

The Co-operator

The monthly newsletter of the East End Food Co-op • Pittsburgh, PA



Growing a Cooperative Forest

by Kate Safin, Assistant Marketing & Member Services Manager

The East End Food Co-op receives a number of benefits as a member of National Cooperative Grocers (NCG), a business services and purchasing cooperative for food co-ops that includes 134 co-ops in 36 states. One of the many benefits of membership is the opportunity to shape national initiatives and participate in regional and national development activities that help us address challenges and share best practices. Many times, these opportunities require air travel to a variety of destinations across the country. Because we are just as committed to the cooperative principal of environmental stewardship as to fostering professional growth through education and training of our staff, we are excited that, as a member of NCG, the East End Food Co-op is helping to offset the



environmental impact of our air travel in a direct and meaningful way: by growing a sustainable forest in Peru!

As of 2012, NCG began offsetting co-op staffs' qualifying air travel-related carbon emissions through this cooperative forest.

To grow the forest, NCG partners with the French environmental collective *Pur Projet*, which provides the research, accreditation, and on-the-ground support necessary to create an effective carbon offset program based on farmer supported reforestation. The region is managed

by ACOPAGRO, a fair trade and organic cooperative of cacao farmers who want to preserve the forests. The project is part reforestation and part conservation, an important combination of efforts that both play a role in slowing climate change. As trees grow they absorb and store carbon dioxide from the air, so reforestation projects slow the rate of CO2 build-up in the atmosphere. By conserving old-growth trees, carbon atoms are kept locked up in their trunks, preventing the carbon from being released and contributing to global warming.

In phase one of the Co+op Forest, 1,000 native trees were planted in Alto Huayabamba, a deforested area in Northern Peru. In phase two, an additional 1,000 native trees were planted and the Co+op Forest's conservation efforts expanded to the San Martin Biocorridor, a Peruvian landscape that is home to hundreds of species of mammals, birds, butterflies, reptiles, amphibians, and plants. The San Martin Biocorridor also happens to sit on massive underground petroleum deposits which, without a collective effort to protect the land, would be at risk for deforestation and development.

To date, NCG has funded the planting of 2,504 native trees, and is the first U.S. partner to plant trees as part of this innovative program. By the time these trees reach maturity, they will have absorbed over 1,032 tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.



And whenever our Co-op's employees attend a qualifying NCG-sponsored training, they'll be participating in this important project. Co-ops nationwide are joining together to not only grow the next generation of co-op leaders, but a sustainable forest too. We really are stronger together!

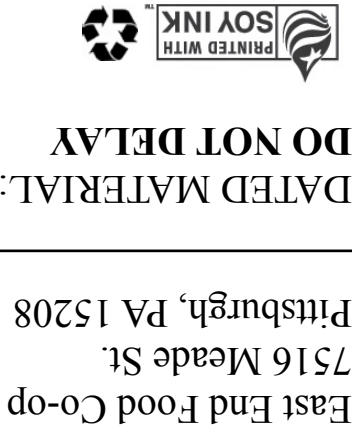
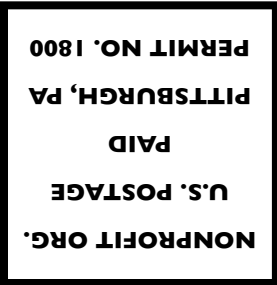
You can learn more about the project, view a brief video, and take in some gorgeous Peruvian scenery by visiting www.purprojet.com/en/project/alto-huayabamba.



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BOARD OF DIRECTORS:	
The next meeting will take place on Monday, February 16th at 7 PM.	
NEW MEMBER ORIENTATIONS:	
To register, call 412.242.3598 ext. 438 or email memberservices@eastendfood.coop	
MEMBERS ONLY:	
Be sure to use your 10% quarterly discount by March 31st! The next quarter goes from April 1st - June 30th.	

East End Food Co-op • 7516 Meade St. Pittsburgh, PA 15208 • www.eastendfood.coop • 412.242.3598 • Open to Everyone, Every Day 8 AM – 9 PM



General Manager’s Report

by Justin Pizzella, General Manager

In December, our board held their inaugural “Board in the Store” event, which you can read about in this month’s “Board Corner.” The intent of this event was to allow directors to interact with members where they are most frequently found: in the aisles of our store. During this event, several individuals were handing out leaflets suggesting topics that members should take the opportunity to talk to the board about, one of which was titled “corporatization.” Under this bullet was one question: “What’s more important, the bottom line or Co-operative Values?” I’d like to address this concern, as I’ve personally been fielding a number of comments and questions about our Co-op becoming corporate, many of which have implied that making a profit is immoral and contrary to the Cooperative Principles and Cooperative Values.

In the eyes of the world, East End Food Co-op is, in fact, a corporation, as are most businesses. Specifically, we are incorporated as a “Co-operative, Not For Profit” in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In the near 35-year history of our Co-op, we have always been a corporation. To say that the Co-op is “corporatizing” is either overlooking this fact or insinuating that being a corporation is somehow wrong.

Profit is simply the amount of money left over after we’ve paid all the bills, other expenses, and staff. If, over time, the Co-op doesn’t make more than it spends, it will cease to exist, which is why we strive to make a profit every year. But how we go about making that money and what we do with it differentiates us from other corporations and other businesses.

So how do we go about differentiating ourselves? First and foremost, we exist to fulfill our Ends, which the board is solely empowered to create. Utilizing a governance structure called Policy Governance, the board follows a set of policies, in alignment with the Ends, to ensure that the GM runs the Co-op in accordance with the will of the members *as a whole*. Given these policies and the seven Cooperative Principles, I’ve been provided with a good framework within which to operate our business and fulfill our Ends. (See our Ends Policy Statement and both the Cooperative Principles and Values on page 3.)

Operationally, our primary objectives are to be an excellent grocer as well as a

great community asset. This means that we provide value to our members and customers, give great customer service, run efficiently so that we generate a profit, and give back to our community. These are our primary focuses because they are explicitly laid out in our Ends.

