



the
Rutabaga Rap

Help us raise the last 10% of the funding needed for the new store.

If you are a NY resident and an owner of Abundance for a year, you are eligible to participate in our Community Loan Drive. Contact Jim DeLuca to set up a meeting to go over the project. jim@abundance.coop 454-2667

Rounding Up: Put Glyphosate in the Not-OK-Corral

By Jack Bradigan Spula

You might remember the Bad Old Days when DDT, the compound once sanctified as savior in the fight against malaria and typhus, revealed itself as Public Enemy Number One. The good news: the revelation sparked the modern environmental movement.

Today, if you're per-versely missing a chemical Public Enemy of similar stature, don't despair. The Monsanto Corporation has given us *glyphosate*, a herbicide designed to help "feed the world" through genetic engineering. And this herbicide is inspiring a global fightback.

First synthesized in 1950 and further developed by a Monsanto chemist in 1970, glyphosate has been on the market since 1974. But only recently has it been getting full credit for the multiple threats it poses.

As the key ingredient in Monsanto's Roundup®, glyphosate has become so ubiquitous, it's now a durable part of our environment. It began life as a "miracle" product to be used in tandem with genetically-modified crops. Today, GMO soybeans, corn, canola, alfalfa, sugar beets, cotton, and others dominate the picture, with other such crops/foods in development. And then there are lawn chemicals, and the like.



Monsanto's game plan, protected by highly profitable patents and ironclad contracts, is devilishly simple: First, the farmer sows seed that has been genetically modified to survive being doused with Roundup®; then the farmer eradicates any competitive plants with a dose of the herbicide, and the crops flourish.



Sounds good -- but Nature, disdainful of laboratory simplicities, will have the last word, and the "miracle" has displayed some less-than-magical characteristics.

For one thing, glyphosate hasn't delivered on its promise of streamlining and simplifying crop production, mostly because the weeds have successfully fought back, doing what weeds do best: adapting and proliferating. Thus new generations of "superweeds," aka "monster weeds", have become resistant to glyphosate, towering in the rows like the garden equivalent of redwoods. (Ironically, some of these species, like the chenopods, are potentially fine food crops themselves.)

The Palmer amaranth (*Amaranthus palmeri*), now stubbornly flourishing throughout the Southeast, is a fine example. But some important plant species have

proved to be vulnerable. Tragically, milkweed (*Asclepias*) has been devastated by glyphosate products used to "control" weeds along highways, as well as on farmlands. This use has caused a precipitous decline in the Monarch butterfly population -- by as much as 80 percent in some areas.



How to address the superweeds? If you're an industrial farmer or corporate "partner," you're likely to keep applying more and more Roundup. Indeed, glyphosate consumption has grown by leaps and bounds. Now even a middle-of-the-road publication, *Newsweek*, warns: "The world is awash in glyphosate... It has now become the most heavily-used agricultural chemical in the history of the world." Indeed, according to a recent European study, since 1974 more than 1.6 billion kilograms have been applied just within the US, around 19 percent of a global total of 8.6 billion kg.

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Before recycling this printed newsletter, why not re-use it by passing it on to a friend or co-worker? Thanks.



About Us

The Genesee Co-op Natural Foodstore, Inc. (GCNF) doing business as **Abundance Cooperative Market** is Rochester's first and only cooperatively-owned retail grocer. Our store evolved from the old Genesee Co-op Food store on Monroe Avenue. Since 2001, the new Co-op store offers a variety of **choices** for all consumers—

both herbivores (vegetarians and vegans) and carnivores alike!

In a world of increasingly artificial, engineered, unhealthy and processed foods, natural food co-ops nationwide are providing access to safe, healthful and nutritious food to those looking . *Abundance is Rochester's only natural foods cooperative.*

When choosing products to sell, priority is given to organic foods and products local, organic, independent, minimally processed & packaged, non-genetically modified, socially responsible, fair trade, non-animal tested, and other selection criteria.

