

A  
special  
engagement  
at Wedge Worldwide!

• PANGEA ORGANICS •

Check out this  
extraordinary line  
of pure and nourishing  
shower gels, soaps  
& body lotions.

Available now  
through  
Wedge Worldwide at  
[WEDGEWORLDWIDE.COOP](http://WEDGEWORLDWIDE.COOP)



IN THIS ISSUE

p6

Food  
Becomes You

p7

Food and  
Minnesota History

p10

Support Local Food:  
Heartland Food Network

p12

Sea  
Vegetables

## Dumbing Down Food Choices— Kids Deserve Better

By Uli Koester

Raise your hand if this has happened to you:

You and your family are invited to a party. Upon arrival, your host beckons you to the buffet table and describes all the fancy delicious foods they've prepared. There is a southwest chili, a spinach lasagna hot out of the oven, a variety of salads obviously devised from scratch, and then, "for the kids, we've got these hot dogs, too."

"something" before going to play. I, myself, have hosted a party in this way. The hot dog is the surest way to avoid the complaints of young eaters perceived to be picky.

Restaurants, of course, perpetuate this misperception. At a recent vacation pitstop to a pancake eatery, I was choosing among various omelettes with nifty ingredients while staring out at my kids from their menu was a pancake with a smiling face of whipped cream and chocolate. Even at home some of us parents—okay, I confess—grab the mac & cheese when we want an easy night at the dinner table.

Of course, we know that children are growing and need healthful food. Yet all too often the belief that kids are finicky and hard to please makes us "dumb down their food." As an educator who specializes in natural foods and nutrition, I find this idea to be a fallacy about most children. I also feel that adults have a responsibility not only to feed children, but to introduce them to the amazing and delicious variety our good earth offers.

I have two growing children at home. One will try anything, and enjoy most of it, the other would prefer macaroni as a daily staple. I resist this, however, and have decided on the following premises:

### 1. Kids deserve a chance to try good food

Many children would really like that southwest chili. Encourage them to try it! I subscribe

(Cont'd on page 3)



photo credit: Chris Bohnhoff

All this happens in a gesture of hospitality and—I assume—as a convenient way to please everybody. You, the adult, want the delicious choices to enjoy while the kids need to eat



## AT THE WEDGE

### LINDY BANNISTER

General Manager

### ELIZABETH ARCHERD

Newsletter Editor &  
Member Services Director

### NICOLE PETERSON

Associate Editor

**Deadline for Next Issue:**  
**March 5, 2007**

Articles, editorials, and letters for the newsletter are welcome. Email copy for possible publication to: [elizabeth@wedge.coop](mailto:elizabeth@wedge.coop). Submission is no guarantee of publication.

### WEDGE CO-OP

2105 Lyndale Ave. South  
Minneapolis, MN 55405  
[www.wedge.coop](http://www.wedge.coop)

Office 612-874-7275  
Store 612-871-3993

Read the newsletter online at  
[www.wedge.coop/newsletter](http://www.wedge.coop/newsletter)

The Wedge Co-op is an  
Equal Opportunity/Affirmative  
Action Employer

Design & Production:  
Handrigan Design

The opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Board, Management, Staff or Member-Owners of the Wedge Community Co-op. Nutrition and health information are given for informational purposes only and are not meant as a substitute for a consultation with a licensed health or dietary practitioner.

If you DON'T want to receive the Wedge Newsletter in the Mail, go to [www.wedge.coop](http://www.wedge.coop) and follow the links to "Membership: Changing Your Preference."

## MOVING?

Go to [www.wedge.coop](http://www.wedge.coop) and click on Membership. Or bring or mail the information to the Wedge. You may also call 612-871-3993 and ask for voicemail box 420 and leave the information there anytime. Be sure to include your ZIP code and member number in all communications.

# Letter from the Board

by Marcy Cordes, President

You've probably seen this description of the Board duties before, either on our website or reproduced in this newsletter. The primary responsibilities of the Wedge Board of Directors are:

1. To ensure sound management of the co-op resources
2. To act as trustees on behalf of the members
3. To set long-range goals and to plan for the future

To members, the practical implications of this statement aren't always apparent, particularly since the Board doesn't participate in operational decisions such as pricing, product selection or supervision of staff other than the General Manager. As a result, our work isn't always visible to the membership.

As I thought about this column and approaches I might take to describing the Board's role, I came across a statement in an article in my files the other day that framed the board's role a little differently: "The greatest threat to the survival of a cooperative is the board of directors." (Dr. Robert Cropp, Director, Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives, 1994).

It's a strong statement, but it emphasizes the importance of the Board to the future of any co-op. As I hear about the financial struggles some of the other co-ops in the metro area currently face, Dr. Cropp's words seem particularly relevant. While the work of the Board may not always be visible to most of the membership, the success of any co-op ultimately depends on the capacity of its directors to provide the vision and direction needed to develop and grow, and sometimes, to survive.

When people got together to form the first Twin Cities' natural food co-ops in the 1970's, the cooperative spirit of these "pioneers" led to the establishment of stores that provided products that weren't available in traditional venues: whole and natural foods. Not all had the business acumen needed to keep their visions moving forward, but many of those early co-ops are still serving members today, including the Wedge. And, all of those early stores provided future co-ops with a model for collaboration and concern for the community that keeps co-ops vital today.

Looking at the history of local co-ops leads us to one of the most important issues currently faced by co-op boards. Products that were once only available at the local co-op can now be purchased at any number of giant retail chains including Lunds, Rainbow, and even Walmart. When consumers have numerous outlets to purchase products once offered exclusively by the co-ops, what steps do we now need to take to ensure our continued relevance and vitality?

The Wedge has already responded in many ways over the years, carving out our unique niche in the market through store expansion (and related growth in the products we can offer our members), the creation of a positive shopping experience and great customer service. The Wedge has also become a key player in ensuring our supply chain through the expansion of Co-op Partners Warehouse and the store's commitment to local producers. Our community efforts, primarily WedgeShare and Midwest Food Connection, are still going strong. And, we continue to work with and support other co-ops, both locally and nationally.

But there is more to do. Due in part to the increased competition and the need for, I believe, increased board performance in the area, the Board has invested time this past year looking at the way it does its work and on processes that can guide our decision-making and ultimately, future outcomes.

As a result, the Board recently revised the Wedge's Mission and Vision statements and are also currently working on a new set of long-range goals that will guide our decisions about the direction, profitability and continued incorporation of the cooperative principles in the work of the co-op. As always, this work will be done in strong partnership with Lindy, our General Manager. We should have our goal-setting completed in February and will publish the results in an upcoming newsletter.

We've also heard loud and clear over the last year or so that the Board needs to become more engaged with members. And, in fact, the Board considers strategies for getting more information about members' needs and wants critical to our planning for the future.

(Cont'd on next page)



## Letter from the Board

(Cont'd from previous page)

To that end, the Board's Trusteeship Committee has been working on ways to obtain more member input. This work has included the development of a member survey list, as well as looking at ways to encourage dialogue between the Board and members on our long-term goals and other Board issues. (We'd love to include you in our email survey project. You can quickly enroll on the website Membership page.)

Finding qualified members to serve on the Board, or even finding individuals who are willing to serve, is a challenge for most co-ops. To improve our own nominating process, the Board has invested time in documenting and improving the steps we take to recruit and evaluate Board candidates. It's important work—this is not a small organization. The Wedge Board represents the Twin Cities' largest co-op membership (soon be to 13,000 strong) and oversees a business with more than \$35,000,000 in annual sales. We have a responsibility as Board members to make decisions that are beneficial to the co-op in general and to the co-op membership as a whole. It is critical, then, that we have board members with visionary capabilities, in addition to business, communication and team-building skills.