In our 2014 Annual Report (hard copies are available in the store’s foyer for a limited time, or you can review the digital version on our website at www.eastendfood.coop/co-op/membership), we detail at great length the direct contributions we have made as an organization. What we don’t talk about is the many indirect benefits our business provides. Numerous studies have shown that for every dollar put into a local economy, its impact is multiplied 8 times over. For example, we pay a staff member who then pays their rent. The landlord takes the money and uses it to pay bills, make repairs, and buy goods and services. The recipients of those expenditures then turn around and do the same thing. If you look at our last fiscal year, between staff wages and purchases of locally sourced items for sale in the store, roughly 40% (approximately \$4.2 million) of our top line sales went back into the local economy. Using 8 as the multiplier, our Co-op had a \$33 million-plus impact in our local economy in the last fiscal year alone!

Underlying these objectives is another impetus, which is to become a great example of how cooperatives can be effective both economically and socially. We do many things that other businesses don’t:

- We pay well and have great benefits.
- We choose to source from socially conscious businesses.
- We don’t compromise our commitment to clean food.
- We give generously.

Co-ops, particularly food co-ops, have been so effective in how we operate while maintaining a focus on community, that our methods are now being imitated by non-cooperative businesses both big and small. By continuing to push the bar higher, we can model how to operate a great business while contributing to our community greatly.

So going back to the original question, I don’t think there is an either/or answer. Rather, we need to do both—focus on the bottom line while simultaneously fulfilling the Cooperative Principles and Values.

Board Corner

by Emily Mercurio, EEFC Board Director

EEFC Board Directors gathered to hold our first “Board in the Store” event on December 13, 2014. This occasion was coordinated by the Member Linkage Committee. The focus of this committee is to facilitate communications between the board and members, and to promote awareness of the board’s activities, particularly with respect to important topics such as expansion. In collaboration with the EEFC’s Marketing & Member Services Department, the Member Linkage Committee organizes meetings and events to engage members.

“Board in the Store” provided a chance for members to visit with directors conveniently while shopping at the store. We hoped to reach more members by way of this casual format, and in this regard the event was a success.

Those who stopped by our table had the opportunity to learn more about the board’s work, and everyone was invited to cast their vote in a “Bean Poll.” The Bean Poll asked the question “Which of these board focus areas is of most interest to you?” and the choices were expansion, member linkage, finances, and board education. Members were given two beans with which to cast their vote in one or two of the categories. Each category received many votes, but expansion was the leader and member linkage was a close second. The Bean Poll was a fun and easy way to “crowd-source” the opinions of our membership and also helped facilitate

communication about the board’s work. We’d like to thank all of you who stopped by—we really enjoyed meeting you and hearing your opinions and ideas. The positive feedback we’ve received about this event has encouraged us to have similar events during 2015.

Our next Member Linkage event will be on February 28th, from 10:00 - 11:30 AM. At this meeting we will briefly follow up on some of the action items proposed during the Volunteer Program Discussion that took place on November 6, 2014. But the main focus of this meeting will be to have a conversation on moving forward with Co-op member engagement. A more formal agenda will be made available as the event date draws near.

We plan to hold this event in our Co-op’s Administrative Offices’ Training Room. RSVPs are requested to ensure the comfort of all those who wish to attend, although walk-ins will be welcome as long as the space allows. If a larger group is expected than the Training Room can accommodate, the Co-op will make every effort to arrange and publicize an alternate venue and contact all those who RSVP. Stop by the Customer Service desk to reserve your spot, or call 412-242-3598.

We hope to see you there! And as always, if you ever have questions or want to know more about the board, please email us at boarddir@eastendfood.coop.

Your Co-op’s Board of Directors invites members to join us for

MEMBER LINKAGE MEETING:
PLANNING FOR 2015



DATE: Saturday, February 28th TIME: 10:00-11:30 AM
LOCATION: Co-op Administrative Offices’ Training Room
This event is FREE, but RSVPs are requested. Reserve your spot at Customer Service or by calling 412-242-3598.
Unable to attend, but have a question you’d like to present to the Board? Email your thoughts to boarddir@eastendfood.coop

Members Speak Out

by Heather Hackett, Marketing & Member Services Manager

Member participation has been a focus point for the Co-op these last few years that I’ve worked here. Between both Operations and Governance, we have all tried to find more ways to engage and communicate with members. We’ve also been interested in creating new ways for members to interact with one another. So far in my department, these motivations have resulted in the creation of our E-newsletters, as well as the establishment of Members’ Open Forums, a monthly event where members gather to hear store news and learn more about topics identified as being of interest (see page 8 for more information).

Now we are opening up another way for members to communicate with one another: a new standing column in *The Co-operator* called “Members Speak Out” that will allow members to share their thoughts with other members. “Members Speak Out” was formerly the heading of our comment card section, but we found that non-members left equally insightful comments that were worth sharing with a larger audience, so we retitled that portion of the newsletter “Customer Comments.” Because the name “Members Speak Out”

sums up exactly what this new standing column will be all about, we’ve retained that title for this section.

“Member Speak Out” topics may include a wide range of subjects, such as:

- Thoughts about co-ops—ours or others
- Opinions about expansion
- Information about food or farming
- Environmental issues
- News from the Co-op’s community
- Other topics of interest to our members

The Co-op embraces diversity and opposing viewpoints and hopes to encourage an active dialogue amongst our membership. To leave space for a larger number of member voices while maintaining efficiency in producing our newsletter, we have established the following guidelines for submission:

- All inquiries received by the 1st of the month will be under consideration for publication in the following month’s newsletter. (E.g. if you submit during the month of February your piece will not run until the April issue or after.)
- Submissions may not be anonymous.

- We require the name of the author.
- Authors must have a current, up-to-date membership and provide their member number in order to be featured in this column.
 - All content must be submitted digitally as a Microsoft Word (or compatible) format to memberservices@eastendfood.coop.
 - Submissions may not exceed 300 words. The editor may request a further reduction of the word count when needed due to space constraints. (Anyone interested in submitting a full-length article for *The Co-operator* should email memberservices@eastendfood.coop for more information.)
 - Submissions may not be promotional, political, or religious in nature.
 - Submissions must be respectful and may not include content that is:
 - threatening, abusive, or obscene
 - deceptive, false, or misleading
 - illegal
 - spam
 - inappropriate, offensive, or hateful.
 - All submissions will be printed at the discretion of the editor (see below).

Determining which content is published each month will be at the discretion of

myself, as editor, and I’ll be using the following general criteria:

- Timeliness of the submission
- Adherence to the above guidelines
- Relevance of the topic to members as reflected in the bi-annual Member Survey
- Alignment with our Ends Policy Statement
- Respect for the many different views of our membership.

