OUR CONSPIRACY VOICES

Engaging a Culture of Creative Storytelling

FOOD CONSPIRACY CO-OP

EVERYONE CAN SHOP, ANYONE CAN JOIN.

412 N. 4th Avenue
Open 7am - 10pm daily
(520) 624 - 4821
At the 4th Ave. / 6th St. streetcar stop

www.foodconspiracy.coop

@foodconspiracy
On the Editor’s Mind

Our Stories and Our Beliefs

Richard Bergsma, Co-op Owner and Conspiracy News Editor

We all have our stories to tell; stories of how we became who we are and what brought us to where we are today. Our stories involve artistic, literary and culinary endeavors, education, travel, and family anecdotes. More than anything, our stories convey our passions. At the Co-op we are beginning to explore and share the stories of our Staff, Owners, Customers, and Neighbors. We have discovered that among us are budding artists and musicians, educators and community leaders. All brought together by one common passion: food. The roads to the Co-op are many but our belief in quality food for all people ties us together and makes us a collective force of energy.

This issue of Conspiracy News continues to focus on the people of the Co-op but begins to delve deeper into the individual and collective life stories that build our Food Conspiracy community and strengthen it.

Kevin Hendricks, Vice President of the Board of Directors, and John Glennon, General Manager, reinforce the importance of storytelling in their News articles. Andrea Buttrick, Front End Team Lead and Chair of the newly-organized Storytelling Committee, presents an in-depth article on how Co-op Staff are building a culture of storytelling to reinforce their individual contributions and help formulate a creative dialog within the store environment and with our extended Co-op community. We shine a light on the talents of two Staff Members who whole-heartedly embrace the concept of storytelling in their daily work and are using the storytelling culture to raise the level of their performance.

We will celebrate our Food Conspiracy people and culture not only at the Annual General Meeting in April but throughout the Spring and Summer as we inaugurate a couple of new regular events. Conspiracy Art will showcase the artistic expressions of Staff and Owners with a monthly showing and meet-the-artist event. Weekend Pours will feature wine tastings on Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings. Check the announcements in this issue and follow the Co-op on Facebook and Instagram to stay abreast of updates.

Finally, we relaunch our Shop & Share program this Spring and ask you to help us feed those in our neighborhood who are the most in need.

Welcome to what promises to be an exciting and fulfilling 2020 for our Co-op!

Our Condolences

We would like to send deep condolences to the friends and family of our dearly departed Maria Cadaxa. Maria was a longtime Owner of Food Conspiracy Co-op, stalwart champion of the environment, dedicated midwife and strong supporter of cooperative social movements. May the memory of Maria be a blessing, especially every time we choose alternatives to plastic. For charitable contribution information, please contact Susan Silverman at ssilverman@foodconspiracy.coop.

Back Issues and E-mail

You can find your favorite articles and recipes from previous Conspiracy News issues of in a convenient, page-turning format at https://issuu.com/foodconspiracycoop.

If you prefer to receive Conspiracy News by e-mail, register for the mailing list at http://www.foodconspiracy.coop/mailing_list/ or update your information in-store.
Food Conspiracy Mission

Food Conspiracy is committed to providing the highest quality natural and organic foods and related products to our members and the greater Tucson community.

Food Conspiracy is also committed to expanding the selection of organic produce and products available in the store, and to network with and support organic producers and suppliers.

Food Conspiracy promotes the health and well-being of our members and our community through education, information, service and outreach on food-related, ecological, sustainability and cooperative movement issues.

Food Conspiracy cooperates with and supports the work of other non-profit organizations working on issues that are consistent with cooperative principals and Food Conspiracy’s stated values.

Food Conspiracy Values

1. We adhere to the internationally recognized Rochdale Principles for cooperatives.
2. We promote whole, natural, organic, and chemical-free products with minimal packaging.
3. We value openness, honesty, and integrity with each other and the community.
4. We seek, through cooperative effort, to provide a humane, fulfilling environment in which to work and shop.
5. We promote social justice by encouraging and respecting diversity.
6. We strive for a sustainable, healthy ecology through use of clean, renewable resources.

Co-op Principles

Co-op principles were first stated by the Rochdale pioneers in 1844. The cooperative principles are guidelines by which we put our values into practice.

1. Voluntary and open Member-Ownership.
2. Democratic Member-Owner control.
3. Member-Owner economic participation.
4. Autonomy and independence.
5. Education, training, and information.
6. Cooperation among cooperatives.
7. Concern for community.

Statement of Cooperative Identity

A cooperative is an autonomous association of people united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.

