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Supplying local produce and supporting local farmers for 20 years.

Food for Thought

Organic Brands Are Backing The Campaign to Defeat GMO Labeling

"The next time you take a swig of Odwalla's Organic Carrot Juice, or munch on a bowl of Orville Redenbacher's Organic popcorn, take note: A lot of popular organic and all-natural brands are made by companies that are spending thousands of dollars to defeat Proposition 37, the California Right to Know Genetically Engineered Food Act." states Katherine Paul of the Organic Consumers Union. "Donations are pouring into the campaign to defeat Prop 37....All of these companies are members of the powerful Washington, DC-based Grocery Manufacturer's Association (GMA), a multi-billion-dollar trade association which represents America's \$1.2 trillion "Big Food" industry. " For more information visit the Organic Consumers Union website <http://bit.ly/MCAf5x>

Monsanto's Roundup Herbicide Could Cause Birth Defects

"The herbicide used on genetically modified soy, Argentina's main crop, could cause brain, intestinal and heart defects in fetuses, according to the results of a scientific investigation released Monday" in Argentina. The *Latin American Herald Tribune* states "Although the study used amphibian embryos, the results are completely comparable to what would happen in the development of a human embryo... In Argentina, farmers each year use between 180 and 200 million liters of glyphosate, which was developed by the multinational Monsanto and sold in the United States under the brand name Roundup...research found that "pure glyphosate, in doses lower than those used in fumigation, causes defects ... (and) could be interfering in some normal embryonic development mechanism having to do with the way in which cells divide and die.... Argentina is the world's third-largest exporter of soy." To read the full article please visit <http://bit.ly/aBFSGI>

Super Spice: Turmeric

"More than just a spice, turmeric is a powerful healer that works as natural antiseptic, anti-inflammatory and liver detoxifier. The bright yellowish orange spice is a member of the ginger family, commonly seen in curry recipes and has a bitter, earthy flavor. The active ingredient in turmeric is curcumin, an antioxidant." - The Well Daily. For more information visit <http://bit.ly/NZZUEX>.

FDC Fresh Ideas

By Julie Pottier-Brown, Operations Manager

I was asked to buy sweet and hot peppers again. For the hot peppers, I said okay. Two peppers per share is manageable, even if you aren't a huge fan. We got a lot of questions about heat level and variety on those peppers last week. Here is a picture guide for some of the types we will be getting in the shares <http://bit.ly/hQQiPo>. I told Rob I want to hold off a week on the sweet peppers. There will be some rotating throughout the day, but not "peppers for all". Rob happens to have a bumper crop this year, and we are the perfect venue for helping them go since we have over 700 members.



Photo of last weeks share by Melrose member, Belinda Cassettari

A hint about peppers: if you aren't that into hot, put them in a mason jar, and freeze them. They will mellow in the freezer, and you can use them in a soup or chili in the middle of the winter. For green peppers, they can be sliced, seeded and frozen with no other prep necessary to be used when the season is over. Peppers are one of the "dirty dozen." According to the environmental working group they are one of the 12 worst fruits and vegetables to eat non-organically.

For those of you asking for bulk tomatoes, the order form is now available on the veggie blog under forms <http://bit.ly/OouA2Z>. There will be a limit of 20 boxes of heirlooms and 10 boxes of red field tomatoes per depot per day. You may pick up either day, but just remember to show up to get them if you choose your non-regular day. Tomato firsts will be \$35 for 20 pounds, and heirloom firsts will be \$31.25 for 10 pounds. Seconds of both red field tomatoes and heirloom tomatoes will be just \$18 for 20 pounds. When a tomato is misshapen, a little scarred, or has a crack at the stem end, it is considered a second. Often to make our numbers we need to get over 600 pounds of tomatoes to satisfy all the vegetable members on Tuesday. Atlas Farm will send us both firsts and seconds, so chances are you have already seen seconds at the depot.

Ideas, wishes, whines? Let us know how we are doing. As always, as the produce gets more diverse and more abundant, we need volunteers. If you want to help to the heavy work, come to the Marblehead Depot at 1pm to help unload the truck. Directions to the Marblehead Depot can be found on our website at <http://bit.ly/NdBnbu>.

Julie

Watermelon, Tomato and Feta Salad

by Mira Clark, Salem Depot

2 cups cubed watermelon
2 cups cubed tomato
1/2 cup crumbled feta

Mix in a large bowl. Season with salt & pepper. Mix in chopped herbs. I used a mix of basil, mint and chives. Squeeze the juice of one lemon over the salad, and drizzle with your best balsamic vinegar and extra virgin olive oil.



Peach Blueberry Crumble

by Kim LaFontana, Melrose Depot

Add 2 cup blueberries and 3 small or 2 large peaches, pitted & sliced with skin. Toss together in pie plate.



Crumble topping:

1 c oats - old fashioned
1/2 c brown sugar
1/2 c sliced almonds
2 T whole wheat flour
1/2 stick butter, cubed room temperature
1 teaspoon salt

Combine crumble ingredients with your hands. Sprinkle over fruit. Bake @ 350 for about 30 minutes until brown and bubbly.

Volunteer Visibility Beyond the Badge

By Lynda Morgenroth, Melrose Depot

Since the Co-op season began, I have often been asked by fellow shareholders to interpret the sign-in sheet, or the distribution, or the mysterious location of cheese, or, most recently, whether the Chef's share was a gorgeous bouquet or something they could sign-up for. (Answer: both.) I don't mind answering these questions and had decided I was being asked because I look old and friendly (because I am old and friendly). But when I am unable to answer the questions--or having a day when I am old and cranky--and suggest asking one of the volunteers, I've observed that it is sometimes hard to find a volunteer. They're there, but they look like everyone else. Especially during the early pickup hours--before people with office jobs, nicely dressed, arrive--we're all in raggy comfy summer duds, standing around. Grazing, or lolling, or chatting. The notable exception is Michele, our energetic coordinator, who is dashing back and forth between table and shed, vigorously hauling. She is often trailed by members with questions because they can't identify the volunteers.

