

The Co-operator

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



Weekend Warriors: Chiropractic Care has Your Back (...and Shoulders... and Knees...)

by Sarah Knight of Cutitta Chiropractic

With spring getting into full gear it's time to start moving, exercising, and enjoying the warm weather. Unfortunately, after a long winter stuck inside, this sudden jump into activity can come with a host of new aches and pains. Often people will establish a new routine as the weather warms up, and instead of working exercise into their everyday life they will concentrate their efforts into the weekend hours. When you don't incorporate exercise into your daily lifestyle these workouts can become disjointed or rushed, and often you'll push yourself too hard during the times you've set aside for fitness.

The United States has become a nation of "weekend warriors" – people who only fit physical activity in on the weekends, and are oftentimes pushing themselves beyond their limits to the point of injury. Most of us were raised with the idea that you only go to a doctor when something is wrong. Even more so, we've been trained that most aches and pains aren't a real problem, but rather are something that should be "walked off." Or perhaps we've been told to just "quit whining about it." Whether it's a sore knee, an aching wrist, or even something as subtle as weekly headaches, most Americans believe that a certain amount of everyday pain is normal. This mentality seems to hold especially true for the "no pain, no gain" weekend warrior crowd.

Pain is not normal!

In many ways your body is like a newborn baby. It can't talk to you in English, communicating a concern like: "You aren't giving my arches enough support and I'm worried that the ligaments are getting inflamed." Instead, it communicates through

metaphorical cries and screams, such as sharp pains across your foot whenever you walk. Sometimes the screaming doesn't start right away – little things may build up before the pain begins. And just because the screaming sometimes stops, this doesn't mean the problem has gone away. The situation is much like a baby with a wet diaper who can be soothed even though the root problem of the disturbance (the wet diaper) is not immediately addressed.

In our chiropractic office we frequently find ourselves using the phrase, "symptoms are the last thing to show up and the first thing to go away." Your body tries quite hard to prevent your discomfort. For instance, it will adjust your gait when your foot or knee is hurting so you won't strain the muscles, ligaments, or tendons further. However, this adjustment can cause new pains in your low back or even your other leg as your body tries to find its balance. When these subtle adjustments don't fix the underlying injury or problem, then symptoms like tension, soreness, and sharp shooting pains will show up. These are your body's way of screaming, "Hey! Something is wrong!"

How chiropractic care can help

I want you to imagine that I've taken a rubber band and wrapped it around the top of your pointer finger, right at the first joint. If you've ever done this, you know what comes next: your finger starts to fill up with blood and turn blue! Now, imagine I take an icepack and hold it onto your blue finger. Will it restore your circulation and fix the problem? What about a heating pack? What if I were to give you a tiny injection of cortisone into your blue finger? None

of these solutions will fix the underlying problem (the rubber band blocking the flow of blood) to restore your circulation. The only way to fix the problem would be to remove the cause, the rubber band.

The success of chiropractic care operates on the same principle: rather than addressing your symptoms, we treat the underlying cause. While a cortisone shot may make you feel better in the short term, it won't fix the reason why you hurt and the pain often returns as the drugs wear off. In a chiropractic office, the doctor will assess your symptoms and find the best way to address the underlying cause of the pain. Chiropractors have specialized training in how the spine and nervous systems of the body function, just like a cardiologist undergoes training to learn how the human heart and circulatory systems work. You wouldn't visit a chiropractor for a heart attack, so why should you rely on a doctor who doesn't specialize in the nervous system when you are feeling pain?

While many people associate chiropractic care specifically with low back pain, neck pain, and headaches, chiropractors actually help the whole body heal and become stronger– reducing your overall pain. Because the nervous system exists throughout the body, chiropractic care is able to help a wide range of symptoms. Plantar fasciitis, ankle sprains, knee pain, shoulder pain, and tennis elbow are just a few of the regularly occurring injuries we see at our office from weekend warrior style exercise, particularly during the summer months.

If you've never been to a chiropractor, it's worth giving this treatment method a try! It is frequently

cheaper than traditional medical treatments (and much cheaper than the surgeries many doctors will recommend), plus it is less invasive. Most importantly: everything a chiropractor does is natural - no drugs or chemicals - meaning your body heals without having to deal with potential side effects and damage. Check with your local chiropractor, or our office, if you have any questions about how your over-use injuries can be helped with this natural healing method.

Sarah Knight works for Cutitta Chiropractic in Lawrenceville. Their practice offers Co-op members a free consultation and evaluation as part of the Community Partners Program, and at the time of the consultation/evaluation, members will also receive a coupon for a free 30-minute massage. For more information about their services, visit their website at www.cutittachiro.com.



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CO-OP DEALS FLYERS:

April 30th – May 20th
May 21st – June 3rd

MEMBERS ONLY:

Be sure to use your 10% quarterly discount by June 30th!
The next quarter goes from July 1st – September 30th.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

The next meeting will take place on Monday, May 19th at 7 PM.

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATIONS:

To register, call 412.242.3598 ext. 103
or email memberservices@eastendfood.coop

HOLIDAY HOURS:

On Monday, May 26th, the Co-op will close early at 7 PM,
and the Café will close at 6 PM.

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Connecting with the Board

by EEFC Board of Directors Member Linkage Committee

On March 15th from 10 AM to noon, the EEFC Board of Directors Member Linkage Committee (MLC) met with members for "Breakfast with the Board." This event was held in The Co-op's Administrative Offices Training Room and was attended by 13 members and five directors. The gathering provided a good opportunity for members to give feedback about what Co-op topics they would like more information about from the board of directors and how they would like to receive this information. Following a delicious breakfast from the Co-op Café, MLC Chair Tina Russell gave an overview of the MLC statement of purpose and facilitated introductions. Members were then invited to identify topics of interest for future meetings and discuss the best channels and methods of communication to reach Co-op membership.