In many ways, this work is part of "gearing up" to address opportunities or changing market conditions, while remembering that we are not just another business, existing solely to make a profit. Our success, our survival, as a co-op requires that we maintain profitability to meet members' needs and provide the resources needed to take creative risks... but it's also the board's role to ensure commitment to the co-op's other "bottom-line," adherence to the cooperative values and principles.

## Financial Report

Elka Malkis

Sales at the Co-op for the first two quarters (July 1, 2006 through December 31, 2006) of this fiscal year were \$13,707,615. While this is just a small increase over last year, it is an all-time record. We had, on average, 2,543 shoppers every day and the average transaction was \$29.49.

Aside from Sales information, the financial statements for the second quarter (October through December) were not finished in time to make this issue's deadline. Instead, this report will focus only on the first quarter, July through September 2006.

Sales for the quarter were \$8,898,088, a 9% increase over last year. Our Gross

Profit Margin (how much we have left after paying suppliers for the food we sell) was 34.9%. That means we had just less than 35 cents per dollar in sales left to pay for all other expenses. Those other expenses are: Labor (25.2%), Building (2.5%), Operating (5%), Admin (.5%), Governance (1.2%) and Promotions (.8%). We brought in an additional 2.4% in interest earned, service fees at the warehouse and transfers from the warehouse to the store.

We ended the quarter with \$192,160 in profit, out of which we paid \$166,736 in estimated State and Federal Income Taxes.

## Dumbing Down Food

(Cont'd from page 1)

to the "two small bites" rule. If after that, a child does not like it, so be it. I try to not nag or blame them for having ungrateful tastebuds.

The goal is to open the world of food to our children and not leave them stuck with fast, easy foods and sweets. Even the most picky eaters may have a 1 in 6 success rate for liking new foods, which still allows for a slow expansion of their palate.

### 2. Expect a minimum of healthy eating.

This can vary according to the priorities in your home. Some expectations that I like:

- a fresh or cooked vegetable at lunch and dinner
- fruit twice a day
- a variety of grains--not wheat every day
- regular meals with whole grain

Some interesting outcomes arise when following through on these expectations. For example, one of my sons thinks millet is the same thing as couscous, which he loves. I have chosen not to correct him, but rather exploit the nutritious benefits of millet! On other occasions, the steamed kale or cabbage is the first thing

my children eat off their dinner plate, because they know I will expect it eaten sooner or later. Quite often they will have seconds, because they actually enjoyed it.

Next time I host a party, I may plan the children's menu first, rather than as an afterthought. Maybe it will turn out as nice as the children's special at my favorite restaurant on the North Shore, which includes fresh blueberries, carrot sticks and scrumptious whole wheat buttered bread. Come to think of it, I won't even cook for the adults-- they can eat the cool stuff I fixed the kids.

Uli Koester directs and teaches for the Midwest Food Connection, which sponsors elementary-school classes on nutrition and natural foods. This winter's favorites among kids are the kale and rutabaga stew, fresh green cabbage and yoghurt with maple syrup. Since September, the Midwest Food Connection has taught a 4-lesson curriculum to over 1,000 children in schools near the Wedge. Uli can be reached through the Wedge at (612) 874-7275.

# Bringing Food Issues and Minnesota History Together, a Project

For Eco Education, sustainability is a community effort. By providing teacher professional development and on-going classroom support, and by helping bridge classrooms with the larger community through community partners, we're better able to provide students with the opportunities, experiences and tools to effectively foster change in their communities. Our belief is that the experiences students have will provide them with the knowledge and the skills necessary to inspire, and hopefully instill, ecologically sound decisions and actions in their communities for days to come.



Paul Sommers, a middle-school teacher at Minneapolis' Anthony Middle School, has been working with Eco Education to integrate the Urban Stewards program into his social studies courses for three years. Last year at Anthony, he incorporated the environmental service-learning program into the existing Minnesota history curriculum. The combination was a natural fit. Sixth graders in Sommers' five classes studied food issues alongside their exploration of Minnesota's agricultural history. Students learned about what Minnesota settlers grew, what life growing up on a sod farm was like and the differences between diversified farming, sustainable farming

and mono-crop farming. Students even ground wheat by hand to bake their own bread!

To connect learning to life, students kept food journals which helped them to follow their food choices and analyze their values related to these choices: was it time, cost, taste or production that most affected what they ate?

Students also made connections to the community, by not only inviting a



variety of community speakers to visit the classroom including a conventional farmer, an organic farmer, a researcher on bio-rationals and a speaker on bio-genetics, but by taking to the community themselves. Students divided into three groups to take a full day to explore the following places: a conventional and certified organic family farm in southern Minnesota, the Mill City Museum and a conventional as well as a cooperative grocery store. These diverse experiences helped students understand the

relationship between the history of land use and agriculture, and the choices that people make surrounding food: both in how it is produced and how it's packaged and sold.

Next, students took action by planning to build raised-bed boxed gardens as a way to promote growing healthy food in local communities. To do so, they used the help of Eco Education's Americorps Promise Fellow, Monica Cuneo. Cuneo and other Americorps Promise Fellows, along with local high school students, built and planted over 14 gardens for local communities. At Anthony, students used this example as a catalyst to make contact with Second Harvest Heartland to build 10 vegetable gardens at various distribution sites within Minneapolis to increase the access of healthy, community grown produce to families most in need. They also built six vegetable gardens at Garlough Elementary School in St. Paul. Garlough will be using the gardens as learning tools as they convert to an environmental magnet.

The connections students made at Anthony last year to food, to history and especially to the community, are extremely invigorating. Sustaining our communities and our world is an impressive and difficult undertaking, but when we're able to join together in a network of community support and resources, the impact of our actions becomes truly sustainable.

Eco Education: [www.ecoeducation.org](http://www.ecoeducation.org)

## Farmers Use as Much Pesticide With GM Crops, US Study Finds

by Steve Connor

One of the major arguments in favour of growing GM crops has been undermined by a study showing that the benefits are short-lived because farmers quickly resort to spraying their fields with harmful pesticides.

Supporters of genetically modified crops claim the technique saves money and provides environmental benefits because farmers need to spray their fields fewer times with chemicals.

However, a detailed survey of 481 cotton growers in China found that, although they did use fewer pesticides in the first

few years of adopting GM plants, after seven years they had to use just as much pesticide as they did with conventional crops.

The findings will undermine claims by the biotechnology industry that GM technology can boost food production without necessarily damaging the environment with pesticides.

For the complete article, go to [commondreams.org/headlines06/0727-06.htm](http://commondreams.org/headlines06/0727-06.htm).

© 2006 The Independent

# Fries with that Cloneburger?

By Barth Anderson

In January, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration tentatively approved meat and dairy products from cloned animals for human consumption, a decision that set off a number of red flags with experts and industry leaders over herd health, genetic diversity and animal tracking.

While no immediate danger from the consumption of dairy products or meat from cloned animals was found in the FDA's findings, researchers have long understood that cloned animals tend to live shorter, less healthy lives than "non-clone" animals, posing serious questions about the health of U.S. herds should cloning become a widespread practice. The FDA admitted as much in its report, noting that "some animals involved in the cloning process... are at increased risk of adverse health outcomes relative to conventional animals." Efforts to clone endangered species have been largely unsuccessful for this reason.

This risk factor was spelled out in a 2001 study conducted by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology which found that even when cloned animals appeared normal, they nonetheless harbored genetic disruptions from the cell culturing process that could have the potential to pose unseen dangers to the animal's health.

Since cloned animals may harbor these undetected, genetic disruptions, it would be virtually impossible to trace problems in the food supply without a rigorous tracking system in place, according to University of Minnesota's Organic Outreach Coordinator and past Chair of the National Organic Standards Board, Jim Riddle. Riddle cautions that because the FDA refuses to label or track cloned animal food products, cloning companies and users of the technology would be shielded from liability.