Please note that all content will be subject to editing. Though my team will use a light touch to avoid changing the author’s voice, some changes may be needed because of space restrictions or typos. As editor, I will discuss proposed edits with authors, so anyone interested in submitting can rest assured that their content will not be altered without their knowledge.

We foresee that there may be months when we do not receive any submissions. Our plan in the absence of submissions will be a recurring column titled “1 in 11,000+” in which our member services coordinator will round up members here at the Co-op and interview them on different subjects. This will ensure that this space will always remain dedicated to sharing member perspectives. So come on members, speak out!

ENDS POLICY STATEMENT

East End Food Co-op exists to enhance physical and social health in our community. To these ends, we will create:

- A sustainable member-owned business open to everyone
- An ethical and resilient food infrastructure
- A vibrant, dynamic community of happy, healthy people
- A creative vision to transform the future

STATEMENT OF COOPERATIVE IDENTITY

Definition

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

Values

Cooperatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, cooperative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility, and caring for others.

Principles

Most cooperatives around the world follow the core principles that were adopted by the International Co-operative Alliance in 1995. Cooperatives trace the roots of these principles to the first modern cooperative founded in Rochdale, England, in 1844. These principles are guidelines by which cooperatives put their values into practice.

1. Voluntary and Open Membership

Cooperatives are voluntary organizations, open to all people able to use its services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political, or religious discrimination.

2. Democratic Member Control

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members—those who buy the goods or use the services of the cooperative—who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions.

3. Member Economic Participation

Members contribute equally to, and democratically control, the capital of the cooperative. This benefits members in proportion to the business they conduct with the cooperative rather than on the capital invested.

4. Autonomy and Independence

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If the co-op enters into agreements with other organizations or raises capital from external sources, it does so based on terms that ensure democratic control by the members and maintains the cooperative’s autonomy.

5. Education, Training and Information

Cooperatives provide education and training for members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperative. Members also inform the general public about the nature and benefits of cooperatives.

6. Cooperation among Cooperatives

Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional, and international structures.

7. Concern for Community

While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of communities through policies and programs accepted by the members.

Customer Comments

Hi, the “bag of stew veggies” was pretty awesome. Please try and stock it often, thanks!

That was pretty cool, I agree. Unfortunately the price shot up and then it went out of stock. Luckily, we carry all of the vegetables on our shelves that were in the soup mix and better still, they are sourced locally!
-Evan, Produce

Why does customer service have to stand now? That has to be unhealthy with little to no reasonable purpose.

Thanks for sharing your concern regarding the well-being and safety of our staff—issues which are of primary concern in all Co-op decisions. It is out of respect for you, our customer, that the staff will serve you while standing. We believe that this enhances our “approachability.” And the Co-op offers paid meal breaks and paid rest breaks (up to one hour for an eight hour shift) in order to ensure that staff are rested and not experiencing discomfort.
-eric, Front End

WOW! What leadership. Removing inferior supplements containing stearic acids may not sit well with uninformed Co-op members. Many popular supplements, albeit they may have been doing more harm than good, will now be missing from the Co-op’s shelves. Two thumbs up. This is great leadership. P.S. Consider an aisle notice to inform members.

Thank you! The supplement aisle continues to be refined to offer the most substantial products for discerning customers like yourself. A statement to illustrate such changes is in development.
-Jackson, Supplements

Have a thought that you’d like to share?

Fill out and submit a comment card at customer service during your next visit!

February’s Round Up Recipient: GTECH Strategies

register Roundup gtech

The mission of GTECH, which stands for Growth Through Energy and Community Health, is to cultivate the unrealized potential of people and places to improve the economic, social, and environmental health of our communities. Their approach to community building follows four steps: Investigate, Act, Connect, and Sustain. Through involvement in policy discussions that affect Pittsburgh neighborhoods, they’re able to create and implement processes and resources that turn environmental liabilities, like vacant land, into community assets.

Since 2012, GTECH has collaborated with 33 Pittsburgh neighborhoods and 55 community partners to reclaim over 1 million square feet of vacant land and remove 500 tons of CO2 from the air. Two teams, ReClaim and ReEngerginze PGH, focus on building relationships in communities with high levels of vacancy and blight. By empowering neighborhoods to make positive changes, they have collectively built 23 permanent projects on vacant land and educated 4,000 residents on energy efficiency, thus reducing blight and air pollution.

GTECH Strategies is enthusiastic about building better communities for everyone through innovative solutions, education, engagement, and by creating partnerships that have a lasting impact. For more information about this organization and how you can get involved, please visit their website or call 412-361-2099. And if you want to support GTECH in their mission to collaboratively make positive changes in Pittsburgh neighborhoods, be sure to tell your Co-op cashier to Round Up your total this month!

Your spare change can result in positive change!

www.gtechstrategies.org

CO-OP CAFÉ ARTWORK

Each month, East End Food Co-op partners with a local school or community organization to beautify the Co-op’s Café seating area with artwork created by area youths.

This provides an opportunity to highlight the importance of art education in the Pittsburgh community while strengthening our partnerships with local educators, many of whom use the Co-op to help teach young folks about nutrition and local food. Be sure to check out this month’s art exhibit created by:

BRADDOCK YOUTH PROJECT



Featuring Vegan and Vegetarian Cooking

including;

Meatless Stroganoff

Peanut Sunflower Tofu

Roasted Cauliflower Mac & Cheese

our “Veggyro” Vegan Gyro

and our famous Seitan Wings!


Meat items also available!



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412-390-1111 DOUBLEWIDEGRILL.COM

COMMUNITY IMPACT


OUR CO-OP GREW BY



49

NEW MEMBERS

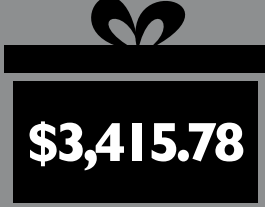
OUR OUTREACH REPRESENTATIVES REACHED



344


PEOPLE AT EVENTS

OUR CO-OP RAISED

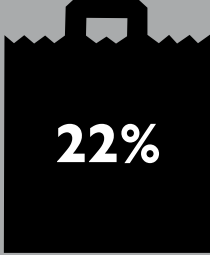


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THROUGH THE REGISTER ROUND UP FOR



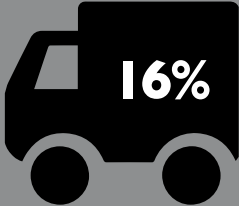
LOCAL PRODUCTS MADE UP



22%

OF TOTAL STORE SALES

OF OUR PURCHASES



16%

WERE FROM LOCAL SUPPLIERS

DATA COLLECTED DURING DECEMBER 2014

Featured Community Partner: Tula Organic Salon & Spa

The East End Food Co-op is proud to partner with Tula Organic Salon & Spa. The Community Partners Program aims to provide Co-op members great benefits and, at the same time, to promote local businesses. Because we are committed to supporting our community, we truly value the partnerships we build through this program.