Many interesting topics were brought up related to member benefits, community-building, Co-op growth and expansion, and sustainability. Although some of the suggested topics are operational and not within the board's scope of governance, this meeting was highly valuable to the MLC because we were able to become more familiar with

the thoughts, ideas, and concerns of some of our members. We all walked away feeling a little more enlightened on the issues that matter to our members, and how we can better represent and communicate to our membership at large.

The MLC is planning the next member linkage event, "Coffee Break with the Board," for May 24th from 2 PM - 4 PM in the Co-op's Administrative Offices Training Room. At this meeting, board members will give a short presentation on policy governance, the mission of the Member Linkage Committee, and the board's position on expansion. A facilitated discussion will follow on what members would like to see at a second and/or a larger store. If you haven't yet attended a Member Linkage event, this is a great opportunity to meet with fellow members and the directors and provide your input on the expansion. Light snacks and beverages will be provided. Because space is limited to 18 members, RSVPs are required. To reserve your seat, please contact Customer Service at 412-242-3598. If you're unable to attend but would like to share your thoughts with the board of directors, please email boarddir@eastendfood.coop.

Board Corner

by EEFC Board of Directors

The EEFC Board recently reviewed the final report of the financial audit for fiscal year 2013. The board hires an external accounting firm that specializes in financial audits to perform the work. An audit gives assurance to the board, management, and our member-owners that the financial statements of the Co-op are true and accurate, and that the financial systems and processes we use follow best practices and are robust with respect to correctness, integrity, and risk. An audit is a very rigorous process. For example, the auditors are on site at the beginning and end of the year when we count the inventory (all the products on the shelves and in the stockroom) in order to observe that counts are accurately done.

Usually the audit results in some adjustments to our year-end financial statements to account for changes in the tax law and regulations that might, for example, involve a different method for computing the value of the inventory or the depreciation on an asset like a freezer. One of the most significant adjustments, of course, is the final computation of our taxes.

When all the work is done, the holy grail is to receive an "unqualified opinion" - that's accounting lingo meaning the auditor has pronounced that the financial statements (with any adjustments made) provide a true and accurate representation of the previous fiscal year's operations and the current financial status of the business. The Co-op has successfully received an unqualified opinion on every financial audit we've had performed.

A financial audit is an important governance tool for the board to carry out its fiduciary oversight duty, to assure you, our member-owners, that the financial results we achieve are real and that we have been good stewards of the assets of the Co-op. As you can imagine, an audit is especially important in growth and expansion scenarios, to assure banks and others who might lend us money for those projects that we are a solid business. In an upcoming column, we will talk about other types of audits the board and management have been undertaking that will also be important to our growth and expansion efforts.

Co-op Shoppers Give Back Over \$12K in First Year of Register Round Up

by Kate Safin, Assistant Marketing & Member Services Manager

In its inaugural year, East End Food Co-op shoppers contributed a total of \$12,909.92 to local charitable organizations through the Register Round Up program!

The Register Round Up was introduced in April 2013. The program's concept is simple: As customers are rung up for their purchases, they are asked if they want to round up their total to the nearest dollar, this difference is then donated to a charity selected by the Co-op.

A thank you note from Shirl Regan, President/CEO of the Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh, helps highlight how spare change can really add up: "Thank you for your donation through the proceeds of Register Round Up! Your contributions provided almost 7,000 clients access to the specific programs and resources they need, so that they can heal from trauma and move on to safe, productive lives."

The East End Food Co-op elects a different organization each month to receive the donations. Priority is given to local organizations that support causes related to nutrition, education, food access, and sustainability, and whose missions are in line with the Co-op's Ends Statement.

Organizations are recognized during their Round Up month with a write-up in *The Co-operator* through the Co-op's social media channels, and in-store with signage at each check out. Organizations are also welcomed into the store where they can hand out brochures and promotional materials and chat with shoppers about their organization's mission and the work they do in the community. The Co-op does not retain any portion of the

proceeds from each month of Rounding Up; everything is donated to that month's charity.

Organizations that were selected as 2013/2014 Register Round Up recipients include:

- Shady Lane
- Clean Water Action
- Food for Change
- POWER (Pennsylvania Organization for Women in Early Recovery)
- Institute for Responsible Technology
- Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh
- Pittsburgh Faison K-5
- Nine Mile Watershed Association
- Just Harvest
- Children's Institute
- Grow Pittsburgh
- Bike Pittsburgh

With the exception of the month of October, Register Round Up recipients have been chosen for the remainder of the calendar year. They include:

- Hope Haven Farm (June)
- Braddock Youth Project (July)
- Animal Rescue League Shelter & Wildlife Center (August)
- Shady Lane (September)
- Backpacks for Hunger (November)
- Neighborhood Learning Alliance (December)

The Register Round Up program helps the Co-op fulfill the seventh cooperative principle: concern for community. It also gives our shoppers an easy way to give back to local charitable organizations that are providing great work in Pittsburgh communities. Thank you to all the Co-op shoppers who have Rounded Up this year!

At this meeting members can share their thoughts about the Co-op's plans for expansion and discuss policy governance with the Member Linkage Committee

Coffee Break with the Board

Where?
Training Room
in the Co-op's Administrative Offices

When?
Saturday, May 24th
2-4 PM

- Light snacks and beverages will be provided
- This event is FREE, but RSVPs are required due to limited seating
- Please call 412-242-3598 to reserve your space

Unable to attend, but have a question you'd like to present to the Board? Email your thoughts to boarddir@eastendfood.coop

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ENDS POLICY STATEMENT

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

- 1. A sustainable member-owned business open to everyone
- 2. An ethical and resilient food infrastructure
- 3. A vibrant, dynamic community of happy, healthy people
- 4. 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.

Members Speak Out!

I would like to request Green Rooibos tea in bulk please.

If you are suggesting a mix of green tea and rooibos, you can mix and match as you choose, but you must buy in separate bags. If you want a green, as in not red yet rooibos, none of my suppliers carry it. Sorry!

