From the Back of the Editor’s Mind:
Kelly Watters, Conspiracy News Editor

When we chose the theme Heating Up for the spring issue of Conspiracy News, we weren’t anticipating the 90-degree days we’ve been having in March. Hard to believe? That said, nearly one-quarter of the U.S. experienced record highs in February. Here at Food Conspiracy, we believe that it is important we get serious about climate change. Not because of the upcoming March for Science or because it is Earth Month in April, but because it is critical that we examine our own behaviors and how they influence our communities and our planet.

Our goal with this issue is to begin exploring the challenges of climate change from a variety of perspectives. In the P3 conversation on page 10, Kara and Jaime de Zubeldia, homesteading beekeepers and livestock producers, talk with aquaponics grower Chaz Shelton about technology and climate change.

We hear voices from the local movement against GMOs. And learn about Fair Trade Certification and impact of co-ops on farmers and their communities. Our Interim GM shares a manifesto from the natural foods industry about climate change action. And Susan, a Co-op Board member, shares her vision for a community-connected venture.

In gearing up for summer, we are faced with the difficult decision to scale back Conspiracy Garden in order to save water. We’ll be hosting a Sonoran Desert Series, among other exciting offerings from Desert Harvesters (see calendar and back page). We also have some hot summer savings coming for Food Conspiracy owners this summer.

July
People for Animals in the Prevention of Cruelty and Neglect, Inc.
People for Animals in the Prevention of Cruelty & Neglect, Inc. is an organization that is dedicated to the welfare and protection of all animals. For the past twenty years they have been helping pet owners with all or part of their veterinary bills for their sick and injured animals. They also provide financial assistance with spaying and neutering and vaccinations for animals whose owners cannot afford it. This unique animal welfare organization is located in Tucson, has helped dogs, cats, horses, pigs and other animals and numerous animal organizations. We work with animal welfare coalitions and phone banks for animal issues.

May
Casa Libre en La Solana
The mission of Casa Libre en la Solana is to cultivate and enrich a vibrant community of writers and artists through the invention, presentation, and appreciation of creative work. The Fair Weather Reading Series celebrates LGBTQ writers, female writers, writers of color, emerging writers, and other underrepresented groups. Everyone is welcome to attend!

On Saturday, May 13, 2017 7:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.
Fair Weather Reading will also be a celebration of Kristen E. Nelson, executive director of Casa Libre, for her service to the Tucson Literary Community for over 14 years. The evening will include readings by Gina Abelkop, Kristen Nelson, Deborah Poe, Selah Saterstrom, Magdalena Zurawski and more; with music by The Three Kings; and with a queer dance party to end the night.

Food Conspiracy Co-op
412 N. 4th Ave., Tucson, AZ 85705
tel: 520-624-4821
fax: 520-792-2703
email: newsletter@foodconspiracy.coop
website: www.foodconspiracy.coop

Questions? Comments? You can reach the board at board@foodconspiracy.coop

Round Ups for 2017 and 2018 were voted by Food Conspiracy owners in the 2017 Co-op elections. In addition to July’s Round Up, the following organizations were chosen by popular vote out of 17 local organizations.

September - Local First Arizona Foundation
November - Humane Society of Southern AZ
January - Emerge! Center Against Domestic Abuse
March - Northern Jaguar Project
**Conspiracy Classes & Events**

Registration for classes must be purchased 24 hours prior to the start of the class. Registration purchases can be made in the store or online at www.foodconspiracy.coop/events

*Indicates the class or event will be held in the Hoff Building, 425 E. 7th St.

**Yoga Hour at the Co-op**  
Tuesdays 5:30 – 6:30 p.m.  
Come join Doctress Neutopia at the Hoff Building for a free weekly yoga session. We will engage in Kripalu Yoga, a yoga of compassion. Experimenting with visualizations for ecological awareness, chakra cleansing techniques (subtle energy centers of the body), we will come to a place of inner sanctuary during our meditations. Yoga, union with the divine, provides us with a vehicle to make this evolutionary shift possible. Neutopia studied Kripalu Yoga at Esalen Institute. She recently completed 300 hour training at the Mystical Yoga Farm on Lake Atitlan in Guatemala.  

**Board of Directors Meetings**  
Wednesday, April 5th, May 3rd and June 7th  
All owners welcome. Stay involved in Co-op decision making and accrue time towards a Co-op discount for your attendance. (owners receive two 5% discount coupons per account for a one-time shopping trip that month). A light dinner is served at 6:00 p.m. Meeting starts at 6:30 p.m.

**New Owner Orientations**  
Wednesday, April 5th at 6:30 p.m., Saturday, May 20th at 10:00 a.m.  
Welcome new owners! We'd like to invite you to learn how you can get the most out of your investment in the Co-op. We'll talk about how the Co-op works, how owners participate, and how you can save money and eat healthy while shopping at the Co-op. RSVP by emailing outreach@foodconspiracy.coop or calling (520) 624-4821.

**Bulk Sale**  
April 19 - May 2  
10% off for everyone on all bulk food, oils and nut butters. (see ad on page 11)

**Owner Days of Summer**  
Friday, June 2nd through Sunday June 4th and July 7th - 9th.  
All Food Conspiracy owners receive 10% off. Maximum discount is 10%. Does not include special orders, gift cards or classes. (See store for details. (see ad on page 11)

**SONORAN DESERT SERIES**

You are Here Uplands Arizona Subdivision: Native Plant Foods  
Palette with Jill Lorenzini  
Monday, April 27 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.  
Use the Sonoran Desert Foods Calendar, Wild Foods Calendar, and Native Seeds SEARCH 5-seasons calendar wheel to understand seasonal cycles and to see the wealth of delicious native perennial plant foods available throughout the year. These nutritious foods will be discussed in detail in subsequent classes, along with the many other benefits they provide. Get familiar with the dynamics of winter and summer monsoon seasons, meet Sky Island mountain ranges, river and riparian areas, explore long-term climate change and ongoing drought cycles. Sample desert flowers iced tea. Cost: $10

**Beautiful Beneficial Bean Trees with Jill Lorenzini**  
Monday, May 22  6:00 - 8:00 p.m.  
Meet the native mesquite, ironwood, and palo verde trees that anchor the Uplands AZ plant palette. These trees act as nurse plants for other desert flora, and create rich environments under their canopies where both plants and animals survive and thrive. Desert legume trees provide bountiful harvests of protein-packed beans and tasty pods year after year. The “Be Like a Bean Tree” poster encapsulates many of their attributes. Taste mesquite flour and pods, and shell and taste green palo verde beans. Cost: $10

