



Buffalo Bullsheets

—♦♦♦—
Fall 2008

Buffalo Mountain
Food Cooperative

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Co-op Hours

Monday–Friday:

9am to 7pm

Saturday:

9am to 6pm

Sunday:

10am to 4pm

Tails From the Barnyard, or; Manure I Have Known by Olive

After years of coaxing a garden out of my thin, acidic top-soil that barely covers the ledges my place sits on, I have come to realize the importance of shit. Manure is perhaps the more polite word for it, but whatever one's comfort zone, the meaning is still the same. I have finally struck gold in my search for the perfect stuff. I've tried cow manure; too heavy to shovel into the tubs that I heave into my truck on their way to my compost bins. Chicken manure; smells terrible and too hard to age. Goat manure; too hard to collect in quantities large enough to count. Horse manure; just right. It's light with a very high fiber content and when aged to perfection, it's like a good wine. A slow release, agreeable aroma, light on the shovel, never burns, and works its way into the soil with a smooth finish. The worms love it; they can tunnel in and out with ease. They can build condominiums and roadways for their ever increasing population, hold parties and reunions; what ever they want. There's all kinds of activity down there that could never have happened in the clay soil it used to be.

There's a horse farm not far from where I work that is only too happy to have people come up and collect as much manure as they need. The farm has at least seven or eight horses, and as the owner says to me as I'm loading the truck, "Take as much as you like, the horses are always making more." They never ask anything for it, but I like to leave something in return like a division of iris or a bag of tomatoes, whatever is handy and ready to pass along.

It wasn't always that easy-over the years I have had great sources only to get cut off when the farm transitioned to organic and needed all the manure for their own fields. Or before that, the dog who owned the farm where I was collecting turned mean, and warned me one day in no uncertain terms that if I knew what was good for me, I'd back away from the horse barn, and never step foot on his property again. I took his advice. So having access to a never ending pile, close to the road, and free on top of that has made all the difference to a small-time gardener who inherited poor soil years ago. If you don't have horses of your own, make friends with someone who does, and you're in business.

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Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I read with interest the article in the Fall issue of the Bullsheet about the preponderance of plastic bags in our environment, and the importance of re-using, or at best, not using plastic bags at all. The article presented some well researched evidence on the negative impact of plastic bags with a focus on shopping bags in particular. I was left wondering however about all those other plastic bags our co-op is using more and more of, for everything from beets, brussel sprouts and broccoli to couscous, coconut and carob powder. It's a little dis-heartening to purchase organic produce and bulk-foods with the best of intentions only to be purchasing toxic plastics in the bargain. If produce drying out is the problem being addressed by the bagging, how about spraying the produce with our good Hardwick water more often?

I appreciate all the beautiful food our co-op makes available to us, and the hard-working staff and co-op working members who help make it all happen. I know that we'll never do away with all the bags, but I'd like to challenge us to take to heart the implications of all that plastic entering the waste stream through our purchases of the organic fruits of all the local and world-wide producers who go to such great lengths to make our food as pure, non-toxic and contributing to a sustainable planet as possible.

Thanks, Sharon Fialco

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;

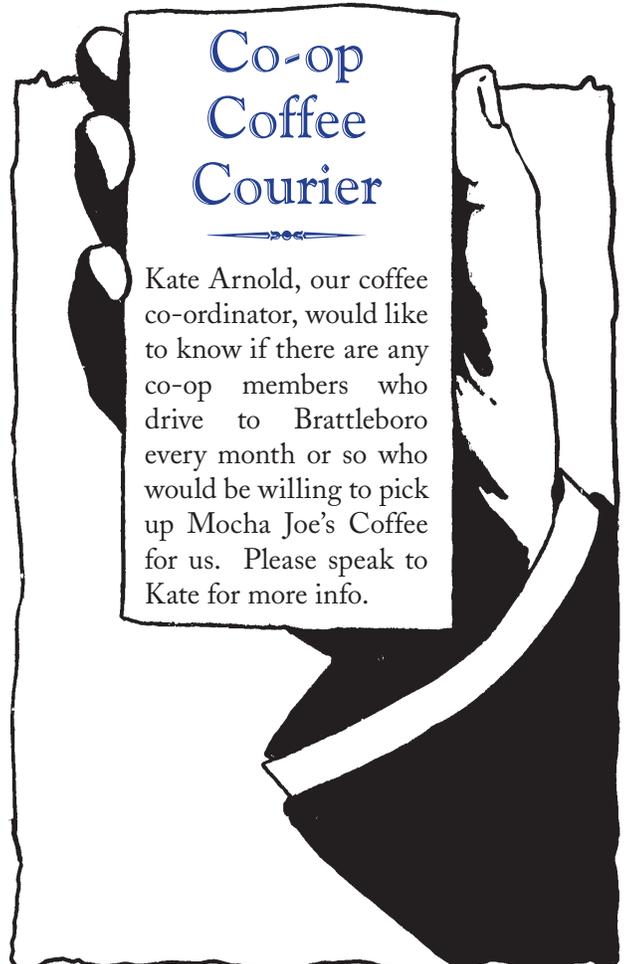
To offer healthy, pro-active choices, and

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

We provide food for all people, not for profit.