Can we do a better job of this? Might the volunteers wear some kind of identifying "badge"? I do not have in mind the dread, corporate, sticky-back "Hello, My Name Is" literal badge, but something more imaginative, distinctive, and fun that would identify and unify, and make operations run more smoothly.

The FDC Volunteer ID could be anything the volunteers agree upon. Caps or tee-shirts with FDC logo. Wearing the fruit or veg of the day affixed to a straw hat. A colorful 3X5 card that simply says, VOLUNTEER, or Can I help you? Or perhaps aprons (I love aprons) that needn't be the same, but each chosen with the wearer's taste in mind. Old thrift store aprons with pockets, fancy William Sonoma-ish aprons (that if offered I would probably hang on the wall), carpenter's aprons, old foolish "men's" denim barbeque aprons from the 50s. I can even imagine a cottage industry of new and vintage aprons for sale. Or maybe there's just a bin of recycled aprons that volunteers choose from each week. Yes, I can picture strapping male volunteers in calico aprons with ruffles. Bring it on!

I hereby issue a Request for Proposals (RFP). Calling all artists, designers, home sewers, idea-guys, and organizational wizards. What might work to make it easier to identify the volunteers, dress up our already attractive depots (not to mention attractive volunteers), and further develop esprit de corps? Please submit ideas to this publication. And until we decide, when you volunteer, feel free to wear an attention-grabbing apron, or a simple, tasteful hat of kale.

KNOW YOUR COOP SUPPLIERS

by Sandra Moltz, Marblehead Depot

A&J KING ARTISAN BAKERS, LLC, 48 Central Street, Salem, MA 01970, Open M-F 7-6 Sat-Sun 7-4

A & J King is an artisan bakery in Salem. For those of you coop members who haven't had the pleasure of going there, here's the place to start: <http://www.ajkingbakery.com/>

A and J King = Andy and Jackie King. How did you two meet? Did both of you have the dream to start your own bakery, or did one of you have that as your vision?

We met at cooking school in Montpelier, VT during our first year. By the time our second internship rolled around, we had both decided that we wanted to work in bakeries - although Andy had designs on being a food writer for a short period. After baking for some years, we decided we wanted to move back to Massachusetts and try our hand at opening something up. For the record, it was initially Jackie's idea. Most of the good ones are.

What lessons did you learn from your time at the Standard Bakery in Portland?

Baking is a craft that uses very simple, very similar ingredients. The hard part is honing technique and understanding the science, rather than coming up with outrageous recipes. It takes quite a bit of time and effort to let simple ingredients speak for themselves when incorporating them in bread - it's a manner of coaxing flavors out over a long period of time.

With an epidemic of diabetes and pre-diabetes in the U.S., there is an emphasis on the glycemic index and carbohydrates--with less white flour being better on the glycemic index. Are any of your muffins or breads low in carbs? Any future plans to offer more of these items?

While we wouldn't rule out anything, low-carb and gluten-free are not really our focus. Currently we offer a 100% Whole Wheat pan loaf, the Multigrain which is 50% white flour and 50% whole wheat along with many other seeds and grains mixed (flax seeds, rye flakes, millet, sunflower and sesame seeds), a 100% whole wheat muffin called the Grain Glory, and another muffin that is 50% whole grain called the Maple Pecan Oat Muffin. The emphasis at our bakery is to bake using traditional, mainly European bread baking methods and recipes. We incorporate whole grains when we feel it meets these criteria.

There seems to be a downtown Salem resurgence. Is the bakery a part of the local community? Are there formal or informal meetings of local food purveyors?

We love to think that we are part of the local downtown community. One of our primary goals when opening A&J King was to simply be the local bakery, offering our goods to Salem and the surrounding towns. We didn't, and still don't, have visions of 18-wheelers with our logo on it. As far as local food purveyor meetings, we're all pretty busy running our own establishments! We pop in on each other every once in a while for a meal or a snack.

What is the product that you see as a hidden gem--something people tend to overlook but would love if they tried?

We love the Pain au Levain. We call it the baker's bread, because it's the one that visiting bakers and chefs gravitate towards, even more so than the baguette. It's such a beautiful loaf when it's done right. On the pastry side, I asked three separate employees and they all agree with me that the Almond Croissant is undersold for how awesome it is.

Your favorite product - and why:

Jackie: Croissants. The time and energy we put in really shows and they taste accordingly. They are well made, simple in their taste profile, but will always satisfy. Andy: Chocolate Chunk Cookie and a glass of milk.

What is the best way to store products, including breads, rolls and cookies? [I love the whole wheat loaf, olive rolls, and chocolate chip cookies but not sure what is the best way to keep them at home.] Are bread boxes useful or not?

None of our products contain preservatives, and are meant to be eaten within a few days of purchase. You can use a bread box, but at our house we usually just keep loaves in a tightly-wrapped paper bag on the counter, or in the case of the 100% Whole Wheat, wrapped in plastic. Anything that you're planning on keeping longer should be destined for the freezer. Wrap the loaf well in plastic first, and when defrosting, let come to room temp and pop in a hot oven before serving. It bounces back extremely well. Cookies should go in a plastic bag (zip locks work great) or wrapped in plastic wrap.