**Cool Cacti with Jill Lorenzini**  
Monday, June 26th 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.  
The Sonoran Desert is dominated by a large variety of cacti: cholla, prickly pear, barrel, saguaro, and pincushion cacti all have unique shapes, features and foods. All cacti are succulents, but not all succulents are cacti. Learn about amazing areoles, found only on cactus, dreaded glochids, mucopolysaccharide slime, cactus fruit and pad nutrition and benefits, harvest seasons, identification, best harvest tools and practices, traditional and contemporary use. Sample saguaro fruit and pickled cholla buds. Cost: $10

**Berries, Seeds, Green, Herbs & Flowers with Jill Lorenzini**  
Monday, July 24  6:00 - 8:00 p.m.  
Lesser known than the bean trees and cactus foods, berries, greens, herbs, and flowers add unique flavors, textures, and health benefits to your diet. Wolfberry, hackberry, and canyon hackberry offer sweet and bittersweet treats. Summer and winter greens and herbs (mustard, Lambs Quarter, chickweed, malva, peppergrass, verdolagas, amaranth, aloysia, etc), and seasonal flowers (desert willow, chuparosa, palo verde, ironwood, ocotillo, etc) provide pungent and colorful additions to foods, and seeds (chia, amaranth, panic grass, plantago, etc) add crunchy protein and visual interest. All will be up for discussion. Try verdolagas salsa with seasonal ingredients. Cost: $10

**On the Cover**

Cover art for this issue of Conspiracy News is by Marcy Ellis. This illustration is ink and watercolor. You can view Marcy’s work at www.marcyellis.com

We are seeking original art or photography for the next issue themed Bearing Fruit. Deadline is June 1.
Dear Fellow Cooperators,

As the newbie to the Food Conspiracy Board of Directors, I am living in a very surreal world as I return to a leadership role at our beloved food Co-op after more than twenty-two years. Imagine, the last time I served on this Board, we didn’t even have email! The realization of the shift that our society has taken since then has catapulted me into the role of an elder in the Co-op food network, one who still knows how to communicate in the old ways: face to face, mano a mano, heart to heart. Those are the kinds of connections I look forward to building with owners as we steer the Food Conspiracy through the treacherous waters (and droughts) to come and lead our community-owned business into a world that is, indeed, heating up.

An attitude of gratitude is essential as we manage this unique cooperative business venture in a time of changing climates. Thanks to all of the staff at the Food Conspiracy Co-op who are carrying on the day-to-day tasks of food gathering and distribution so that we can all feed our families with organic, healthy food. Thank you to Eric Lauterbach-Colby, our Interim General Manager, and all of his support staff, for stepping up to the helm and steering the ship while we begin to re-vision our future, and complete our search for a permanent GM. Thank you to Michael DeSantis, our new Board President, who has graciously agreed to take charge of our team. I offer my sincerest gratitude to all of my fellow Co-op owners and Board members for trusting that my vision of the Food Conspiracy as a food hub where spokes connect in the digital world, our community-connected venture that can sustain our store, grow food for our community, and nurture all of our members. Through initiatives like the Member Engagement Committee, which is exploring new ways to connect in the digital world, support small business ventures, and maximize the collateral and resources that the Food Conspiracy has to offer, we can benefit our entire community in more ways than we ever imagined.

Thank you for being a member of the Food Conspiracy Co-op, the foundation of our cooperative community! As always, I welcome your feedback and participation.

Peace, love, and good health, Susan Silverman

The next Board meetings are:
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5TH
WEDNESDAY, MAY 3
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7
There is no Board meeting in July.
Communicate with the Board via email board@foodconspiracy.coop

Food Conspiracy Cooperative, Inc. is hiring a General Manager. Job posting and information is on our website at www.foodconspiracy.coop. Apply until April 31st.
$1.00 coffees in April with Co-op Klean Kanteen Coffee Mug.

Replacing 1 disposable cup a day for 1 year with a reusable mug you prevent:

- 281 gallons water usage
- 23 lbs CO2 emissions
- 16 lbs solid waste
- 1 tree from being chopped down
- and save $91

YOU CHOOSE! SINGLE USE OR REUSE?
Join the reuse revolution!

Replacing 1 disposable cup a day for 1 year with a reusable mug you prevent:

- 281 gallons water usage
- 23 lbs CO2 emissions
- 16 lbs solid waste
- 1 tree from being chopped down
- and save $91

YOU CHOOSE! SINGLE USE OR REUSE?
Join the reuse revolution!

Mrs. Green’s World
MrsGreensWorld.com

Heating up the conversation about CLIMATE CHANGE and taking ACTION in our community!

WEEKLY PODCASTS | COMMUNITY EVENTS | PUBLIC SPEAKING | BLOGS

LISTEN TO US ON iHeartRadio AND CONNECT WITH US ON SOCIAL MEDIA
Generally Speaking

Eric Lauterbach-Colby, Interim General Manager

“Saving our planet, lifting people out of poverty, advancing economic growth; these are one and the same fight. We must connect the dots between climate change, water scarcity, energy shortages, global health, food security and women’s empowerment. Solutions to one problem must be solutions for all.”

- Ban Ki-Moon (Dec 7, 2016)

Since opening our doors in 1971, organic products have been a primary focus at the Food Conspiracy Co-op. As the world has changed over the years, it has become increasingly clear that the impacts that organic practices have on the environment are not only positive, but necessary. And now we know that these impacts are not only necessary, they are imperative. Climate change and the role organic food plays in counteracting it, is not only the issue of the day, but the issue of our lifetime. As our climate heats up, we need to make choices that will positively impact our environment, because if we don’t, we will suffer the consequences and future generations will be irrevocably harmed.