Co-op Coffee Courier

Kate Arnold, our coffee co-ordinator, would like to know if there are any co-op members who drive to Brattleboro every month or so who would be willing to pick up Mocha Joe's Coffee for us. Please speak to Kate for more info.



Equal Exchange Campaign to Create A Green and More Just Food System

“The best way to protect jobs and livelihoods, ensure people’s food security and health, and protect the environment is to keep food production in the hands of small-scale farmers.”

Via Campesina, an international farmers’ organization

A green and more just food system starts with small farmers, represents a path to bringing justice to the food system and health to the planet. Since 1986, Equal Exchange has been recognized for being a pioneer in Fair Trade and is now creating additional ways consumers and producers can join together to reduce our environmental footprints, conserve natural resources, and demand agriculture and trade policies that actually benefit small-scale farmers and consumers, instead of large corporations. The positive impact of these actions would indeed represent a powerful change.

Why should consumers care about small farmers? While 25–30% of the carbon dioxide emissions that contribute to global warming are estimated to come from the industrial agriculture sector, the sustainable farming practices of small-scale producers actually help cool the planet, protect the environment, and restore local eco-systems. Organic farming, reforestation, soil and watershed protection, and the use of stoves that convert organic waste into methane gas are just some of the ways in which small-scale farmers are keeping our food, our bodies, and our eco-systems healthy. By supporting small-scale farmers, we can bring justice to the food system and help reduce the effects of our changing climate. It’s a win-win solution that benefits us all.

However, small-scale farmers face tremendous challenges. Many of our agriculture and trade policies are designed to favor large agricultural corporations. The subsidies, credits, and tax incentives the government awards to agribusiness dramatically undermine the ability of small farmers to compete in the marketplace. Additionally, global warming causes changes in weather patterns which affect crops and crop cycles. Unusual storms have become more frequent and severe, causing a loss of lives, homes, crops and livelihoods.

Equal Exchange is also inviting consumers to directly support the environmental protection and food security projects that small-scale farming co-operatives are implementing in their communities. Toward this end, we have created the Small Farmers Green Planet Fund. Two of the exciting projects the fund will support this year are:

Climate change adaptation project, South Africa.

The Heiveld Co-operative and Wupperthal Tea Association are comprised of 220 small-scale farming families located in the Northern and Western Cape Provinces of South Africa. These indigenous communities descend from native Khoi and San populations that have inhabited the region and cultivated rooibos for centuries. Due to extreme climatic conditions in the southern Kalahari, global climate change affects these farmers disproportionately. Their land, livelihood and culture are in peril. Equal Exchange has committed to raising \$20,000 to support their efforts to adapt to this rapid climate change. The project will include initiatives to: enhance bio-diversity; promote water conservation; develop windbreaks using native plant materials to enhance soil carbon and reduce soil degradation; and, recapture the indigenous strategies of natural resource management used by their ancestors.

Food security and income generation, Mexico.

CESMACH was founded in 1995 to help the farmers in the Sierra Madre region of Chiapas to market their coffee at higher prices, access affordable credit and receive



technical assistance, while at the same time protect the important resources of the El Triunfo Biosphere Reserve, a U.N. designated World Heritage Site. The organization groups 270 families of small coffee producers in 14 communities, located in the buffer zones of the Reserve. Within the nucleus of the biosphere, agricultural activities are not permitted as the area contains many endangered and protected species. Organic farming is allowed in the buffer zone, which separates the biosphere from the surrounding region, as long as it is done in accordance with a strict set of standards designed to protect the fragile environment of the rain and cloud forest. For thousands of farmers living in this area, coffee is the principal agricultural activity and their only source of income.

