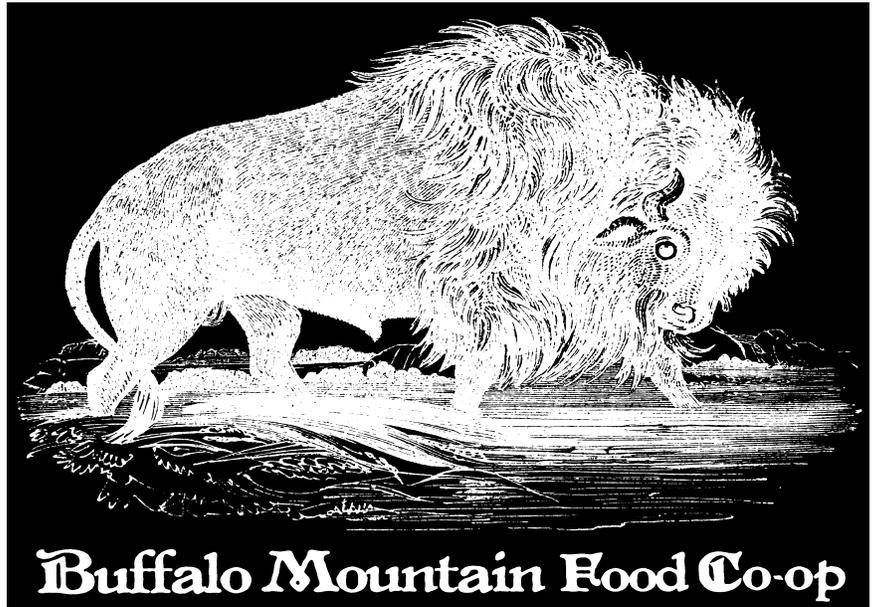


Buffalo Bullsheet Spring 2008



And Café

P.O. Box 336, Hardwick, VT
05843
Phone: 802-472-6020
Fax: 802-472-5946
E-Mail: Buffalo1@vtlink.net
Web-site
www.Buffalomountaincoop.org

Co-op Hours

Monday - Friday; 9am to 7pm
Saturday; 9am to 6pm and
Sunday; 10am to 4pm

What's Cookin' in the Café?

The Buffalo Mountain Coop Café is a vibrant, happy place to be as we (finally) move into spring and towards summer. Two new collective members, Rachel Davey and Debra Wilson, have been working hard to energize and revitalize the space and menu.

Our new menu features many of your old favorites and now includes some delicious new options for meat eaters or those looking for wholesome and affordable meals. Come in and try the simple and hearty rice and veggie bowl with baked tofu, or please your taste buds with the delicious curried chicken salad with almonds and raisins. For breakfast, enjoy everything from granola and yogurt to an omelet brimming with your choice of fillings. Coffee lovers out there can look forward to enjoying a latte or espresso with their meal, too!

The café is looking for eager working members to help out with some Spring-cleaning as well as some small building projects. As we move in to the busy and all-to-short summer, we are also looking for additional subs to fill out the staffing needs in the café. If you can boil water you can work in the café! We need people who are enthusiastic and available to cover one or two morning (8-2) or afternoon (11-5) shifts a week when needed. Hours spent training in the café can count toward your working member hours!! Thank you for all you support, feedback, suggestions and recipes. You help us to be better and tastier all the time!