-Mary Beth, Bulk Herbs

Could you research ground chia seeds? I have been buying them mail order, but the manufacturer was purchased by “Genesis Pure” and it is no longer cost effective for me to buy that way. All the Co-op has are whole seeds.

Thanks for the suggestion. We now have milled chia seeds from Nutiva in Aisle 4.

-Maura, Grocery Manager

Please carry sugar-free Luciene’s Chocolate.

I apologize, but this product is not available through our distributors. Thanks for the suggestion, though!

-Maura, Grocery Manager

Love the book department, great selection!

Yay! Thanks, we love the books too!

-Karen, Book Buyer



Do you have a thought you’d like to share with the Co-op’s staff?

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

May’s Round Up Recipient: Bike Pittsburgh



By working closely with local stakeholders to advance bicycle and pedestrian improvements in the region, BikePGH is transforming our streets and communities into vibrant, healthy places by making them safe and accessible for everyone to bike and walk. Through the implementation of a wide variety of programs that embrace advocacy, safety, community, and sustainability, BikePGH anticipates that everyone in Pittsburgh will experience a benefit of their work by the year 2020.

In addition to publishing the Pittsburgh Bike Map and *Urban Biking Companion*, BikePGH also organizes the region’s leading annual bicycle events, PedalPGH and BikeFest. Through their Bike Friendly Employer program, they provide local businesses with bicycle action plans and bike parking assessments. They also coordinate Car Free Fridays and bike parking for events. In 2013, they also launched a high profile public safety campaign to remind motorists to drive with care.

BikePGH is our city’s leading advocate for the development of an active transportation network that will safely connect Pittsburgh neighborhoods for exploration by bike or on foot. For more information about their activities and how you can get involved, visit: www.BikePGH.org. And if you want to support them in their mission to make our region safe and accessible for bicyclists and pedestrians, be sure to tell your Co-op cashier you want to Round Up this month!

Your spare change can result in positive change!

www.bikepgh.org

Growing in Cooperation

In the month of March we welcomed 70 new members to our Co-op!

We extend our gratitude to each and every member, whether you’ve been signed up for weeks, months, or years. We couldn’t do it without you - thank you for your support, your patronage, and your investment in this business!

We invite all of you new members to sign up for a Member Orientation with a member services expert. We will give you a guided tour of the store, explain the benefits of membership, and fill you in on the many ways you can become more involved in your Co-op. To reserve your spot, please call 412-242-3598 ext. 103 or email memberservices@eastendfood.coop.



MARATHON TAILGATE PARTY

JOIN US AS WE CHEER ON THE RUNNERS OF STEEL



WHEN? SUNDAY, MAY 4TH

WHERE? “THE FACTORY”
7501 Penn Avenue
Pittsburgh PA 15208

TIME? 8 AM—NOON

Allegheny Chesapeake PT and East End Food Co-op will provide coffee, breakfast treats and prizes. Please bring your own chair!

Value-Added Products

by Danielle Roberts of Republic Food Enterprise Center

Everyone deserves the right to healthy food. But how do we make nutrient-rich food available to everyone throughout the year? Also, how do we ensure that farmers are getting a fair share of the profits for all the hard work they do? Value-added products address both of these problems.

Value-added products are defined by the USDA as involving any of the following:

- A change in the physical state or form of the product (such as milling wheat into flour or making strawberries into jam).
- The production of a product in a manner that enhances its value, as demonstrated through a business plan (such as organically produced products).
- The physical segregation of an agricultural commodity or product in a manner that results in the enhancement of the value of that commodity or product (such as an identity-preserved marketing system).

A value-added product is one whose worth has been increased by special production, marketing, or processing. Value-added products fall on a spectrum from minimal to heavy processing. Minimally processed foods include bagged spinach, cut vegetables, and roasted nuts which are simply pre-prepped for convenience. Canned and frozen fruits and vegetables, processed at their peak to lock in nutritional quality and freshness, are near the middle of the spectrum. Finally, the most heavily processed foods include frozen or pre-made meals like frozen pizza and microwaveable dinners. In this article, I will focus on minimally processed food like bagged spinach and frozen or canned products, since the majority of the ingredients in these products are traceable right back to the farm.

Even though these minimally processed foods do hail directly from the farm, the question remains whether these products are healthy. Processed fruits and vegetables have long been considered to have lower nutritional value than their fresh counterparts due to the loss of vitamin C during processing. However, a recent report from the American Chemical Society found that processed fruits and vegetables may actually retain their antioxidant activity despite the loss of vitamin C. Additionally, the absorbability of antioxidants is actually higher in cooked (canned) tomato products than in fresh ones. Therefore, it seems that minimally processed foods remain a healthy option.

So, if these products allow farmers to generate more revenue and they’re good for consumers, why don’t all farmers make them? Most value-added products are created from “seconds,” those parts of the crop that are slightly smaller or have cosmetic damages.

All crops yield some seconds, ranging anywhere from 5-20% of the harvest. Farmers have a hard time utilizing this produce because they cannot get a fair market price for it, and attempts at selling seconds can actually cost farmers money since they have to pay the same amount for labor but are reaping a lower profit. Unfortunately, the equipment needed to create value-added products is expensive and not accessible to all farmers. As a result, most farms leave these items in the field and the produce is wasted.

Some farmers, however, have been catching on to the benefits of value-added products. Value-added products can extend the selling season for growers and increase the shelf life of a product, which in turn increases the crop’s profitability. Additionally, the national market for value-added products was \$63.09 billion in 2009 and sales increased 10% from 2007-2009, showing that the demand for these products is steadily increasing.