Food Conspiracy Co-op

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday, April 4
Borderlands Brewing
119 E. Toole Ave.
5:00 PM

2020
It’s an exciting time of the year at the Co-op. We have the opportunity to invite Owners to run for the Board of Directors, leading up to the Annual General Meeting (AGM). This is a great opportunity for those who want to become more involved in guiding the direction of our Co-op as we grow and expand.

The Board recently had a retreat where we checked in on the progress of our Strategic Plan and Vision. At the retreat, the Board authorized a plan and funding for the next phase of the East Entrance Project. This phase includes stakeholder engagement so we are looking forward to hearing more from our Owners and the community as we proceed with the project.

Progress of the East Entrance Project will be a big topic of discussion at the AGM in April. You will also have the opportunity to meet those running for Board positions and hear them speak about their qualifying experience and their hopes for the Co-op’s future. This will inform your vote in the General Election. In addition, the AGM is your opportunity to gather with other Co-op Owners, existing Board Members, and Co-op staff outside of the store environment where we share amazing food prepared by our Conspiracy Kitchen, music and conversation. And children will have a dedicated play area at Playformance!

"It is an honor and joy to be a part of these opportunities."

As a Board member, I personally feel that it is an honor and joy to be a part of these opportunities as we continue to create space and place for the connection that brings us together in further actualizing the Co-op’s mission. The identity we share as cooperative Owners gives us the capability to develop from mission-guided ideas to visioning and action.

We are now looking forward as we move from plan to action and execute the opportunities we have created together. We invite you to continue supporting your Co-op and join us at the AGM where we will have more good news to share and provide opportunities to connect. In the meantime, see you in the store!

YOU ARE WELCOME!

Join us for a Board Meeting - Share, Voice, Learn

4th Wednesday of every month (except June and December), 6pm
Hoff Building, 425 E. Seventh St. (just east of the Co-op)
A light dinner is prepared by Conspiracy Kitchen. Owners attending receive a coupon for grocery purchases.
APPLY NOW TO RUN FOR THE FOOD CONSPIRACY BOARD

JOIN US IN BUILDING A BIGGER TABLE

HELP US TRANSFORM THE NEXT 50 YEARS OF COOPERATION

Applications due March 4th, available on our website
Hello people of Food Conspiracy! We just wrapped up a stellar 2019 with our highest sales ever for the holiday quarter (October – December). We eclipsed the previous high in 2015 by over $30,000. Sales for the entirety of 2019 finished 6% over 2018 getting us back to 4.9 million for the year, another feat not achieved by Food Conspiracy since 2015. As I illustrated in my last News article, we have worked with intention and care to transform our organizational culture to one of positivity, Staff retention, Staff development, and Board unity. Our collective process of illuminating and actualizing these critical principles in our work have absolutely contributed to our gains in sales in 2019 as well as positive movement in other critical indicators for the Co-op. 2019 was seriously one of the most successful years I have ever been a part of in my career. Honestly, it is just plain fun to come to work every day and share in special moments with everyone on our Team. So here’s to our wonderful Staff, and here’s to you our wonderful Owners and Community for making this all possible with your dedication and commitment to our Co-op.

“Everywhere we look there is something special to convey that demonstrates how our Co-op is unique and powerful.”

The course of 2019 brought to light a pivotal moment for the Staff of Food Conspiracy, one in which we initiated a collectivized process of exploring what it is that makes our Co-op special and our work meaningful while also considering how we can convey these sentiments in a shared way. We chose to interface with this exploration through developing a concept that could bridge the spaces between our individual notions and our shared conventions, our rich past and compelling future, to create a collective landscape of communication. Our concept is storytelling and it is coalescing as the fabric of our philosophy.

Why arrive at Storytelling? Stories have the potential to activate the humanity, joy, and connectivity in our experiences through the creation of space for creative thought, expression, and action. Storytelling is an avenue for exploring depth, individuality, and our uniqueness while also functioning as a method of bringing people together around common themes. At Food Conspiracy, storytelling connects our work to a deeper meaning while functioning as a creative means to develop and communicate this deeper meaning. With storytelling we have the opportunity to transcend the norms of conventional marketing, advertising, and outreach to materialize what truly differentiates our Cooperative; an outlet that is uniquely Food Conspiracy.

Our efforts around storytelling thus far have illuminated that everything associated with Food Conspiracy has a deep story behind it. From the local and organic vegetables in our Produce Department to our buying club roots in the early 70s, everywhere we look there is something special to convey that demonstrates how our Co-op is unique and powerful. We cannot pinpoint exactly where our engagement in storytelling will lead us because frankly the outcome or the product is simply not the point of this kind of work. We are looking to create a long lasting culture for our Co-op that evolves and responds—a culture of storytelling that affords the space for meaningful engagement with our Co-op for our Staff, Board, Owners, and community. There is surely more to come.