Consequently, CESMACH has decided not only to become the supplier of the highest quality, organic coffee in the region, but to create and implement a variety of social development and environmental projects which

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Fermenting Foods

by Co-op Member Judy Jarvis

Fermented foods are a wonderful and tasty way to stay healthy. Fermentation increases the vitamin and mineral content of the food, enhances your digestion as well as making the food much easier to digest, and promotes healthy flora throughout your intestines making you more resistant to disease. They are easy to make yourself so you can preserve food as soon as it is picked and at its peak vitamin content. There are there are many variations of food and drinks you can make to satisfy different taste buds. One drink I have been enjoying is lemon, ginger and honey. I cut up 2 organic whole lemons and take out the seeds. Put them in a wide mouth quart jar. Grate up 2 to 4 tab. of peeled ginger root depending on how gingery you like your drinks. Mix 2 to 3 Tab of raw honey in warm water until dissolved. Add to quart jar and fill with spring water or untreated water. (Both chlorine and fluoride displace iodine which is needed for a healthy thyroid gland.) Cover with a towel and stir several times a day for about a week until bubbly. Strain and squeeze out the juice from the lemons and store in the refrigerator. Drink as is or dilute it if it is too strong for your taste. The lemons give you Vitamin C and bioflavonoid and help dissolve mucus. The ginger is warm and stimulating and will help you sweat out toxins. The raw honey has vitamins, minerals, and has antibiotic, antifungal and antiviral properties. I made a delicious drink using elderberries, rosehips, ginger and honey. I fermented them in water and then squeezed out all the juice through cheesecloth. You can make it with any fruit and get fresh live antioxidants, vitamins and minerals. I was going to try it with cranberries and cinnamon. These two recipes

are from *Nourishing Traditions* by Sally Fallon. Cabbage juice improves your intestinal flora. Put ¼ green cabbage, 1 tab. sea salt, 2 tab. whey and filtered water in a ½ gallon container. Cover tightly and leave out until bubbly. It depends on how warm your house is, warmer and it will take 2 to 3 days, colder and it will take longer. Beet kvass is a wonderful liver cleanser, blood tonic, loaded with nutrients and aids regularity. Beets help to moisten dry bodies so are helpful to eat when you have a dry house during the winter. To make the beet kvass cut up 2 medium beets, 2 tab. whey, 1 tea. sea salt and filtered water to fill a half-gallon jar. Cover tightly and keep at room temperature for 2 to 3 days until bubbly. Sometimes the kvass doesn't come out. Dump it out and make it again. Everyone who makes it has that problem sometimes and I don't know why but it will taste flat instead of bubbly and effervescent. If you make cheese you have plenty of whey or you can strain yogurt and make yogurt cheese and save the whey in the refrigerator to use again. All fermented foods need to be kept cold or they will keep fermenting and you may find them too strong for your taste. Experiment with different drinks and fruit and vegetable combinations to keep yourself healthy and thoroughly enjoying food.



Judy Jarvis is a homeopathic and Heilkunst practitioner in East Hardwick

The Co-op has a small but carefully chosen book department under the thoughtful management of Lori Leff. Two current titles on fermented foods are:

Nourishing Traditions

by Sally Fallon with Mary G Enig, PhD
(mentioned by Judy Jarvis in her article)

This well-researched, thought-provoking guide to traditional foods contains a startling message: Animal fats and cholesterol are not villains but vital factors in the diet, necessary for normal growth, proper function of the brain and nervous system, protection from disease and optimum energy levels. Sally Fallon dispels the myths of the current low-fat fad in this practical, entertaining guide to a can-do diet that is both nutritious and delicious.

Topics include the health benefits of traditional fats and oils (including butter and coconut oil); dangers of vegetarianism; problems with modern soy foods; health benefits of sauces and gravies; proper preparation of whole grain products; pros and cons of milk consumption; easy-

to-prepare enzyme enriched condiments and beverages; and appropriate diets for babies and children.

Wild Fermentation

by Sandor Ellix Katz

Bread. Cheese. Wine. Beer. Coffee. Chocolate. Most people consume fermented foods and drinks every day. For thousands of years, humans have enjoyed the distinctive flavors and nutrition resulting from the transformative power of microscopic bacteria and fungi. *Wild Fermentation: The Flavor, Nutrition, and Craft of Live-Culture Foods* is the first cookbook to widely explore the culinary magic of fermentation.

"Fermentation has been an important journey of discovery for me," writes author Sandor Ellix Katz. "I invite you to join me along this effervescent path, well

The Center for an Agricultural Economy: A Vision for a Healthy 21st Century Food System in the Greater Hardwick Community



The Center for an Agricultural Economy recently moved into a ground floor office space in the Bemis Building. As a 501c(3) non-profit dedicated to building a healthy, local food system for the 21st Century, we are appropriately located between two local food establishments, Claire's Restaurant and the Buffalo Mountain Co-op. Among other things the Center runs the Hardwick Community Gardens and has recently purchased the Atkins Field property in Hardwick to develop agricultural infrastructure and incubator programs.