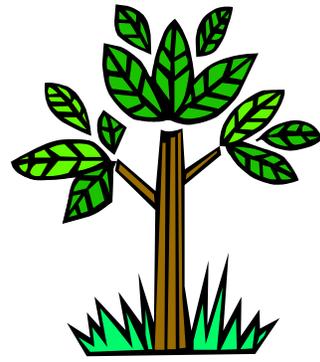
From the Barnyard;
True Tails Retold by Olive

My neighbor, Cynthia, kept her "girls," about 10 aging chickens, all through the fall and into the depths of winter whether they laid eggs or not. They were fed, watered, and fussed over in the manner of the most expensive assisted living quarters money could buy. Then one day, another neighbor, Susan, called her and asked if she could take in another flock of aged ladies that no one could bring themselves to dispatch. Cynthia said sure, what difference could a few more freeloaders make anyway? Well, no sooner were Susan's chickens installed in their new henhouse, when an egg or two began to appear. In a few weeks, production had increased dramatically--everyone was apparently inspired. Whether the egg laying was of a competitive nature, or the change in season, or a new phase of the moon, we'll never know. Does this story reflect some underlying moral? I don't know, but I delight in the abundance of the fresh eggs I was paid to write this up for the Spring Bullsheat.

Most appropriate, ayah?
If anyone has a barnyard tale to share,
I'd love to hear it. Happy Spring,
olive@vtlink.net.

The Tea Story

by Co-op Member Eric Snyder



Tea is a beverage that originated in China. It is stimulating, as it has caffeine, and it comes in a variety of forms. The flavor varies greatly, depending on the part of the plant harvested, the stage of growth at harvest, the method of processing, and the method of brewing.

The highest quality tea comes as loose leaf whole, cut or broken leaves of a certain size. The remaining tea from the cutting or breaking process is sieved out or fanned away to be used in teabags, or mixed with spices and made into chai. Good quality tea bags will have the same tea as loose leaf tea.

Black tea leaves are crushed and fermented. Black tea is the most aromatic tea with the darkest color ranging from amber to red to dark brown. It also has a good quantity of healthful antioxidants. You will get the most benefit from the antioxidants if you take the tea without milk. On the other hand, if you are in a hurry to drink your tea before it cools, milk will cool your tea and reduce your risk of esophagus and stomach cancer from repeated exposure to heat.

Green tea is steamed and dried without fermenting. It also has antioxidants. The flavor is vegetal or aromatic depending on the variety. The color of the brew is yellow to green. Green tea leaves are sometimes roasted. Good quality green tea can be used for two or three brewings. You might add a pinch of black tea to pick up the flavor. Experiment and see what works.

White tea is green tea harvested while it still has fuzz on the leaves. Oolong is semi-fermented, between green and black. Twig tea is what it sounds like; it is roasted twigs, and it has the least caffeine of all types of tea. It is considered to be restorative of deep chi.

Chai comes in powder and in coarse form. The powdered form is mixed directly into hot milk or water, sweetened to taste and served.

If you drink ice tea with lemon, or bottled ice tea, you can reduce damage to your teeth by drinking it all at once rather than sipping it. For greatest enjoyment and health benefits, alternate varieties of tea.



Food Prices Explosion



"More than 100 million people are being driven deeper into poverty by a 'silent tsunami' of sharply rising food prices, which have sparked riots around the world and threaten U.N.-backed feeding programs for 20 million children," according to a top U.N. food official quoted on the front page of the Washington Post in late April. Certainly here at the Buffalo Mountain Co-op, prices we pay for the food we sell have been rising at a disturbing rate. Here is a sampling of recent thoughts on the subject.

Rachel Smolker, a research biologist at the Global Justice Ecology Project, www.globaljusticeecology.org based in Hinesburg, states that, "the massive diversion of crops and land to producing biofuel crops instead of food is a major factor in the very dramatic food price increases. Governments and industries have foolishly pursued biofuels in spite of this and in spite of a cascade of scientific studies and statements from all levels of society which clearly demonstrate that biofuels are not only exacerbating hunger, but also rural displacement, climate change and deforestation."

"Incentives and mandates for the use of biofuels are being promoted by agribusiness giants like Monsanto, ADM and Cargill along with big oil, biotechnology and automobile industries -- all of whom stand to profit enormously. The price is being paid right now by those who can no longer afford food or access to land. We need new models for food and energy production that do not leave people hungry and displaced, do not contaminate our crop biodiversity and pollute our water and soils, and do not leave food and energy production in the hands of profit-seeking multinational corporations. People are beginning to wake up to this fact."