Please join us at Borderlands Brewing Company on April 4th 2020 to hear how our Cooperative performed in 2019, an update on patronage rebates, and an update on our advancing East Entrance Project.

Owners at the 2019 Annual General Meeting viewed conceptual renderings of the East Entrance Project. This year, at the 2020 meeting, there will be more to share about how the project is progressing and how Owners can share insight and ideas with the design team.
Food Conspiracy Co-op is happy to continue its collaboration in 2020 with the Pima County Public Library Seed Library. The Seed library’s regular feature will recommend top-selling gardening and seed saving books that are the most popular and requested at libraries.

**THE ART OF SOUTHWESTERN LANDSCAPING**
*by Dawn Layna Fried*

This beautiful publication is dedicated to the wide variety of desert accents, cacti, groundcovers, ornamental grasses, palms, shrubs, succulents, trees and vines that can beautify landscapes in the Southwestern desert. The author, Dawn Layna Fried, has spent years designing and installing award-winning landscapes for her company, Horticulture Unlimited Inc, in Tucson. She has included a broad selection of plant species that she has used in her own practice as a landscape designer over the past 30 years. Dawn is also an avid plant photographer and has always been passionate about creating magnificent, outdoor living spaces using a variety of color and greenery. Her stunning photographs accompany each species. The Art of Southwest Landscaping will educate longtime desert dwellers and newcomers alike about the variety of amazing landscape plants available today for small and large gardens. The book includes specific plant suggestions for a variety of landscapes, along with detailed characteristics and special features, such as flower color, fragrance, texture and uses for shade, sun or to attract butterflies. It also identifies the genus and species for each plant with detailed resources on how to keep plants healthy.

**HOT COLOR, DRY GARDEN**
*by Nan Sterman*

Dry weather defines the southwest, and it’s getting dryer. As water becomes more precious, our gardens suffer. If we want to keep gardening, we must revolutionize our plant choices and garden practices. Hot Color, Dry Garden provides home gardeners with a joyful, color-filled way to exuberantly garden in low-water conditions. Gardeners will find advice for adding color to the garden, information about designing for structure and texture and a plant directory that features drought-tolerant plants. This book is a must-have guide for gardeners in the Southwest and other areas affected by drought and low-water conditions.

California native Nan Sterman is an author, botanist, garden designer, consultant and award-winning garden communicator. Her articles appear in the Los Angeles Times, Sunset, Organic Gardening and other major publications. She has a monthly garden column in the San Diego Union Tribune and is the gardening expert for San Diego public radio’s Midday Edition talk show. Sterman also hosts A Growing Passion, a television program that takes viewers into their own backyards to create beautiful, welcoming spaces.

**VEGETABLE GARDENING WISDOM**
*by Kelly Smith Trimble*

Sometimes the best gardening advice comes in tidbits shared over the backyard fence from a sage neighbor. In Vegetable Gardening Wisdom, Master Gardener Kelly Smith Trimble shares her tried-and-true ideas and guidance for finding success and enjoyment in every aspect of vegetable gardening. Trimble addresses topics ranging from gardening to cooking, preserving, and creative ways to use the harvest along with ideas for reducing garden and kitchen waste, all presented in a lively, beautifully designed package. She suggests the best herbs to grow indoors, the best way to start peas, how to use lettuce as a living mulch in the garden, how to make compost tea, how to identify beneficial bugs, how to blanch cauliflower and much more.


Remember that Library cardholders can check out up to 10 packets of seeds per month at Pima County Public Library.
Conspiracy Storytelling
Finding Our Voice and Building Our Identity
Andrea Buttrick, Front End Team Lead and Storytelling Committee Chair

“In the beginning, when the earth was set down and the sky was lifted up, some things were not quite finished.” Traditionally we are familiar with stories beginning with “Once upon a time.” The comfort of believing that an event occurred long ago, results in a sense of being locked into patterns of our past and truncates our thinking about what might be possible. What if, as with this alternative folk tale beginning, we consider telling our stories from a time when things were not quite finished? What if they are not finished now? What if right now is the time when the earth is set down and the sky is lifted up and we are in the process of being actively unfinished? Considering our stories in this way offers us a chance to decide how we tell our stories; additionally, who tells our story? Whose voice is lifted up? What is revealed when we reconsider which voices we have missed and which voices will inspire us forward?