"Without traceability, the determination of harm, should harm occur, is virtually impossible," Riddle said.

Mark Kastel of the Cornucopia Institute, an organic industry watchdog group, said there is no guarantee that some aspects of cloning will not creep into the organic food supply.

"For example, a cloned bull could potentially be used to impregnate dairy cows as high-production operations seek ways to further maximize their facility's milk production," Kastel said, "and those offspring could, under the USDA's present lax enforcement standards, find their way into organic production."

As a result of these various factors, and because consumers are clearly skeptical of cloned food products entering the food system, Riddle has called for a comprehensive



economic impact analysis to examine cloning's impact on existing markets for conventional and organic livestock products.

"The real question with cloning is who is going to benefit—consumers? farmers? animals?" George Siemon, CEO of Organic Valley Cooperative said. "Allowing animal cloning ... to be patented by profit-driven companies has too many unknown risks and is a detriment to farmers and the future of our food supply."

## What's Coming to the Wedge Floral Department

A fabulous array of Len Busch Roses from Plymouth, MN. Their motto is "MN-grown, wildly fragrant." This greenhouse uses integrated pest management, spraying minimally and only if absolutely needed. The greenhouses are heated from a sustainable energy source. In addition to roses, they grow alstromeria (aka Peruvian lilies), gerbera daisies, potted bulbs (the tulips, hyacinth and daffodils in 4-6 inch pots for indoor bloom) and other blooming plants like African violets, cyclamen, begonia and mums.

We're looking forward to offering organic bouquets from Vanderbloom, a local company, with such flowers as

delphinium, roses and Bells of Ireland.

We'll also have bunches of Dutch tulips and daffodils - okay, not local, but beautiful.

With spring coming, look for decorative pussywillow branches from Troy McArthur. They are responsibly wildcrafted with permission from the landowners.

Local organic flowers will appear in April or May, many from Community Homestead in Osceola, WI. Community Homestead is a communal living situation for people with developmental disabilities and provides us with bouquets including gladiolus and mixed wildflowers.

Ryan Evans of Shining Hills Farm and Gardens of Viroqua, WI grows certified organic zinnias, giant sunflowers, amaranth, decorative okra and drives them here straight from the farm. Our floral buyer selects our flowers right off the truck. You can expect heirloom varieties of hydranga and other unique flowers.

If you are looking for houseplants, there are wonderful cacti, succulents, hanging plants, peace lily, rubber plant, ficus and diffenbachia from Green Valley Greenhouse in Ramsey, MN.

Finally, we will also carry integrated pest management Silver Vase Orchids from Florida.





# Food Becomes You

by Wendy Gordon

Fat is evil, right? Or at least part of a nutritional Axis of Evil, alongside saturated fats and cholesterol?

No. Like just about everything else in the world, the reality of fat is far more nuanced than that. While it is tempting to blame the vilification of fat on a cabal of doctors and pharmaceutical companies, these entities are only reacting to a universal human tendency: to simplify our complex and often contradictory universe and paint it black and white. Let's take a closer look at what we throw around so glibly.

Fat is an integral part of life. To be more exact, it is one of the three primary constituents of food, along with carbohydrates and protein. Fat packs the most energy, providing nine calories per gram as opposed to four for carbohydrates and protein. In times of food scarcity (most of human history), this was a valued commodity. While in Tuscany, I sampled a traditional delicacy known as "lardo," thin slices of rendered pork fat. Unappetizing as that may sound today, for centuries it provided valuable calories to peasants laboring on the steep hillsides of western Tuscany. Along with providing calories, fat is the primary carrier of flavor in food. It also adds: an appetizing texture; provides essential constituents for brain development, sexual function reproduction and infant development; promotes healthy skin and hair; and carries fat soluble nutrients such as vitamin E.

Fats are composed of chains of fatty acids bound to the alcohol glycerol. These chains vary in length and in the proportion to hydrogen atoms they contain. Depending on the proportion of hydrogen atoms, fats are ranked according to degree of "saturation." The more saturated a fat is, the more solid it is at room temperature. Generally speaking, animal fats are more saturated than vegetable, with the exception of palm and coconut oil. Though the body is capable of making most fatty acids, it cannot synthesize long chain fatty acids which makes them an essential nutrient. Fish is the most complete source, while flaxseed, canola oil, nuts, seeds and leafy vegetables provide a more limited range of this vital nutrient.

For a long time, polyunsaturated fats were assumed to be the healthiest, but beginning in the 1990's, scientists came to realize that monounsaturated fats (found in olives, peanuts and avocado) were the most beneficial for heart health and carried the least risk of adverse effects. They also discovered evidence that saturated fats were not a blanket entity. Certain saturated fats—in particular stearic acid, found in chocolate and red meat—are at worst neutral and may actually be beneficial.

Trans fats are a totally different animal. Unknown in nature, they are artificially created by adding hydrogen atoms to polyunsaturated fats. This solidifies liquid oils, increasing shelf life and flavor stability. Trans fats are found in many shortenings and margarines and thus, the foods made from them such as commercial french fries. First popularized in the 1960's, trans fats have since turned out to be more damaging to heart health than a slab of paté. Mercifully, they are currently, albeit slowly, being phased out of the U.S. food supply.

Since cholesterol contains fat and foods high in saturated fat generally (though not always) are high in cholesterol, the two are bundled together in the public mind. However, cholesterol is actually a distinct substance—a steroid. Cholesterol is an essential component of bile acids, vitamin D, all sex hormones, aldosterone and cortisol. It is essential for brain development and the normal function of cellular membranes. While some cholesterol is ingested via food, the body also manufactures its own cholesterol.



Evidence indicates that people's natural cholesterol baselines vary, and that individuals differ in their susceptibility to dietary cholesterol.

Triglycerides are the basic form of digested fat that floats through the bloodstream. Triglyceride levels vary dramatically with the amount of fat and alcohol ingested within the previous twelve hours, so fasting blood levels are the only ones with any diagnostic value. High fat diets raise triglycerides, but so do diets high in refined carbohydrates and alcohol. Ignored for a long time, triglyceride levels are now recognized as a potentially major factor in heart disease.

Cholesterol is not water soluble, so it must be transported through the blood stream via carriers known as lipoproteins. These come in several forms, of which the primary are HDLs (high density lipoproteins) and LDLs (low density lipoproteins). LDLs carry cholesterol to the cells for deposit, while HDLs carry cholesterol away from the cells to the liver for eventual elimination. Judging from the number of references to "good" cholesterol and "bad" cholesterol, you'd think these two lipoproteins were duking it out in your bloodstream. The reality is far more complicated. While elevated LDL levels are one of a cluster of factors associated with cardiovascular disease risk, there has yet to be one study that points the finger specifically at LDLs. As a natural constituent of the body, presumably they have some legitimate role to play.

Ruptured arterial plaques are believed to cause most heart attacks and strokes, yet no one is certain precisely how these plaques develop and what causes them to break loose. Plaques are not just globs of LDLs. They contain many substances, including smooth muscle cells, calcium, connective tissue, white blood cells, cholesterol and fatty acids, all found in the human body. A variety of factors triggers the aggregation of these substances into a plaque on the arterial wall. These factors include nutrient deficiencies, poor glycemic control (as in diabetes), cigarette smoking, psychological stress, overly high iron levels, trans fats and microbial infection.

(Cont'd on page 13)

# Professor Produce

*How is it even possible that California produces so much food? I'm used to four seasons, and I don't understand how I can buy organic lettuce from California all year long.*

Not unlike California itself, this question is topographically complex. I could say something short and sweet, a pat answer such as, "Imagine paradise. Now doesn't it make sense you can have a Caesar salad in paradise any time you want?" But that would be ground level, and this Professor is really more interested in the peaks and valleys (literally!) of this question. In fact, over the years, I have yet to stop learning about and being amazed by the wonder of human effort and ingenuity that is California's agricultural system. Farmers are truly on the front lines wrestling with nature every single day out there, taming and brutalizing that final frontier of human survival: the ability to have any kind of food that can grow, at any time one desires.