The Center has a clear vision to build upon local tradition and with others, bring together the community resources and programs needed to develop a locally-based, regenerative, and healthy food system. This vision supports the desire of rural communities to rebuild their economic and ecological health through strong, secure, and revitalized agricultural systems that will meet both their own food needs locally and determine and build the best opportunities for value-added agricultural exports.

To build an even more robust local food system, the Center is establishing and nurturing a network of public, private, non-profit and academic partners to bring a range of resources to the table. We will be focused on building the physical infrastructure local producers and consumers need, strategizing around issues of food access, developing models and tools for assessing food system health, and continuing the tradition of celebrating food in our community. Among other things we are trying to inventory the farms, food producers, food processors, service providers (i.e. butchers, nutrient management planners, etc), local food product retailers, and other aspects of the food system within a 25 mile radius of Hardwick. If you have a business or organization that is part of the food system in this area, please email us and make sure we have your contact information and a brief description of what you do. Emails can be sent to center@hardwickagriculture.org.

As any folks who frequent the co-op likely already know, Vermont has had a history of diverse agricultural businesses for decades, especially in Hardwick and surrounding towns. This long-established and ground breaking organic agricultural base is what has made possible the innovative and entrepreneurial developments that have led to the explosive growth in both existing and new sustainable agricultural businesses over the last five years. Significantly, the Northeast Organic Farmers Association (NOFA) notes that this region of Vermont has the greatest number per capita organic farms in *the entire country*. We are gathering more input from communities members about work the Center should be undertaking, as well as to contribute to work we have already set out to do, such as increase local access to nutritious food, celebration of food locally as the center piece of our community, and necessary infrastructure to support the work and meet the needs of homesteaders, and small and medium sized farms. We need community input and hope you will help contribute to an intentional process of designing and realizing the food system we collectively want and need.

This long-standing sustainable agricultural activity has directly contributed to recent recognition that Hardwick is building a new food system that can serve as a model for other nearby rural areas, and elsewhere in Vermont.

The Board of Directors consists of Neil Urie - Bonnieview Farm, Pete Johnson - Pete's Greens, Tom Stearns - High Mowing Organic Seeds, Andy Kehler - Jasper Hill Farm, Tom Gilbert - Highfields Institute, Andrew Meyer - Vermont Soy/Vermont Natural Coatings, and Warren Rankin - Top Rankin Farm. The Center has two full time staff, Monty Fischer and Hilary Hoffman. Please stop by anytime to share input, stories and ideas, and visit our website at www.hardwickagriculture.org.

trodden for thousands of years yet largely forgotten in our time and place, bypassed by the superhighway of industrial food production.”

The flavors of fermentation are compelling and complex, quite literally alive. This book takes readers on a whirlwind trip through the wide world of fermentation, providing readers with basic and delicious recipes-some familiar, others exotic-that are easy to make at home.

The book covers vegetable ferments such as sauerkraut, kimchi, and sour pickles; bean ferments including miso, tempeh, dosas, and idli; dairy ferments

including yogurt, kefir, and basic cheesemaking (as well as vegan alternatives); sourdough bread-making; other grain fermentations from Cherokee, African, Japanese, and Russian traditions; extremely simple wine- and beer-making (as well as cider-, mead-, and champagne-making) techniques; and vinegar-making. With nearly 100 recipes, this is the most comprehensive and wide-ranging fermentation cookbook ever published.

Both books are available at the co-op for \$25, minus co-op discounts.

Planting Hope News Update

Planting Hope is planning its annual multi-generational trip to Nicaragua, over the February school vacation (February 21 to March 2, 2009). You will live with home-stay families in the village of San Ramon, and make daily visits to diverse settings. Activities will include visits to play with children in rural public and pre-schools and students at La Chispa Library in the city of Matagalpa, and trips to the Casa Materna pre-natal shelter, and Nicaraguan weaving and paper cooperatives. This trip concludes with vacation time in the beautiful city of Granada and at a lodge at the edge of a volcanic lake (Laguna de Apoyo in Masaya). The cost is \$800 per adult and \$600 per child traveling with an adult. This fee includes all meals, lodging, entry fees, hotels and ground transportation in Nicaragua. Airfare is not included. For information, call Darryl Bloom at 802-229-4145 or Helen Beattie 802-472-5127 for more information. There will be a gathering of all interested participants on November 13 in Montpelier. This is a highly recommended, often life-changing, unforgettable experience!

