT: DEL SOL CHOCOLATE

We are pleased to announce that **Del Sol Chocolate** is a 2015 VFC P6 Microlending recipient. The VFC P6 Microlending Committee is excited to fulfill Del Sol Chocolate's entire request of \$2,000 for their Cacao Mill and Wining Machine Project.

Del Sol Chocolate is owned and operated by Lynn Kronschnabel in Viroqua, WI. Lynn specializes in making artisan bean-to-bar chocolates using high quality, organic and ethically sourced cacao from farmer co-ops and small holder farms around the world. The bars are sweetened with organic cane sugar or locally produced maple sugar. To learn more, check out Del Sol Chocolate's P6 Profile in the 2014 November/December Pea Soup Newsletter or visit our website: <http://s.coop/1v82y>

Del Sol Chocolate's VFC P6 Microloan will finance the construction of a new cacao bean mill and winnowing machine for chocolate production. The new cacao mill will be used specifically for milling whole roasted cacao beans into nibs. The mill will be hand powered with the



ability to be converted to bicycle power. The winnowing machine will separate milled cacao nibs from cacao skin in a much more efficient manner than is currently used.

Time and human resource management are critical to the success of small farms and producers. The VFC P6 Microloan allows Del Sol Chocolate the ability to build new equipment that will help increase efficiency when making

bean-to-bar chocolate, thereby allowing them to increase production and save on labor.

The VFC P6 Microlending Initiative was created in 2012 by the VFC Board of Directors as a way to make interest-free loan(s) of up to \$3,250 available for farmers and producers selling to the VFC or at the Viroqua Farmers Market. Loans are aimed at financing new projects or infrastructure for small farmers/producers that will help them grow their businesses and must be paid back within one year. Through the P6 Microlending Initiative the VFC strengthens small, local farms and producers that supply the Co-op and creates opportunities to improve their operations. To learn more, visit our P6 Microlending Initiative page: <http://s.coop/1v82z>

Congratulations, again, to Lynn Kronschnabel of Del Sol Chocolate! We look forward to seeing your chocolate business grow in the coming year.

In cooperation,
VFC P6 Microlending Committee

A BLAST FROM THE PAST



Jeff Marshall working as cashier/bagger, 2005



The Bulk section, circa 2000

Please share any stories or photos regarding the history of the Viroqua Food Co-op by mailing us a digital copy at: info@viroquafood.coop

BOARD'S EYE VIEW

Changes in the Works at the VFC – Slow and Steady

The VFC Board of Directors and VFC Staff are working to follow up on the meetings and discussions held over the past year. These previous discussions, listening sessions and one-on-one conversations with VFC owners refined the topics, ideas and information as it relates to the growth of the Co-op.

Several previous Board's Eye View articles highlighted many of these meetings, some of which included work with our Cooperative Board Leadership Development consultant. These planning level meetings resulted in a direction to expand the Co-op in our current location while maintaining our owner's access to great healthy food and excellent service.

Many of our owners were involved in the data gathering effort for the Market Study completed this past fall. The results of this study confirmed that our community can support our plans for growth in Viroqua.

Part of the planning process led us to begin drawing the edges to our vision of expansion. The Board met with Cooperative Development, the

consulting arm of the National Cooperative Grocers (NCG, formerly NCGA), and will contract with them to work with VFC Management as

we enter into the next phases of expansion. These next phases include contracting with our architect, builder, lenders and other specialists to assist us over the next one to two years as the project moves from the planning stage into the reality of hammers, nails and more shopping, deli and seating space and parking space.

The Board's primary goal of serving VFC's owners is our incentive to make the best possible choices for VFC's future. By utilizing a steady planning process and working with experts in cooperative development, the VFC Board is building a foundation of success that benefits all owners.

Mike Link,
VFC Board of Directors



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The next Board meeting is Wednesday, March 18 at 6:30pm in the VFC offsite office (Sunshine Apartment #2). Any changes are posted in the VFC Owner Services area. To make a presentation at the meeting, please contact a Board Member 10 days in advance.

SAVE THE DATE!

BIKE THE BARNS DRIFTLESS

Sunday, June 28, 2015

Don't miss this year's ride - early bird registration starts April 1st!

Pedal off starting in Sparta, WI, the Bicycling Capital of America. Stop for a break at Old Oak Family Farm and Hickory Wind Alpaca Farm. Enjoy the bounty of the season as this event is catered by Rooted Spoon Culinary, who features local, seasonal fare from FairShare CSA farms and other local producers. Bike the scenic Elroy-Sparta and La Crosse River state trails.

Super-Early Bird: April 1-May 15, \$75

Early Bird: May 16-May 31, \$85

Full-Price: June 1-until ride fills, \$100

Space is limited and available on a first-come, first-serve basis! For more info, visit their website at www.csacoalition.org or info@csacoalition.org or 608-226-0300.



