



Newsletter

Open 7 Days A Week, 8 to 7
Nine Washington Street
Middlebury, VT

May
2009

Middlebury Natural Foods Cooperative
Dedicated to the Health and Wellbeing of the Whole Community



Co-op Community Celebration and 34th Annual Meeting **Saturday, May 30th, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.** **on the Middlebury Town Green**

How is the Co-op doing? How have sales been affected by the recession? What should be our focus in the coming year? How can we effectively promote Healthy Foods, a Vibrant Local Economy, Sustainable and Energy Effective Practices, and Cooperative Democratic Ownership? As a Co-op member you have a stake in the health of the Co-op and its future. Come to our Annual Meeting to show your support, learn about the issues and ask questions.

Our Annual Meeting will also be a lot of fun! Hope for a sunny day! In case of rain the event will take place inside the church. For more details about this fabulous party, look inside this Newsletter's insert. And remember... now is the time to vote for you Board of Directors. Look inside this newsletter for information on candidates and voting procedures. The ballot can be find on the second to last page.



MNFC Newsletter

A Monthly Publication of the
Middlebury Natural Foods Cooperative

Editor - Reiner Winkler

Printed at *The Little Pressroom*, Middlebury, Vermont.

The purpose of the MNFC Newsletter is to provide a means of communication between the Co-op and its general membership. Its aim is to provide a forum, which promotes an awareness of social, health, political, economic, technological, and environmental issues as they relate to food and other products sold by the Co-op. In addition, the Newsletter provides a medium to introduce the Co-op and its products and services to the general public. The format is intended for educational debate and discussion. Your letters of opinion and article submissions are welcome and encouraged. The views expressed in the MNFC Newsletter do not necessarily reflect the policies or beliefs on the Middlebury Natural Foods Cooperative as a whole.



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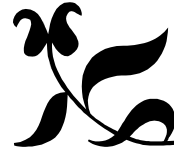
Middlebury Co-op Ends Statement

*MNFC member owners, customers,
and the community benefit from:*

- ◆ **Healthy Foods**
- ◆ **Vibrant Local Economy**
- ◆ **Environmentally Sustainable and Energy-Efficient Practices**
- ◆ **Cooperative, Democratic Ownership**

Dear Members and Friends of Middlebury Co-op,

Welcome to the beautiful month of May! The short three-letter word *May* may conjure up a number of interesting associations, such as *May Day*, the first day of May, marked in European countries as the beginning of spring. It is often celebrated with dances around the *Maypole*, with merry-makers holding on to colorful streamers attached to the pole.



Mayflowers are... well, flowers blooming in May. The *trailing arbutus*, a low-growing plant with evergreen leaves and fragrant pink or white flower clusters, is commonly referred to as *mayflower*.

The *Mayflower*, with a capital M, was the name of one of the ships landing at Plymouth in 1620. During its voyage some of the passengers signed the *Mayflower Compact*, binding the group into a political body and pledge members to abide by any laws that would be established. The concern was that without this contract some members might leave and form their own colonies.

The *mayfly*, an insect that lives in its adult stage only for a few hours, may remind us of the fleetingness and therefore preciousness of life; for even a life thousands of times longer than that of the mayfly still seems short.

The *May beetle* is another name for the June beetle or June bug, whose larvae live in the soil and can be quite destructive to some of our crops.

A white wine flavored with woodruff and slices of orange or pineapple is referred to as *May wine*. Others think of *May wine* as a punch of champagne, claret, and Moselle or Rhine wine, flavored with woodruff.



At Middlebury Co-op, May stands for *Annual Meeting and Community Celebration*. Join us on May 30th for music, dancing, and lots of good food!

Read through this Newsletter and Insert carefully and cast your vote for the election of our Board of Directors.

Happy Spring,

Reiner



PRODUCERS OF THE MONTH

No, we did not forget the *d* in *Profoun* Salsa! Tom and Linda simply combined their last names, Fountain and Provost, when they formed the company and following the advice of their teenage daughter, opted for *Profoun* rather than *Founpro*. Clever! Read about their courageous adventure in making wonderful **salsa**. Gert's and Arda Schut of *Millborne Farm* came all the way from Holland to make their delicious **yogurt drinks** for us at Middlebury Co-op! Flavors in our Dairy cooler include strawberry, peach, raspberry, and pomegranate. Mike Bowen and Julie Brown farm in the North Hollow valley in Rochester. Their **grass-fed cattle** never have to put up with stimulants or growth hormones! Read what they have to say about the benefits of naturally raised meat.