Tula Organic is an Aveda affiliated salon and spa offering hair, skin, and sugar waxing services. Professional stylists and co-owners Emily Askin and Becky Goodwin value the well-being of both their clients and our planet. Their mission is to provide a relaxing environment for beauty services that are luxurious yet sustainable. The team at Tula Organic believes that true beauty is best attained through green business practices, pure organic ingredients, and a loving relationship with the local community. They believe in empowering women by showing them how to enhance their natural beauty, and their motto is, “Be yourself, and beauty will follow.”



Co-op members who are first-time customers at Tula Organic will receive 10% off of the cost of their visit. To take advantage of this discount, fully paid members must be sure to present their green plastic membership card at the time of payment. If you have any questions about the Community Partners Program, contact Member Services at memberservices@eastendfood.coop or call 412-242-3598 ext. 438. You can check out the full listing of your Co-op’s partners on our website at www.eastendfood.coop/co-op/community/community-partners-program.

Did you know... ...the Co-op accepts SNAP benefits?

SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) is a program administered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to assist citizens that are in need. In Pennsylvania, benefits are then distributed to eligible recipients through the ACCESS program.

How does ACCESS work for SNAP beneficiaries?

All SNAP beneficiaries in the state of Pennsylvania are given an ACCESS card, which enables household residents to use their benefits through the EBT (Electronic Benefit Transfer) system. At the time of purchase the beneficiary will swipe their ACCESS card and enter their PIN number (a unique personal identification number known only by the card holder). The SNAP funds will then be deducted from the appropriate account to pay for SNAP eligible items. If insufficient funds exist in the account, the transaction will not complete.

Do I qualify for SNAP?

Eligibility for SNAP benefits is determined by several factors. The best way to see if you qualify is to apply, which you can do online using the State of Pennsylvania’s COMPASS website at www.compass.state.pa.us. You may also apply by sending an application (which can be downloaded and printed from the COMPASS website) to your local county assistance office.

What products are included/excluded by SNAP?

SNAP guidelines for included/excluded foods are specific and set by the USDA. Generally speaking, benefits may be used for foods intended to be prepared and eaten at home, such as: breads, beans, grains, and cereal; fruits and vegetables; meat, fish, and poultry; and dairy products.

SNAP benefits may not be used for the following: beer, wine, liquor, tobacco, or cigarettes; foods that are hot at point of sale; food to be eaten in the store; vitamins, supplements, and medicines; pet food; bottle deposits; and non-food items such as tissue, soap, cosmetics, or other household items.

The majority of food selections sold at the East End Food Co-op are eligible for SNAP, even vegetable seeds and plants. However, some foods are deemed ineligible by the USDA. These include, but are not limited to: food from our hot bar; salad bar food eaten on the premises (note: take-out salad bar food remains eligible); and made-to-order juices and smoothies from the Café.

There are also a number of items throughout the store that may seem

SNAP eligible, but surprisingly are not. These products tend to be medicinal in nature and, as such, they are considered supplements by the USDA. We most often see confusion arise in our Bulk Herbs Department. A good rule of thumb for determining whether or not an item of this uncertain nature is SNAP eligible is to examine the label on the product. If there is a “Nutrition Facts” label, then the product is most likely covered. If, instead of a “Nutrition Facts” label, the item in question has a “Supplement Facts” label, then it is probably considered a supplement by the USDA and is ineligible. If you have any questions as to whether or not an item is SNAP eligible, please feel free to inquire at the Customer Service desk.

Does the East End Food Co-op offer any additional discounts?

We realize that healthy eating can be costly and provides a challenge for many folks. To this end the East End Food Co-op offers a 10% courtesy discount on all transactions for which a customer uses SNAP benefits. We hope that offering this discount will make healthy foods more affordable and accessible to everyone in our community.

The 10% courtesy discount for ACCESS card users may sometimes be combined with additional discounts, but the aggregated discount may not exceed 20%. In cases where the SNAP courtesy discount exceeds the member discount, then only the SNAP discount will apply. Here are examples of some commonly combined discounts and their final discount percentages:

DISCOUNT COMBINATION SCENARIO:	FINAL DISCOUNT:
Member (daily) +SNAP	10%
Member (daily) + SNAP + Senior	15%
Member (quarterly) + SNAP	20%
Member (quarterly) + SNAP + Senior	20%
Non-member SNAP	10%
Non-member SNAP + Senior	15%

How can I learn more?

Questions about the SNAP program specific to East End Food Co-op can be directed to the Customer Service desk. Additional general information about SNAP is available online at www.dhs.state.pa.us/foradults/supplementalnutritionassistanceprogram.



March 27, 28, 29, 2015

Westin Convention Center Pittsburgh

Call for Entries for Design Contest, \$500.00 cash award for Best in Show!

www.pghknitandcrochet.com



Receive seeds & seedlings from us every few weeks and grow your own CSA Share in your backyard.

SIGN UP!

Or sponsor a Garden Share for 2015 today!



www.blackberrymeadows.com

Environmentalism: It Starts In Your Shopping Bag

by Jeffrey Cohan, Executive Director of Jewish Vegetarians of North America

The standard repertoire of environmentalists—recycling, using reusable containers, turning off the lights when you leave a room, keeping the thermostat set low in your home, and so on—are certainly commendable actions. Yet the inconvenient truth remains that what matters most for the environment is what’s in your shopping bag, and what is on your plate. Whether your concern is climate change, habitat destruction, or even water pollution, then animal agriculture is unfortunately at the top of the list of culprits.

Climate Change

When the leaders of the World Bank decided to look into what exactly is causing climate change, the study they commissioned yielded some shocking results. The World Bank’s climate scientists concluded that a whopping 51% of human-caused greenhouse-gas emissions (GHGs) are attributable to animal agriculture.