At this moment we, the Food Conspiracy Staff, are committing to be the caretakers of our Story. In a new way, we are hearing from Managers and Administration the affirmation that our vibrance, our intuition, and our creativity are trusted and wanted. As Staff we are embracing Food Conspiracy’s uniquely specific identity set down at the hub of 4th Avenue, in Downtown Tucson, in the Sonoran Desert of the Borderlands. The change happening within our walls is paralleled by that happening on 4th Avenue and both are quite literally uncovering our memories. Like the ghost sign that was discovered when Flycatcher was demolished this autumn, our memories are revealing themselves to us, and are insisting upon intentional engagement in ways that reclaim our narrative.

We are seeing, as invited by the beginning of a folk tale, how this place that is Food Conspiracy that is set down, under this Desert sky that is lifted up, is not quite finished. As we prepare to literally open up our back wall with the East Entrance Project, to expand our embrace to the East with gardens and gathering spaces, we are committing to new ways to pull the people, all the People of our community inside our walls, new ways to hold space for each other to shop, to cook, to prepare, to learn, to create, to wonder; new ways to tell our Stories.

Like the old European fable “Stone Soup” in which everyone in the village adds something to the stone in the pot until a rich, nourishing soup is produced, the unique talents of each Co-op Staff Member add to our collective narrative. Our contributions enrich the storytelling culture of Food Conspiracy and build the cultural legacy passed on to future generations of the Co-op family.

Co-op Staff create an interactive dialog to identify how we view our food-focused organization through the lenses of Place, Space, and People.

The ghost sign hidden for decades on the building behind The Flycatcher once again saw the light of day when the club was demolished.
In the summer of 2019, Staff began engaging in an extensive and critical dialogue that led to identifying the lenses of People, Space, and Place through which to view our Stories. Stories are what make us uniquely human, what bond us together, what construct and preserve our culture; and what make visible not only Where we are but Who we are and What we value. When stories are written they are usually done so by those who hold power. We are committing to be deeply creative in all the ways that our Story can be told in order to intentionally and actively include, and rightfully honor, the full spectrum of voices who are protagonists of Food Conspiracy’s Story.

Among us are artists, musicians, writers, photographers, culinary experts and educators. Artistic endeavors foster dialog that allows Staff to realize what they bring to the Co-op table and encourages an inclusive environment in which everyone’s voice is heard and respected.

As Staff who are considering our Story unfinished, we are searching our landscape, our place, for those voices and narrators we have missed, those stories we have passed over. We are searching the faces of those who cross our threshold for the memories we have forgotten or have actively chosen to ignore in our own discomfort.

“We write the Story that is uniquely Food Conspiracy Co-op on 4th Avenue in Tucson.”

We acknowledge that the protagonists of our Story are any and all who cross our path in the course of a day in the store. We are therefore also considering the Space of store: how it can tell our Story even if, for a moment, we are not present to tell it out loud? What signs, what pictures, what path of progression through the store will tell those that enter that they are expected, they are needed, that they are the People that write the Story that is uniquely Food Conspiracy Co-op on 4th Avenue in Tucson, in the Sonoran Desert Borderlands.

All this is to say, after 49 years as Food Conspiracy Co-op, we are here at the beginning, where the city of Tucson is set down, and the Desert sky is lifted up, and we are telling the Stories with you, our Owners and caretakers of Food Conspiracy Co-op, of some things that are not quite finished.

Not finding what you need? Special orders are easy!

1. Call or visit the store to place your special order (min. 48 hrs. in advance).
2. Owners receive 20% off regular price; non-Owners 10% (excludes sale items).
3. Grocery items by the case, wellness items minimum three each.

A GREAT GIFT FOR ANY OCCASION

Food Conspiracy gift cards are an excellent way to celebrate milestones and show your loved ones that you care about their well-being. Purchase any amount. It’s recycleable, reloadable and made with 60% chalk.

Bring your own bag to the Co-op and save!

Single use paper bags cost 10 cents.

A colorful selection of reusable bags is available in the Co-op’s merchandise area.
A New Look for Shop & Share
Relaunching the Program that Benefits Our Neighbors

Nick Super, Front End Cashier

Food Conspiracy Co-op offers an amazing opportunity to help our neighbors in need of food and goods. Our Shop & Share program has been in place for some time but is being relaunched this Spring with a new look and a fresh agreement with Primavera Foundation, the program’s beneficiary.

Primavera Foundation was started in 1983 by people who were concerned about the welfare of the most vulnerable members in our community. It provides tangible pathways out of poverty for individuals and families who sincerely want to improve their lives. It focuses its efforts on breaking down the root causes of poverty, such as multi-generational cycles, social and economic injustice, and inequality – and partners with community members like Food Conspiracy to overcome the barriers that have kept people from achieving long-term financial stability. Primavera offers people the chance to strengthen their skills and assets, obtain employment, gain affordable housing, build stable and sustainable financial futures, advocate for their rights and reconnect with their communities in a meaningful and productive way.