Maria Luisa Mendonça is director of the Social Network for Justice and Human Rights in São Paulo, Brazil. She also lays much of the blame for the spike in food prices at the rise in bio-fuel production. "This model has caused negative impacts on peasant and indigenous communities, who have their territories threatened by the constant expansion of large plantations. The lack of policies in support of food production leads peasants to substitute their crops for agrofuels, and, as a result, compromises our food sovereignty. It is necessary to strengthen rural workers' organizations to promote sustainable peasant agriculture, prioritizing diversified food production for local consumption. It is crucial to advocate for policies that guarantee subsidies for food production through peasant agriculture. We cannot keep our tanks full while stomachs go empty."

"It's clear that the global food system is in crisis," says Gretchen Gordon of the Food First/Institute for Food and Development Policy. "Food prices globally have skyrocketed, in some cases 80%. Food protests and riots from Italy to Yemen have begun capturing worldwide attention, and policymakers are scrambling to point fingers at a litany of culprits-everything from climate change, high oil prices, a weak dollar and the biofuels boom, to meat eaters in China. All of these factors have played a part in the current crisis, but the blame game is also allowing one culprit-the principle protagonist in this story-to get away with not even a mention - deregulation."

"Let's look at the scale of deregulation. Deregulation in agricultural markets, like economic deregulation in many sectors, reached full tilt in the eighties and nineties. Trade and development economists preached the wonders of open markets, unfettered production, and industrial agriculture. The World Bank and International Monetary Fund conditioned loan policies on the elimination of government intervention in agricultural markets. Global commodity agreements, price supports, and other mechanisms which helped keep global supplies and prices stable were dismantled. The World Trade Organization's Agreement on Agriculture, together with multi-lateral and bilateral agreements including the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), slashed agricultural tariffs in the developing world, and opened up markets for a growing global agribusiness industry. The dumping of cheap commodities swamped small farmers here and abroad, pricing them out of local markets. Cheap feed crops fueled industrial livestock production, increasing meat consumption and driving out small producers. The few independent farmers who stayed in farming shifted production to a few commodities including corn and soy that can be stored and shipped to distant markets."

“The impact of all this deregulation was to replace local market access for the majority of small producers with global market access for a few global producers. We’ve reached a level of concentration in our global agriculture system that would make Standard Oil blush. Three companies-Cargill, Archer Daniels Midland, and Bunge-control the vast majority of global grain trading, while Monsanto controls more than one-fifth of the global market in seeds. Consumers from Sioux City to Soweto are more and more dependent on fewer and fewer producers. By eliminating the breadth and diversity of the system, we’ve eliminated its ability to withstand shock or manipulation.”

“At its root, hunger is not about lack of food, it's about poverty and inequity, and the inability to access available food. If small farmers in Africa had access to land and local markets they wouldn't need food aid. Another gross injustice of our food aid policy is the requirement that the majority of it be purchased and shipped from the U.S. rather than bought from local producers. Meanwhile, African producers will once again be denied income and shut out of their local market. It's long past time we re-claim a rational economic and agriculture policy in this country and globally, before it's too late. The unregulated free market has proven itself the gambling addict that it is-incapable of self control. We saw it in the sub-prime mortgage crisis and we're seeing it in the current food crisis.”

In another very insightful article, Manufacturing a Food Crisis, Walden Bello (*The Nation* May 15th) talks about Via Campesina (Peasant's Path). “Via not only seeks to get "the World Trade Organization out of agriculture" and opposes the paradigm of a globalized capitalist industrial agriculture; it also proposes an alternative--food sovereignty. Food sovereignty means, first of all, the right of a country to determine its production and consumption of food and the exemption of agriculture from global trade regimes like that of the W T O. It also means consolidation of a smallholder-centered agriculture via protection of the domestic market from low-priced imports; remunerative prices for farmers and fisherfolk; abolition of all direct and indirect export subsidies; and the phasing out of domestic subsidies that promote unsustainable agriculture. Via's platform also calls for an end to the Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights regime, or TRIPs, which allows corporations to patent plant seeds; opposes agro-technology based on genetic engineering; and demands land reform. In contrast to an integrated global monoculture, Via offers the vision of an international agricultural economy composed of diverse national agricultural economies trading with one another but focused primarily on domestic production.