At the Co-op, in addition to making organics a priority we will challenge our suppliers to switch to organic ingredients and sustainable practices through the Climate Collaborative (Climatecollaborative.com). Climate Collaborative is a new initiative within the natural foods industry, which officially launched at Climate Day at EXPO West. Climate Collaborative is bringing manufacturers, retailers, brokers, distributors, and suppliers together to take bold, meaningful action to scale solutions to reverse climate change. Companies can commit to one of all of the nine initiatives:

- agriculture (integrate carbon farming into the agricultural supply chain)
- packaging (reduce the climate impact of packaging)
- policy (responsible engagement in climate policy)
- energy efficiency (increase energy efficiency)
- food waste (reduce food waste in the supply chain)
- forests (remove commodity driven deforestation from the supply chain)
- renewable energy (commit to 100% renewable energy)
- short lived climate pollutants (reduce short lived climate pollutants)

We need you, our owners and customers, to make fighting climate change a priority. What story will you tell? Will you tell a story of how we joined together to make daily choices to fight climate change and support our environment? Will you support organic, regenerative agriculture, and biodynamic practices? Will you support solar projects, recycling, up-cycling, and composting?

At the Co-op we are committed to reducing our impact on the environment. Through the Co+efficient sustainability program, in cooperation with hundreds of other food co-ops in the country, we are working to measurably improve the Food Conspiracy’s social, environmental, and local economic impacts. Now, I invite you to make choices that support efforts to positively impact our world! Visit www.climatecollaborative.com for the inspiration, ideas, and support on the path to being part of the solution.

What is Climate Change?

“Climate change” encompasses global warming, but refers to the broader range of changes that are happening to our planet. These include rising sea levels, shrinking mountain glaciers, accelerating ice melt in Greenland, Antarctica and the Arctic, and shifts in flower/plant blooming times. These are all consequences of the warming, which is caused mainly by people burning fossil fuels and putting out heat-trapping gases into the air. The terms “global warming” and “climate change” are sometimes used interchangeably, but strictly, they refer to slightly different things.

Source: climate.nasa.gov/faq/
We are manufacturers, retailers, distributors, brokers, suppliers and other concerned businesses from the natural foods industry working collaboratively to take bold action to reverse climate change.

We are a community of businesses joining forces to create pathways to action, connecting companies to resources and working together to create solutions. We shine a light on success stories and recognize companies for their great climate work which in turn inspires more companies to act.

We are a catalyst for change. Big, bold change.

We’re turning-up the heat to challenge our peers to up their climate game.

Climate change is here now.

We already feel its effects. While climate change is one of the biggest risks ever to face humankind, it’s also one of our greatest opportunities. Solving the climate crisis will make our businesses stronger, our nation more prosperous, and our families safer. It will unleash a new wave of innovation and improve our quality of life.

It’s been more than 25 years since we started down the road to climate action. Yet we are still not making the progress necessary to stay below that critical 2o C threshold that scientists agree will trigger dire consequences.

We get it. Blazing a new path is not easy. Climate can feel like a distant threat when you’re working to meet quarterly revenue targets, resolve production capacity constraints or deal with another human resource crisis. Further, many in the natural foods industry are already deeply engaged in climate action including measuring their carbon footprints, setting goals, and implementing practices to reduce their climate impact.

But when recently polled about their company’s climate action the overwhelming majority of natural foods companies responded: “We could be doing more.”

We must.

We are an industry of innovators. Our consumers expect us to lead. We can go farther together to reverse climate change than any of us have gone before and usher in the new low carbon economy. Collaborating to create scale and momentum, we can drive the change that must happen to create a stronger more resilient industry—and a better future for all.

Working together we will.

The natural products industry has a proud history of leading the way on animal welfare, organic agriculture, fair trade, and non-GMOs. Now it’s time to lead on climate change.”

--John Foraker, President, Annie’s.
Annual Meeting 2017
We are Better Together

photos by Mamta Popat
Getting to Know You:

Michael, Co-op owner

YOU & YOUR CO-OP

How long have you been a Co-op owner?

About five years (I can’t remember exactly)

Why is being a Co-op owner a priority for you?

It’s important to me to buy locally-grown food. And it’s important to me to support the entities that make it possible for me to do what I find important. Being a member-owner of the Co-op is an easy way for me to be supportive of The Co-op beyond being a patron.


What’s a favorite find at the Co-op?

Local eggs. May I list more than one? Mother-in-Law’s kimchi, Pomi strained tomatoes, La Maldita wine, South River miso, Arizona pecans, Woodstock frozen blueberries, Ohsawa shoyu sauce.

What is your favorite way to create and cook up cuisine using ingredients from the Co-op?

Red sauce

Yield: just enough for two pounds of whole-wheat spaghetti

Ingredients:

1 head of garlic

2/3 c extra virgin olive oil

1 yellow onion, finely diced

1 bay leaf

1 box of Pomi strained tomatoes

1 rind of Parmigiano-Reggiano, say about 2" in its longest dimension

2 tsp salt

1/2 tsp freshly ground black pepper

Procedure:

1. Roast the garlic in the usual way.
2. Sweat the onion in the olive oil in a pot large enough to hold all of the ingredients.
3. Make a paste of the roasted garlic.
4. Add the garlic to the pot.
5. Let the onion and the garlic cook another few minutes.
6. Add the remaining ingredients to the pot.
7. Bring the sauce to a boil. Stir occasionally.
8. Simmer the sauce for fifteen minutes. Stir occasionally.
9. Fish out the bay leaf and the cheese rind before consumption.

What do you love most about where you live?

The smell of the creosote bush.

Where do you consider yourself native? Here

What’s your favorite outdoor activity or to be more specific, your favorite sunset or full moon activity? I’m a morning person. I like early-morning bicycle rides through vacant streets; leisurely rides, not ones for working up a sweat.

Eat Local Challenge is coming!

July 1 - 14 All local produce and local grocery 10% off for everyone.
Local melons, tomatoes, cucumbers, Conspiracy Kitchen salads & more!
Q&A with Chaz Shelton and Jaime and Kara de Zubeldia

As you read, remember that there is no substitute for being able to have a direct relationship with your producer and to learn the deeper story of our food. We ask that you speak up, insert yourself, share information you learn here, have conversations at the water cooler at work, and of course, around a table with a slice of pie.

Our second P3 conversation embraces the newsletter’s theme of Heating Up through a discussion about climate change. We hosted three local farmers over a delicious lemon pie, and asked them to discuss the impact of changing weather patterns on our southern Arizona farmers and food system.

Chaz Shelton is the co-owner of Merchant’s Garden, a greenhouse operation that launched in a vacant TUSD property in March 2016. Their mission is to make food accessible and affordable to everyone using the science of aquaponics and hydroponics.