May 10th is Mother's Day... a good opportunity to celebrate all mothers of the world! Christine Du Mond is our fourth Producer of the Month and offers **beautiful flowers** at the Middlebury Co-op Flower Shop.



Profoun Salsa

by Tom and Linda Fountain-Provost

Just imagine — a couple, married with four grown children, six grandchildren, both working full time, decide to plant a small garden in their backyard. They let it do its thing, and by the time August arrives, there are more tomatoes than they know what to do with! So, starting with a small food processor, they make some salsa, and bring it to a house warming, to work, and share it with friends and relatives. The response was unbelievable! *Profoun Salsa* is born!

The summer of 2004 was spent producing salsa, and selling it at local Farmers' markets. As word spread, orders came not only from local stores but from folks out of town as well as out of state! In 2005, while marketing our product, Middlebury Co-op was one of the first stores we approached. Since then, the Co-op has been instrumental in promoting and supporting our business.

Profoun Salsa comes in four flavors:

- ◆ **Mild** — great tasting, fresh garden flavor without any bite. *Child's play*, some might say.
- ◆ **Medium** — same great flavor, but with a little kick. Just right for you *middle of the roaders*.
- ◆ **Hot** — on a scale of 1-10, this one gets a 7 on the hotometer. Fresh

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habañeros provide the heat - careful! It sneaks up on you!

- ◆ **Sweet 'n Sassy** — ah, what a gem this is! Our signature flavor sweetened with just the right amount of pure Vermont maple syrup. A must-try!

Our salsa is produced at *Vermont Food Ventures* in Fairfax, Vermont, and made only from the freshest ingredients available.



The Co-op Flower Shop

by **Christine Du Mond**

*They say Flowers are a girl's best friend.
Flowers also help making friends!*

I started selling flowers at the Co-op shortly after it opened in October 2004. I have learned to keep my focus on beautiful, simple, fresh product offered at a fair price – typically under \$10. I usually buy the flowers grown at the *Esmeralda Farms*, in Florida – a grower committed to strict Eco-responsible flower growing practices and fair labor standards. Our **Oriental Lilies** provide beauty and tremendous value: typically they retail at florists for over \$5 per stem. At the Co-op you will find two Oriental Lily stems for \$6.95! Lilies are long lasting and you will usually find an abundance of them week after week at the Flower Shop! **Tulips, Hyacinth, Daffodils** and **Narcissus** come directly from their homeland - Holland.

The house plants are grown at the *Little Leaf Greenhouse* in Morrisville, Vermont – the greenhouse is a wonderful place to visit if you are in the area. Other flowering plants such as **Herbs** and **Lavender** are grown at the *High Meadows Herb Farm* in Putney, Vermont.

Please remember we have flower tissue available near the registers of the store. It keeps the flowers protected, and it looks nice too.

Thank you MNFC members and friends for keeping the Flower Shop at MNFC growing... like seeds in the wind... bringing bounty year after year. You're the best!

Millborne Drinkable Yogurt

by **Gert and Arda Schut**

Starting out on a small farm in Connecticut, we milked 40 cows for ten years, during which time we added our two children, Kelcey and Dennis, to our



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family. When it became apparent that 40 cows would not sustain us in the future, we moved to Vermont and grew our herd to 150 milking cows. By today's standard this is still a rather small farm, but maybe already bigger than we like it to be. We like cows, but having more and more of them does not necessarily make it more enjoyable. Between our desire to remain a small dairy farm and the reality of having financial obligations (bills!), selling our milk strictly as a commodity seemed no longer an option.

A few years ago we started building a small processing plant and started converting some of our milk into our **Drinkable Yogurt**. This not only provides us with the pride and satisfaction of knowing people enjoy a product we actually produce right here on the farm; it also gives us an opportunity to interact with our customers, listen to their concerns, and educate them about dairy farming. This truly has added a whole new exciting perspective, making us feel good about the new direction we have taken on our farm. We are really encouraged by the enthusiasm and support we receive, especially locally.

The great taste, smooth texture, refreshing flavors, and the added benefits of pre- and probiotics (which many people have become familiar with and to appreciate) seems to be a combination that makes people happy.