We support a sustainable food system, both locally and globally. Our **"Ends" Policies** support these shared values.



Currently our Co-op has over 2,000 shareholders, and is still growing strong! But you don't have to be a member to shop here. Anyone may shop at Abundance and benefit from our everyday low prices on **"Basics"** as well as our bi-weekly **Co+Op sale specials** (Please pick up a current sales flyer and quarterly coupon books for extra savings in the store).

Purchasing a co-op share (cost \$100) is optional, and affords extra benefits and discounts. *See our Shareholder Application for more details.*

Abundance is a member of the National Cooperative Grocer's Association (NCGA) with 150+ other food co-ops nationwide. *Co+op = Stronger Together!*

Thank you for choosing Abundance—your locally-grown community-owned Co-op! For more information about us, please visit our website at www.abundance.coop. Revised March 2011

Staff Directory

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Jenn Rekos Madeline Brown

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Payton Marovich, Nada Eldehni

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Shealyn Rapp Gwes Ebangwese

Becca Soriano

Marketing: Chris Whitebell

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Nazareno Runfola, Senior Buyer, Grocery Ext. 106

Diane Banks, Buyer, Bulk, Refrigerated & Frozen Foods, Ext. 108

Nicole Rapone, Buyer, Supplements, Health, Beauty & General Merchandise, Ext. 105

Jenn Rekos, Wellness Assistant

Emily Sniezyk, Gwes Ebangwese

Daniel Brightman

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Deli Departments:

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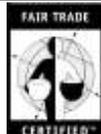
Contact information provided for co-op related communications only. Thank you.

The Rutabaga Rap, our bi-monthly newsletter, is published for the benefit of all our customers. Our current circulation is approx. 800 copies per issue. It is also viewable on our website at www.abundance.coop. Advertising and articles are welcome, space permitting. Items will be edited for length, content and style. Acceptance of an item does not imply endorsement. Our complete editorial policy, current ad rates, publication schedule, and deadlines are available on our website. We are still accepting advertising orders for 2016. ***SEE RATES AND FORM ON WEBSITE***

DEADLINE for the next issue (May/June) is April 20th, 2016. Email **Jim DeLuca**, interim editor Questions? jim@abundance.coop.

Publisher: Abundance Cooperative Market. **Contributors** to this issue are: Jim DeLuca, Elizabeth Henderson, Ken Rich, Jack Spula, Caitlin Holcombe, Juli Barrette, Beth Garver, June Avignone Duplication by: Presstek.

EDITOR'S NOTE: All opinions offered in the Rutabaga Rap are those of the authors, not necessarily those of Abundance Coop. Any health information or advice should be checked with your physician or other medical professional.



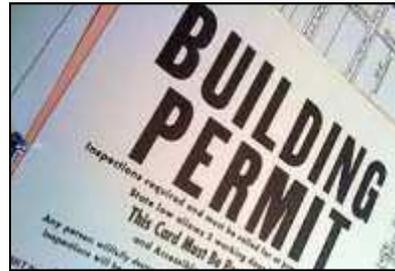


This winter has been more like a Spring/Fall/ Winter mix. Just when it looked like we were going to avoid the February of 2015, we got the blizzard. Seems to me that climate change means more erratic weather in the short term with the possibility that the average global temperature continues to rise in the longer term. Since growing food depends upon daring, risk-taking farmers along with a climate that nurtures farming, we as a retail food purveyor have plenty of interest in both the short-term and long-term prospects for our business survival. Of course, if food shortages do occur, life will become more difficult than it already is for everyone. We are firmly convinced that organic agriculture can do a lot to save the planet. Our commitment to organic goes all the way back to 1974 when Rochester food pioneers started the Food-store at the Co-op in order to provide a more real and healthy alternative to corporate agriculture and a lack of a broader vision for the future of the health of our people and of the planet.