Once regarded as relics of the pre-industrial era, peasants are now leading the opposition to a capitalist industrial agriculture that would consign them to the dustbin of history. With the global food crisis, they are moving to center stage--and they have allies and supporters. For as peasants refuse to go gently into that good night and fight de-peasantization, developments in the twenty-first century are revealing the panacea of globalized capitalist industrial agriculture to be a nightmare. With environmental crises multiplying, the social dysfunctions of urban-industrial life piling up and industrialized agriculture creating greater food insecurity, the farmers' movement increasingly has relevance not only to peasants but to everyone threatened by the catastrophic consequences of global capital's vision for organizing production, community and life itself.”

What should our response as a co-op community be to this crisis? We can continue to do our best to support local sustainable agriculture in our purchasing. We can also continue our policy of supporting small-scale growers and producers in other countries through working with suppliers like Equal Exchange and Frontier. Certainly our contributions to the Hardwick Area Food Pantry and sponsorship of the Community Dinner offer support to some of those hard hit by escalating food prices locally. Our support for Planting Hope through sponsoring the Plant Sale and sale of Nicaraguan crafts, and Child Haven International through the sari sale sends funds to two organizations tackling hunger issues in Nicaragua and Asia. Our Learning Exchange has offered workshops focusing on sustainable agriculture and related issues. What else might we do? Are there ways we can lower the price of the food we sell? How can we protect and further the kind of world our co-op's sharing of resources; “food for people not for profit” ethic speaks to? Many years ago the then Onion River Co-op had a 3% surcharge on all 3rd World items sold in their store. Proceeds from that fund went to support efforts in 3rd World countries seeking to create a more just, equitable and sustainable world order. Co-op members voted each year on which projects would be supported. Do the times call for that kind of response here? What other ideas might we consider? All thoughts and ideas are most welcome for future Bullsheets, or general co-op discussions. Thanks.



A Trip with Planting Hope - Karl Stein

Nicaragua is a place that changed me in a very short time. It is a place of poverty but a place where those whom I lived with, the children and teachers in the schools that we worked in, and workers that we worked with lived at ease within their community, a place where their village life and culture supported their lives. We saw and met people who were not bitter about their lot in life, but took joy in what they had. Anger, frustration, theft and all the other ills of any society do exist. It's not that we did not see and experience these ills for, like any place where children go hungry and people live not just on the edges of poverty but deep with in its grips, we saw mistrusting stares, and found ourselves in places where we did not feel safe or welcome.

What we did experience among the people that we knew and for a short time lived with was a feeling of welcoming and interest. Twelve of us; three adults and nine high school students traveled to Nicaragua on a service learning experience with Planting Hope, a non-profit organization based in Montpelier, Vermont and San Ramon, Nicaragua. Planting Hope serves communities in northern Nicaragua by supporting the La Chispa Library, enhancing educational opportunities, and providing assistance for grassroots initiatives. .

Music, singing and dance surrounded us. It added to the general din of sound that was always present –roosters, dogs, birds, insects and people kept the air full of sounds that never stopped and many times at 3 or 4 am reached a deafening crescendo. The music was playful, full of love, passion, happy and sad stories and intense feeling. Folk music is nationalistic and proud while the music and dance of the day is rich with struggle, love, and dreams. The violence of our music is missing and my home stay brother (Genaro) who is studying music at the university agrees that, although current American music is listened too, it is not the popular music. In the clubs and on the streets if we heard American music it was more often of the 60's and 70's but mostly we heard music of Mexico, Central and South America as well as music from Spain.

