MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Fellow Cooperators,

What a month it has been. Fears of COVID-19 (coronavirus) over the last couple of weeks have given the opportunity to reflect on the Co-op and what it means for our community.

I feel lucky to have the Co-op in this community. Things may get worse and our community may be affected in all sorts of ways that we can not yet predict. If tough times do come our way, leaning into the Co-op and other institutions is incredibly important to farther strengthening our community.

In this sense, instability is an opportunity for us to come together and become stronger. I want to encourage all of us to see the Co-op as a resource for this endeavor. Presently, the Co-op is looking for additional board members. My one year term has ended. It has been such a pleasure serving this membership. For those interested, applications are due by March 16th. A link to this application can be found in the email sent out on Feb. 22nd. For more information, please contact sitkafoodcoopboard@gmail.com.

On another note, the Co-op has been underwriting with KCAW for the past two months and it has been extremely successful. We had Thanksgiving-like lines going out the door earlier this month and our membership has continued to steadily increase.

Lastly, our annual survey will soon be sent out to everyone on our emailing list. Please take the time to fill it out as there’s some important information that we need to plan for the future.

Cooperatively yours,

Simon - Board Member
Greetings Fellow Co-op-ers;

Where to begin and what to say? Our Co-op continues to chug along at an amazing pace! If you came to our last main delivery (especially for the first hour that we were open) you undoubtedly saw the place was packed! WOW! As Simon mentioned above, our underwriting of several KCAW programs is definitely getting the word out about who we are and what we're doing. We definitely had more members ordering and lots more people just walking in to "Shop the Co-op" than on average. That, and just the other day I had several people come up to me to say how grateful they are that the Co-op is here to help provide wholesome foods (many not available elsewhere in town) at the prices we're able to provide them at. Especially our produce! Others have even commented that they've noticed that the other two retailers in town are actually lowering their prices and offering new items. That goes to show that our services... and competition... is good for our entire town!

But... as I always like to say: "We can't do what we do without member support" and as our orders get larger and larger we definitely need more members to step up to the plate and help out on delivery days. Last month we barely got everything split and distributed in time to open at 5:30 and that's not fun at all. It's a bit stressful in fact. The members who are stepping up to the plate to help out are an amazing group of people but they... and the Co-op... definitely need more help. PLEASE consider volunteering if you can. The deeper the pool of people we have helping out the better we'll be able to serve all our members... and... keep our prices as low as they are. It's not that hard and can be quite fun. Not only do you get a 10% discount on your orders through the Co-op... we're also kid friendly!

On another note... I look forward to seeing as many members as possible at our next Annual Meeting and potluck which will be held on March 29th. This is a great time to participate in the actual operations of the Co-op. Your membership entitles you to vote on who will be on the Board of Directors, determine our Bylaws and future goals, and... we'll be unveiling two new logo concepts that the Rebranding Committee has settled on and you get to vote on which one will be our finalist! So mark you calendars for the 29th... it will be from 4:00 - 6:00 pm at a place yet to be determined.

By-The-Way... have you ever thought about serving on our Board of Directors? If elected, you would actually become my "boss." How about them apples? :-)

No matter what... I continue to look forward working with... and for... you!

Cooperatively Yours;
Keith Nyitray

WE ❤ VOLUNTEERS

VOLUNTEER WITH THE SITKA FOOD CO-OP!
Sign-up to volunteer for at least 3-4 hours on delivery days and receive a 10% discount on your order! Check out www.sitkafoodcoop.org/membership/volunteer for upcoming opportunities, we are Thankful for YOU, our amazing volunteers!!
What's New For March?

UNFI SPECIALS
ORDER BY 3/13 FOR
3/24 DELIVERY

Clif Bars
Kids - Z-Bars
$0.95 each

Muir Glen Tomato Products
assorted, organic
$1.95/14.5 oz

Muir Glen Tomato Products
assorted, organic
$2.95/28 oz

Late July Snacks
Assorted Tortilla Chips
$3.30/11 oz

Briannas Dressings
assorted
$3.59/12 oz

Woodstock FZ Vegies
assorted, organic
$2.75/10 oz

Happy Baby
Stage 2 pouches
$1.90/4 oz

Anna Extra Fine Flour
organic
$2.40/2.2 lbs

Garbanzo Beans
Bulk, organic
$2.54/1 lb

ANNUAL MEETING

Come to our 9th Annual Meeting!
"Everyone" is invited to attend our 9th Annual Meeting (and potluck) to be held on March 29th from 4:00 to 6:00 pm in the Sitka Fire Hall's conference room.

On the agenda:
- A report by the Board of Directors.
- GM's annual report on the status, finances, and future of the Co-op.
- Review of the annual survey.
- Election of Board Members.
- Changes to the Bylaws?
- Voting on a new possible logo for the Co-op!
- Plus: member input & feedback.

This is your Co-op and your chance to have a direct say in where the Co-op should go. Don't miss out!

Bring your thoughts, ideas, and suggestions... bring your kids... and bring a dish to share!!

Hope to see you all then and there!
As I divided up an 11 pound bag of "Forbidden Rice" into 1 to 4 pound orders during our last big delivery day, it got me thinking. What’s up with that phrase, Forbidden Rice? I looked into the website for this month’s featured vendor, Lotus Foods, to find out. Legend has it that this ancient grain was eaten exclusively by the emperors in China to bring them good health and long lives, but now you can eat it too, thanks to Lotus Foods and the Co-op!

According to their website, this “longevity rice” was the grain behind the inspiration for Lotus Foods. The couple who started Lotus Foods fell in love with this nutty and flavorful black rice while traveling in China. They started importing the rice in 1995, calling it Forbidden Rice, and since then the company has expanded to include an amazingly wide variety of rice and rice products, such as noodles, crackers, and prepared foods.

Lotus Foods doesn’t care about just rice, they also care about small farmers and the environment. They have helped farmers learn to grow more rice with less water and less seed, through a practice called “More Crop per Drop.” Their foods are organic, non-GMO, fair-trade and from what I hear, delicious! They have won many awards in the food industry, for innovation, leadership and sustainability to name a few.

If you feel like trying to eat like an ancient Chinese emperor, order some Forbidden Rice or other delicious Lotus Foods products with your next Sitka Food Co-op order!

Learn more about them at: www.LotusFoods.com

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**The Perfect Guacamole Recipe**

**Directions:**
- Cut the avocado, remove flesh, place in bowl
- Using a fork, roughly mash the avocado. (The guacamole should be a little chunky.)
- Sprinkle with salt and lime (or lemon) juice. The acid in the lime juice will help delay the avocados from turning brown.
- Add the chopped onion, cilantro, black pepper, chopped tomato, and chiles. Chili peppers vary individually in their hotness. So, start with a half of one chili pepper and add to the guacamole to your desired degree of hotness.
- Serve immediately, or if making a few hours ahead, place plastic wrap on the surface of the guacamole and press down to cover it and to prevent air reaching it. (The oxygen in the air causes oxidation which will turn the guacamole brown.) Refrigerate until ready to serve.

**Ingredients:**
- 2 ripe avocados
- 1/4 teaspoon of salt, more to taste
- 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice or lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons to 1/4 cup of minced red onion or thinly sliced green onion
- 1-2 serrano chiles, stems and seeds removed, minced
- 2 tablespoons cilantro (leaves and tender stems), finely chopped
- A dash of freshly grated black pepper
- 1/2 ripe tomato, seeds and pulp removed, chopped