We will be celebrating our last Earthday/Birthday event on Saturday April 23, fifteen years after we opened. The efforts of co-op owners back in 1999/2000 to expand from the small buying club location on Caroline Street is what created the wonderful store and experience on Marshall Street we have had since then. We are moving forward once again and are excited about being able to take our mission to a broader audience and we need your support in that effort.

We are engaged in the fundraising efforts to complete the funding package needed for the project. The Board of Directors called about 250 of the most active owner/shoppers to invite them to consider being part of a special group of owners who are stepping up and loaning Abun-

dance the needed \$250,000. At this point we have commitments for about \$150,000 and are still looking for owners who can loan anywhere from \$2,000 to \$10,000 for a period of 5 years. And if that is not doable, we are encouraging folks to consider purchasing an extra 5 non-voting shares. We would like commitment letters in March followed by checks issued in April/May. PLEASE CONTACT ME SOON IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO GET



MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT.

Abundance is in the final activities of getting our building permit for the new location. We are optimistic that our plans will be approved since we have had

preliminary meetings with the officials and they have suggested a couple of changes, but nothing that seems to be an issue. Once we have the permits we will jump right into construction. We are looking into having a live camera feed available online 24 hours a day so everyone can watch the progress.

We will be sending out a short survey to our owners that have shared their email addresses to help us determine the most effective language for our marketing push to get new shoppers and owners to our store. We hope you will take the couple of minutes it will take to complete the survey.

We are also considering changing the newsletter; either by cutting back to a more food focused quarterly or even just going digital. If you have an opinion, please email our Marketing Manager: chris@abundance.coop.

The Benefits of Abundance Co-op Ownership:

- 10% discounts on all non-sale purchases on monthly **Shareholder Days**. Choose a day each month, at your convenience.
- **Enjoy our new "Shareholder Deals", sale items exclusively for shareholders.**
- **15% discounts on special orders** anytime.
- Eligible to **participate** in Owner-Volunteer program with store **discounts**.
- 20% **discount** on newsletter advertising for your local business & free classified ads.
- Your **vote** at annual elections and input at shareholder meetings.
- **Eligibility** to serve on the Board of Directors and participate on committees. Potential to receive **patronage dividends or rebates**.

Become an owner today and start enjoying these benefits! Anyone may purchase a share for \$100. Application forms are available at Customer Service Desk, and on our website at www.abundance.coop



Rounding Up: Put Glyphosate in the Not-OK-Corral

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Migration of genetically-modified biological material from treated fields can contaminate non-GMO and/or organic farmland. Monsanto, vigilant in defense of its patent rights, has been involved, as plaintiff or defendant, in highly-contentious lawsuits stemming from such contamination. All in all, though the company says it's been unfairly portrayed, its alleged eagerness to bully farmers and defend has not earned it many friends.

Last year, Monsanto and its creature got some body-blows that could legally modify glyphosate's future. The World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer determined the herbicide is "probably carcinogenic to humans." A review in *Scientific American* explained: "Glyphosate has been linked to tumors in mice and rats -- and there is also what the IARC classifies as 'mechanistic evidence', such as DNA damage to human cells from exposure to glyphosate."



On top of this have come some political responses. For example, two months after the WHO-IARC determination, the government of Sri Lanka banned the "import, sale or deployment" of products containing glyphosate. This action follows bans of varying degrees in France, Colombia and elsewhere.



In the United States, Ground Zero for glyphosate, a movement toward a ban, or at least controls, continues to gather steam. Along with the organic-farming and consumer movements, groups like Greenpeace and Food

&Water Watch (go to <http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/> for detailed background) are pushing hard. There's also a movement to require labeling of food products that contain any GMOs; Food and Water Watch publishes a handy downloadable fact sheet about this.

The movement may be growing, but it's got a long way to go, given the resources of a corporate behemoth like Monsanto and the political entrenchment of industrial ag in certain states and countries. But popular pressure can turn things around -- so put your consumer and health-conscious shoulder to the wheel!