Of course, lettuce doesn't grow by human effort alone (although it's a decent bet that a lab somewhere is working on that). California is a unique and staggering state that boasts extremes: temperatures ranging from -45°F to 143°F, extraordinary elevations and the lowest recorded point below sea level in all of North America (Death Valley). This impressive range of landscape folds itself into an impressive range of agricultural opportunities, and as a result, many of California's seven primary growing regions boast between 250-365 days of growing season annually. That means while you or I are munching a refrigerated carrot and watching the snow fly from behind our windows, somebody in California is yanking a carrot from the ground and munching it in the warm glow of the sun at the same time; or picking a ripe mango or snacking on an

avocado or even an almond. And when we're pulling the carrot out of the ground? Yep, they still can, too.

How is it done? I'd rather try to explain how the Universe is expanding and exactly what dark matter is, but let's continue with the lettuce, as you suggested, for a concrete example. In areas of the central and southern coasts, lettuce is planted from late November/December to mid-August, harvesting continually from early April to November. When this protracted season ends, production switches to the southern deserts, where lettuce is planted from mid-September to mid-November for harvest from early December to February. And finally, in the central valley, plantings are made from early November for harvest in March and April, thus managing to have some area of California producing lettuce for the entire country during any time of the year. The crops shift regions like this on the basis of the weather, and as lettuce ends in the central valley, they start up a crop that will grow in the new season's climate.

Meanwhile, orange and persimmon and mango orchards are producing nearby. *That* is how you squeeze every kind of productive plant into every available growing space year round.

Frequently people will complain about the quality of products like lettuce in the wintertime. I am pretty magnanimous about the issue, because many of us have simply grown up expecting things like lettuce. It's a given: the sun rises; I breathe to live; the store has lettuce; and so on. In fact, it is nothing short of a very specific example of the times we live in; yet another miracle of the modern era. It helps bring the reality home if you imagine trying to convince someone to drive a salad across the country for you before it goes bad and pay him \$2 for the trouble. Good luck, right? Yet this is exactly what happens with California produce every day, albeit on a large scale. It starts to make even organic lettuce seem cheap at the price.

Although unquestionably impressive, there are myriad environmental (and labor!) issues that California struggles with as a result of this intensive pressure to produce year-round. We as consumers can choose to ease this strain by using our food dollar to support local agriculture whenever it is available, and in the wintertime, we can give thought to what we eat and how our food is being produced. You just might find a salad of roasted root vegetables from Harmony Valley, WI (available now and throughout winter) makes a delicious or at least "cents-able" option to your California Romaine sometimes... even if it has come straight out of paradise.

For a mind-boggling sample list of commercial crops grown in California, check out:

[www.wrpmc.ucdavis.edu/Ca/CaCrops/state.html](http://www.wrpmc.ucdavis.edu/Ca/CaCrops/state.html)

***If you have a question for the Professor, please email me at [professorproduce@wedge.coop](mailto:professorproduce@wedge.coop)! Not all questions submitted will receive a response.***

## Food Cooperatives and the Katrina Cooperative Recovery Fund

The staff, members and boards of food cooperatives contributed 64% of the \$124,073 donated to CDF's Katrina Fund! Thank you for your great generosity. The Katrina Fund has provided \$65,000 to the Federation of Southern Cooperatives to support their extensive work with Katrina victims in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama: from obtaining basic necessities in the days and weeks immediately after the hurricane; to repairing cooperative and credit union facilities; and to educating and providing technical assistance about how cooperatives can not only help recovery, but be an effective means of economic and social organization. A further \$15,000 will be used as a match to support the writing of a business plan for a fishing cooperative that is organizing itself in Plaquemines Parish, south of New Orleans.



## WedgeWorldwide in Winter

If you checked out [www.WedgeWorldwide.coop](http://www.WedgeWorldwide.coop) before the holidays, don't think for a moment that you have seen it all. We are continually adding products and features to the site. The site is an extension of your store, so please let us know what you'd like to see there and tell us about your experiences.

Check this out: Free shipping on orders over \$100 (before sales tax) through March 2007!

Just in time for Valentine's Day, Sensuous Beauty bodycare products have arrived. Their Kissing Balm and other Valentine's items are floral and alluring, and the only thing that smells rosier than the rose balms are located in Wedge Floral. Be sure to take a peak in time to get Sensuous Beauty delivered by February 14th.

Wedge Worldwide is focusing on the crème de la crème of our most popular facial care lines. These products smell great and make your skin feel wonderful. They are among the purist and cleanest products on the market with labels like Dr. Hauschka, Weleda, Alaffia

and our own Wedge label body care products.

Wedge Worldwide is one of the few sites on the web that sends you free Dr. Hauschka samples based on your purchases. For every \$40 worth of product you order, you get to choose a sample from the list of currently available samples. For everyone who has ever used Dr. Hauschka products,



you know how special that offer is.

We've added more products by Evan Healy, SYB Soap Company (a local company) and a new line exclusive to the site: Pangea Natural Body Care. Pangea uses biodegradable packaging embedded with seeds, so you

can plant the packaging in your garden. They specialize in unusual scent combinations and make bar soap, shower gel, facial care and moisturizers. Mmm.

Also, an e-newsletter for Wedge Worldwide is coming soon! Go to [www.WedgeWorldwide.coop](http://www.WedgeWorldwide.coop) to sign up. This will keep you updated about new features on the sites, tell you the stories of the vendors we deal with and why they are super-cool.

New sections on the site explain the various companies' practices. Many of our favorite companies use at least some biodynamically-grown or organically-grown ingredients and/or fairly traded ingredients, and you can learn about the skin care philosophies behind the product lines.

A new service to personalize gifts is now available at no cost to you! While you check out, you may choose to write a personal note with items you are sending. We print out a card with your message and put it in an envelope with the gift.

## HOURLCAR + The Wedge = Cleaner Air

The Wedge community is full of thoughtful environmentalists. When it comes to air quality, we know that we can do simple things to make a difference, like using non-toxic cleaning products and monitoring our energy use at home. Another choice we make has a significant impact on the air we breathe – the choice of how we get around. We can eliminate unnecessary car travel by carpooling, taking transit, riding our bikes, walking and running multiple errands with one trip. You know Wedge shoppers take this to heart when you see a line of bikes parked outside the store on the coldest days of winter!

A convenient way to eliminate unnecessary car travel is through HOURLCAR car-sharing, which is also available at the Wedge.

HOURLCAR members can use a shared car for trips when a car is necessary, and use transit, bicycling or walking for all other trips. Studies have shown that the use of one shared car can eliminate the need for several personally-owned cars. More transit use, plus the drop in overall car use by car-sharers, results in significantly decreased global warming emissions.



HOURLCAR, the Twin Cities' first car-sharing organization, goes a step further when it comes to safeguarding air quality. HOURLCAR's

signature vehicle is the Toyota Prius, the much-acclaimed hybrid car with excellent fuel efficiency and comparatively low emissions.

HOURLCAR members at the Wedge are reserving sleek new Priuses by the hour to run errands around town efficiently, rather than buying cars and paying thousands of dollars for them each year.

For more information on HOURLCAR hub locations, member qualifications or to join online, please visit [www.HOURLCAR.org](http://www.HOURLCAR.org).

HOURLCAR is a program of the nonprofit Neighborhood Energy Connection, whose mission is to reduce pollution, conserve resources and improve quality of life by offering tools for energy-efficient living.