Their model took into account the staggering amounts of fossil fuels required to fertilize, process, and transport livestock feed; to transport live animals, slaughter them, and process their body parts; and then to chill and transport the final products. Climate-change models that omit many of these stages of meat production still show that animal agriculture produces more GHGs than all cars, trucks, ships, and planes combined.

The widely consulted Environmental Working Group, based in Washington, D.C., put it another way: If a family of four eats an entirely plant-based diet just one day a week, it has the same impact on climate change as not driving your car for five weeks.

Habitat Destruction

We certainly need farms. But whenever you see a farm, you’re looking at land that has been radically altered by human enterprise. In Pennsylvania, for instance, virtually every acre of farmland was once a forest.

According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, about one-third of all the arable land on the planet is being used to grow feed for livestock, rather than for humans. In addition, about one-fourth of the Earth’s terrestrial surface is being used to graze livestock. In the Amazon Basin,

about 70% of deforestation is the result of ranchers clearing land to graze cattle and other farm animals.

If we care about preserving natural habitats as homes for threatened species of animals and plants, or preserving forests as suppliers of oxygen and sponges for carbon dioxide, then it behooves us to create a food system that uses land efficiently. Arguably, such a food system would require a lot less meat production and consumption. A global shift in diet could restore literally billions of acres of farmland and pastures to their natural condition.

Water Pollution

There are vast “dead zones” in the Gulf of Mexico, and even closer to home, in the Chesapeake Bay and the Great Lakes. These are huge swaths of open water in which all animal life has suffocated, and the main cause is rooted in animal agriculture.

Synthetic fertilizers used to grow corn and soy for livestock feed are finding their way into rivers and streams—and ultimately into lakes, bays, and gulfs. These fertilizers stimulate the production of algae, which suck all the oxygen out of the water during decomposition. Additionally, livestock spew forth 1.4 billion pounds of wet manure a year in the U.S. alone (130 times what humans produce).

Eating Environmentally

Based on these inconvenient truths, one change we can all make to address these environmental concerns is to reduce our consumption of meat, dairy, and eggs. To learn more, join me on Wednesday, February 18th at 6:30 PM for a workshop co-hosted by the East End Food Co-op and Repair the World. More information about this free event is available on page 8. You can also learn more about my organization, Jewish Vegetarians of North America, at www.jewishveg.org.

Jeffrey Cohan is the Executive Director of Jewish Vegetarians of North America (JVNA). Jeffrey earned his Master’s in Public Management from Carnegie Mellon University. He worked in print and broadcast journalism for 18 years and served as Director of Community Relations for the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh from 2005-2012, before taking the helm of JVNA in 2012.

Know Your Farmer: Jamison Farm

by Kate Safin, Assistant Marketing & Member Services Manager

Jamison Farm, a member of the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA), is a 210-acre lamb and sheep farm located in Latrobe, PA, that was established by John and Sukey Jamison in 1979. For over thirty years, the Jamisons have been committed to raising the best lamb in the country, allowing the nearly 3,000 lambs they raise annually to roam freely on the farm’s scenic pasture where they graze on bluegrass, white clover, wild flowers, and seasonal grass. This natural diet and free range lifestyle yields a meat that is lean, firm, and tender, and free of herbicides, pesticides, antibiotics, and hormones.

Jamison Farm has been recognized by a number of local and national media outlets. They were included in a spot on the 2014 season of the Travel Channel’s “American Grilled” and received a write-up in *The Atlantic* magazine in 2012. Lamb from Jamison Farm is sold around the nation and sourced by some of the country’s best chefs, from New York to California, including Pittsburgh’s own Trevett Hooper of Legume and Greg Andrews of The Supper Club in Greensburg, PA. You can also find their lamb available for purchase at the East End Food Co-op, including fresh stew meat, ground meat, mini leg roasts, and shanks, and frozen lamb chops, lamb sausage, spinach feta sausage, and Merquez sausage. To learn more about Jamison Farm, visit their website at www.jamisonfarm.com or email sukey@jamisonfarm.com.



PHOTO COURTESY OF WWW.JAMISONFARM.COM

EEFC: How did you get into farming, and what inspired you to start in this business?

Sukey Jamison (SJ): I always loved cooking and good food. I did catering and used our own lamb for events and found it was much better than anything we could buy.

EEFC: What makes products from your farm unique?

SJ: Simply put: wholesome, natural, tender lamb. Our lamb comes from young, pasture-raised animals that we process at our own USDA plant.

EEFC: What are you most proud of as a local farmer?

SJ: We are proud that our customers appreciate our hard work.

EEFC: What is the biggest challenge of being a farmer?

SJ: Educating the public about our products as well as why farm-to-table products can seem more expensive.

EEFC: What is a typical day on your farm like?

SJ: We call ourselves 9-to-5ers—that’s 9 PM to bed and 5 AM to rise.

EEFC: What is your hope for the future of your farm?

SJ: To continue providing America’s best lamb and exposing new people to our operation all the time.



PHOTO COURTESY OF WWW.JAMISONFARM.COM

Chocolate Banana Bread Pudding

Ingredients

2 tablespoons melted butter
4-5 cups stale French bread, cut into 1/2- to 1-inch cubes
4 large eggs, beaten
2 cups milk
1 cup sugar
2 tablespoons rum (optional)
1 tablespoon vanilla
Pinch of salt
2 ripe bananas, peeled and sliced
1 cup semisweet chocolate chips (or roughly-chopped chocolate)
2 tablespoons brown sugar
2 tablespoons pecans, chopped

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Use melted butter to grease a 9” x 13” casserole dish.

2. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the eggs, milk, sugar, rum, vanilla and salt. Add the cubed bread and toss gently to coat. Gently stir in the bananas and chocolate chips. Pour into the casserole dish and sprinkle brown sugar and pecans evenly over the top. Let the pudding sit for 20 minutes in the refrigerator, then bake for 40 minutes. The pudding is done when the edges start to brown and pull away from the sides of the pan. Slice into 2” x 3” rectangles, and serve hot.

Serving Suggestion

Be sure to use Fair Trade bananas and other ingredients where available. Add Kahlua instead of rum, or try substituting apples, raisins, and a dash of cinnamon for the bananas and chocolate.