DELI & CHEESE DEPARTMENT NEWS By Julianna Barrette, Manager

Cheese News:

Have you ever bought a packaged cheese and discovered a thin layer of white crystal formations? Before you write it off as spoiled or cut off the 'defective' area, you may want to consider what this deposit is.



Recently, our cheese department found this out first hand. That thin layer of crystalline powder or granules is called calcium lactate. "Calcium lactate crystal formation is a widespread and costly problem for cheesemakers in Vermont and throughout the US because institutional buyers and consumers reject cheeses that contain the white surface deposits (<http://www.reeis.usda.gov>)". The reason why these crystals form is complex chemistry. Factors such as the temperature during the serum (whey) phase of cheesemaking, the type of packaging, variety and age of the cheese, and its specific surface texture also play a role.

The good news is that here is nothing to worry about. Calcium lactate is commonly used in foods, such as baking powder and sugar-free foods to prevent tooth decay. It is also used as an antacid and is said to help treat calcium deficiencies. What some may see has an unsightly deficiency we see as an unexpected benefit.

Deli News:

We have had a great soup season so far this year thanks to our customers. One new in-house soup we are excited about in particular is our Ethiopian Lentil. It is our version of the popular Lentil soup provided by Kettle Cuisine. What makes this soup unique is its exotic spice blends. The two made in-house blends we use are berbere and nitter kiddeh. Berbere is considered a spicy blend but it is not harsh like cayenne, so a good amount can be used. Berbere is great for grilling, roasting or stews. Nitter kiddeh is most commonly used as a seasoned clarified butter. It is prepared similar to ghee but nitter kiddeh is simmered with ginger, garlic, turmeric and spices such as cardamom, cloves and fenugreek. Instead, to keep things vegan, we sauté onions, add herbs and spices, then add water to deglaze the pan before pureeing the mixture to a smooth consistency. We hope you enjoy, thank you again for your support!



NEWS from PRODUCE
By Caitlin Holcombe, Produce Manager

During this time of year when we are more reliant on other countries for our organic produce, I would like to highlight two fair trade companies, Equal Exchange and Interruption. Both companies work to ensure organic farm workers receive fair prices and safe working conditions. This way of doing business ensures that farmers' will not merely sustain but be able to invest in their communities.



Many of our shoppers and shareholders are familiar with Equal Exchange (EE), and most have seen their logo. 2016 marks the 30th anniversary of this worker-

owned co-op, which had an auspicious start in 1986 with coffee--finding a loophole to get around a U.S. trade embargo on Nicaragua. Their history is worth delving into, as they have become a strong business model for challenging trade practices. EE works directly with growers, and educates consumers about the true costs of food. We currently sell EE organic fair trade bananas and organic fair trade avocados, when available. I encourage you to visit their website to learn more: <http://equalexchange.coop/>.

For the month of March, Equal Exchange is celebrating their 10th year in the banana trade. As part of this celebration they are promoting an independently created web documentary called "Beyond the Seal." Filmmakers Leah Varjacques and Katherine Nagasawa travelled to Ecuador to better understand and convey the challenges facing banana farmers. This web documentary incorporates audio, photography and video—revealing, through farmer and activist interviews, the need to transform business practices in our food distribution systems. View it online free here: <http://beyondtheseal.com>.



Interruption (Taste Me, Do Good™) was founded more recently, in Argentina after the country's economic collapse (2001) with the mission of supporting farmers through a socially responsible business model. Interruption provides support and development opportunities to farmers, and is also focused on consumer advocacy.

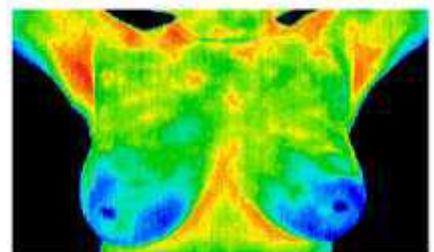
Interruption is now working with one of our distributors, Four Seasons in Pennsylvania, to offer Fair Trade Organic blueberries, pears and apples from Argentina and Chile. We should be getting more of their fruit by mid-March.