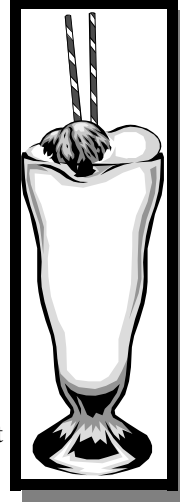
Our **Drinkable Yogurt** has been on the shelf at the *Middlebury Natural Food Co-op* from the very month we started producing it! The fact that our products conforms to the strict standards of the Co-op, makes us proud to be in on the shelves in the store. It also has proven to be one of the best outlets, because it lets us present our product to those consumers who care how and where their food is produced and who are willing to support local food products. Countless visitors, e-mails, and phone calls start out with: *Hey listen, I found your yogurt at the Middlebury Co-op...*

Thank you, *Middlebury Co-op*, for believing in our product from day one!!

North Hollow Farm

by Mike Bowen and Julie Brown

We have been raising **natural beef and pork** at *North Hollow Farm* in Rochester, Vermont, since the late 1970's. About five years ago, we changed to a 100% grass fed program for all of the cattle to meet the increasing demand for local grass fed beef. We are in an ongoing process of changing our genetics to



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work better with an all grass program. By cross breeding our *Hereford* and *Angus* cows to *Red Devon* and *British White* bulls we are trying to get a smaller frame, quicker fattening animal. Both the *Red Devon* and *British White* breeds have been less common in the last several decades because in a feed-lot situation they would get too fat, the same trait that makes them superior breeds for fattening on grass.

There have been a lot of studies done in the last ten years on the make up of fats in all kinds of products. Results show that that some fats are healthier and better for you than others. The ratio of omega-6 fats to omega-3 fats in grass fed meats has been found to be better for consumers than that in cattle that has been fed a ration of grain and concentrates.


The owned and leased land that we hay and graze are what used to be dozens of smaller farms. We have about 850 acres of hay land and pastures, about half in the Route 100 valley and the other half spread all over Rochester's North Hollow. As most of the farms have gone out of business over the years in this valley we feel one of the most important things we do is keep all of this unique land open and productive.

We raise all of the hay, silage and pastures that the cows eat with manure and some wood ash for fertility. We have not used any chemical or non-organic fertilizers for more than a decade. No antibiotics or growth stimulants are ever fed to our animals. Our focus is always on what's best for the animals in order to provide everything they need in a very low stress and healthy environment.

Although beef is our main focus, we also raise pigs, chicken, eggs, goats for milk and meat, rabbits and maple syrup.

We have had a great relationship with the *Middlebury Natural Foods Co-op* for several years. We are happy to see how many local producers they work with, large and small. Working with the local farmers is more important now than ever before and will become more and more so. We would like to thank the *Middlebury Co-op* for picking us as a Producer of the Month!



 *A little Madness in the Spring
Is wholesome even for the King.*
— Emily Dickinson

Neighboring Co-ops **Building a Thriving Regional Economy** by Kristin Bolton

General Manager Glenn Lower and I attended the most recent *Neighboring Food Co-operatives* Association meeting in Hanover, New Hampshire. This group, representing 17 food cooperatives in Vermont, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts, has been working for over the past four years to decide on the most fruitful ways they could work together and what they could achieve. Their goal is a thriving regional economy. Realizing that so many local food initiatives are happening at so many different levels right now, the *Neighboring Co-ops* decided that the first step is to reach out to the many organizations involved in these initiatives. Not only will this linkage help the *Neighboring Co-ops* gain a holistic view of the local food system as it's being rebuilt. It will also allow them to support these initiatives by sharing intelligence from other parts of the state and the region. It's exciting to see co-ops cooperating to strengthen their presence and to have a seat at the table in local food system initiatives in Hardwick, Montpelier, Hanover, Brattleboro, and of course here in Addison County.

With a deeper understanding of the local food system, the *Neighboring Co-ops* will then determine what other roles they can play to boost the regional economy. (For example, soon the *Neighboring Co-ops* have started to participate in a local cheese promotion, to showcase cheese makers from around the state.) With traditional economic structures looking uncertain, cooperatives have a real opportunity to make a positive difference in our collective future.

Kristin Bolton is a member of the MNFC Board of Directors

Give Water

We are happy to announce a new product:

Give bottled water.

Give water is the first bottled water in the United States to come in a 100% biodegradable bottle! In addition, 10 cents of each bottle sold, will be donated to one of four charity groups — children in need, breast cancer support, environmental causes, or working for the cure of muscular disorders.

“Our bottles are 100% recyclable and degrade within 10 years.”