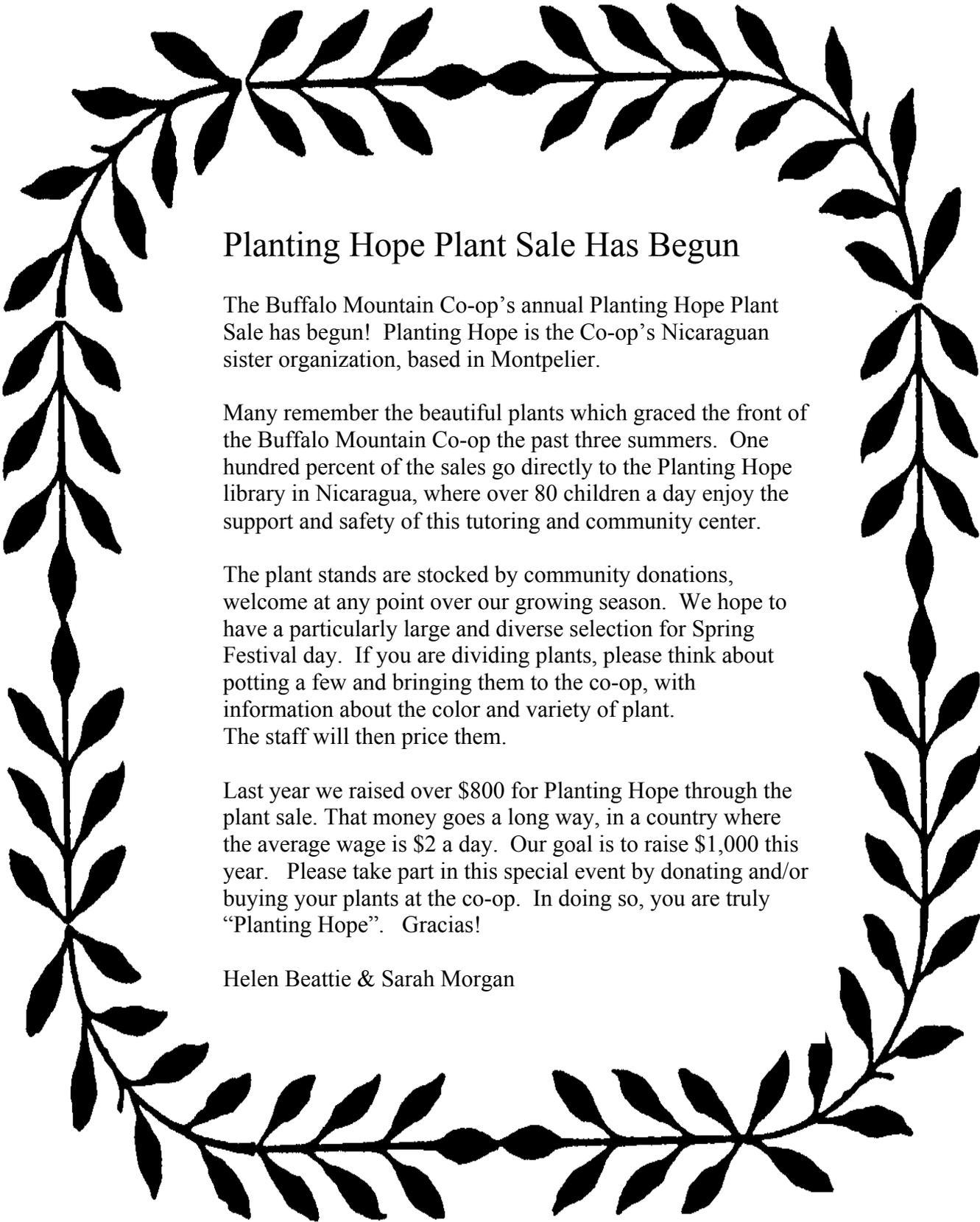
My home stay was with a family that by Nicaraguan standards has more than some. The kitchen, social spaces, work space and stone sinks to wash clothing and dishes in all had dirt floors while my bedroom had a tile floor. Every day we had to sweep and wet down the dirt floors. The family had acquired electricity a few months ago-- five light bulbs and two outlets (this