Planting Hope is planning a Winter Nicaraguan Cooking Workshop

A group of 10 Nicaraguan students and 2 adults will be spending the month of January in Vermont, sponsored by Planting Hope. We have delayed the traditional fall Coop Nicaraguan dinner until Saturday, January 24, when we will be able to incorporate the cooking and dancing expertise of this group into our evening of celebration. A Nicaraguan Cooking Workshop will be hosted in the Hazen Union kitchen, on the afternoon of January 24, led by our visitors. You will learn undeniably authentic (!) Nicaraguan cooking, while helping to prepare for the evening's meal! Please sign up for this workshop at the check-out counter at the co-op (posted January 1), or call Helen Beattie (472-5127). The exact time frame will be noted on the sign-up sheet. Donations for this workshop will be gladly accepted, offsetting the costs of hosting this Nicaraguan group. (Note: We will also have a sign-up for help with the evening event, which takes approximately 30 volunteers — it takes a community to pull this one off!).

Newsletter Correction

I was working the register at the coop recently and Ruth Gaillard came in and said that she had a question about my article on the coop management she wanted to know who the “old hippies” were because she was there and the founders of the co-op were mostly young people, for this error I must apologize. I have only fifteen years here of listening to the stories of “way back when” which I store diligently in my mind and so all these elder hippies were young when this co-op was formed we’ve just gotten more years beneath our belts now. The co-op was founded by a group of wise younger hippies, intellectuals and young families struggling to create a new way in the world to get what they needed from food to snowshoes. There have been a long stream of young and old who have grown together here and some of us newcomers who have only seen one or two generations flow through and become aged elders of our community. I myself was helping at the Plainfield Co-op at the time the Hardwick Co-op was being founded, driving to Boston at the crack of dawn to get produce etc. and now I know what it means to age, forgetting how young I was.

With apologies to all you youngsters who have helped and grown wiser along the way,

Angus Munro

Another Reason for Schools to Ban Genetically Engineered Foods

Submitted by Kate Arnold from an article written in 2004 by Jeffrey M. Smith, Institute for Responsible Technology

Before the Appleton Wisconsin high school replaced their cafeteria's processed foods with wholesome, nutritious food, the school was described as out-of-control. There were weapons violations, student disruptions, and a cop on duty full-time. After the change in school meals, the students were calm, focused, and orderly. There were no more weapons violations, and no suicides, expulsions, dropouts, or drug violations. The new diet and improved behavior has lasted for seven years, and now other schools are changing their meal programs with similar results.

Years ago, a science class at Appleton found support for their new diet by conducting a cruel and unusual experiment with three mice. They fed them the junk food that kids in other high schools eat everyday. The mice freaked out. Their behavior was totally different than the three mice in the neighboring cage. The neighboring mice had good karma; they were fed nutritious whole foods and behaved like mice. They slept during the day inside their cardboard tube, played with each other, and acted very mouse-like. The junk food mice, on the other hand, destroyed their cardboard tube, were no longer nocturnal, stopped playing with each other, fought often, and two mice eventually killed the third and ate it. After the three month experiment, the students rehabilitated the two surviving junk food mice with a diet of whole foods. After about three weeks, the mice came around.

Sister Luigi Frigo repeats this experiment every year in her second grade class in Cudahy, Wisconsin, but mercifully, for only four days. Even on the first day of junk food, the mice's behavior "changes drastically." They become lazy, antisocial, and nervous. And it still takes the mice about two to three weeks on unprocessed foods to return to normal. One year, the second graders tried to do the experiment again a few months later with the same mice, but this time the animals refused to eat the junk food.

It's interesting to note that the junk food fed to the mice in the Wisconsin experiments also contained genetically modified ingredients. And although the Appleton school lunch program did not specifically attempt to remove GM foods, it happened anyway. That's because GM foods such as soy and corn and their derivatives are largely found in processed foods. So when the school switched to unprocessed alternatives, almost all ingredients derived from GM crops were taken out automatically.

Does this mean that GM foods negatively affect the behavior of humans or animals? It would certainly be irresponsible to say so on the basis of a single student mice experiment and the results at Appleton. On the other hand, it is equally irresponsible to say that it doesn't.

We are just beginning to understand the influence of food on behavior. A study in *Science* in December 2002 concluded that "food molecules act like hormones, regulating body functioning and triggering cell division. The molecules can cause mental imbalances ranging from attention-deficit and hyperactivity disorder to serious mental illness." The problem is we do not know which food molecules have what effect. The bigger problem is that the composition of GM foods can change radically without our knowledge.

In spite of the potential for dramatic changes in the composition of GM foods, they are typically measured for only a small number of known nutrient levels. But even if we *could* identify all the changed compounds, at this point we wouldn't know which might be responsible for the antisocial nature of mice or humans. Likewise, we are only beginning to identify the medicinal compounds in food. We now know, for example, that the pigment in blueberries may revive the brain's neural communication system, and the antioxidant found in grape skins may fight cancer and reduce heart disease. But what about other valuable compounds we don't know about that might change or disappear in GM varieties?