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Get Growing with Garden Dreams: Backyard Chickens

by Hannah Reiff, Garden Dreams Urban Farm & Nursery

Whether or not you're familiar with the antics of egg-laying hens, I hope you find this list of 10 things I've learned from my flock of backyard chickens to be entertaining and informative.

Never let your guard down: When our flock was young, I was crouching down, intent on a task, and felt a bird hop on my shoulder. I ignored this, but then she pecked me right in the eye when I turned my head toward her. Luckily, no lasting harm was done, but I learned my embarrassing lesson: Respect the beak! Eyeballs, jewelry, rivets on jeans, even bare toenails in sandals are all fair game for a curious peck.

Prey can be predators: Hens need protection from many predators, but did you know that hens are huntresses in their own right? I'm not just talking slugs and worms here, either. I've watched egg-laying hens hunt, kill, and eat voles, mice, and an unfortunate snake, but not until after running around and making quite a show of it until the whole flock gave chase.

Don't believe everything you hear: One chicken injured a leg so I set her up in a quiet spot away from the flock to rest and recover. Someone who had kept chickens before offered the discouraging advice that chickens didn't recover well from leg injuries, and the bird was as good as dead. Yet, a few weeks later, with a little TLC, she was good as gold.

Pecking order means just that: Chickens live in a rigidly structured society. The hens have a strict hierarchy, with a hen at the top who gets the best of everything and a hen at the bottom who gets the worst of everything. Not the best model for human society, but it works for them. Unless blood and feathers fly, it's wise to stay out of it. They know what is best.

One is the loneliest number: At least this is true in the poultry world. I'll never forget the first time I saw a "chicken pile" of wings, feet, and heads sticking out every which way, happy as could be. As strict as their social system is, chickens need the companionship of their flock.

Dinosaurs still walk the earth: Look closely at an egg-laying hen and you won't be able to argue. Scaly legs, talon-like claws, beady eyes, feathers.... They have something prehistoric in their blood—I'm sure of it.

Not everything is as it first appears: By this I mean that what at first looks to be an



unconscious chicken sprawled in the grass may actually just be a hen sunbathing in a weird pose. And what could easily be mistaken for a seizure may just be dust-bathing in a bit of dry soil to keep the skin free of parasites!

Do what you are born to do: For chickens, this means scratching. Whether it's in soil, compost, leaves, or grass, they love looking for bugs and seeds—it's their mission in life. And it's my job to help them do it.

Fresh is best: Fresh eggs are *so good*. No brainer.

Smiling makes you feel good: My chickens are not pets, so I keep an emotional distance. But I can't help cracking a smile at their antics. Like when they hop straight up in the air to peck a cabbage on the table just out of reach, or every time they come barreling out of the coop as I open the door, heads down, legs pumping, like a flock of roadrunners.... Chicken therapy, I call it.

Hannah Reiff is Production Manager at Garden Dreams Urban Farm & Nursery. Located in Wilksburg, Garden Dreams is a small, community-oriented business committed to increasing access to healthy, fresh food by providing strong vegetable, herb, and flower starts to home gardeners, community gardens, nonprofits, schools, and retail markets (including the East End Food Co-op). You can learn more about their operation at www.mygardendreams.com.

Get to Know the Pittsburgh Food Policy Council

by Dawn Plummer and Dora Walmsley, Pittsburgh Food Policy Council

The Pittsburgh Food Policy Council (PFPC) was formed in 2009 when a group of local stakeholders, including your Co-op, began meeting regularly to address issues with our community's food system. The Council serves as a collaborative advisory organization, bringing together people from diverse food-related sectors to examine, develop, and improve Pittsburgh's food system.

Over the last two decades, food policy councils (FPCs) like ours have emerged as food democracy in action. Between 2010 and 2014 alone, FPCs in North America grew in number from 91 to 263. In the United States, there are 200 active FPCs, which exist in all 50 states. By convening stakeholders across a local, municipal, or state food system, FPCs are spaces where grassroots community leaders, non-profit organizations, academic institutions, and government officials come together to make an assessment and develop solutions that promote an equitable and sustainable food system. By looking at the whole system—from production to consumption, and even waste—food policy councils have successfully educated officials, and improved coordination of existing programs while developing new ones, all the while consciously incorporating the voice and solutions of those who have been historically under-served or unrepresented in food policy development.

Following Pittsburgh's FPC formation, organizers first developed a common vision statement and council charter, sharing a vision for "a food system that benefits the community, the economy and the environment in ways that are equitable and sustainable." The Council's founders and present members are committed to working with city officials and residents to develop food and urban agriculture policy. The Council also provides technical assistance, education, momentum, and support on issues related to food production, food access, food distribution, health/nutrition, and urban planning.

Currently, among cities of its size, Pittsburgh has the highest percentage of people residing in areas without ready access to supermarkets—so-called "food deserts." For nearly half of Pittsburghers (47%), the simple act of getting fresh food at a store is a huge difficulty. While the effects of living in a food desert community are far reaching,

Pittsburgh's size, strong non-profit sector, and focus on community-driven processes will allow for sustainable solutions to help solve these types of systemic issues.

Since its founding, the PFPC has, among other accomplishments, partnered with Just Harvest, to establish and subsequently expand SNAP/EBT payment systems to facilitate the purchase of fresh foods at farmers markets; worked with Grow Pittsburgh and the City of Pittsburgh to improve our region's urban agriculture zoning policies; and most recently, we hosted a presentation by national expert Gina Lasky, who outlined the connections between shifting attitudes towards population health and food policy.

As Pittsburgh emerges as a city and region reborn, we have the opportunity to become a leader in the new economy, offering solutions to the critical issue of human health and well-being by keeping a constant focus on our food system. The challenges of food insecurity, unsustainable agricultural models, community disinvestment, and poverty require new models of collaboration.

The Pittsburgh Food Policy Council is made up of members from various government, non-profit, co-op, restaurant industry, business sector, university, and farm entities from Southwest Pennsylvania who come together to support each other's individual missions and goals. This structure has benefited the community by creating one strong, coordinated voice.

To learn more about the PFPC, please visit www.pittsburghfoodpolicy.org. You can also join us for a workshop co-hosted by your Co-op on February 25th at 6:30 PM to learn more about how you can help make the change you want to see in your food system happen! (Event information is on page 8.)