Jaime and Kara de Zubeldia are the owners of ReZoNation Farm, located 25 miles west of Tucson in Avra Valley. “Every part of our farm has been designed with the principles of permaculture and sustainability of resources in mind,” they write on their website. “Since 2007 we have been relocating hives, raising honeybees, and cultivating native and heirloom varieties of plants and animals.”

FCC: Tell us about your work.

Chaz: We have a 10,000 square foot greenhouse, and we do aquaponics on a recirculating system. We farm about 7,000 sq. feet of that 10,000 square foot greenhouse, which does about just under a half a million pounds of leafy greens a year—lettuce, basil, watercress, all sorts of herbs and types of lettuce. Right now we are operating at about 40 – 50% capacity. We primarily sell to restaurants, schools, and grocery stores. Right now it is just myself and my step-dad Billy, the farmer, and we have some part-time help and some really great resources from the University. It’s a learning adventure for us right now.

Jaime: We are about 40 minutes outside of Tucson, directly west of the Food Conspiracy Co-op. We started about nine or ten years ago, and our farm is built from a permaculture design concept. At the moment we are focused primarily on honey bee production and honey. We spent a lot of time raising eggs and hogs and providing those products to the Food Conspiracy. Outside of the time on the farm, Kara works at the U of A at the Eller College of Business, and I am full time on the farm. I spend about a quarter of my time working with the Western Water Agency, looking at irrigation efficiency for alfalfa and cotton. We also did some work with a Western SARE Grant on beekeeping education with the Tohono O’odham tribe. We keep hives at the San Xavier Co-op Farm and around the Mission. We’re trialing a strain of honey bee and regional honey bee development.

Jaime: When you deal with livestock, you are always wrapped up in the moment, and you have to deal with the problems of the moment in a reactionary mindframe. Unless you have designed your system around climate change so that you have built-in efficiencies, you are really just running around reactionary, like a chicken without its head. Speaking of chickens—that is one of the things that we nixed, because of the economics versus the time. It was not as beneficial for us as other things.

Kara: And we were tired of seeing them suffer during the summer. It is really just too hot for chickens, despite all of the misters, fans and shade. When we graphed the production, we could see a reflection of the stress—you get a huge dip with the heat stress.

Jaime: Our interest now is really focused on the bees, but you see the heat stress in the nectar flow—it goes away, whereas in other areas, nectar flow is peaking. [In southern Arizona], we get these two productive seasons, and our honey production is more subdued but spread out. This spring the temperatures went from the 70s directly into the 90s. Usually we have a couple of weeks of 80s. Springtime for bees starts in late January when the hives start making baby bees, and that is the same for chickens. They start sensing daylight length and sensing that change.

FCC: How does climate change impact how you set up your farm and your livestock?

Jaime: Many would say that the onset of climate change has been caused because of the introduction of technology, and so we at Merchants Garden are trying to figure out how can we allow Mother Nature to do what she does, use technology to allow her to be her, but not alter that in a way that’s caused the issues that we have today in the environment.

Jaime: We’re doing the same thing with regard to the SARE grant (Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education) to do instrumental insemination. We will be getting some equipment and specialized training to control the mating a little bit more. If the temperature isn’t right, the drones (the male bees) don’t match up with the queens, and the semen isn’t just right to be able to inseminate the queen. You need a more controlled environment to do that. It’s the old way of mating versus the new way of mating, which some may think “Oh, that technology is really invasive.” But the only thing we are doing is choosing the drones. It’s another example of using technology, but dancing around what Mother Nature already does, and trying facilitate that because of the challenges that we are facing.

Chaz: That is such a hard dance to take. To what degree do we allow...
technology to undo what’s already done, and to what degree do we allow Mother Nature to work it out and do her thing? We know that consumers, when it comes to our products, love naturally grown products. We truly believe that those are the best flavor and best looking products as well. Those are the questions and that’s why we are in a controlled environment—to allow for those things to occur in nature and do so in a way where it’s sustainable, and in a system recirculating water, because we are getting less and less of that. Regardless of what we have as a footprint here in Tucson, that stuff is felt hundreds of miles away across the country.

Jaime: Meeting consumer demand is part of being sustainable, depending on how you look at it. Regenerative or sustainable is zero growth. We want to be able to provide queens from this region to people here rather than through this genetic bottleneck of four regions on the planet. But we can only do that if we are using technology or at least teaching ourselves what method will be sustainable moving forward. Is it the old method, or some sort of combination, or the new technology?

Chaz: I am not sure this translates with bees and pollen production, but with lettuce production, there was a system in place with technology to meet the consumer demand in the 1950’s, 60’s, and 70’s, but because of the population increasing so much, consumer demand is naturally on the rise. While we see people in the industry trying to make a super powerful unique seed to produce a greater yield, we’re saying: Okay, I understand that we need to make more food, but we’re not going to do it that way. We’re going to do it, just in a different way. But I think we all have the same problem here. We need more food for people.

Chaz: I am just learning about the major massive issue with bees right now, but I am not sure people understand the degree of what’s going on.

Jaime: Exactly. It’s just a reflection of things that are probably not right. It just happens to be the “canary in the coal mine,” in-your-face type of example. Thanks to the media.

Chaz: Do you struggle with that in terms of your products, with demand or selling it?

Jaime: We’re making bees from bees for right now. We are just getting to the point where can harvest some of that excess. This year, our very small goal is to produce 4,000 pounds of honey using the bees that have been collected here.

Chaz: Jaime, I think you bring up a good point of a localized vision for small impact. We are all exhausted with the enormous issue of climate change, and how to make an impact or even making a dent in that, but I think that understanding one tiny step or goal at a time is the only way to approach that. That’s what we try to do at the farm. We are local production for local consumption. Just like you spoke about in the bee industry and farm industry, people try to produce as much as possible and ship it thousands of miles away. And a lot of infrastructure is invested in that, but we’re kind of more of what I like to call a militia style, with little groups attacking this big issue from a local setting.

Jaime: Bringing it home to climate change and our future, we will need more energy and more resources coming in to address the challenges we are facing. We are constantly learning and understanding not just the concept of bees, but how this affects our environment and our consumers. Meanwhile, we’re trying to make a livelihood—get a little skin in the game, or enough risk to actually make the product and pay the bills.
**Now Sowing**

by Justine Hernandez, Pima County Seed Librarian

It’s heating up, Tucson! This means our warm-weather gardening season is upon us. As you consider which delightful crops will grace your warm-weather garden, we want to encourage you to add seed saving to your list of criteria. A once integral part of agricultural practices across cultures, seed saving has fallen off of most gardeners’ radar in recent generations. We want to change that by helping gardeners reconnect with their inner *semillista*, because we believe that a community of seed savers and seed sharers is part of a healthy and robust local food system.