Consider GM soy. In July 1999, years after it was on the market, independent researchers published a study showing that it contains 12-14 percent less cancer-fighting phytoestrogens. What else has changed that we don't know about? [Monsanto responded with its own study, which concluded that soy's phytoestrogen levels vary too much to even carry out a statistical analysis. They failed to disclose, however, that the laboratory that conducted Monsanto's experiment had been instructed to use an obsolete method to detect phytoestrogens—one that had been replaced due to its highly variable results.]

Differences in GM food will likely have a much larger impact on children. They are three to four times more susceptible to allergies. Also, they convert more of the food into body-building material. Altered nutrients or added toxins can result in developmental problems.

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Seasonal Recipes: This time of year the kale just gets sweeter!

Italian Kale

Ingredients:

1 bunch kale, stems removed
and leaves coarsely chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
Salt and ground black pepper
to taste

Directions:

Cook the kale in a large, covered
saucepan over medium-high heat
until the leaves wilt. Once the
volume of the kale is reduced by
half, uncover and stir in the garlic,
olive oil and vinegar. Cook while
stirring for 2 more minutes. Add
salt and pepper to taste.

Kale and Bean Soup

Ingredients:

1 Tbs olive oil
8 large cloves of garlic chopped
4 cups chopped raw kale
5 cups chicken or vegetable
broth
4 cups cooked white beans (navy
or great northern)
4 plum tomatoes chopped
2 tsps Italian herb
seasonings
salt and pepper to taste
1 cup chopped parsley

Directions:

In a large pot, heat
olive oil. Add garlic
and onion: sauté until
soft. Add kale and sauté,
stirring until wilted. Add 3
cups of broth, 2 cups of beans,

and all of the tomato, herbs, salt
and pepper. Simmer 5 minutes.
In a blender or food processor,
mix the remaining beans and
broth until smooth. Stir into soup
to thicken. Simmer 15 minutes.
Ladle into bowls; sprinkle with
chopped parsley.



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 Hartt—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—Bulk and Cheese Coordinator

Regina Troiano—Bookkeeper

Deb Wilson—Café Coordinator



Hardwick Hoopla

Well it looks like the cover's been blown off one of the best-kept secrets in Vermont by all the Hardwick Hoopla lately (article in *7 Days*, *New York Times*, etc.). That secret of course is what a great community Hardwick has always been. These articles aren't the first to allude to Hardwick's rough and tumble reputation, and the hardscrabble, rugged individualist types who live here. But in the 35 years I have been a part of it, what has impressed me most about this greater community has been how people for the most part just find a way to get-along, get-along well, and on top of that, offer a ready hand-up to each-other more often than not.

How can people who on the surface appear to be so completely unlike each other live in the same community and do all right by each other? Maybe it has something to do with the fact that you never know who'll be driving by when you're up to your fenders in muck during mud season, or buried up to your antennae in a snow-bank during the blizzard, and need an extra shoulder to help push your buggy back onto navigable ground. Maybe it's something to do with how powerful, raw and breathtakingly beautiful the mountainous wilderness that surrounds us can be. That combined with our often ferocious and inescapable weather can't help but serve to humble and bring "down to earth" even the most highfalutin' or inclined to pretension amongst us. Perhaps we're brought together by the shared insanity of actually choosing to live in a place like this; four months of arctic weather, followed by mud season, followed by black-fly season, then there's the deer flies, then the traffic slows to a crawl for foliage season, and it's about time for the woolen skivvies again. It takes a certain kind of someone to want to be a part of all that, and it could be a kind of affinity for others with that shared affliction is called into play.

Here at the co-op we have benefited greatly by being part of a community with such a profound collaborative heritage. The fundamental co-operative ideal that together we can do things more effectively and more enjoyably than we can alone has a rock-solid foundation in the age-old traditions of barn-raising, quilting bees, and helping to get your neighbor's hay in before the rain. Back in the early days of our co-op, it was our senior citizens who were among the first locals to come in and shop. Perhaps it was an innate appreciation of the co-operative ethic honed by decades of farmer's co-ops, the Grange and the like. Perhaps the co-op recalled for them the old general stores where you'd buy a block of cheese from the wheel on the counter, help yourself to pickles from the barrel or grain from the bin. Whatever the reason, what began as a largely flat-lander enterprise was warmly welcomed, and eventually utilized by the entire community.