Dawn Plummer serves as the Director of the Pittsburgh Food Policy Council. Over the past fifteen years, Dawn has served in a variety of leadership roles including coordinator of national and international networks, coalition builder, fundraiser, researcher, and community organizer. Dora Walmsley, PFPC Outreach Coordinator, worked for nearly four years with the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, in addition to owning a fresh-food-focused corner grocer in Pittsburgh.

Outreach Spotlight: Farming for the Future Conference

by Erin Kelly, Outreach & Education Coordinator

Through our bi-annual Member Survey, members consistently indicate that supporting local, environmentally responsible farming should be one of our Co-op's main priorities. On top of that, the cooperative principles of "education" and "concern for community" encourage us to partner with organizations that champion information-sharing and community-building around food production. It is for these reasons that our Co-op is proud to once again be a Guardian-level Sponsor of the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA) *Farming for the Future* Conference!

This year's conference theme is "Nature as Mentor," and will focus on the importance of learning from nature as we endeavor to build a sustainable food system. Over 2,000 farmers, students, businesses, and community leaders will attend more than a hundred workshops and various pre-conference activities from February 3 – 7 in State College, PA. We're excited to support this wonderful event, and we will be sending some Co-op representatives to meet with others in our region who are working to create an ethical and resilient local food infrastructure.

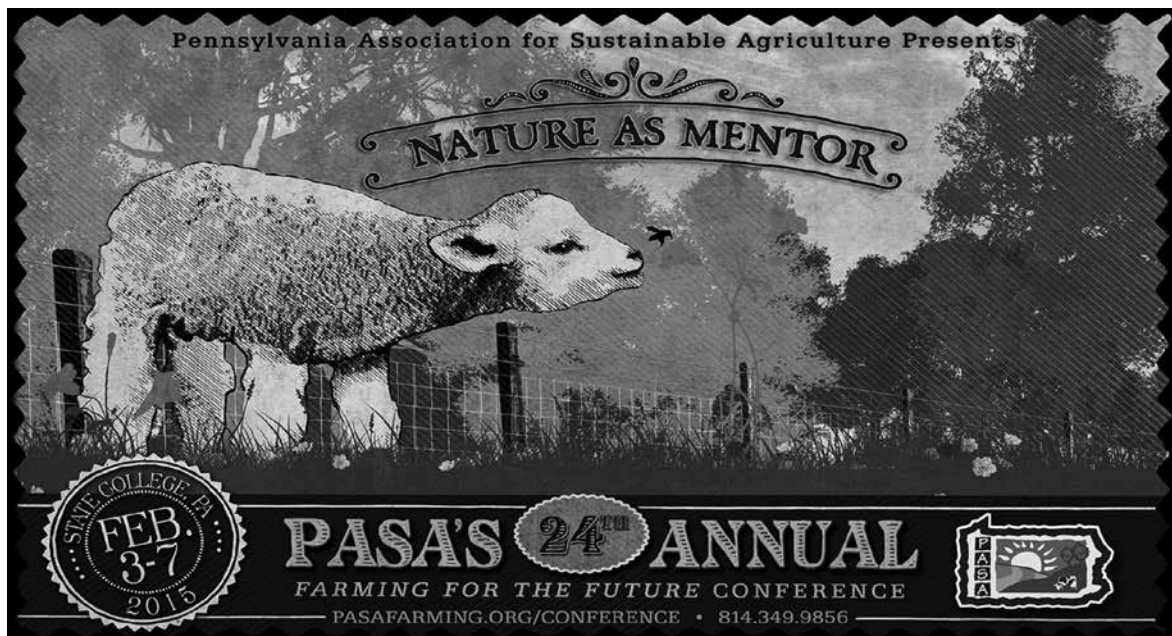
Groundbreaking author and sustainable food advocate Francis Moore Lappe will deliver a keynote address on Friday, and nationally renowned soil scientist Ray

Archuleta will address conference attendees as Saturday's keynote speaker. For those who wish to maximize the conference experience, six different pre-conference tracks, ranging from financial planning to seed sovereignty, will be available prior to the workshops. Whether you are a farmer or a food producer interested in strengthening your business or your commitment to sustainable farming methods, or a consumer hoping to develop a deeper understanding of where your food comes from, this conference will provide invaluable insights.

This event provides us with the opportunity to learn from other food system stakeholders while sharing information about our cooperative. In addition to sponsoring the conference, our Co-op will host a table in the event's main exhibit hall, where we will have promotional materials and samples. We also donated a wine-and-

cheese-themed gift basket to the conference auction, which all attendees can bid on.

If you plan to attend the conference, be sure to stop by our table to learn about what we do to promote local and sustainable agriculture in our region. And be on the lookout in next month's issue of *The Co-operator*, which will feature a recap of the event's highlights.



Are you interested in attending the Farming for the Future Conference this year? There's still time to register; visit the conference website to purchase tickets, or you can register in person at the event itself. Learn more about PASA and view the conference schedule here: conference.pasafarming.org.

THE CO-OP

The East End Food Co-op is Pittsburgh's only member-owned natural and organic food market, serving the community since 1980. We offer the finest in certified organic produce and herbs, bulk foods, vitamins and supplements, cruelty-free health and beauty aids, organic and natural packaged and perishable goods and hard-to-find items for special dietary needs.

Our award-winning Vegetarian Café and Juice Bar offers a daily array of fresh, wholesome, hot entrées, soups, salads, and vegan dishes.

The Co-op is open to the public and membership is not required to make purchases, but members do receive better prices, have access to the Federal Credit Union, and can vote and serve on the board of directors.

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Assistant Editor: Kate Safin
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The Co-operator is a monthly publication mailed to East End Food Co-op members. Additional copies are available in the store's foyer, and at outreach events. *The Co-operator* is also available online at www.eastendfood.coop.

Opinions expressed are the writers' own and do not necessarily reflect Co-op policy. The East End Food Co-op does not endorse the views or products of the advertisers in this newsletter.

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EMPLOYEE
OF THE MONTH



Congratulations to **Kaitlyn Weikel** who was chosen as the Co-op staff pick for Employee of the Month. Kaitlyn has worked in Supplements, HBA, and Bulk Herbs for four months.