Many thanks to our friends at Conspiracy News for giving the Pima County Public Library Seed Library this space to share some basic seed saving tips to get you started on your seed saving adventure!

**Why save seeds?**

The reasons for saving seeds are as diverse as the seeds themselves. Seed saving is food security—helping to preserve the genetic biodiversity of our food crops by encouraging the planting of varieties (often heirlooms) that are not favored by commercial growers. Seed saving is culture—helping us preserve and share the foodways and stories of the communities that have passed down the seeds. Seed saving is community—encouraging us to share its bounty. Seed saving is resiliency—helping us create seed stock that is better adapted to our unique climate.

**Choose your seeds**

For the seed saver who is just starting out in their learning, the warm-weather garden makes a great classroom. That’s because many of the heat-loving plants we love to grow are self-pollinating, making them “easy” to save seeds from. We recommend that beginning seed savers start with self-pollinating varieties. Our favorite choice for first-timers is tomatoes. We recommend heat tolerant cherry varieties like pinkish hued Nichols (a true local heirloom stewarded by the Nichols family of Tucson) or Ciudad Victoria, a brambly, almost wild variety that’s perfect for popping in your mouth by the handful.

It’s important to start with open-pollinated seeds (not hybrids or $F_1$ seeds) when planning to save seed. Open-pollinated seeds are seeds whose offspring will breed “true” as long as steps to prevent cross-pollination are taken. Whereas hybrid seeds are the crossing of two different parent plants, resulting in offspring whose seeds will have a combination of both parents’ genes. If we try to plant from those seeds, we can’t reliably know what traits will be expressed in that next generation.

**Gather your tools**

The indispensable tools of the seed saver are:

- Garden journal
- Masking tape
- Pollination bag (we made our own from mesh-like fabric scraps found at the fabric store, but you can also find these at Native Seeds/SEARCH or online)
- Curiosity!

**Start with tomatoes**

Tomatoes are self-pollinating, but there’s always the chance that eager pollinators will squeeze into the just-barely-opening flowers,
potentially cross-pollinating different tomato varieties growing in your garden. If you are only planting one variety of tomato in your garden, you don’t have to worry about this and can easily collect seeds from the ripe fruits over the course of the growing season. But, if you’re tomato fiends like we are, we’re planting at least two varieties of tomatoes in our garden and need to take extra steps to prevent cross-pollination. If this sounds like you, follow these steps:

- Select a branch of the plant with several unopened buds (it’s recommended saving from at least 5 different tomato plants of the same variety for best genetic diversity)
- Place a pollination bag over the cluster of flowers on the branch
- Tag the section you bagged with a piece of masking tape so you know later which fruit to harvest and collect seeds from
- Allow the flowers to bloom inside the bag, keeping the bag on for a day or two past their initial bloom (help ensure good pollination by shaking the branch a few times)
- Remove the bag and allow the fruit to fully mature on the plant

**Harvesting the seeds**

Collect the ripened fruit from your plants (the tagged branches if you’re using the bagging method) and squeeze the pulp into a container with a little water. Loosely cover and let ferment for 4-6 days, shaking occasionally. Pour off the “filmy” pulp and any floating seeds, keeping the seeds that have settled to the bottom. Rinse the settled seeds through a colander, removing any excess pulp. Spread rinsed seeds on cotton cloth and allow to completely dry (depending on humidity, up to 2 weeks)

**Storage**

Dry, dark, and cool: these are three keywords to remember when storing seeds for later use. Make sure your cleaned seeds are perfectly dry before storing. A good way to test this is by trying to cut into or snapping the seed. If you’re feeling some resistance, they’re probably still too moist and need more time to dry. Store completely dry seeds in an envelope, baggie, or jar in your cool, dark, and dry space.

**Share!**

We hope your seed saving journey is a fun and fruitful. Consider sharing your seedy bounty with friends, neighbors, and of course, the PCPL Seed Library!

**More on seed saving**

For those wanting to really dig-in to seed saving, we recommend these terrific guides which are available to check-out from the Pima County Public Library:

*The Seed Garden: The Art and Practice of Seed Saving* edited by Lee Buttala & Shanyn Siegel. Seed Savers Exchange

*Seed to Seed: Seed Saving and Growing Techniques for Vegetable Gardeners* by Suzanne Ashworth


We’re already on the search for writers, reporters, and photographers for the next issue of Conspiracy News. The theme is “Bearing Fruit” and submissions are due by June 1.

Email newsletter@foodconspiracy.coop with ideas or suggestions. Food Conspiracy member-owners who participate in the newsletter can qualify for a shopping discount.
FCC: Tell us the story of Exo Roast. What role do you envision playing in Tucson?

Exo as a cafe began in 2009 (and before that, a roastery at Time Market for a few years) by Doug Smith, Chris Byrne, and Peter Wilke. The vision was to introduce Tucson to the spectacular array of single-origin coffee available on the global market, to celebrate coffee on its merits alone (without adulteration by milk and sugar), and to highlight the important work and often heartbreaking sacrifice that goes into the “crop to cup” process. I joined the team in 2010 and since then, we’ve included in our mission to help create a space for non-profits and other organizations to meet and work. We are proud to be a neighborhood spot and thrive on creating a cafe culture where people can be better stewards of our community and the world.

Can you tell me about the process of launching Southern Arizona Work Space (SAWS) and the incorporation of education into your business model?

The formation of SAWS was really the idea to build upon the foundation that people had already created for themselves at Exo. We saw a need for organizations—like Living Streets Alliance, Ironwood Tree Experience, Sky Island Alliance, Watershed Management Group, Desert Harvesters, Pivot Produce, The Arts Foundation, El Grupo, Edible Baja Arizona, Watershed Management, City High School, Lead Local, Tucson Young Professionals and MANY MANY others—to workshop, talk through ideas, meet and enjoy coffee or tea, and collaborate. We knew it didn’t need to be a membership-based working environment, but just “if we build it, they will come” (and drink coffee and eat breakfast), and we’ll get to host these awe-inspiring groups and social change in action. We also wanted to give these groups a chance to meet privately and rent our space at a fair value. We also wanted to give them an opportunity to host their own public events and allow their work to be showcased. We ALSO (it’s very versatile) wanted to curate our own series of events designed to build “20th century skills” through initiatives aimed at sustainability, resiliency, land preservation, skill building, and networking. Since July, we’ve had workshops on everything from fermenting to welding, sewing and Spanish. How to harvest an acorn and how to harvest water in your front yard. Each class is designed to introduce a skill that we see as endangered in our technology-driven culture and bring people back to a place of engagement with their land, their community, and the materials they interact with.