Our first home was in what is now *New To You*, across from Poulin Lumber. After we were flooded out once too often by the raging Lamoille, we moved to the Houghton Building. We shared that building with the Messier's State Liquor Store on one side, and Cal Foster's gun shop below us. We were also the unofficial home of the Greater Hardwick Peace and Justice Coalition. As you might imagine, or remember, we did a brisk business in lemons, limes and salted peanuts. There was also plenty of opportunity for the exchange of divergent viewpoints, perspectives and opinion. Through it all, there was an amicable, spirited and more or less open-minded dynamic that characterizes much of what Hardwick is best at. With any luck, all the great new projects and attention won't change that much.

Robin Cappuccino

Another Reason for Schools to Ban Genetically Engineered Foods continued from page 7

For this reason, animal nutrition studies are typically conducted on young, developing animals.

Unfortunately, there is a much bigger experiment going on—an uncontrolled one which we are all a part of. We're being fed GM foods daily, without knowing the impact of these foods on our health, our behavior, or our children. Thousands of schools around the world, particularly in Europe, have decided not to let their kids be used as guinea pigs. They have banned GM foods.

The impact of changes in the composition of GM foods is only one of several reasons why these foods may be dangerous. Other reasons may be far worse (see www.seedsofdeception.com). With the epidemic of obesity and diabetes and with the results in Appleton, parents and schools are waking up to the critical role that diet plays. When making changes in what kids eat, removing GM foods should be a priority.

Vandana Shiva (a Bullsheet Favorite) Rocks the House

A food/climate manifesto presents new visions for responding to climate change

Posted by Tom Philpott at 10:43 PM on 26 Oct 2008
at <http://gristmill.grist.org/story/2008/10/25/904/94558>

Turin, Italy—I've just come out of the most hopeful and interesting discussions of climate change I've ever witnessed. Anchored by Indian food-sovereignty activist Vandana Shiva, the panel discussion at Terra Madre unveiled a new "Manifesto on Climate Change and the Future of Food Security," drawn up by the International Commission on the Future of Food and Agriculture.

The room was packed beyond capacity with at least 400 people, and the discussion was translated through headsets into eight languages.

The document under discussion is brisk, lucid, and to the point. I will be publishing it soon on Gristmill as one of those infamous multi-post series.

Vandana Shiva.

To me, Shiva and her multinational crew of colleagues (other commission members include Wendell Berry, Jose Bové of Via Campesina, Frances Moore Lappé, and Alice Waters) have articulated a powerful new vision for confronting climate change—one more potent even than Al Gore's famed slides and push for trade-based solutions.

Where Gore dreams of a "low-carbon" or even "carbon-free" world, Shiva pines for a "carbon-rich" future—one in which agriculture systematically builds organic matter into the soil, capturing it from the atmosphere.

Shiva—a forceful and erudite off-the-cuff speaker—opened by running through the manifesto's main points:

- ✧ Industrial globalized agriculture contributes to and

is vulnerable to climate change

- ✧ Ecological and organic farming contributes to mitigation and adaptation to climate change
- ✧ Transition to local, sustainable food systems benefits the environment and public health
- ✧ Biodiversity reduces vulnerability and increases resilience
- ✧ Genetically modified seeds and breeds: a false solution and dangerous diversion
- ✧ Industrial agrofuels: a false solution and new threat to food security
- ✧ Water conservation is central to sustainable agriculture
- ✧ Knowledge transition for climate adaptation
- ✧ Economic transition toward a sustainable and equitable food future

After going down the list, Shiva gave a brief history of the global sustainable-food movement's involvement with the climate-change debate. She said that in the 90s, when discussions were going on around the Kyoto Treaty, there were simultaneous talks going on around a Biodiversity Treaty. Unfortunately, sustainable food activists, including herself, were content to let climate talks go on without their input; they focused instead on the biodiversity talks. As a result, she said, discourse around climate has almost completely ignored agriculture—even though industrial agriculture emits something like a third of greenhouse gases.

Shiva didn't say this, but I'll add it: Only by blithely ignoring agriculture's role in climate change can people present abominable ideas like government-mandated ethanol and biodiesel as "solutions" to the climate crisis.

Shiva made what I found to be a novel and powerful point about livestock's contribution to greenhouse gases, recently documented by the U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organization: If you're going to take animals off of pastures, deprive them of their native foods (i.e., grass for cows, bugs for chickens, whatever the landscape offers for pigs), and feed them a diet heavy on beans (i.e., soy), they're going to get gas—literally, greenhouse gas (methane).

She said more great stuff than I could copy down. She said that in the current economic system, we release 400 years worth of naturally stored carbon every year. Even if we stop tomorrow, we're still going to get extreme droughts, cyclones that wash saltwater into soils, floods that wash away soil nutrients, etc. In that context, locally adapted agriculture is the "only adaptation strategy that gives us any hope."