In addition to rising demand, there are now more ways for farmers to produce value-added products, thanks to aggregation centers that offer co-packing services or shared-use kitchens that have all the needed equipment. The Republic Food Enterprise Center, in Republic, PA, is one local example of an aggregation center that makes these resources accessible to growers. We also work to make these value-added products available to our communities, so they can purchase and enjoy healthy, local products throughout the year. Our start-up company partners with regional growers and suppliers to provide a platform for joint ventures in the food products arena and we will become self-sustaining by the end of our third full year of operation. Better still, the operation will benefit residents by providing employment opportunities. We hope to create 40 new full-time jobs in the food industry, from growing and transportation to processing and preparation positions. We plan to eventually transition to a worker-producer owned cooperative.

Value-added products are a win-win for all of us. They help farmers utilize their entire crop, eliminating waste and increasing profitability. The creation of these products also ensures that healthy products are available to everyone, no matter what the season. Everyone deserves the right to healthy food, and value-added products help make that possible.

Danielle Roberts is the Sales and Marketing Coordinator at Republic Food Enterprise Center. With a Bachelor’s Degree in Environmental Science from St. Vincent College, her studies instilled her belief that sustainable food systems will make people and the planet much healthier and happier. To learn more about RFEC, visit www.republicfoodenterprisecenter.org.

Know Your Farmer: Garden Dreams Urban Farm & Nursery

Garden Dreams Urban Farm & Nursery specializes in naturally grown seedlings, organic gardening products, and neighborhood-scale farm production. The 1/3 acre farm was established in the Hamnett Place area of Wilkinsburg in 2000 and is built on two reclaimed city lots where dilapidated houses once stood. This “labor of love” is run by Community Outreach Director Bob Madden, Production Manager Hannah Reiff, and Office Manager Mindy Schwartz, along with a handful of seasonal helpers.

Operations are primarily supported through seedling sales of over 100 varieties of tomatoes (mainly heirlooms), ethnic peppers, specialty eggplants, herbs, flowers, fruits, and a wide range of other vegetables. This year, the farm expects to grow roughly 45,000 seedlings, which they will sell directly to home gardeners, community gardens, organizations in and around the East End of Pittsburgh, and even some loyal customers from neighboring states. You can find Garden Dreams vegetable, herb, and fruit seedlings here at the Co-op. You can also visit the farm at 806 Holland Avenue in Wilkinsburg. Please check their website for hours and information: www.mygardendreams.com or call 412-638-3333.

What is the most important thing for customers to know about your products?

We grow all of our seedlings without any chemicals, in the most natural way possible. In the garden we rely on plant health, compost, and beneficial insects. We inoculate every plant with mycorrhizal fungus, a beneficial soil organism that improves soil quality and helps plants grow. Although we do not carry a formal certification, we offer our customers 100% transparency with our practices and inputs and we adhere to organic growing methods. Additionally, we purchase seed from suppliers who have taken the Safe Seed Pledge and don’t use any GMO seed.

What are you most proud of as a local farmer?

We are excited to be part of a very strong local movement. We enjoy being a positive entity in the Hamnett Place neighborhood of Wilkinsburg and having an impact on the lives of the youth in our community through daily interaction, fun events, and supporting the Ramsey Street Children’s Garden. We are also proud of creating a top notch product that is fairly priced, while making progress every year in terms of running the best business we can.

What makes your farm unique?

We dedicate a lot of time and energy to educating and staying connected with our customers through events, classes, speaking engagements, and on-farm customer service and tours. Each year we provide thousands of discounted seedlings to a wide range of organizations doing awesome work in and around Pittsburgh. We also offer seedlings (at wholesale cost) as a fundraising opportunity for local schools and organizations.

What is the biggest challenge of being a farmer?

Our job is to grow seedlings in weather and temperatures that they normally cannot tolerate, so we are constantly keeping an eye on their every need. Moving them from sun to shade, from hot to cool, from cold to warm, and back and forth. It is very challenging, and each year we are up against unknown weather patterns and unpredictable inclement weather.

What is your hope for the future of your farm?


We hope to build a small, yet self-sustaining business that has significant positive impact on our neighborhood and helps to change how people eat and garden in Pittsburgh. We hope to play our part in the global shift in food production and food systems. We also hope that, one day, we might be able to share what we’ve learned, and the systems we’ve built, with other urban farmers across the country.



Stars and Stripes Sandwiches

Ingredients:

- 1 cup strawberries
- 1 cup raspberries
- 1 banana
- 1 cup blueberries
- Cream cheese
- 3 slices of bread
- Berry jam



Preparation:

1. Thinly slice 1/2 cup strawberries. Cut all the raspberries in half. Slice the entire banana.
2. Toast three slices of bread. Spread a layer of cream cheese over the top of each toasted slice.

Starry Night: Form a star shape using five strawberry slices. Put the star in the middle of a toasted bread slice. Outline the strawberry star with cut raspberries. Fill up the rest of the toasted slice with blueberries. Cut off the top of a whole strawberry. Place it in the middle of the star.

Stripes Forever: Cut banana slices in half across the middle. Lay the slices in a vertical row on the right-hand side of the second toasted bread slice. Make a row of cut raspberries next to the banana slices. Make a row of blueberries next to the raspberries. Continue making rows of banana slices, raspberries, and blueberries until the toasted slice is filled.

Land of the Free: Make two horizontal lines of three blueberries in the upper left-hand corner of the last toasted bread slice. Make three horizontal lines of jam on the toast. Use a knife to make the lines even and thin. Make sure a line runs into the blueberries. Place cut raspberries on top of the lines of jam.

Servings: 3

New In The Aisles

ELLA'S KITCHEN - Organic Baby Food

WOOD SPIRITS - Seaweed Scrub Bar Soap

CAROL'S DAUGHTER - Black Vanilla Shampoo

CAROL'S DAUGHTER - Liquid Pomade Hair Balm

CAROL'S DAUGHTER - Marguerite's Magic Restorative Cream

VERMONT SMOKE & CURE - Real Stick Turkey Jerky

GOLDEN VALLEY - Natural BuffalOs Jerky

EMERALD VALLEY ARTISANS - Black Jack - Cracked Peppercorn Monterey Cheese

EMERALD VALLEY ARTISANS - Ricotta Salata

EMERALD VALLEY ARTISANS - Queso Fresco

Get Growing with Garden Dreams: Heirloom Tomatoes Reviewed

by Bob Madden of Garden Dreams Urban Farm & Nursery

Now that we are finally experiencing warmer temperatures, it’s time to start thinking about planting tomatoes. Here at Garden Dreams, we have a vast appreciation of heirloom varieties, so I’m excited to share more information with you about them.