Tell me about Exo’s focus on resource conservation, water harvesting, wildcrafting, etc. How is your business informed by the social and ecological community we live in?

The desert as a culinary resource is a wildly engaging one. We have the opportunity to do things here that no one would ever dream of somewhere else! Chiltepin in coffee (just what is a chiltepin many would wonder?), mesquite syrup in coffee, pickled barrel cactus fruit, locally grown and produced mole—these are exciting pairings that just keep us going. We have always considered coffee too beautiful a pallet to just mask with sugar and fat. There are so many other things you can do.

What are other partnerships you’ve engaged in, and how does partnership strengthen your business and/or local businesses in general?
We hope to bridge a greater partnership with Desert Harvesters this spring and summer, and we have some exciting news to share about that soon. We always wanted the kitchen at Exo to further our connections to the harvesting and gleaning community in Tucson. We hope to become a model for kitchens to buy direct or through a food hub like Pivot Produce or Iskashitaa, and instead of relying on a stable menu, allowing ingredients to change as seasons do. This is of course, an established trend and we are by no means the only folks in Tucson doing this. But we want to highlight this even more in our kitchen. You’ll never see a delivery truck pull up in front of Exo. Pivot Produce provides all of our connections to farmers and we want to highlight the importance of food hubs and small farmers in our community. We also are excited to expand our menu into evening hours soon and have more to share on that later. Summer surprises!

We will also be traveling to Colima, Mexico to further a relationship with a coffee growing co-op there. Our hope is to build a small development project with a co-op there and to continue to buy direct from sources in Mexico. We are so excited! We love the character of Mexican coffee and are excited to share more of it with folks in Tucson.

The summer at Exo Roast Co. is going to hold the following: Desert inspired aquas frescas! Coffee cocktails! Live dances and music! Homemade nut milks! Desert harvested kitchen collaborations and demonstrations! •

WHAT IS FAIR TRADE?

®

FAIRTRADE

ANSWER:

Fair Trade is a global trade model and certification that allows shoppers to quickly identify products that were produced in an ethical manner. For consumers, Fair Trade offers a powerful way to reduce poverty through their everyday shopping. For farmers and workers in developing countries, Fair Trade offers better prices, improved terms of trade, and the business skills necessary to produce high-quality products that can compete in the global marketplace. Through vibrant trade, farmers and workers can improve their lives and plan for their futures. Today, Fair Trade benefits more than 1.2 million farming families in 70 developing countries across Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Globally, the Fair Trade network certifies coffee, tea and herbs, cocoa, fresh fruit and vegetables, sugar, beans and grains, flowers, nuts, oils and butters, honey and spices, wine and apparel. Certified ingredients are now used in ready-to-drink beverages, body care products and spirits. In the United States, Fair Trade Certified™ products are available in more than 50,000 retail locations.

Fair Trade principles include:

Fair prices and credit: Democratically organized farming groups receive a guaranteed minimum floor price (or the market price if it's higher) and an additional premium for certified organic products. Farming organizations are also eligible for pre-harvest credit.

Fair labor conditions: Workers on Fair Trade farms enjoy freedom of association, safe working conditions and sustainable wages. Forced child and slave labor are strictly prohibited.

Direct trade: With Fair Trade, importers purchase from Fair Trade producer groups as directly as possible to eliminate unnecessary middlemen and empower farmers to develop the business capacity necessary to compete in the global marketplace.

Democratic and transparent organizations: Fair Trade farmers and workers decide democratically how to invest Fair Trade premiums, which are funds for community development.

Community development: Fair Trade farmers and farm workers invest Fair Trade premiums in social and business development projects like scholarships, schools, quality improvement and leadership training, and organic certification.

Environmental sustainability: Harmful agrochemicals and GMOs are strictly prohibited in favor of environmentally sustainable farming methods that protect farmers’ health and preserve valuable ecosystems for future generations.

FAIR TRADE FEATURE

LA RIOJANA WINE & OLIVE OIL

CO-OP TO CO-OP

You may have tasted the delicious La Riojana Wines at Food Conspiracy. La Riojana is a fair trade cooperatively-produced wine from Argentina. The winery is located in a semi-arid region of Argentina, with short winters and very hot summers. The cooperative is comprised of 442 families.

La Riojana winery has a direct relationship with food co-ops in the U.S., which allows them to offer the wine to the consumer at the affordable price of $8.99, while still investing their profits back into local community infrastructure. La Riojana was the first winery in Argentina to become Fair Trade Certified in 2006, and remain the largest Fair Trade producer and exporter in Argentina. In the 1950’s, when they planted grapes in the region, they also planted olives, a companion plant to grapes. In 2015, La Riojana received Fair Trade Certification for their olive oil. We recently brought in their Fair Trade organic extra virgin olive oil. It is cold-pressed with a ripe olive bouquet and notes of almonds and spices.

La Riojana has invested in a water facility and a new secondary school specializing in agriculture for the community. In addition to health and education, the co-op is invested in becoming carbon neutral, transitioned its growers to become organically certified, using solar and bio energy.

Learn more at www.lariojanawines.com
Local Movement Against GMOs Heats Up in Avra Valley

What you Need to Know:
Monsanto is building a 7-acre greenhouse on 155 acres of purchased land in Avra Valley to develop corn for production seed. In addition, they originally applied for a Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) designation, with a proposal that included “payment in lieu of taxes.” A FTZ is a site designated by the FTZ Board, in which special customs procedures may be used. The FTZ Board may approve any zone or sub-zone which it deems necessary to serve adequately “the public interest.” Foreign Trade Zones have many benefits and exemptions for a company. The approval process, depending on whether the company engages in manufacturing, can take 10-12 months. The application is listed on the federal register and has a period of public comment. Before the Pima County Board of Supervisors could vote on whether to approve the proposal, Monsanto pulled it off of the table. Presumably, this was a result of the public outcry among Pima County constituents concerned about Monsanto’s presence in our community. While this is a small victory in itself, the fight is not over yet. Monsanto has already begun developing the Avra Valley site and it is possible that they could still apply for the FTZ. There is more education and awareness necessary, including campaigns to shift purchasing towards organic foods, an exploration of ways to remove the use of toxic chemical Roundup from our public spaces, and community readiness to act upon new information.