Photo credit: Eric Wuennenberg



2014-15 VFC Board of Directors



**Now accepting
Health Tradition
Health Plan**

210 Airport Road, Suite 103
Viroqua, WI 54665
(608) 638-7420
Email: info@centerpoint.coop
www.centerpoint.coop

CENTER POINT
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Cooperative

**Knapp Creek Farm Certified Organic Produce
Home Delivery CSA**



Small and Full weekly shares straight from our field to your door.
Early Bird Discount before April 1st
Support a local family farm and journey through the season with us.
www.knappcreekfarm.com Westby, WI 608.634.3880

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Gift Certificates Available

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www.viroquahealingarts.com

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NCG SUPPORTS MANDATORY GMO LABELING BILL

National Co+op Grocers (NCG) expresses its support for **The Genetically Engineered Food Right-to-Know Act of 2015**, introduced on Feb 12 in the U.S. House and Senate with a renewed call for mandatory federal labeling of genetically modified foods and ingredients. Viroqua Food Co-op is a member of NCG.

In addition, the bill prohibits any foods containing GMO ingredients to be labeled “natural” – requirements similarly featured in the Vermont’s Act Relating to the Labeling of Food Produced with Genetic Engineering, which the state successfully passed in 2014.

The federal bill, submitted in the House by Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-OR) and in the Senate by Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), updates a similar bill the officials authored in 2013 but was not voted upon by the House or Senate.

“Multiple surveys show that more than 90 percent of U.S. consumers want GMO foods labeled. We think all shoppers have the right to know what’s in the food they buy and clear labeling empowers everyone to make their own informed decisions,” said Robynn Shrader, chief executive officer for NCG.

“While we support individual state’s right-to-know efforts, this national legislation presents a simple solution for manufacturers, retailers and consumers with consistent requirements across the nation,” continued Shrader.

“Under the leadership of Sen. Boxer, Sen. Blumenthal and Rep. DeFazio, our elected officials have the opportunity to provide clear, transparent information to Americans who simply want to know whether their food has

been genetically modified,” said Katrina Staves, campaign manager for Just Label It.

Rep. DeFazio, Sen. Boxer and Sen. Blumenthal are submitting the bill ahead of Rep. Mike Pompeo (R-KS), who is expected to re-introduce his bill codifying the current system of manufacturers’ voluntary GMO labeling. NCG opposes Pompeo’s Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act (also known as the Deny Americans the Right-to-Know or “DARK” Act), which would also nullify settled GMO labeling laws in Vermont, Connecticut and Maine.

NCG’s support for The Genetically Engineered Food Right-to-Know Act of 2015 continues its years-long advocacy for GMO labeling at the federal level. NCG is an active supporter of the Just Label It campaign, a national coalition of more than 650 organizations, which calls for the mandatory, federally enforced labeling of GMO foods.

NCG also encourages individuals who support labeling of GMO foods to contact their elected officials to voice their support for The Genetically Engineered Food Right-to-Know Act.

Until GMOs are labeled, consumers who wish to avoid GMO foods, and the toxic pesticides they are often engineered to withstand, can look to the USDA Certified Organic label.

About NCG

National Co+op Grocers (NCG) is a business services cooperative for retail food co-ops located throughout the US. Their 143 member and associate co-ops operate more than 190 storefronts in 38 states with combined annual sales over \$1.7 billion. NCG is a winner of the dotCoop Global Awards for Cooperative Excellence and a Certified B Corporation.

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NEW OWNERS WELCOME

We want to welcome the following new owners who joined the Co-op between Dec. 12, 2014 and Feb 17, 2015:

Ryan Cunha	Troy Mckay
Andrea Cunha	Roger Christensen
Amber Ahlers	Pandora Flores
Jedediah Schaller	Anthony Sedlak
Pat Horkheimer	Melinda Nichols
Doreen Dahl	David Hansen
David Ecklund	Rebecca Rohrer
Davina Hemmer	Kari Eden
Joshua Ecklund	Joann Scribbins
David Curry	John Scribbins
Michele Curry	Tracey Johnson
Tim Wirtz	Sandy Baklum
Heather Barrett	Edward Mort
Alexander Barrett	Gregory Fossedal
Rebecca Redfield	Carol Goska
Eric Weninger	Leon Goska
Bree Breckel	Janet Lippert
Jo Sevede	Christine Reynolds
Dan Mosgaller	Dan Brandt
Josef-Peter Roemer	Jennifer Brandt
Kris Roemer	Tonya Wagner
Deborah Liebakken	Troy Wagner
Wendy Keogh	

MOVED? MARRIED? DIVORCED? NEW PHONE?

Please notify VFC so we have accurate records and mailing information for you. If you want to separate a two-adult household membership into two single adult household memberships, ask a cashier for the form or download it from our website at viroquafood.coop/you-own-it/stay-in-touch

CELEBRATING THE FOLLOWING STAFF ANNIVERSARIES:

- ★ Arwyn Wildingway - 11 yrs - 3/31/04
- ★ Linda Gallardo - 5 yrs - 4/14/10
- ★ Laura Burnham - 5 yrs - 4/20/10
- ★ Jamie Cermak - 2 yr - 4/25/2013
- ★ Leo Shonka - 2 yr - 4/27/2013
- ★ Melissa Stussy - 1 yr - 4/10/2014

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