# Friendly Fats for February

by Wendy Gordon

Everybody's familiar with olive oil, but how about other monounsaturated oils? Both avocado and walnut oils are relatively expensive and are fun as a change of pace. They are sold in many gourmet food shops and natural food stores.

This Southwestern-themed dressing tastes great over a mixture of butter lettuce, thinly sliced oranges, black olives and more avocado:

## AVOCADO VINAIGRETTE

- 1/2 cup avocado oil
- 2 T. cilantro, minced
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- 2 tsp. dark brown sugar
- dash sea salt
- 1/8 tsp. cayenne pepper
- 2 T. rice vinegar
- juice of 1 lime

1) Blend ingredients (an immersion blender works well). Mixture tends to solidify when

refrigerated, so let it warm up to room temperature before tossing with salad.

Or, let avocado oil lend a rich taste to a vegetarian pasta:

## PENNE WITH SPINACH AND WALNUTS

- 1 lb. penne pasta
- 1/2 lb. white mushrooms, washed and sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 bunch spinach, washed and coarsely chopped
- 1/4 cup toasted walnuts, chopped
- 1/4 cup avocado oil
- 1/4 cup parmesan cheese, grated
- black pepper to taste

- 1) Cook penne pasta to al dente.
- 2) In a large saucepan, sauté garlic and mushrooms in avocado oil until garlic is fragrant and mushrooms are tender. Add spinach, cook until wilted.

- 3) Toss pasta with spinach mixture, walnuts and cheese. Serve immediately.

This homemade mayonnaise is good with chicken salad. You can also use it as a dip for oven roasted potato wedges:

## WALNUT OIL MAYONNAISE

- 1 whole egg (room temperature)
- 1 egg yolk (room temperature)
- 1 heaping tsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp. paprika
- healthy grating of black pepper
- 1 tsp. sea salt
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 3/4 cup walnut oil
- juice of 1 large or 2 small lemons

- 1) Place 1/4 cup of walnut oil and other ingredients in blender (an immersion blender works especially well for this purpose). With blender operating, slowly stream in the rest of the oil until the mixture is emulsified.

## Community Supported Agriculture

# Double Rabbit Farm

By Courie Bishop

Double Rabbit Farm is a small transitional to organic farm in Redwood County run by James Fitzgerald and me, Courie Bishop. James is a former Wedge Co-op cashier whom some of you may remember. We moved to our new farm in June of 2006 and started working the vegetable field the day we arrived.

We grow heirloom varieties of all the most loved and delicious vegetables we can find. We grow all our produce without the use of synthetic fertilizers, herbicides or pesticides. Coming from strong co-op and community service backgrounds, there was no other choice for us as we chose to become farmers; we had to grow everything in the best possible way.

During the growing season we are vendors at the Midtown Public Market in South Minneapolis every Saturday. We offer over

fifty varieties of heirloom tomatoes, over twenty varieties of squash, many kinds of leafy vegetables, root vegetables, herbs, melons and so much more. We grow and pick everything by hand which means better quality and supreme ripeness for our customers. We grow the food for ourselves, too, and always have a great suggestion or easy recipe for folks and their families at the market.

Our farm offers a CSA, community supported agriculture, in which people can purchase shares of our farm and receive produce from us at the market from May to October. We offer several different sizes to accommodate single people, families and people who have never tried a CSA before. CSA programs help small farms like ours because they ensure that we will have the funds to survive the long winter when we are unable to grow food. They help us buy seeds

and ensure the viability of our new business venture and even more, our new life on the farm.

We've had a lot of positive feedback from our continuing CSA members about the delicious and beautiful food they received all last summer. Since we grow heirloom vegetables and herbs, you're likely to find rare varieties of your favorite produce that exceed the norm in every way, including the most important factors: flavor and nutrition.

You can learn more about our farm, sign up for our CSA and read about our vegetables and life on the farm at our website [www.doublerabbitfarm.com](http://www.doublerabbitfarm.com). Or, contact us directly at [info@doublerabbitfarm.com](mailto:info@doublerabbitfarm.com)

## New Ways to Support Local Food – Brought to you by the Heartland Food Network

Who doesn't love fresh-picked strawberries, the crunch of the season's first sweet corn, warm roasted winter squash, rich farmstead cheddar or the subtle earthiness of bison?

As Wedge shoppers, you already appreciate the great flavors of local foods and know the value of supporting your local farmers. And, thanks to a great community of food co-ops, ever-growing farmers markets and numerous CSAs, you have many opportunities to buy local foods. But, how do you get local foods when you're not preparing your own meals?

Third Thursday is a monthly event celebrating local foods and local restaurants, organized by the Heartland Food Network (HFN). Chefs at HFN member restaurants offer seasonal specials featuring local ingredients. Different specials every month let you experience the flavors of the season and the creativity of the chefs.

The debut of Third Thursday was a January success (yes, local foods in January!). Some of the fabulous specials included local Three Cheese Potato Gratin from Bridgewood Café, Minnesota Wild Rice and Walleye cakes from Firelake Grill, Homemade Mushroom Duxelle ravioli from Duluth's Chester Creek Cafe and Wisconsin Rainbow Trout with Ginger-Cranberry Brown Butter from Café Brenda. If Minnesota chefs can do all that with local ingredients in the middle of winter, just think what the harvest season will have to offer! So, mark your calendars and enjoy a meal out every Third Thursday at one of the HFN member restaurants.

To locate participating restaurants and to find more information, visit [www.heartlandfoodnetwork.org](http://www.heartlandfoodnetwork.org) or call the Third Thursday hotline 651.645.6159 x 111.

Though the Third Thursday event is new, HFN has been growing for several years. Beginning in 2004, working closely with several statewide organizations, The Minnesota Project facilitated a number of conversations with farmers, chefs, restaurant-owners and food distributors to identify barriers to using local foods. Although the exceptional flavors speak for



themselves, it isn't always easy for food establishments to acquire great local foods. Contract obligations or liability and insurance requirements make it difficult for large restaurants and institutions to buy directly from producers. Small, independently owned restaurants face different challenges such as juggling multiple product invoices and identifying/locating local producers who can meet their needs on a regular basis.

In June 2006, The Minnesota Project launched the Heartland Food Network to address these challenges and expand the availability of local foods served in restaurants and

public dining establishments such as museums, universities, schools, corporate campuses and hospitals. Uniting all components of the "food system," HFN is a collaboration of chefs, restaurateurs, farmers and distributors whose mission is to:

"Encourage and facilitate the increased consumption of local and seasonal foods as a way to build stronger communities, healthier lives and a cleaner environment."

The Heartland Food Network provides a unique opportunity to measurably increase the amount of local foods served in Minnesota. In just the first 7 months, 11 restaurant members, 2 distributor members and more than 30 local producers joined HFN. HFN facilitates relationships among producers, distributors and chefs so that whether chefs purchase via distributors or farmer-direct, they have more locally produced options. Producers do not participate as members, but have the opportunity to connect with new buyers through the HFN producer list. HFN staff work closely with the local farm community to identify experienced farmers and producers selling foods that meet HFN standards.

With Heartland Food Network, more purchasers of local foods mean more opportunities for local farmers and producers. For chefs and YOU this means more great opportunities to get a real taste of Minnesota. Don't forget to get in on the fun and flavor at the next Third Thursday! For more information on HFN members, product standards, the Steering Committee or HFN in general please see [www.heartlandfoodnetwork.org](http://www.heartlandfoodnetwork.org).



# Sea Vegetables

By Jennette Turner

Are you looking for a way to expand the variety of vegetables in your diet? Would you like something extraordinarily nutritious with interesting flavors and textures? Try sea vegetables! These are wild marine algae that are harvested for culinary use all over the world. They contain a wide variety of important vitamins, minerals and special nutrients that benefit health. Sea vegetables, such as nori, dulse, wakame and kelp, have been most commonly used in coastal areas such as the British Isles and Japan. Since they are fabulous from both nutritional and culinary perspectives, the popularity of these foods is spreading.