Food Conspiracy partners with Primavera to provide food and household goods to residents of its two nearest facilities: Women in Transition (WIT), a facility in the West University Neighborhood, and Catalina House, a residence for men located downtown. The food is donated by YOU, the Co-op Owners and customers!

Your Shop & Share contributions not only provide food to people that may not have regular meals but also empower Primavera Foundation residents to make healthy food choices. Purchases made by Co-op customers are turned into a voucher that the residents use as a shopping list. Residents often shop as a group and prepare meals together, strengthening the bond between them. When residents cook as a group they also often have leftovers that they can share.

There are nearly 50 Shop & Share purchase options, including fresh vegetables, canned and refrigerated foods, broth, cereal and ground meat. Bath tissue and paper towels are also on the list for purchase. Historically, some of the most popular items have been eggs (perhaps because they are a key ingredient in many dishes), peanut butter and pasta.

Our Co-op’s partnership with Primavera Foundation produces measurable results that directly benefit people in our neighborhood. Adding one extra item to your shopping cart can have a profound impact. Please continue to support the Shop & Share program with your purchases.

Learn more at https://www.primavera.org/.

THE PRIMAVERA FOUNDATION

MISSION: The Primavera Foundation provides pathways out of poverty through safe, affordable housing, workforce development, and neighborhood revitalization.

VISION: To promote social and economic justice, while working to build a future in which all people are assured basic human rights, a livable income, and safe, affordable housing.

VALUES: We believe in the intrinsic value of every individual, and that everyone deserves a voice and has the ability to make a difference.

GOALS: Economic empowerment and long-term financial security; Neighborhood revitalization; Community and civic engagement; Empowerment of the most marginalized members of our community.
How to Shop & Share

The Co-op’s Shop & Share program allows you to donate food and goods directly to those in need who live in our neighborhood. Co-op Cashier Nick Super shows us how easy it is to help. Your donations help support the Primavera Foundation’s nearby Women in Transition and Catalina House residential facilities.

1. Look for the Shop & Share tags throughout the store. They are located on product shelves, in the produce department, and in the refrigerated cases. There is a wide variety of products from which to choose.

2. When you have chosen an item to donate, remove its Shop & Share tag from the shelf and take it with you to the register when you check out.

3. The tag is scanned and the item’s cost is added to your shopping total. Items purchased are then donated to the Primavera Foundation’s nearby residents.

Thank you for sharing!
Sunflower Superfoods
Growing Microgreens with Purpose

If you are a fan of microgreens and the health benefits they provide, you’ll love Sunflower Superfoods! You can find the company’s pea shoots, sunflower and broccoli sprouts in the Co-op’s produce aisle.

Sunflower Superfoods’ greenhouse is located in an intentional community near Tucson called Sacred Earth Neighborhood. The community is comprised of people trying to live sustainably, practicing things like solar energy, food composting, raising chickens for eggs and growing vegetables and fruit trees. Residents also hold public events like group meditation in a tipi, yoga, pot lucks, sweats in the harmonic sweat lodge, rammed earth building workshops, bonfires, full moon drum circles and dances in a big dome.

Sunflower Superfoods is the creation of Dani K. Fowler. Dani moved from the cold woods of Maine to sunny Tucson many years ago and began growing sprouts, microgreens and wheatgrass for her own juicing and healthy eating. After moving to the Sacred Earth Neighborhood, she learned more about growing these crops from a friend.

Two years ago, the greenhouse that Dani operates was a storage facility filled with junk that had been abandoned for many years. Dani saw its potential for growing microgreens and spent many months cleaning it out and fixing it up, building shelves, a sink, a walk-in cooler and planting areas. “I’m proud of what I’m doing and believe sprouts and microgreens are the healthiest foods we can grow and eat,” says Dani. Her sprouts and microgreens are grown with sunlight, well water, organic and non-GMO seed, organic soil, and no pesticides or fertilizers. They are harvested fresh each week at the peak of their nutrient content.

For more on visit https://www.sunflowersuperfoods.com/. Sunflower Superfoods are also sold at the Rillito Park Farmers Market and the farmers market at Mercado San Augustin.