How to Grow a Green Lawn

- ⇒ **Use lots of compost.** It builds healthy soil and grows a lush lawn by adding nutrients, soil biodiversity, and organic matter.
- ⇒ **Mow high — at least 3 inches.** Grass blades need enough green to produce and store energy.
- ⇒ **Leave clippings on the lawn.** The clippings return nutrients, including nitrogen, back to your lawn.
- ⇒ **Mow only with sharp blades.** Dull mower blades rip grass, leaving it vulnerable to disease and other stresses.
- ⇒ **Water infrequently.** Infrequent but deep watering encourages deep root growth.
- ⇒ **Spread lots of seed.** Over-seeding is the best herbicide.
- ⇒ **Use only organic fertilizers.** Conventional pesticides kill other bugs that are necessary for a healthy and diverse soil food web.
- ⇒ **Use compost tea regularly.** It discourages plant diseases by rejuvenating the soil food web.
- ⇒ **Learn to love clover and dandelions.** Clover adds nitrogen to soil, and dandelions aerate the soil with their big tap roots.
- ⇒ **Aerate your lawn.** Soil organisms need air and grass roots need air and space to grow.



Spanish Rice



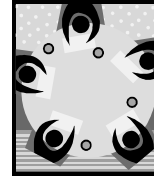
2 tablespoons olive oil	1 heaping tablespoon tomato paste or
1 onion, chopped fine	1 cup of diced fresh or cooked
1 garlic clove, minced	tomatoes, strained
2 cups of long-grain white rice	Pinch of oregano
3 cups vegetable stock	1 teaspoon salt

In a large skillet brown rice in olive oil over medium heat. Add onion and garlic. Cook onion rice mixture, stirring frequently, about 4 minutes, or until onions are softened.

In a separate sauce pan bring stock to a simmer. Add tomato sauce, oregano, and salt. Add rice to broth. Bring to a simmer. Cover. Lower heat and cook 15-25 minutes, depending on the type of rice and the instructions on the rice package. Turn off heat and let sit for 5 minutes.

Board of Directors Meetings

Co-op members are welcome to attend Board of Directors Meetings, scheduled for one Wednesday of each month (for specific times please check our web site or the store Board bulletin board). Time is set aside at the beginning of each meeting for members to express concerns or suggestions.



The next Board Meeting will be held **Wednesday, May 20, at 6:30 p.m.** The following Board Meetings is scheduled for June 24. For more information, call Ashar Nelson, Board President, at 388-9278.



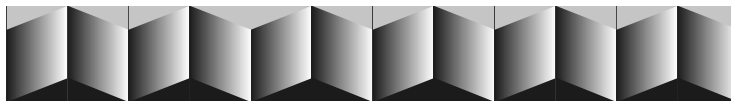
Wendy's Cheese Corner



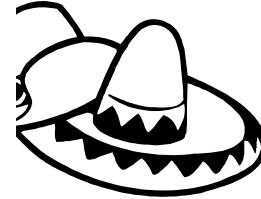
Morbier is a lovely French raw cow's milk cheese, originally produced in the Jura Mountains region. It has a natural moist rubbed rind with a mild supple sweet interior. This semi-hard cheese is aged from 2-3 months. The wheels are 16 inches across, 3 inches high and weigh 20 pounds each. A horizontal black band of ash divides the top from the bottom layer creating an unusual appearance.

The origin of this remarkable cheese has two stories. One tells of a cheese maker who threw some leftover fresh milk cheese curds into a bucket one evening to prevent a rind from forming. To protect the cheese from flies, he sprinkled ashes over it. The next morning more cheese curds were added on top of the layer of ash, thus dividing the evening from the morning milk curds and voilà! — *Morbier* was born.

The second version claims that a wheel of cheese was dropped into ashes or soot, and to try and hide the soiled surface the cheese maker placed a second wheel on top. In either case today's *Morbier* black layer is a harmless vegetable product, and purely decorative.



Mexican Delights



Tamale

A *tamale* is a traditional indigenous Latin American food consisting of steam-cooked corn dough with or without a filling. *Tamales* can be filled with meats, cheese (post-colonial), and sliced chillis or any preparation according to taste. The *tamale* is generally wrapped in a corn husk or in plantain leaves (post-colonial) before cooking, depending on the region from which they come. Their essence is the corn meal dough made from hominy (called *masa*) usually filled with a sweet or savory filling, wrapped in plant leaves or corn husks, and cooked, usually by steaming, until firm. *Tamales* were developed as a portable ration for use by war parties in the ancient Americas and were as ubiquitous and varied as the sandwich is today.