was a very big deal). To say that this is a “house” by our standards is inaccurate: it’s really a group of spaces with metal roof covering them. The bedroom and bathrooms had walls and there was a space where Marbelly (home stay mom) worked on sewing and where guests slept. These spaces made up a 15 by 15 foot space where six family members and I slept. The living/gathering space was open air with a covered metal roof. There was a space where Genaro (the dad) worked on building cabinets and windows outdoors—no walls, no roof. This was also where the garden with flowers and herbs used for cooking and medicine grew under a hot sun that rarely saw a cloud. The rainy season would start in a few weeks but for now in the cool mountains the average temperature was in the 90s and the air was thick with humidity.

In our house they installed running water while I was there and built a shower with a “real” toilet. I learned to wash my clothes in a stone sink. I gave the whole family a good laugh as they watched me learn. There is a correct way to do this that even the youngest children know. It was inconceivable to them that I did not know how to do such a simple thing. (It is not truly simple. It’s like kneading bread but takes real arm and back strength. If you do it wrong you ruin the clothing). Because it was the end of the dry season water was scarce and had to be used with care. Most nights members of my family would gather to teach me Spanish, to sing or to teach me a folk dance. Every morning the extended family would come and sit around with me while I ate (I never saw them sit down and eat but that was their custom to eat many small meals. Only when I cooked pancakes for them did everyone sit down in shifts and eat.) It was during this time every day that I had my Spanish lessons for at least an hour. This was very funny and we laughed a lot. The rule was that anything they taught me in Spanish I had to teach them in English. They learned English quicker than I learned Spanish!

My family there was very poor by our standards. They had so little yet their lives were rich with what they did have. I found this true among all the home-stay families and with the homes we visited. The custom of visiting others’ homes happened by walking down a street and walking into an open space saying “Hola”. Then a conversation began. In many homes there were no doors to knock on or doors were always open as long as someone was home. This was true not just with my family but with the whole community. Stopping and visiting frequently was part of the day for everyone.

This set the tone for our service learning experience, which I will describe in the next issue.



Planting Hope Plant Sale Has Begun

The Buffalo Mountain Co-op's annual Planting Hope Plant Sale has begun! Planting Hope is the Co-op's Nicaraguan sister organization, based in Montpelier.

Many remember the beautiful plants which graced the front of the Buffalo Mountain Co-op the past three summers. One hundred percent of the sales go directly to the Planting Hope library in Nicaragua, where over 80 children a day enjoy the support and safety of this tutoring and community center.

The plant stands are stocked by community donations, welcome at any point over our growing season. We hope to have a particularly large and diverse selection for Spring Festival day. If you are dividing plants, please think about potting a few and bringing them to the co-op, with information about the color and variety of plant. The staff will then price them.

Last year we raised over \$800 for Planting Hope through the plant sale. That money goes a long way, in a country where the average wage is \$2 a day. Our goal is to raise \$1,000 this year. Please take part in this special event by donating and/or buying your plants at the co-op. In doing so, you are truly "Planting Hope". Gracias!

Helen Beattie & Sarah Morgan



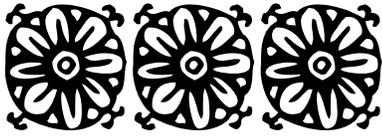
Song-birds For Breakfast?