Ounce for ounce, sea vegetables contain higher amounts of minerals than any other food. They are among the richest sources of magnesium (the stress mineral - we all need more of that!), potassium (which helps regulate blood pressure) and especially calcium (important for muscles, teeth and bones). Sea vegetables also provide iron (for your blood and energy levels) and iodine (which helps boost thyroid function - important for your endocrine system). For comparison: hijiki, arame and wakame all contain 10-20 times the calcium of milk; hijiki, wakame and kelp all contain 4-8 times the iron of beef; and arame, kelp and kombu all contain over 100 times the iodine of shellfish!

Sea vegetables are also a great source of vitamins C, E and K, mood stabilizing B complex vitamins and the antioxidant beta-carotene. Sea vegetables are also a particularly good source of disease-preventing folic acid. Note: though bacteriological tests have confirmed the presence of vitamin B12 in sea vegetables, it is actually a B12 analogue which is NOT usable by the body. This situation can be dangerous for vegans, because it can mask B12 deficiency in a blood test, a serious condition that can cause permanent brain damage.

Sea vegetables are also a unique source of substances called fucans, which can help reduce inflammation in the body. Couple that with their muscle-relaxing calcium and nerve-soothing magnesium and you have a great ally in fighting pain. In addition to

these nutritional benefits, sea vegetables contain plenty of fiber, are very low in calories and taste delicious!

Perhaps the most impressive quality of sea vegetables is their detoxifying abilities. They contain phytochemicals shown to absorb radioactive elements from the body and assist with their elimination. These phytochemicals convert toxic heavy metals (such as aluminum, lead and mercury) into harmless salts that can then be excreted from the body by normal channels. On a personal note, the toddler son of a good friend of mine had dangerously high lead levels - she began feeding him dry nori as a snack as often as he'd eat it. She told me that her doctor had never seen lead levels drop so fast.

Sea vegetables are delicious and can be very simple to use. The Wedge carries a wide variety of dried sea vegetables in various forms. Some require preparation and others can be eaten dry by themselves or sprinkled on food as condiments. These tasty and nutritious foods are available in bulk (above the bulk baking supplies in Aisle 2) and packaged in the International Foods section in Aisle 3.

- Dulse comes in maroon-colored soft leaves. It has a mild, briny flavor and can be eaten raw, sautéed or used in soups. A tip: dulse needs to be rinsed before sautéing to soften it. Dulse is also available in flakes to use as a salt substitute. You can find it with the bulk herbs and spices or in convenient shakers in Aisle 3.
- Nori is most commonly used in sushi rolls. It is sold as large sheets ready to wrap around cooked rice and condiments. It can also be crumbled into soups, vegetables or grains and can be eaten dry by itself. Try tearing it into thin strips and giving it to your kids - my daughter loves it.
- Hijiki (Hiziki) looks like long black curls of grass and has a strong briny or oceanic flavor. Soak hijiki before using to soften it (15-30 minutes are enough). Note: hijiki expands to more than four times its dry size after soaking, so a little goes a long way! It is best sautéed.
- Arame looks like thin brown blades of grass and only needs a 5-minute soak before using.

Arame will expand to twice its dry size and has a milder flavor than hijiki, but even so, it is fishier than dulse or nori.

- Kelp is usually sold in powder or in tablets and is used as a nutritional supplement or salt substitute. It is one of the easiest ways for people to include sea vegetables in their diets. Try sprinkling a little bit on sandwiches - you won't even notice it on anything with a strong flavor, such as mayonnaise or nut butter. Kelp can also be added to soups or dips. I like to add it to hummus.
- Kombu is a member of the kelp family. It comes in greenish strips and is often cooked with beans to tenderize them and make them easier to digest. Kombu can also be cooked alone to make broth. Traditional dashi stock is made with kombu and dried bonito flakes.
- Wakame has a mild flavor and olive green color. Wakame is usually used in miso soups (it is added to the soup dry) and salads. It needs a 5-minute soaking period before using.
- Agar is sold in both flake and powder form. Agar is used as a gelling agent, most commonly to make kanten, a natural vegetarian "Jell-O" made with fruit juice. To gel one cup of liquid, use 1 T. agar flakes or 1 tsp. powder.

## GINGERY HIJIKI-CARROT STIR-FRY

3-4 carrots, sliced diagonally and halved (or cut however you want)  
 1/2 yellow onion, sliced  
 1/4 c. dried hijiki  
 2 T. sesame oil  
 2 T. grated ginger  
 tamari or shoyu to taste (start with about 2 T.)  
**option:** sesame seeds and/or scallions for garnish

1. Soak the hijiki in water for 15-30 minutes. Drain.
2. Warm the sesame oil in a large skillet. Add the carrots and onions and sauté for a few minutes, until the vegetables begin to glisten.
3. Add the hijiki and ginger. Sauté 5 more minutes, stirring often.
4. Turn heat off. Add tamari or shoyu, stir, taste and adjust.

(Cont'd on page 13)



# Giving Back to the Community in 2006

## *Wedge Co-op Donations Committee Recipients 2006*

The Wedge donations committee gives a limited number of \$50.00 gift certificates (3 per month) to organizations that are co-op related, food related, focused on the environment, and in the neighborhood served by the Wedge, and are limited to one donation per organization in a calendar year. Requests must be made in writing, on organizational letterhead, at least eight weeks before needed.

Compassionate Action for Animals  
Sexual Violence Center  
MN Zen Center  
Judson Preschool  
Grace Nursery School  
Women's Prison Book Project  
Bryn Mawr Elementary Family Fun Night  
SLP HS Animal Rights Group  
MN Advocates for Human Rights  
Emerson Spanish Immersion  
Learning Center  
Kenwood Elementary School  
Lake Harriet Community School  
Frank Theater  
Friends of Loring Park  
Chrysalis  
Pillsbury House Harvest Festival  
Simpson Housing Services  
Sundays Energy  
Clara Barton School  
Minnesota Sinfonia  
Pratt School  
National Night Out  
Southside Family School  
Gale Woods Farm  
Stevens Square Community Organization  
WAMM  
Missing Children MN  
No Coast Craft-o-Rama  
Earthfusion Festival  
Jawaahir  
TC Green Guide  
Inside 3 Hands  
People Serving People  
Bird x Bird  
MN Coalition for the Homeless

Youth Farm  
Animal Ark  
Friends School of MN

## **GREEN PATCH RECIPIENTS**

Green Patches are given to customers at the cash register who bring their own bags for packing groceries. Each Green Patch is worth five cents. On a quarterly basis, proceeds are donated by the Wedge to a community garden. The total of \$6,158.55 reflects the use of 123,171 recycled bags.

**Soo Line Community Garden**  
\$2945.70

**Green Space Partners/Green Institute**  
\$3212.85

## **FOOD SHELF DONATIONS**

Last year Wedge customers donated \$6081.15 at the checkout cash registers for area food shelves, during the period of Jan. 1, 2006 - Dec. 31, 2006. Those donations were dispersed in either cash or food purchased wholesale by the Wedge to the following organizations:

**Emergency Foodshelf Network**  
\$1,581.15

**Groveland Emergency Foodshelf**  
\$1,500.00

**Joyce Emergency Foodshelf**  
\$1,500.00

**Sabathani Foodshelf**  
\$1,500.00

In addition, the Wedge donated an additional \$17,135.21 of food items to local food shelves, calculated at wholesale.