Enchilada

An *enchilada* is a corn tortilla rolled around a filling and covered with a chili pepper sauce. *Enchiladas* can be filled with a variety of ingredients, including meat, cheese, beans, potatoes, vegetables, seafood or combinations.

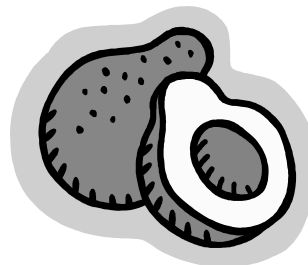
Burrito

A *burrito* consists of a flour tortilla wrapped or folded around a filling. The flour tortilla is usually lightly grilled or steamed, to soften it and make it more pliable. In Mexico, refried beans, Mexican rice, or meat are usually the only fillings and the tortilla is smaller in size. In the United States, however, fillings generally include a combination of ingredients such as Mexican rice, beans, lettuce, salsa, meat, guacamole, cheese, and sour cream, and the size varies, with some burritos considerably larger than their Mexican counterparts.

The word *burrito* literally means *little donkey* in Spanish. It possibly derives from the appearance of a rolled up wheat tortilla, which vaguely resembles the ear of its namesake animal, or from bedrolls and packs that donkeys carried.

Guacamole

Guacamole is an avocado dip. Of Aztec origin, *guacamole* was originally made by mashing the avocado and adding tomatoes and salt. The name *guacamole* comes from an Aztec *āhuacatl* (avocado) and *molli* (sauce). Most recipes call for ripe avocados, onions, lime, and salt. Lime juice is often added for flavor, and to slow the enzyme causing browning.



Seven International Cooperative Principles

Cooperatives are autonomous associations of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically controlled enterprise. They are based on the values of self help, self responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, cooperative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility, and caring for others.

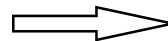
1. Voluntary and Open Membership
2. Democratic Member Control
3. Member Economic Participation
4. Autonomy and Independence
5. Education, Training and Information
6. Cooperation Among Cooperatives
7. Concern for the Community

MNFC Election Voting Procedure

**The voting period begins on Friday, May 1, 2009
and ends at 7:00 pm on Tuesday, May 26, 2009.**

What Am I Voting On?

1. There are seven members seeking election to four seats on the MNFC Board of Directors. Candidate names and statements appeared on previous pages of this document. Select the candidates you feel should fill these seats. Vote for up to 4 candidates.
2. This year the Board is proposing a change in the Bylaws to provide a procedure for breaking tie votes in a Board of Directors' election. Last year's election produced a tie vote for the first time. Since the Bylaws didn't address this situation, the Board decided to hold a runoff election. This meant the Board was incomplete for several months while the run-off was held and the new Board member elected and seated. It also meant additional expenses for



the Co-op. Currently the Bylaws allow the Board to appoint a replacement if a Board member leaves the Board before the end of their term. The Board recommends that it be allowed to act in a similar fashion in the event of a tie.

The Board recommends the following addition to Article IV of the Bylaws, Section 4.3 [added words are in italics]:

Section 4.3 Election and term. Directors shall be elected by member-owners to serve for terms of three years. The terms of directors shall be staggered so that no more than four expire in each fiscal year. *In the event of a tie vote for Director, the Board members shall choose a Director from among the candidates who tied. If an incumbent Board member is part of the tie, s/he will not participate in the decision-making process.* The staff representative shall be elected by the staff and approved by the Board and shall serve for a term of one year or until the election of his or her successor.

A "yes" vote is a vote in favor of this change.

Who Can Vote?

Only the individual who is named on a membership is eligible to vote. That person's name appears on this newsletter's mailing label. Please remember one membership equals one vote.

How Do I Vote?

- ◆ A ballot is located on the last page of the newsletter.
- ◆ Each member's name is on the other side of the ballot. After filling out a ballot, seal it in an envelope.
- ◆ Bring the sealed envelope to a cashier at the Co-op or mail the envelope to: MNFC Elections, 1 Washington Street, Middlebury, VT 05753. No ballots will be accepted after the close of business on Tuesday, May 26, 2009.

What about Voter Anonymity?

- ◆ Your ballot should be securely sealed inside an envelope. Envelopes will remain sealed until the close of the voting period.
- ◆ At the close of the voting period, Board-appointed ballot counters will count the ballots.
- ◆ Ballots will be destroyed after results of the election are confirmed.

How do I find out about the results?

Results of the election of the new Directors and vote on the Bylaw change will be posted in the store, listed in the July newsletter and announced at the Annual Meeting on May 30, 2009.