The food you eat can have a direct impact on the song-birds in your front yard. This is the assertion made in a March 30th article in *The New York Times* by Bridget Sutchbury. The article sites the findings of former Buffalo Mountain Co-op member Roz Renfrew, now a biologist at the Vermont Center for Ecostudies. Roz describes a study she conducted in Bolivia in which she captured bobolinks feeding in rice fields in Bolivia and took samples of their blood to test for pesticide exposure. She found that about half of the birds had drastically reduced levels of cholinesterase, an enzyme that affects brain and nerve cells — a sign of exposure to toxic chemicals. The article states that; “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. Rice farmers in the region use monocrotophos, methamidophos and carbofuran, all agricultural chemicals that are rated Class I toxins by the World Health Organization, are highly toxic to birds, and are either restricted or banned in the United States.”

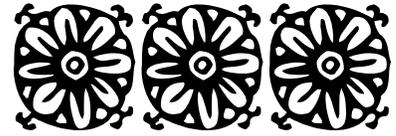
“In the mid-1990s, American biologists used satellite tracking to follow Swainson’s hawks to their wintering grounds in Argentina, where thousands of them were found dead from monocrotophos poisoning. Migratory songbirds like bobolinks, barn swallows and Eastern kingbirds are suffering mysterious population declines, and pesticides may well be to blame. A single application of a highly toxic pesticide to a field can kill seven to 25 songbirds per acre. About half the birds that researchers capture after such spraying are found to suffer from severely depressed neurological function.”

“What should you put on your bird-friendly grocery list? Organic coffee, for one thing. Most mass-produced coffee is grown in open fields heavily treated with fertilizers, herbicides, fungicides and insecticides. In contrast, traditional small coffee farmers grow their beans under a canopy of tropical trees, which provide shade and essential nitrogen, and fertilize their soil naturally with leaf litter. Their organic, fair-trade coffee is now available in many coffee shops and supermarkets, and it is recommended by the Audubon Society, the American Bird Conservancy and the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center. Organic bananas should also be on your list. Bananas are typically grown with one of the highest pesticide loads of any tropical crop. Although bananas present little risk of pesticide ingestion to the consumer, the environment where they are grown is heavily contaminated.”

Thanks to Regina Troiano for this article



April 26th



At the edge of the woods
still draped with scarves of snow

Coltsfoot pushes through the Earth
their yellow blossoms unopened
poised
waiting for the sun

and from deep in the woods
the barred owl is heard

Gokokhas gokokhas gokokhas...

Encouraged enough
he sings his love song.

Phyllis Rachel Larrabee

(Gokokhas is the sound of the barred owl as well as his/her Abenaki name.)

BUFFALO MOUNTAIN FOOD COOPERATIVE MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Buffalo Mountain Co-op, Inc. is:

To develop within its area of influence a community-owned and operated, health-oriented, thriving enterprise;

To continually educate the community as a whole in regard to food politics, health issues, and our social-cultural activities;

To demonstrate alternative approaches to structuring our work environment so that it is more decent and compassionate;

To offer healthy, pro-active choices, and

To open our doors to, and develop all aspects of our community.

We provide food for all people, not for profit.

Co-op Staff Responsibilities

Kate Arnold – Coffee, Medicinal Herbs and Office Support

Barry Baldwin – Office Guy, Board Liaison, Building Maintenance

William Bridwell – Bulk Coordinator

Robin Cappuccino – Working Member and Community Outreach Coordinator

Kathy Castellano – Health and Beauty Aids, Bulk Spice and Tea, Vitamin Buyer

Beth Cate – Meat Dept Coordinator, Assist with Grocery

Rachel Davey – Café Coordinator

Alicia Feltus - Produce Coordinator

Annie Gaillard – Grocery, Dairy and Freezer Coordinator

Deborah Hart – Pet Food, Cards, Candles, Gift Items Buyer

Lori Leff – Assist with Grocery, Bread, Eggs, Books, Music, Café Art Coordinator

Joe Merion – Produce Coordinator

Angus Munro – Bulk Products in Bins and Computer Maintenance

Caitlin Strong – on Maternity Leave

Regina Troiano – Bookkeeper

Deb Wilson – Café Coordinator