“\textbf{I believe sprouts and microgreens are the healthiest foods we can grow and eat.}”

HEALTH BENEFITS OF MICROGREENS AND SPROUTS

Microgreens are seeds grown in soil and harvested within 1-3 weeks. Sprouts are seeds grown with only water, and ready in about a week. Both are eaten at their peak in nutrient levels. These little vegetables can have 40 -100 times more vitamins and nutrients than regular sized vegetables. This is because they need these extra enzymes for their rapid growth and cellular health. They are also rich in Chlorophyll, which is what makes plants green, and contains light energy. Chlorophyll helps build and oxygenate blood, reduces inflammation, calms the nervous system, detoxifies, revitalizes tissues and balances pH levels. They are good for weight loss, energy and digestion. They can be used in salads, juices and smoothies.
Lily Metcalfe is one of the many budding artists on the Co-op Staff. Her inspirational work will be featured at the Co-op’s inaugural Conspiracy Art celebration.

With no formal art education, Lily says she was inspired a few years ago to pick up a paint brush as a way to express herself. “I’m inspired by life experiences, music and film,” she says, “and I have a desire to interpret those things through painting.” Lily usually paints abstract acrylic art, using a palette knife to create an impasto texture. She has recently been using watercolor and gouache (a medium similar to watercolor that has a much higher pigment content) as well. “Watercolor is more transparent on the paper, gouache is more opaque, producing richer and more bold colors for a stronger expression,” Lily explains. “It’s a fun medium to use.” She also enjoys crafting and makes her own soaps and mineral makeup.

When not working at the Co-op or pursuing her artistic endeavors, Lily enjoys the warm Tucson weather with outdoor activities like hiking.

Lily hails from Montana. She made her way to Southern Arizona about five years ago after a solo road trip along the West Coast. She has been working as a Cashier at the Co-op for over a year, always greeting people with a smile and kind voice. She says her favorite part about working the Front End is the diversity of people with whom she comes in contact. “It’s certainly never boring,” she says. “There is always something interesting happening on Fourth Avenue!”

Check out more of Lily’s art at her Instagram account @lilymetcalfeart and the next time you see Lily at the register, be sure to ask about her paintings!
STREET FAIR SALE
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2020
10% off on purchases of $25 or more for everyone
Does not include special orders, gift cards or classes

Donations made by Food Conspiracy Co-op customers are placed in our Cooperative Community Fund. The interest earned on the Fund is donated to three local non-profits chosen annually by Co-op Owners.

The Round Up program is another way in which you can positively impact our neighbors and those that share Food Conspiracy’s Vision.

Recipients have included:
Native Seeds SEARCH
Tucson Cooperative Network
Living Streets Alliance

Round Up
at the register

DISRUPTORS FOR GOOD
Doing Good Things for the Planet

WEEKLY PODCASTS | COMMUNITY EVENTS | PUBLIC SPEAKING | BLOGS
LISTEN at MrsGreensWorld.com AND CONNECT @mrsgreensworld
The Natural Wine Company
Elevating the Experience of Food and Wine in Arizona

The Natural Wine Company (NWCO) is a small company in Tucson dedicated to a big need: bringing authentic, low-intervention wines to Arizona.

NWCO states, “We are in the midst of the most exciting wine revolution of recent memory: a return to the agricultural roots of fine wine and to the sense of joy and generosity that we find around the dinner table. This is wine for thinking and drinking and feeling and sharing.”

NWCO focuses on organically farmed vineyards and low-intervention winemaking. NWCO represents highly regarded importers of classical, fine and natural wines ("natural" means small enough production to be able to control quality by hand instead of through chemical or technological intervention). The company partners with others who are elevating the experience of food and wine in Arizona and provides them the support, access to product, and information they need to achieve this goal.

NWCO’s offerings at Food Conspiracy (left) include some amazing values on white and red wines.

WEEKEND POURS

Join us on weekend evenings as we cork bottles from the Co-op wine shelf and enjoy. We feature wines made by small, environmentally-responsible producers who farm sustainably, grow organic grapes, and practice fair-trade.

Remember that if you buy six bottles of wine or beer (mix and match) you earn 10% off!
Meatless Conspiracy Cuisine
Cooking Delicious Dishes with Meat Alternatives

Our Conspiracy Kitchen turns out an impressive array of delicious, scratch-made food. Food is prepared daily for the Co-op's hot bar, Grab & Go items and pre-prepared meal kits. Fresh soup and salad bar ingredients are also prepared as is a mouth-watering selection of hot baked goods and sweets.

Every day our hot bar includes a main course dish made with meat and an equivalent dish made with a meat alternative. The Kitchen's favorite meat substitutes to use in its recipes come from Gardein and Alive & Healing Tempeh.