What does “heirloom” mean?

Many gardeners aren’t sure exactly what “heirloom” implies about a vegetable variety. “Heirloom” simply means that the variety is stable, of good quality, and documented as being old. “Stable” means that once a farmer saves the seed from a plant that shows especially good qualities, they then grow that seed variety repeatedly and select only the best plants from which to collect seed for the next year’s sowing. Seed companies generally want some written proof that the variety has been around at least 25-50 years to be considered an heirloom. This practice is meant to eliminate any unwanted characteristics that occasionally pop up.

When people talk about heirlooms today, for the most part they are talking about varieties chosen for their excellent flavor. But heirlooms are also traditionally saved for other very important reasons, such as their productivity, pest or disease resistance, or tolerance of poor soils, altitude, or harsh weather.

Open pollinated vs. hybrids

All heirloom tomatoes are open pollinated, which means that the flowers of the plant pollinate themselves, rather than being crossed with another plant. The collected seed will grow to produce a similar fruit as the original. By contrast, a hybrid tomato is purposefully cross-pollinated to produce a plant with combined good qualities from both parents. By mixing two strains together, the offspring, and even more so the future generations, can have very mixed results. Though hybrids often create superior plants, the downside is that they are the opposite of stable, and saving seeds from hybrids and planting them will not produce the same fruit.

Because hybrids aren’t stable, we are reliant on geneticists to produce them, and unfortunately they are usually expensive as a result. Another drawback to our culture’s shift to

hybrids over the last hundred years is the huge loss of genetic diversity. This diversity resulted from thousands of years of efforts by farmers and growers around the planet, who selected the very best plants to collect seeds from for the support of future generations.

If you’d like to help maintain and strengthen the genetic diversity of our vegetables, support and/or buy seeds and seedlings from companies that are working to promote and preserve heirloom varieties. Once you’ve grown your own heirloom tomato plant, try saving the seed to start the following year. Be sure to label the packet with the variety and the year and store it in a cool, dry place.

My favorite heirloom tomatoes

Below are some of my favorite varieties of heirloom tomatoes. For more specifics please check out the catalog available on our website. Please note that depending on the quality of the soils and the summer weather, flavor can vary drastically, so don’t judge a tomato variety based on just one tasting or those grown in a single location.

- Rose de Berne: Excellent flavor and earlier harvest period than most heirlooms.
- Paul Robeson: For a black tomato it is very productive and early. I personally love the rich flavor of all the black tomato varieties.
- Persimmon: Arguably the best orange tomato. It’s velvety, creamy, and has the rich color of a persimmon.
- Garden Peach: These garden oddities are the size of golf balls and are slightly fuzzy with thin, tender skin. I am impressed with their late season production, when most other plants have slowed down.
- Rutgers: This is a great tomato because it has a moderate, good flavor and is reliable even in situations when most other heirloom varieties succumb to disease.

Bob Madden is the Outreach Manager at Garden Dreams Urban Farm & Nursery. Located in Wilkinsburg, Garden Dreams is a small, community-oriented business committed to 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 them at www.mygardendreams.com.

Springtime Bike Ride Recipe

by Dan Yablonsky of BikePGH

Like the flowers and buds that are anxious to jump out of winter hibernation, I sense that an old, forgotten friend is calling out to me, assuring me that the coast is clear, the weather is warm, and the rain clouds have finally parted. As persuasive as my trusty steel frame bike, named Olé, and the perfect weather can be, I know that there’s some business I have to take care of before we hit the street. I’d like to share with you all my springtime bike ride recipe.

To get in the mindset of a city bike rider, I will begin by dusting off the mental cobwebs with some “required reading” for bike season. BikePGH’s *Urban Biking Companion* is an excellent resource that gives a quick run-through of the basics of riding in the city: from picking a bike, to choosing useful accessories, to positioning yourself on the roadway. This fun and accessible manual is written like a comic book so it’s easy to read. You can view an online version at www.bikepgh.org/101. You can also pick up a free copy at the Co-op or any of the bike shops around town.

Next, I have to make sure Olé is safe and strong, so I’ll run through the “ABC Quick Check” before I start rolling:

- A – Air: Make sure there is air in the tires. Use a bike pump to inflate the tires to the suggested pressure printed on the side of the tire. Also check the tires for cuts or signs of dry rot.
- B – Brakes: Make sure that when squeezing the brake lever there’s at least a thumb-size amount of space between the lever and the grip. Spin the wheels; the brakes shouldn’t rub the wheel. When grabbing the brake, the wheel should stop immediately and everything should feel solid.



- C – Chain: Make sure the chain is clean, well lubricated, and not rusty. If your bike has gears, try shifting between them to make sure the chain moves freely and easily.
- Quick: The bike might have a few “quick release” levers holding the wheels to the frame of the bike, holding the seatpost in place, or even connecting the brakes. Make sure all of these quick releases are shut firmly and that the seat is at a comfortable height.

- Check: The final step is to double-check everything. Take the bike for a test ride to make sure the handlebars turn easily, the wheels spin smoothly, the pedals turn, the chain moves, the shifting works, and most importantly, the brakes stop!

If I have trouble with any parts of the ABC Quick Check, I’ll take my bike to a professional at a local bike shop to help get things in working order.