Q. What's one thing you've learned in your time working at the Co-op?

A. A lot more about actual herbal therapies, and more about how to actually use the herbs themselves.

Q. What's your favorite product here?

A. *S. boulardii*. It's a very specific type of probiotic that's hard to find.

Q. What do you like to do when you're not at the Co-op?

A. I'm really into bees. And puppy snugs. And kombucha making.

Q. What wouldn't you ever change about the Co-op?

A. That it's always open to everyone, regardless of whether they're a member or not.

NEW FACES

Andrew Colin Jacobsen, Grocery
Andrew finds co-ops to be a more personal experience without the large, corporate issues of a big store. He loves the tea selection here. Outside work, Andrew does lots of camping, hiking, and visiting historical landmarks. Andrew hopes to someday be a representative for a national park.

Lauren Torralba, Front End
Lauren's goal is to be self-sustaining and she has come to our Co-op because it's a perfect place to learn about eating and shopping locally. Lauren loves to hike and is interested in reading and writing, photography, farming, and cooking. She also plays the ukulele.

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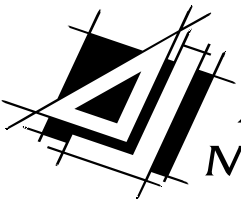
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CAFÉ SPECIALS • FEBRUARY 2015

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 CHEF'S CHOICE	2 SEITAN ALLA DIAVOLA	3 TOFU ROGAN JOSH	4 INDIAN KITCHEN	5 MARRAKESH VEGETABLE CURRY	6 PIZZA: VEGAN & DAIRY	7 PESTO MAC 'N' CHEESE
8 CHEF'S CHOICE	9 MIXED VEGETABLES WITH ROMESCO SAUCE	10 PIEROGIDILLAS	11 PITTSBURGH KITCHEN	12 SMOKED MUSHROOM LASAGNA	13 BURRITO BAR	14 SPICY TEMPEH HASH
15 CHEF'S CHOICE	16 TEMPEH & BROCCOLI ARRABBIATA	17 HUNGARIAN STEW WITH EGG NOODLES	18 COUNTRY KITCHEN	19 SOUTHWEST TEMPEH	20 PIZZA: VEGAN & DAIRY	21 VEGETABLE LO MEIN
22 CHEF'S CHOICE	23 SWEET POTATO GNOCCHI WITH MUSHROOMS & SPINACH	24 MOUSSAKA	25 GREEK KITCHEN	26 YAM, GREENS, & QUINOA GRATIN	27 BURRITO BAR	28 CHEESY SPINACH STRATA

STORE HOURS:

OPEN DAILY: 8 AM - 9 PM

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JUICE & COFFEE BAR: 8 AM - 7 PM
SOUP & SALAD BAR: 8 AM - 7 PM
HOT FOOD BAR: 11 AM - 7 PM
WEEKEND BRUNCH: 9AM - 1 PM

February Co-op Events

SETTING AND ACHIEVING REALISTIC RESOLUTIONS <i>Vanessa Broers, Sweat & Butter</i>	THE FOOD DISCONNECT <i>Sarah Trafican, Clinical Psychologist</i>	ENVIRONMENTALISM STARTS ON YOUR PLATE <i>Jeffrey Cohan, Jewish Vegetarians of North America</i>	GET TO KNOW OUR FOOD POLICY COUNCIL <i>Dawn Plummer & Dora Walmsley, PFPC</i>
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4TH, 6:30 PM <i>Gemini Theater</i> Have you given up on your New Year's resolution to get healthy already? You are not alone—over ninety percent of people abandon their proclaimed goal before the year closes. Certified Health Coach Vanessa Broers wants to help you beat that statistic. By sharing strategies for making gradual and lasting changes to your health and fitness routine, Vanessa will help you identify positive ways of kicking your bad habits and reaching your health and fitness goals this year.	WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11TH, 6:30 PM <i>Gemini Theater</i> Our relationships with food and our role within the modern food system are becoming increasingly complex. Clinical Psychologist Sarah Trafican has dedicated a great deal of thought and research to this idea and finds that the changing politics and technologies involved in food production and marketing have alienated us—as individuals and as a society—from the food we eat. Come hear about and discuss Sarah's take on the causes and implications of what she deems the food disconnect.	WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18TH, 6:30 PM <i>Repair the World Workshop</i> Jeffrey Cohan, Executive Director of Jewish Vegetarians of North America, will speak about the environmental ramifications of food production, comparing plant-based and animal-based diets. After Jeffrey's talk, our Co-op and a group of Repair the World Fellows, who are working to allay food justice issues in our community, will host a collection of activities to stimulate both your social conscience and inner foodie. Join us in learning how an act as simple as eating dinner can change the world.	WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25TH, 6:30 PM <i>Gemini Theater</i> The Pittsburgh Food Policy Council (PFPC) was founded in 2009 and works to build membership among organizations and individuals—including our Co-op—dedicated to fostering a just and sustainable food system in Southwestern Pennsylvania. This past year, PFPC brought on its first staff: Director Dawn Plummer and Outreach Coordinator Dora Walmsley. Join us to learn about the work of food policy councils around the country and get up to speed on what PFPC has done—and will do—to better our region's food system.

These events are FREE; just call 412-242-3598 to reserve your spot!

Look for your Co-op at these upcoming events:

February 2nd, 5 PM – 9 PM: EEFC's Caldwell Linker will be featured in a celebration of local cheeses hosted by Legume and Slow Food Pittsburgh (SFP). Caldwell and Alix Wiggins of Wheel & Wedge will prepare cheese plates highlighting some of their favorites. These selections—along with beer or wine pairings—will be available for purchase at Legume's Butterjoint Bar. More information: www.eastendfood.coop/co-op/community/outreach-projects.

February 4th - February 7th: Our Co-op is a proud Guardian-level Sponsor of PASA's **Farming for the Future Conference!** This event gives attendees a chance to learn about new innovations in sustainable agriculture and celebrate achievements from the past year. Look for our Co-op's gift basket in the raffle and stop by our booth! More information: conference.pasafarming.org.

February 12th, 6 PM - 8 PM: We're excited to join Pittsburgh Center for Creative Reuse for their Open **Studio Night** potluck and fundraiser. Open Studio Night is a DIY crafting event for people 18-years old or older, where guests are invited to use crafting tools and materials from PCCR's bulk section to make unique pieces of art. Bring a vegetarian snack to share! More information: PCCR.org.



MEMBERS' OPEN FORUM

A chance to meet and share your ideas with other members!

Monday, February 9th, 2015
Starts at 7PM
Cafe Seating Area

This event is free, but please call 412.242.3598 to reserve your spot. More information is available at www.eastendfood.coop/co-op/membership.