Gardein products are made from soy, wheat and pea proteins, vegetables and ancient grains (quinoa, amaranth, millet and kamut). Gardein is easy to digest and free of cholesterol, trans and saturated fats. The majority of Gardein foods are a good source of fiber and low fat too. Gardein is also animal and dairy free and their website states that it only uses ‘identity-preserved’ soy protein, which helps ensure the soy protein is not genetically modified. The Conspiracy Kitchen uses Gardein beefless meat and chick'n strips in its meatless fajita and curry recipes.

The Kitchen’s preferred brand of tempeh is provided by Alive & Healing Tempeh. It is 100% Certified Organic, GMO-Free, Gluten-Free tempeh that remains unpasteurized to retain its natural, tender texture. As a fermented whole food, Alive and Healing Tempeh outperforms tofu from both a nutritional and culinary standpoint. The Conspiracy Kitchen uses the tempeh for its famous Curried Tempe Salad, made fresh daily and offered in the stores Grab & Go refrigerated case.

Let’s follow Alive & Healing Tempeh on its journey from the manufacturer to your tummy!

Alive & Healing Tempeh is the base ingredient in the Conspiracy Kitchen's Curried Tempeh Salad recipe. Vegetables, herbs, spices and condiments can all be purchased at Food Conspiracy.

To learn more about the meat alternatives used in the Conspiracy Kitchen to https://www.gardein.com and https://www.aliveandhealing.com.

Conspiracy Kitchen Manager, Jesse Powell, oversees daily preparation of the salad, one of the store's biggest selling products.

The Curried Tempe Salad is sold in the store's Grab & Go refrigerated case and is a favorite with Co-op customers.
Curried Tempeh Salad

Reference: “Tucson Cooks: A Collection of Recipes from the Food Conspiracy Co-op” -- Buy your copy in the store!

Cut tempeh into small cubes, spread evenly on a cookie sheet and bake for 30 minutes at 350 degrees. Halfway through the baking process, stir the tempeh to ensure even cooking. Remove from oven and set aside to cool. In a small bowl, combine Vegenaise, stone ground mustard, tamari, garlic, olive oil, black pepper, curry powder, mix well and set aside. In a large bowl, combine cooled tempeh, celery, red onion and cilantro. Add dressing, mix well and salt to taste. Serves 4-6.

Driven By Intention
Matt Sawyer, Cook

Conspiracy Cook Matt Sawyer is excited about curating a culture of storytelling at Food Conspiracy. “I’m driven by the idea of generating a culture of intention that begins with each one of us,” Matt explains. “An attitude of intention will guide us to mature individually and as an organization. It allows us to reflect on our relationships with each other and to build our understanding of the role we play in the Co-op organization.”

Matt is from small-town Wisconsin. He moved to Tucson seven years ago to finish his degree in Film and Creative Writing. He worked for two years as barista at Time Market before migrating down 4th Avenue to the Co-op.

Matt is currently preparing and test-batching dishes for development of a fresh new Hot Bar menu. “I’m particularly excited about bringing fish to the Hot Bar,” he says. “We’re trying some fantastic fish curries. We’re also looking to introduce a pot pie. It’s cool to focus on world cuisine, incorporating elements from Thai, Indian, Mexican and good old fashioned American food.”

Matt plays a key role in the organization of kitchen responsibilities. As the kitchen’s activities become wider in scope, Management and Staff are working diligently to formalize kitchen systems. “But at the same time,” Matt points out, “it is important to empower people to pursue their own passions and career growth opportunities. We have to grow with purpose.”

Matt is also collaborating with kitchen staff on projects that will further customer awareness and understanding of the Conspiracy Kitchen’s activities and what they have to offer Co-op consumers. Projects may include new store signage and communication vehicles.

Matt spends time away from the Co-op writing screenplays and is considering pursuit of a Masters degree in Creative Writing.
Raw Milk
Making an Informed Choice

It seems odd that this deep into the 21st century there are still so many misconceptions regarding the consumption of raw milk. Perhaps it is a legacy attitude we have inherited from our parents and grandparents, a hold-over from the nuclear age when all products highly processed were believed without question to be the cleanest and safest to consume. But raw milk deserves consideration for a number of reasons and we have excellent local resources that provide information. Food Conspiracy Co-op sells three brands of locally-produced raw milk: Fond du Lac Farms in Casa Grande, Golden Rule Dairy in Elfrida and Save Your Dairy in Queen Creek. All three producers maintain websites that contain a wealth of information about how their milk is produced, the health benefits of raw milk and answers to common questions.

A blog post on the Golden Rule Dairy website states, “97% of the U.S. drinks processed, pasteurized milk. Whether you buy organic or regular, it’s all pasteurized. The milk is heated to high temperatures to kill bacteria. When milk is pasteurized, it destroys much of the calcium in the milk as insoluble – it also destroys part of the vitamin C, and wipes out the vitamin D and vitamin K.”