Finally, when it’s time to go for the first ride of the season, I like to start with a slow pleasure cruise to make sure everything (mind, bicycle, muscles) agrees that “all systems are go.” There are plenty of low-traffic places to ride in town, including our beautiful cemeteries and city parks, which have paved roads to ride on. I also like the super-fun, friendly, no-rush rides coordinated by Flock of Cycles. The nice folks of Flock meet monthly for a group slow roll on the streets; it’s a great way to try riding on the streets within the protection of a group.

Following that, I’m ready to enjoy the rest of my summer riding. So I’ll see you on the road! Have fun, stay happy, and be safe. Enjoy the ride.

Dan Yablonsky is the Business Programs Assistant at BikePGH, a local bike advocacy organization. BikePGH organizes annual events like Bike to Work Day, BikeFest, PedalPGH, plus you can check out their community bike event calendar at www.bikepgh.org to see what else is coming up. You can also join Dan for an Urban Biking Forum here at your Co-op on May 7th (more information on page 8).

Neighbors Feeding Neighbors

by Jeralyn Beach of the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank

Gardening season is finally here! After a winter like we’ve had, it’s easy to get carried away with your garden and find yourself with more food than you can actually eat. Did you know that you’re able to donate your extra harvest to the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank?

Here in Allegheny County alone, 153,092 people are living in poverty, 41,697 of whom are children. Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank (GPCFB) is a non-profit organization that collects and distributes food through a 380+ member network in 11 counties in Southwestern Pennsylvania. Using many different methods of collection and distribution, altogether the Food Bank currently distributes approximately 27 million pounds of food every year. The continued success of the Food Bank relies greatly on the generosity of people donating their time, money, and even their extra home-grown produce!

Through our Community Harvest program, gardeners can donate extra fruits and vegetables directly to a food pantry or soup kitchen within their own community. They can also participate in the Community Harvest program by purposely growing an extra row or two of produce. So if you’re a gardener, your excess bounty can go

a long way toward providing fresh fruits and vegetables to people in need.

To locate a food pantry or soup kitchen in your community, visit www.pittsburghfoodbank.org/findanagency. Enter your zip code to find an agency near you that accepts donations of fresh produce. Be sure to observe the following guidelines when making your donations:

- Call the agency in advance so they can prepare for your produce.
- Be sure to tell them that you are donating through the Community Harvest program.
- Make sure all produce donations have at least 3 - 5 days of shelf life.
- Use good hygiene practices when harvesting and handling fresh produce.
- Use a tarp when transporting produce in your vehicle.

Another great opportunity to get involved with the Food Bank is by volunteering as a gleaner. Our gleaning program rescues surplus and unmarketable fresh produce that would otherwise go to waste from area farms. We distribute this produce through our network of over 400 member agencies and through our monthly Produce



to People programs. Gleaning volunteers get a chance to experience a working farm, while also helping people in need. To get involved with the gleaning program, sign up to receive glean alerts at www.pittsburghfoodbank.org/glean. Gleans take place weekdays and weekends, June through November. There is a maximum 3-hour commitment for all volunteers. No experience is necessary; the Food Bank provides all of the training, tools, water, and snacks - all you need is transportation. Children age 7 and up are welcome with a guardian.

Jeralyn Beach is the Produce Coordinator at the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. She coordinates the procurement of fresh produce for GPCFB member agencies and oversees the Community Harvest, Farmers’ Market Connection, and Gleaning Programs. Learn more about the GPCFB’s Community Harvest Program at www.pittsburghfoodbank.org. If you have questions you can email jbeach@pittsburghfoodbank.org, or call 412-460-3663 ext. 214.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Featured Community Partner: Pro Bikes

The aim of the Community Partners Program is to provide East End Food 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. Locally-owned businesses have a huge impact on the infrastructure of our regional economy and we firmly believe that we are all stronger together.

Your Co-op is happy to partner with Pro Bikes. This full-service bike shop has three locations (Squirrel Hill, South Hills, and Monroeville) that offer a full line of bikes, parts, and accessories. They can help everyone from the beginning biker to the seasoned enthusiast with all their biking needs. The Pro Bike sales team will happily help you select

the perfect bike, be it a children's bike, a commuter bike, a race bike, or a hybrid bike fit for the trails. Each Pro Bikes shop also features a service department staffed with highly-trained repair technicians who will fix your bike with attention and care.

Please visit www.probikesllc.com for locations and hours. Co-op members receive 5% off everything excluding repairs. To take advantage of this discount, fully paid Co-op 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. 103. 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... That your Co-op is a Bike Friendly Business?

Your Co-op is proud to be one of only 33 certified Bike Friendly Businesses in the state of Pennsylvania! Bike Friendly Businesses (BFB) are certified according to standards established by the League of American Bicyclists. In their evaluation, the Bicycle Friendly America program considers the Four Es: Engineering, Education, Encouragement, and Evaluation & Planning. When the League reviewed how we measured up in a quick assessment of bike-friendliness in 2011, we were awarded the Bronze status right off the bat!

The evaluation of businesses is conducted by a team of several League staff members, and their scores are combined to determine the final award level for each application. In order to qualify for Bronze standing, a business must be accomplishing something in all four categories, and excelling at any one of the categories. To achieve the Silver level, a company must excel at any two of the categories, and so on for Gold. The Bicycle Friendly America program encourages businesses to look holistically at becoming more bicycle friendly by tackling all Four Es with equal vigor, but they also recognize that certain business types/sizes/locations will have an easier time with some Es over others, so flexibility remains important during their evaluations. In Pennsylvania as of April 2014, there are 23 Bronze BFB, eight Silver, and only two Golds.

The Co-op's Bronze status was based largely on our bike parking options, as well as our Do-It-Yourself repair station. On any given day throughout the year, you can find bikes parked in front of the store, in the bike corral located in our parking lot, or in the secure lobby of The Factory near the Penn Avenue entrance. This lobby parking area also features the aforementioned repair station, where cyclists can top off air in their tires, mount their bike by its seatpost in the rack, and use the tools fastened to the station to adjust brakes or derailleurs. On fair weather days, it's not uncommon to see the bike racks packed to capacity with fixed-gear, mountain, tandem, touring, and commuter bicycles, as cyclists make a convenient stop for brunch or a few groceries; and the number of shoppers who bike to the Co-op continues to grow since we happen to be on a newly recommended BikePGH bike route. A number of Co-op employees are also regular bike-commuters. Some even ride to work year-round!