## **WEDGESHARE RECIPIENTS**

Each year the Wedge philanthropic WedgeShare grant program donates a portion of profits to organizations who apply. In October, the membership voted to allocate the fund to the following organizations:

**Cornucopia Institute**  
\$8,000

**Youth Farm and Market Project**  
\$9,000

**Land Stewardship Project**  
\$8,000

**Local Fair Trade Network**  
\$6,000

**Northside Food Project**  
\$5,000

**Farmer's Legal Aid**  
\$9,000

**Heart of the Beast Theatre**  
\$5,000

## **OTHER DONATIONS:**

**Cooperative Grocers' Information Network**

-Wedge gave \$100

**Co-op Development Foundation / Howard Bowers Educational Fund**

-Wedge gave \$945

**Cooperative Grocers' Information Network Scholarship Fund**

-Wedge gave \$50

**Midwest Organic & Sustainable Education Services**

-Wedge gave \$60

**Institute for Agriculture & Trade Policy Sponsor Dinner**

-Wedge gave \$250

**Whittier Alliance**

-Wedge gave \$500

**Consumer Co-op Management Association Gift Basket**

-Wedge gave \$87.96

**Midtown Greenway Coalition**

-Wedge gave \$500

**Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference**

-Wedge gave \$900

## Sea Vegetables

(Cont'd from page 11)

### WAKAME SALAD

1 medium cucumber  
1/4 lb. wakame, soaked until soft — about  
7-8 minutes

**option:** 4 red radishes, thinly sliced

**option:** 1/4 small red onion, thinly sliced

### Dressing:

4 T. rice vinegar  
3 T. shoyu or tamari  
1 T. mirin

1. Soak the wakame 5 minutes to soften. Drain and chop.
2. Peel cucumber (or don't) and slice. Mix with wakame (and radish or onion, if using).

3. Mix dressing ingredients together well. Toss over salad. If possible, let salad marinate for 20 minutes before serving.

### DULSE AND PARSNIP SAUTÉ

2 parsnips, sliced  
1 onion, sliced  
1 handful dulse, rinsed and chopped  
1-2 T. sesame oil  
shoyu or tamari to taste  
**option:** 1/4 c. toasted sunflower seeds

1. Warm oil in a skillet. Add parsnips and onions and cook (covered) around 5 minutes.

2. Add dulse to pan and continue to cook for another couple of minutes, stirring. Remove from heat. Stir in seeds, IF using.
3. Season to taste with tamari or shoyu.

*Jennette's Class "Cooking for Healthy Bones" (offered in March) will include at least one recipe featuring sea vegetables for you to try. She believes that once you see how easy these bone-building foods are to prepare and taste how yummy they can be, you'll want to try them at home, too.*

## Food Becomes You

(Cont'd from page 6)

Equally unclear is the link between diet and serum cholesterol levels. Some people manufacture more cholesterol than others, regardless of diet. Some could eat egg yolks all day without raising their cholesterol level, while others are born with inherited "hypercholesterolemias" where their body manufactures extremely high levels of cholesterol (again, regardless of diet). A recently reported study indicates that some people transport cholesterol differently than others, in larger sized "particles" that are less likely to clog arteries. Foods that raise LDL levels often raise HDL as well, keeping the ratio even.

Statin drugs, which lower LDL levels, are one of the most popularly prescribed drugs in the United States. They lower mortality rates in men already suffering from heart disease, but not nearly as effective when used as a preventive measure or by women. Also, there's no proof that the LDL-lowering function of these drugs is what makes them effective. Statins, which block an enzyme involved in cholesterol synthesis, show many other effects, such as improved arterial function and anti-clotting activity. Side effects of statins (especially in the elderly) include memory loss, irritability, personality changes and muscle pain. And (should this be surprising?) the overall reduction in death rates is no greater than that seen with less toxic interventions, such as vegetable-rich diets, omega-3 fatty acid supplementation and exercise.

Since the 1970's mainstream organizations have recommended limiting fat intake to thirty percent of total calories, with only ten percent coming from saturated fats. However, two computer models developed as early as the 1980's indicated that people diligently following these dictates gained minimal benefits: a life expectancy increase of one year for those with additional risk factors such as high blood pressure; a gain of as little as three days for those who didn't. A study of over 28,000 middle-aged Swedes failed to pinpoint any type of fat intake (total, saturated, polyunsaturated or monounsaturated) as a definitive risk factor.

The current prevalence of heart disease is paradoxically the result of triumphs of modern medicine and sanitation. Very few people today die of infectious illness (keep in mind that pneumonia was the most common cause of death as recently as the early 1900's) allowing them to survive long enough to develop chronic conditions like heart disease. Take a look at cookbooks from a century ago, when heart disease ranked significantly lower as a cause of mortality. You'll find an awful lot of eggs, butter and organ meats. And, no one was taking statins. Clearly, there is more to the story.

None of this is to imply that diet does not affect cardiovascular health. It most definitely does. Nor am I recommending you

put down this article and cut yourself a big slice of lardo. It's just that fat is far from the only culprit.

An increasing body of evidence suggests that antioxidants and omega-3 fish oils protect against formation of arterial plaques. In several studies, subjects with a higher percentage of oxidized LDL showed a greater incidence of heart disease. Eating antioxidant-rich foods such as fish, fruits, and vegetables also exerts a protective effect. Again, as manufactured trans fats are not found in nature, it makes sense that they would disrupt the body's natural handling of fat and promote disease. Complicating health factors such as obesity, diabetes and high blood pressure increase cardiovascular disease risk. Refined carbohydrates and excess alcohol increase serum triglycerides, another risk factor. Since environmental toxins and psychological stress also cause oxidative damage, they qualify as risk factors. As tempting as it is to look for a black and white solution, the problem of cardiovascular disease can only be seen in shades of gray.

*Wendy Gordon is a writer and restaurant reviewer who lives in Portland, Oregon. She has a Masters Degree in Clinical Nutrition from the University of Chicago.*

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Re: coconut oil and saturated fat

I have read in this newsletter and elsewhere that coconut oil may be good for you. Since this went against conventional wisdom, I decided to search for the truth. I went to the medical library to see the studies for myself, and this is what I found.

There have been countless studies that link saturated fat in general, and coconut oil in particular, to increased LDL cholesterol levels. There have also been many studies that have linked high LDL cholesterol levels to heart disease. If you do a search on coconut oil in google scholar, which brings up only professional articles, you will see the studies listed for yourself. Not one positive study about saturated fat or coconut oil appears.

I then searched the popular literature, and read for several hours about the benefits of coconut oil. I did not find even one reference to an actual study. There were references to doctors; however, these doctors were stating their opinions and did not site a study to offer

proof to support their opinions. This does not mean that all of their claims are wrong; it means that their claims are not tested rigorously. However, claims that coconut oil is good for the heart are troubling to me, given the studies mentioned above.

I found only one study that calls into question the relationship between saturated fat and death from heart disease (not occurrence of heart disease). There are problems with this study, and with the interpretation of the study by the media. The methodological choices of the researchers made it difficult to find a statistically significant result, which is exactly what the researchers found--no significant result about saturated (as compared to unsaturated) fat intake and death. This does not prove anything; it simply fails to support a claim that has been supported in other studies using different methodologies. It is important to note that in the study, nearly all people were eating a high fat diet (greater than 30% of calories from fat), so this study does nothing to undermine the American

Heart Association or the World Health Organization's dietary requirements. Very few, if any, of the people in the study were following the dietary requirements of the American Heart Association.

It is hard to know what to believe when doctors disagree, but here are a couple of hints. Always be skeptical of everything written that does not site its sources. If a person can't back up what they are saying with facts, it could simply be their opinion (and some opinions are more educated than others). A degree is never enough to prove that what you say is correct; you need evidence.