“By purchasing raw milk locally, the money you spend stays in your farmer’s pocket and in your local economy.”

The historic need for pasteurization is discussed on the Save Your Dairy website. It states, “There was a time when pasteurization may have prevented certain pathogenic bacteria, introduced through poor handling techniques, from being transferred to the milk and to the consumer.

But the pasteurization process continues to be needed today in the context of industrialized farming, as pointed out by Golden Rule Dairy on its website stating, “Cows sickened by confinement and an unnatural diet of grain and mash produce lackluster, thin milk poor in vitamins, minerals and other nutrients and rich in pathogenic bacteria. Sick milk from sick cows makes for sick people. Pasteurization kills pathogenic bacteria just as it kills beneficial bacteria. When you purchase pasteurized milk at the store – unless you’re careful about your brand – you’re purchasing it from farms and cooperatives that follow industrial practices like confining their animals, sub-therapeutic and routine use of antibiotics, and feeding grain- and soy-based feed which changes the nutritional properties of the milk.”

“By contrast,” Golden Rule states, “raw milk is not produced on a massive, concentrated scale. Raw milk producers have small operations with fewer cattle spread out over a larger amount of space where the animals have access to fresh pasture and spend their time outside. Save Your Dairy confirms this stating, “We have eliminated the need for pasteurization by solving the problems that caused the need. Our cows are vibrantly healthy, being fed a completely organic diet of alfalfa hay, barley and other occasional additions as directed by a nutritionist who determines when they need dietary changes. We never use pesticides, herbicides, harsh chemicals or synthetic fertilizers. Our closed collection system insures that the milk goes straight from the cow into a clean chilling tank.”

The Fond du Lac Farms website presents many of the benefits of consuming raw milk. It states, “Raw milk is a unique, complete food. It contains all essential enzymes, whereas less than 10% remain in pasteurized milk. Often, people who would consider themselves lactose intolerant are able to enjoy raw milk because it contains “lactase.” Lactase is one of the enzymes that is destroyed during the pasteurization process. This peculiar enzyme helps with pre-digestion of the milk in your stomach. This means that your body can more readily utilize all the nutrients available in raw milk. Protein is 100% available as well as all 22 amino acids, including eight that are essential. All 18 fatty acids are metabolically available; vitamins are 100% available, whereas in milk that is pasteurized they are significantly altered. Minerals are all 100% metabolically available. Calcium is altered by heat during pasteurization and the loss can be as much as 50% or more.

Golden Rule Dairy makes another valid point stating, “Raw milk supports your local economy. Raw milk is a delicate food and is not suited to traveling long distance. Pasteurized milks travel long distances before arriving from the dairy to your door and are often mixed with the milks of several dairies prior to pasteurization. The money you spend on such milk is divided between your grocery store, the broker/supplier, the branded dairy and, lastly, the farmer. By purchasing raw milk locally and farmer-direct, almost 100% of the money you spend on your milk stays in your farmer’s pocket and in your local economy.

How to Make Homemade Yogurt with Your Raw Milk


This recipe uses 1 gallon of raw milk to make 4 quarts of yogurt.

Take a small amount of tap water and dissolve two packages of unflavored gelatine. Then mix the dissolved gelatin with the milk with a whisk (this can be done before you start heating the milk or right after). After you have mixed in the gelatin, heat the milk to 130 degrees (if you prefer a more firm, set yogurt, heat to 180). Then, let set a few minutes until it cools down to 110 degrees.

Remove from the heat and gently stir in 1/2 cup of your homemade yogurt culture (you can use any other yogurt for your culture as long as it’s plain). Pour the mixture into jars and place the jars in a large pot. Using hot water that is the same temperature as your mixture, fill up the pan until it reaches the neck of the jars. Place the lid on the pot.

Set the covered pot in the oven. If you have an oven without a pilot light, heat the oven up just for a few minutes before setting it in. You will leave it sit for approximately four hours or until thick.

After 4 hours, the yogurt is set and ready to enjoy!

Would you like to reduce the amount of packaging you purchase and discard?

Food Conspiracy Co-op sells a variety of containers for reuse in our Co-op merchandise shop, grocery and produce areas, and bulk foods department:

- Grocery bags
- Cloth bulk item bags
- Squeeze bottles
- Water bottles
- Baskets
- Canning jars
- Spice jars

You can also reuse any container you bring from home for bulk item purchases. Just make sure you weigh your containers at the register before you fill them so you are not charged for the weight of the containers. A Staff member will be happy to show you how it works!
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