In addition to being a Bike Friendly Business, your Co-op offers support to a number of biking initiatives within our community. We extend regular sponsorships and donations to BikePGH for campaigns such as Car Free Fridays, Bike to Work Day, and Bike Fest. BikePGH is our May Register Round Up

recipient and we are also partnering with them to present the Urban Biking Forum, a workshop open to the public. (You can learn about this free event on page 8.) Here at the Co-op we also distribute educational materials about bike routes and safe cycling to all new staff, plus we have cycling route maps available in our community brochure racks in the store's entryway.

Aside from our relationship with BikePGH, there are a number of other significant ways your Co-op has made efforts to support our city's bike-friendliness in recent years. Here are some of the things we've done:

- Hosted *Take Back the Night* as an effort to have more community dialogue about bike and community safety in response to a flurry of assaults targeting bicyclists (including a Co-op staff member) in the spring of 2010.
- Facilitated a forum for Co-op staff to share experiences with one another and discuss the safest routes for commuting to work by bike following multiple bike accident fatalities on Penn Avenue in 2012.
- Provided location support for a ghost bike installation and memorial ride coordinated by community organizations in July 2012.
- Participated in and provided feedback at the MovePgh workshop regarding the use of Meade Street as an alternative byway to Penn Avenue in 2012.
- Coordinated Co-op volunteers to provide support for *PedalPGH* in 2012.
- Created a free loaner bike lock program for shoppers in 2012.
- Served as a supporting location for the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank fundraiser, *Pedal for the Pantry*, in 2013 and 2014.
- Installed a "Bike Crossing" sign at the Meade Street parking lot entrance to promote driver awareness in 2014.
- Provided support to bike-centric events like Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture's *Bike Fresh Bike Local*, Rainbow Kitchen's *Walk and Ride, Wheels of Hope*, and the *3-2-1 Ride*.
- Registered an East End Food Co-op team comprised of staff members in the National Bike Challenge (more information at www.nationalbikechallenge.org) in 2012, 2013, and 2014.

Over the past few years, our city has become increasingly bike-friendly on account of the economic, environmental, and health benefits biking offers. Your Co-op is proud to be a part of the momentum in our region and we encourage everyone to learn more about Bike Friendly America here: www.bikeleague.org/bfa.

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SCHOOLHOUSE YOGA offers classes ranging from gentle to challenging, beginner to advanced. We also offer Co-op members a discount on passes! For details, contact us at info@schoolhouseyoga.com.

THE BIG IDEA BOOKSTORE is a worker-owned cooperative and café that specialized in radical literature. Visit us Wednesday - Sunday at 4812 Liberty Ave. in Bloomfield.

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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.

7516 Meade St. Pittsburgh, PA 15208
www.eastendfood.coop

Store:	Café:
412.242.3598	412.242.7726
8 AM - 9 PM	8 AM - 7 PM

Credit Union:
412.243.7574
Wednesdays 6-8 PM
Saturdays 3-6 PM

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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.

CONTACT US:

If you are interested in more information about advertising or would like to submit an article, please contact Member Services:

East End Food Co-op
Attn: Member Services
7516 Meade St.
Pittsburgh, PA 15208

Email: memberservices@eastendfood.coop

Phone: 412.242.3598 ext. 103

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH



Congratulations to **Rae Ivory** who was chosen as the Co-op staff pick for Employee of the Month. Rae has worked here for 5 years and is a Café Supervisor.

Q. What’s your favorite thing about your job here?

A. My co-workers.

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

A. Patience, multitasking, and juggling numerous responsibilities.

Q. What’s your favorite thing about the Co-op in general?

A. The Café and counter.

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

A. Cycling and gardening.

Co-op’s Task Force Provides Safety for All

by Mike Eaton, EEFC Task Force Representative

At the East End Food Co-op, our staff elects representatives from each department to a Task Force that serves as a conduit between staff and management. The Task Force fields questions and suggestions from all departments and decides how best to proceed. It’s there to review policies and provide feedback to the EEFC Management Team. And, perhaps more relevant to all non-staff Co-op members, the Task Force also functions as a Safety Committee to ensure that the shopping, dining, and overall experience at your Co-op continues to be positive.

This year, the Task Force and Safety Committee has made a more formal leap: it’s following the steps necessary to become certified by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). As a member of the Safety Committee for more than a year (representing our Stockroom), I’m excited to see us go in this direction.

Sometimes a bit of guidance is a wonderful thing. OSHA has been monitoring the success of their safety standards since 1970, and their guidelines don’t come lightly. It’s one thing for us to brainstorm how to prevent injury or react in an emergency, but there’s another level of assurance if we follow what OSHA has proven to work.

More structure and efficiency for our Safety Committee means more staff productivity. It also means our insurance company and our landlord have more confidence in our Co-op’s ability to keep you safe while you’re in the store. Fewer accidents in the store, coupled with putting better practices into place, can result in lower insurance rates. Decreases in our operational costs often translate into lower costs for customers, and every injury prevented is time and money saved for all of us. Regular procedures and safety reviews keep our staff prepared to prevent many emergencies and to react quickly and properly to the ones we can’t control. Accidents happen, and your Co-op staff wants to do the right thing when they do.



erly to the ones we can’t control. Accidents happen, and your Co-op staff wants to do the right thing when they do.

Having a formal, certified Safety Committee will also allow us to move forward with our plans for expansion. The more procedures we can solidify in this store, the more we can duplicate effectively in future spaces. It’s important that you get the same positive experiences you’ve come to expect at any location of your Co-op.