Darla

*Darla Flint Paulson is a Wedge Co-op member with advanced academic training in statistics.*

*Editor's note: The letter writer suggests the Harvard Heart Letter as a resource for accessible medical opinion on heart health. Enter "Harvard Heart Letter" into any internet search engine to find access to this newsletter.*

## Errata

The retained earnings portion of the Statements of Income and Retained Earnings Years ended June 30, 2006 and 2005 in the Dec 06 / Jan 07 issue of *At the Wedge* was incorrect. Correct numbers are:

	2006	2005
Retained earnings		
- beginning of year	\$3,387,531	\$3,207,396
Retained earnings	\$3,612,457	\$3,387,531
- end of year		

## WEDGE CO-OP BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2007

### OFFICERS

President – Marcy Cordes • Vice President – Jack Stanton  
Secretary-Treasurer – Fred Grieco

### COMMITTEES

LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE	TRUSTEESHIP COMMITTEE	ECONOMIC COMMITTEE
Marcy Cordes (Chair)	Jack Stanton (Chair)	Fred Grieco (Chair)
Jack Stanton	Mark Muller	Sarah Wovcha
Fred Grieco	Emily Williams	Candace Dow

## 2007 MEETING SCHEDULE

Tuesday, March 27	Thursday, August 16
Tuesday, May 22	Tuesday, October 9
Wednesday, June 27	Tuesday, November 27

Meetings start at 5:30 p.m. and are held in the Wedge Classroom. All meeting dates, times and locations are subject to change.

Call the store to confirm date if you plan to attend. For information about how to get on the agenda to make a presentation to the board, go to [www.wedge.coop](http://www.wedge.coop) and click on Membership.

## Ploughshare Farm CSA

Organically Grown Herbs & Vegetables, delivered weekly to the metro area.

[www.ploughsharefarm.com](http://www.ploughsharefarm.com)  
218-267-5117

**Subscribe Today!!!**







## BKS IYENGAR YOGA CENTER

**Introductory Series begin soon. Call for dates.**  
(formerly the Yoga Room) (612) 872-8708  
2736 Lyndale Av. S., Mpls., MN 55408

## DISCOVER WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU!



**300+ valuable coupons inside!** Pick up your 2007 Blue Sky Guide at local natural food stores, bookshops and community fundraisers or at [www.FindBlueSky.com](http://www.FindBlueSky.com).

THINK **GLOBALLY** • SAVE **LOCALLY** • PLAY **CONSTANTLY**

## Starting Spirit Bodywork

holistic shiatsu & therapeutic massage

Bodywork that is healthy for you and the environment!

- Eco-friendly sustainably built equipment •
- Bamboo fiber linens •
- Only organic, cruelty free massage products •

**15% off  
First Visit**

Gift Certificates Available

[www.startingspirit.com](http://www.startingspirit.com) 612.991.2377

### DONATIONS

We appreciate the food you donated in November and December. It amounted to 1,675 pounds. Thank you for your support. It helps us serve those in need.

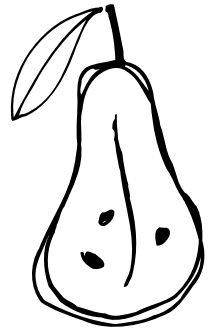
Sincerely,  
Joyce Food Shelf

## Jennette Turner

Natural Foods Educator

[www.jennette-turner.com](http://www.jennette-turner.com)

612.374.6039



*Teaching people to eat well and improve their health*



*farmtofork*  
a personal chef service

Kristin Hamaker

651.231.4356

[kristin@farmtofork.net](mailto:kristin@farmtofork.net)

[www.farmtofork.net](http://www.farmtofork.net)

same place

new face (formerly "Sahib's")

4022 Central Ave NE • 763-782-9678

## The Vegetarian

Serving South Indian, North Indian & Vegan Food

**Lunch Special:** 11:00am to 2:30pm • Tue thru Sun

**Dinner:** 5:00pm to 9:00pm • Tue, Wed, Thu, Sun

5:00pm to 9:30pm • Fri & Sat • Closed Mon

## NOW OPEN!



- ANTIQUES • VINTAGE
- NEW • CUSTOM BUILT
- ITEMS • FENG SHUI
- CONSULTATIONS

2207 Lyndale Avenue S.  
Uptown, Minneapolis  
612.879.6105

SHOP • DESIGN STUDIO • HEALING CENTER • WORKSHOPS

## CUSTOMER COMMENTS

***Could you please check on pumpkin seed oil?***

We will be picking up the Rapunzel brand pumpkin seed oil to answer your request. Look for it by mid-December.

***For a look at the current state of who owns what in the organic food biz, go to:***

***[www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca/rcbtoa/services/corporate-ownership.html](http://www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca/rcbtoa/services/corporate-ownership.html)***

We'd print the chart, but between the time we print and mail At the Wedge, chances are good that it would be already out of date. Companies gobble each other up at an amazing rate.

***A customer expressed intrigue concerning the use of high fructose corn syrup in the glaze in the custard-filled Blood Orange pastry. Perhaps we could avoid using this questionable ingredient?***

Sorry, we do not use high fructose corn syrup. That was a label misprint on the danish. Thank you for bringing it to our attention!

***Bring back the Tempeh Pasta in the deli please!***

We've taken Tempeh Pasta off our rotation to make way for seasonal items. Look for it to return this spring!

***I miss the herb, olive and sun-dried tomato focaccias that I used to buy here. I have not seen them in a while. Will they ever return?***

Sorry! We found that more plain focaccias sold than ones with toppings. We do still make the herb focaccia, and you can always special order

focaccia with a topping from the Bakehouse.

***Fantastic Tofu Scrambler- when will it be available again?***

Fantastic Foods has discontinued the Tofu Scrambler. At this point we have not found a replacement product.

***Amore Mimosa Sparkling drink. It was so good- can we get some more?***

The original Amore drinks were victim of a recipe change. Due of this—and the new Amore's low sales—this line has been discontinued.

***What is your position on carrying products that contain MSG? It appears that some of your soups may have it listed under a different name. Thank you.***

Our "policy" is that we do carry products with "autolyzed yeast extract" and other "natural flavorings" which may include naturally occurring MSG. Unfortunately, in the same way that we would be unable to monitor a diabetic's purchases of products with sugar on the label as an ingredient, I'm afraid it's up to the consumer to choose whether or not these products would be appropriate for their personal use. For every person who would love to not see these products on our shelves, there are hundreds who would roar at their removal. "Caveat emptor."

***Please, please, please, please can you guys make an order for goat milk ice cream? Even if it's just one case a month! I'll buy 'em all.***

Your suggestions worked! Goat milk ice

cream coming to our shelves within the next few weeks. Keep an eye out for it!

***Is Sonny's still making the Ahana line of ice cream anymore? If so, can we carry it again- the ginger one is awesome!***

Thank you for your inquiry! Sonny's still makes the line- just with reduced flavors: Toasted Coconut and Ginger. We stock both of these. If you can't find it when you are in the store, just ask an employee for help!

***Please run your sales from the beginning of the month to the end. The other coops do it that way and it is less confusing.***

Actually, not all coops follow the solar calendar. We choose to change endcaps on Wednesdays because operationally, it fits in best with both store and customer needs. It would be impossible to bring in a huge order on Friday, Saturday, Sunday or Mondays due to heavy customer traffic in the store. Since sales change on Wednesdays at our distributor (UNFI), we have chosen that as our beginning day. We've been doing this for over 10 years now and we do place sale dates on each and every sign. Hope that helps.

***Why do you carry sweets in your bulk section that have partially hydrogenated oils in them?***

I would prefer not to! I tried to discontinue some in the past but the quality of the non-hydrogenated ones must be way lower. The reason I say that is because I received customer complaints asking me to bring back the hydrogenated oil candy- so many that I had to bring them back!



2105 LYNDALE AVE SOUTH  
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55405

PRESORTED  
FIRST CLASS MAIL  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Permit No. 1  
Mpls., MN

• MON-FRI 9 TO 10 •  
• SAT-SUN 9 TO 9 •



Printed on recycled paper, using recycled and soy based inks.