A recent report finding high levels of glyphosate (the main ingredient in Roundup) in popular U.S. foods included two product we carried at Food Conspiracy—Kashi Organic Promise cereal and Stacy’s Pita Chips. When we learned of this, we immediately pulled these products from our shelves. Below are four different perspectives on this issue.

Fiore IAnnacone, Food Conspiracy Board Member

FCC: Why do you feel it is important for the Food Conspiracy to take a stand on this issue?
The Board represents the interests of the Owner-members. Therefore, as a Board member, I feel it is my responsibility to speak out when our environment and the health of our community is in danger. Our Ends Statement speaks to our Co-op being “Environmentally conscious” and supporting “Sustainability” in agriculture. I take these values very seriously and believe this is one of the reasons our owners are so passionate about the Co-op.

FCC: How has your participation in public meetings impacted community perception about this issue?
People now know and believe that activism can make a difference. Prior to the public’s outcry against Monsanto potentially receiving a tax credit, no one ever thought that Monsanto would ultimately rescind their application for that designation. This happened only because people in our community came together and said “No to Monsanto.” Our Board meetings and rallies have also helped as well to inform the public on the dangers inherent in Monsanto’s “Project Corn” greenhouse project in Marana. This is our 1st Amendment in action.

FCC: What kind of impact do you think this issue has on the Co-op?
I personally felt that our Board needed to take the lead on this important issue. As a result, I authored the “Stop Monsanto Project Resolution,” which was unanimously approved by the Board on January 4th, 2017. This document provided the direction needed to represent our interests in the community.

Melissa Diane Smith, local author and nutritionist

FCC: From the perspective of a nutritionist and author, who has researched and written extensively about GMOs, why do you feel that Monsanto’s proposal is a concern?

By Kelly Watters, Education & Outreach Manager

FCC: Why do you feel it is important for the Food Conspiracy to take a stand on this issue?
The Board represents the interests of the Owner-members. Therefore, as a Board member, I feel it is my responsibility to speak out when our environment and the health of our community is in danger. Our Ends Statement speaks to our Co-op being “Environmentally conscious” and supporting “Sustainability” in agriculture. I take these values very seriously and believe this is one of the reasons our owners are so passionate about the Co-op.

FCC: How has your participation in public meetings impacted community perception about this issue?
People now know and believe that activism can make a difference. Prior to the public’s outcry against Monsanto potentially receiving a tax credit, no one ever thought that Monsanto would ultimately rescind their application for that designation. This happened only because people in our community came together and said “No to Monsanto.” Our Board meetings and rallies have also helped as well to inform the public on the dangers inherent in Monsanto’s “Project Corn” greenhouse project in Marana. This is our 1st Amendment in action.

FCC: What kind of impact do you think this issue has on the Co-op?
I personally felt that our Board needed to take the lead on this important issue. As a result, I authored the “Stop Monsanto Project Resolution,” which was unanimously approved by the Board on January 4th, 2017. This document provided the direction needed to represent our interests in the community.
Several years ago, when I was researching the topic of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and pesticides, I kept running into stories with titles like “Poisons in Paradise.” These were stories about the toxic chemicals that were used in areas of Hawaii where Monsanto or other biotech companies set up shop. People experienced symptoms like coughs, breathing problems, rashes, nausea, flu-like symptoms, and many are sick today with cancer, diabetes, ADHD, asthma, and reproductive problems—which all can be long-term effects of exposure to pesticides. I felt very badly for the people of Hawaii that Monsanto and other companies had ruined such beautiful land and felt lucky that Monsanto wasn’t doing its toxic business here.

**FCC: Why is Monsanto’s history important to Tucson and Pima County right now?**

Unfortunately, we in southern Arizona are no longer in that lucky position. Monsanto has set its sights on our area. It bought land in Avra Valley just northwest of Tucson and plans to develop it—even though Monsanto didn’t get the tax break it wanted from Pima County, and even though the people of Pima County have overwhelmingly said “Monsanto, we don’t want you here.” Monsanto says it plans to build a 7-acre enclosed greenhouse, but it has no binding agreement with Pima County and can literally do whatever it wants on the 155 acres it bought. Monsanto has a history of unscrupulous business practices, of not telling the truth about its products and business, and of not being liable for costs of the cleanups of its products.

**FCC: What’s important for people to know about Monsanto globally?**

Recent news about Monsanto in just the past month or so:

- Monsanto is facing more than 20 lawsuits from victims who say they, or a family member, have non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma because of exposure to glyphosate, the main ingredient in Roundup. Lawyers for the victims say Monsanto knew all along that its flagship herbicide causes cancer.
- Last week The New York Times reported that a federal court unsealed documents that reveal that a high-level EPA official was colluding with Monsanto behind the scenes by letting Monsanto ghostwriters write the toxicity reports that would form the basis for a government investigation into whether or not Roundup causes cancer. Then he bragged about it, reportedly saying to a Monsanto executive, “If I can kill this I should get a medal.”
- Last week, a California judge ruled that the state can require Monsanto to label Roundup sold in retail stores as a “possible carcinogen.”
- On April 18, judges who presided over the International Monsanto Tribunal will assemble to tell the world what they found, after six months of pouring over testimony delivered by more than 30 witnesses, including victims of Monsanto’s poisons, scientists, doctors and lawyers. The testimony was delivered during a 2-day citizens’ tribunal, held in October, in The Hague.

**FCC: What can people do to join in?**

Once people understand even a few of those basics about Monsanto, they realize that Monsanto wanting to establish an experimental corn facility using experimental chemicals here in our area is a serious threat both to our environment and to the healthy food system (including Tucson’s World City of Gastronomy designation) that we hold dear.

We have to keep the pressure on Monsanto by continuing to get this word out, speaking to everyone we know, forming new alliances, and opposing Monsanto’s actions every way we can.

**Richard Elias, Pima County Board of Supervisor District 5**

**FCC: You were the only Pima County Supervisor to oppose this tax proposal for Monsanto. Why?**

I oppose the tax proposal for several reasons. Typically in economic development packages, the County can offer an incentive to entice companies to do business here. Monsanto was already here. There was no need to incentivize them and furthermore, in this case, it is not an incentive. It is a giveaway.