The members of your EEFC Safety Committee would like you to know that we have volunteered and been elected to serve because we care about what happens to our members, staff, volunteers, and other shoppers. We’re constantly learning and training because we want to make sure your experience with the East End Food Co-op is worth your patronage. Getting certified helps to make sure our store, and our entire organization, continues to be a positive, healthy force in our community. We’re glad you’re able to share in this every time you come in.

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				1 STEWED GREENS OVER COUS COUS	2 PIZZA DAIRY & VEGAN	3 CORN & ROASTED RED PEPPER QUESADILLA
4 CHEF'S CHOICE	5 ROASTED LEEKS & POTATOES WITH BROWN BUTTER VINAIGRETTE	6 SPINACH LASAGNA	7 BURRITO BAR	8 LEMON ASPARAGUS MAC 'N' CHEESE	9 PIZZA DAIRY & VEGAN	10 HONEY DIJON SEITAN
11 CHEF'S CHOICE	12 SPICY RED TEMPEH	13 GINGER CILANTRO TOFU & KALE	14 THAI KITCHEN	15 SESAME SEITAN IN RASPBERRY SAUCE	16 PIZZA DAIRY & VEGAN	17 ASPARAGUS & MUSHROOM QUICHE
18 CHEF'S CHOICE	19 GREEK BULGAR WITH ROASTED VEGETABLES	20 TOFU ROGAN JOSH	21 INDIAN KITCHEN	22 BROCCOLIKOPITA	23 PIZZA DAIRY & VEGAN	24 HALUSKI
25 CHEF'S CHOICE	26 BUFFALO SEITAN WINGS	27 PAELLA A LA VEGETARIAN	28 PITTSBURGH KITCHEN	29 CREAMY SQUASH & CASHEW CURRY	30 PIZZA DAIRY & VEGAN	31 THAI TEMPEH

Café Hours

Soup, Juice & Salad Bar:
Daily 8AM-7PM

Hot Bar:
Daily 11AM-7PM

Weekend Brunch:
9AM-1:30PM

May Co-op Events

<u>WEDNESDAY, MAY 7, 6:30 PM</u> URBAN BIKING FORUM <i>Dan Yablonsky, BikePGH</i> Join us for an informal educational opportunity on the basics needed for confident city cycling. The Urban Biking Forum is based on the understanding that every participant will come with specific questions in mind, and also provides useful personal insights from the presenter. Through friendly discussion, participants will have their questions answered and come away with a better understanding of how people can safely bike in Pittsburgh. All participants will also receive a copy of BikePGH's <i>Urban Biking Companion</i> . This event is FREE; just call 412-242-3598 to reserve your spot!	<u>WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 6:30 PM</u> SHEEP TO SHAWL <i>Jen Montgomery, Blackberry Meadows Farm & Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA)</i> Travel back in time to homesteading days at this PASA Sustainability School workshop and learn how to turn sheep's wool from a raw material into a rustic shawl. Farmer Jen Montgomery will provide an overview of each step in this transformative process, and then demonstrate the fiber arts of carding, spinning, and knitting. Participants will be invited to try their hand at each technique if they choose. Knitters, bring your needles! A free shawl knitting pattern and fiber arts resources will be provided. This event is FREE; just call 412-242-3598 to reserve your spot!	<u>WEDNESDAY, MAY 21, 6:30 PM</u> WATERSHED AWARENESS & RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP <i>Nancy Martin, Pennsylvania Resources Council (PRC)</i> Don't miss out on an abundant, free supply of the earth's most valuable resource - fresh, clean, rainwater! This workshop will demonstrate how to build a rain barrel that will harvest and store rainwater from your roof for use in your garden and landscape. Participants will return home with the knowledge and necessary hardware to assemble and install a rain barrel, in addition to a \$10 coupon good toward the purchase of a 55-gallon drum at Penn Barrel Company. Learn how to practice watershed protection and conservation in your own backyard. This event costs \$50/person or \$55/couple; call 412-488-7490 ext. 247 to reserve your spot!	<u>WEDNESDAY, MAY 28, 7:00 PM</u> PRODUCT SOURCING GUIDELINES <i>Justin Pizzella, EEFC General Manager</i> Did you ever wonder how a product gets on the shelf here at the Co-op? Or why things are priced the way they are? Join General Manager Justin Pizzella as he discusses the store's product sourcing guidelines, especially our commitment to supplying whole, local, organic, and sustainably-sourced foods. He will also review our pricing strategy, and explain how this works with the guidelines toward achieving the core values expressed in the EEFC Ends Policy Statement. There will be plenty of time left for questions. This event is FREE; just call 412-242-3598 to reserve your spot!
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Look for your Co-op at these upcoming events in your community:

Saturday, May 10th, 10 AM – 3 PM: ‘Fair Trade People’ is the theme for this year’s **World Fair Trade Day** celebration. This theme has been chosen to recognize the people of fair trade, both the producers and consumers. To celebrate, your Co-op will be tabling alongside other fair trade vendors in front of Ten Thousand Villages in Squirrel Hill. There will be music, samples, and information about fair trade products. More information: www.tenthousandvillages.com/pittsburgh.

Friday, May 16th, 3 PM – 6 PM: The second annual **Food Revolution Day Pittsburgh** is a celebration of our region’s food culture and the people who work together to build it. Through integrative activities, food booths, and theme-based exhibits focused on building and sustaining healthy communities, this day-long event at the Obama Academy will recognize and invigorate cross-sector efforts dedicated to sustaining food-focused community development. More information: www.foodrevpgh.com.

Saturday, May 17th, 11 AM – 6 PM: Venture Outdoors primary goal is to get more people involved in outdoor activities. Its premier annual event is **Venture Outdoors Festival** at Point State Park. In its 14th year, the festival is the perfect springboard for families, couples, and individuals interested in outdoor recreation. From weekend warriors to families with young children, this free event promises entertainment for every member of the family. More information: www.ventureoutdoors.org/vofest.aspx.

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