She said climate treaties and discussions take place in the stratosphere—in congressional committees, exclusive global confabs peopled by CEOs of vast business empires, etc. She said these people operate under an industrial paradigm, and the solutions they concoct to climate change—cap-and-trade mechanisms, GMO seeds, etc.—mimic and don't challenge that paradigm. While she was talking, I

thought of the extraordinary set of charts from *New Scientist* that David Roberts posted last week—the ones showing the titanic rise of resource consumption and industrial activity in the last century.

I realized why certain right-wingers so vigorously deny human-provoked climate change, and why technocrats push “market-based solutions” to it: because climate change amounts to a tremendous rebuke, from the very earth we stand on and the air we breathe, to industrial-scale economies. The initial answers are denial or desperate attempts to rejigger industrial economies, to make them “carbon-free.”

But in the end, these attempts get nowhere. Real reform, Shiva insisted, will happen when discussions move from the stratosphere to the *soil*, and when we find new, non-industrial ways of thinking.

Shiva responded well to questions from the audience. A Londoner who runs two “sustainable” restaurants said that his clients ask him all the time if the world isn’t doomed, because China and India are rapidly developing into Western-style economies, and using huge amounts of resources along the way. Given that reality, why should Westerners

even try to be “sustainable”? He said he needed help with how to answer these questions—all he does now is stammer something about how “maybe we can show them [Indians and Chinese] a more sustainable way . . .”

Before turning the floor over to Shiva, the moderator pointed out that the average American uses the resources of something like 10 to 15 average Indians. Then Shiva made some excellent points about how the explosion of the Indian and Chinese economies pays tribute to the consumptive power of Americans and Europeans—we’ve gutted our own industrial bases and moved them east, in search of cheap labor and lax environmental controls.

She said that something like 5 percent of Indians have benefited from this trend, and added that per capita food consumption for most Indians had actually declined in the past 20 years. Food security, meanwhile, has been threatened. She pointed out that peasant farmers in India’s most fertile area are fighting to save their land from being swallowed up by a car factory. She might have added that China’s most productive farmland is under severe pressure from industrial pollution and expansion.

Another Englishman, from *The Independent*, pointed out that the last time “our preferred ways of agriculture” held sway, global population could be counted in the hundreds of millions. Today we are 6.7 billion—and growing. What do you say to folks who insist that a return to community-scale, low-input ag will cause millions to starve?

The question was asked with the air of “all very nice indeed, but serious people concern themselves with feeding the world, and you people are being nostalgic.” Shiva responded like Babe Ruth taking aim at a slowly gliding softball.

First, she pointed out that for all of industrial ag’s vaunted food-production power, 1 billion people—and growing—live with hunger. Then she forcefully made the point that mixed-crop agriculture that relies on compost is actually many times more productive on a per-acre basis than industrial monoculture. She also noted that locally adapted agriculture is not a fixed, static thing—it evolves and responds to changes in the land and climate. So which style of agriculture is it that threatens millions with starvation?

Case closed.

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Before you left
you taught me the secrets
of apples at the foot
of the garden
and many other things

how the rain paints the harvest
on mooncalf nights
gliding past
rushing stars.

Before you left
I could not find these words.

Is it possible
to walk gingerly in boots
on caked leaves

and when the coltsfoot
turns purple
will it still be good
for the pain in my chest?

Phyllis Rachel Larrabee, from *Shoveler on the Roof*

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will benefit its members and the fragile Biosphere in which they live. Three years ago, the co-operative began to actively work with the women members and the wives of members to support their efforts to provide a more healthy and diversified diet to their families, as well as generate additional income. Earlier this year, Equal Exchange and its partner, the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, provided \$15,000 to support a women's leadership development and capacity building project. Now Equal Exchange is committing to raise an additional \$20,000 to support an integrated environmental protection and food security project which will establish 50 organic gardens, 180 mixed fruit-tree gardens (2000 plants of different species), 40 rustic family plant nurseries to encourage the recovery of native crops found in the Biosphere, and 30 collective chicken coops in which they will raise 2400 chickens for consumption and sale into the local market.

How can consumers help?

- ✧ Food co-operative members and consumers can purchase Equal Exchange's Organic Co-op Blend. (available at Buffalo Mountain) For every pound purchased, Equal Exchange will donate 25 cents to the Small Farmers Green Planet Fund.
- ✧ Visit: <http://smallfarmersbigchange.coop/> to read about these projects and our campaign, as well as to offer your thoughts and opinions.
- ✧ Support domestic small-scale farmers by purchasing produce from local farmers, and Fairly Traded coffee, tea, and chocolate from small-scale farmer co-operatives abroad.