**FCC: Are you concerned with Monsanto’s track record?**

Monsanto is not a good community partner. We can’t fund them when we can’t fund things like education. Monsanto was fined $80 million by the Securities and Exchange Commission last summer for accounting violations and misstated earnings on their Roundup product.

**FCC: What does this proposal mean for local farmers?**

We need to protect our local farmers and enable them to bring healthy food to people rather than produce tons of food that really isn’t good for us.

**FCC: What do you recommend as next steps? What action can we take now?**

This issue is so much more than an objection to a tax break. People did a great job and the Board of Supervisors responded in kind. Monsanto has applied for a Foreign Trade Application with the Department of Commerce. This takes the issue from the local level and elevates it to the federal level. Citizens can share their opinions on this process by contacting their Congressional office or the Department of Commerce.

**Michael Giardinelli, Saguaro Honey Farm, Avra Valley**

**FCC: You have been raising honey in Avra Valley for years, and the Monsanto greenhouse will be close to some of your hives. What does mean for Saguaro Honey Farm?**

It’s hard to say what the impact will be, but going by Monsanto’s track record, it is not what we would want, that’s for sure. (continued on page 19)
When you think of Mexican food, what comes to mind? Many think of chimichangas, fajitas, chile relleno, menudo, cheese or beef enchiladas, wheat flour tortillas, and many other meat and cheese laden dishes. None of that was part of the Mexican diet before the Spanish conquest, when beef, pork, chickens, wheat, and dairy products entered America. These dishes represent the colonized Mexican diet. Luz Calvo and Catriona Rueda Esquibel have done their research and bring us a flavorful trip back to the uncolonized roots of Mesoamerican cooking. This trip was prompted by Calvo’s bout with breast cancer, which after 15 years of being a vegetarian, left them wondering what went wrong. Medical studies have pointed to the interesting result that first-generation immigrants to the USA from Latin America seem to have better health outcomes, including lower rates of cancer, than those in subsequent generations who are born in the USA. In fact, English language proficiency and a longer measure of time in the USA correlate with poorer health outcomes for immigrants. Diet is a likely cause of these observations, as people gradually abandon the healthy diets of their homelands and adopt the modern fat and sugar laden diet so common here. In 100 Million Years of Food, Stephen Le studied diets around the world and came to the conclusion that no one diet was best, and that eating like one’s genetic ancestors would be a good guideline for a healthy diet. Decolonize Your Diet provides an excellent template for those with indigenous American genes. It also offers healthy options for the rest of us, focusing on fresh plant-based ingredients from Mesoamerica, a tropical zone with a grand diversity of plants that offer a wide variety of flavors and nutrients. As conquerors, the Spanish banned the cultivation of certain Mesoamerican crops, but the Mexica considered their diet to be much superior to what their Spanish conquerors were eating. It certainly was much more varied, with many more plants to choose from.

Tucson’s recent declaration as a UNESCO City of Gastronomy was partly based on millennia of agriculture in the region, an outpost of the Mesoamerican diet with Sonoran desert flavors added in. The Hohokam diet had much in common with the ingredients in this book. The principal ingredients can be found in Tucson’s gardens and farmers’ markets. In the January 2017 Intersection Analyst, Lorraine Chuen reported on a study of The New York Times recipe section, in which she categorized the recipes and their authors by ethnic origin. For all the cuisines she examined, fewer than 10% of the recipes were authored by people of the ethnicity of the recipe, and over 80% were written by authors she categorized as white. These results echo Gustavo Arellano’s complaint in his book Taco USA, that non-Mexican chefs seem to have become the so-called experts on Mexican cuisine. Toni Tipton-Martin recently reclaimed African-American food heritage in her The Jemima Code, Where she reviewed over a century of cookbooks by African-Americans who were not able to own or profit from their creations, and who were never on the cookbook bestseller lists. Viewed in a broader context, Decolonize Your Diet is part of an effort by communities of color to retake control of their food heritage and health. Instead of viewing Mexican food as an interesting anthropological investigation, they bring the memory and connection to the foods that their parents and grandparents cooked for them. They also bring a sense of urgency prompted by high rates of diet-related diseases. In this book, you will find many traditional dishes and new healthy twists on classic dishes. Not all of the recipes are strictly vegan. Some include dairy products, but suggestions are given for substituting ingredients to make the dishes vegan. This book also provides interesting narrative descriptions of many of the ingredients, a welcome addition because some are not as commonly used now. While the background chapters provide very interesting history, this is ultimately a cookbook to be used in your kitchen, with many flavorful and healthy options for eating. ■
(continued from page 17)

FCC: Avra Valley already has lots of GMO crops like cotton and alfalfa. Is having Monsanto as a farmer neighbor different than people farming with GMO seed?

Avra Valley historically is not a grower of food crops. The main crop people raise in the valley is cotton. They aren’t spraying it as much as they used to. Modifying for pest resistance is ok for fiber crops like cotton, but not desirable for food crops.

FCC: Does this concern you as a beekeeper?

GMO food crops could be a concern for beekeepers in other communities. We really don’t have crops that the bees are attracted to. Bees aren’t attracted to cotton because of a lack of nectar.

FCC: Work has already begun on the 7 acre greenhouse. What do you know about the rest of the project, given that the total amount of purchased land is 155 acres?

Having Monsanto growing in a greenhouse in the valley is a big question mark. I am more concerned about what they are going to do outside the greenhouse, what they might plant, and how it will affect the bees. I don’t know. My concern would be that the bees might forage on the genetically modified plants.
Desert Harvesters presents a guild of educational and interactive offerings this year, from walks to classes, demos to hands-on workshops, and from volunteer opportunities to field trips.

Food Conspiracy is hosting the new Sonoran Desert Series of classes, which is an invitation to develop familiarity and gradually, intimacy, with place. Monthly classes introduce the Sonoran Desert, explore the AZ Uplands, present the main native edible plants that make up the food palette from trees to cactus to berries and more, and suggest how to localize your food choices. The series ends with preparing and sampling desert foods, and each class features a seasonal snack! Sonoran Desert Series runs Spring through Fall 2017. All SDS classes are posted on the Food Conspiracy website at www.foodconspiracy.coop. Register online by purchasing your tickets or at the register in the store. Each classes is $10. Check out other interactive and educational offerings at www.desertharvesters.org