Welcome
NEW Shareholders!!

- | | | |
|-----------|---------|---------|
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Board Talk: By Beth Garver

The Abundance Food Co-op Board has been busy as of late with on-boarding a new board member, planning co-operative events geared toward connecting with our membership, preparing for a successful relocation and 2016 calendar forecasting.

Welcome to Our New Board Member

Paula Hansen is Abundance's newest Board Member. Paula attended several Board meetings throughout the summer and fall of 2015 and was appointed to the Board in January 2016. Paula replaces Jack Hurley, who relocated with his wife to Claremont, New Hampshire.

Paula comes to the Board with many years' experience as President of Metro Justice, as a teacher in the Rochester City School District and an involved Abundance Food Co-op owner. If you see Paula in the store, please welcome her.

Board Phone Bank – Loan Drive

On Monday, February 1, the Board met in a conference room at Board member Scott Wagner's place of employment, to conduct a loan drive through a coordinated phone bank to ask for support for Abundance's relocation. Each Board Member received a list of 25 owners. If you were not called and would like to participate in the loan drive, please give Jim DeLuca, Abundance GM, a call at 585-454-2667 or by e-mail at jim@abundance.coop.

Thus far, Abundance has access to about 90% of the money necessary for the relocation in the form of bank loans and owner loans. Abundance is looking to acquire another \$100k in small loans from owners ranging from \$2k to \$10k, with very competitive interest payouts over a 5 year period. Jim is the contact person and will be holding owner meetings throughout March to offer information about the relocation and financials. See Jim's contact info above.

Owners are also encouraged to purchase more shares in Abundance at \$100/each, which can be gifted, donated, or kept. If an owner purchases 5 shares over the next couple of months, s/he will receive a \$10 gift card to Abundance each year for the next 5 years – which is a 2% return on the investment. Ask about the "5 share purchase option" at the Customer Service desk next time you are at Abundance.

Winter Wonder Market

On Saturday, February 6, Board Members participated in Abundance's Winter Wonder Market. Board members tabled and ran a raffle, while shoppers tasted several of the partici-

pating vendors' samples and took advantage of discounts and sales throughout the co-op.

Parades

Abundance may be participating in the Earth Day Parade on Apr 23 depending on how many folks are interested in marching. Won't you join us? Reach out to Chris, Marketing Manager at Abundance at 585 454-2667.



CCMA

From June 9-11, the Consumer Cooperative Management Association conference will be taking place in Amherst, Massachusetts, sponsored by the burgeoning River Market Cooperative. Several Board Members will be invited to attend. CCMA is an opportunity for Board Members and co-op staff to network with other co-op participants, become educated on current practices and co-op developments, learn about what's up and coming, trendy, and forecasted for the future of the co-op movement. It's an exciting and intense 3 days, with an abundance of knowledge and information at every workshop and event at the conference.

Thanks for reading! Questions about this Board Talk? E-mail me at bgarver@rochester.rr.com.

Yours, Beth Garver Beha, Board Member, Abundance Cooperative Market, Rochester, NY

NEW DAY AND TIME! Monthly Board Meetings.

The Board generally meets on the 2nd **Thursday** of every month from 6 pm until 8 pm. Meetings are open to all owners and staff to attend, however, anyone wishing to bring items before the Board or wishing to speak at a meeting should call or email Jon Greenbaum 585 303-2110 (cell) gtree61@riseup.net one week prior to the meeting to be on the agenda.



Ken's Kookery: Sloppy Joe Lasagna

By Ken Rich

Don't you love Lasagna Binge-mas, longest known holiday in the galaxy? Careening across the lasagna universe these months, I hit bumps, stalled in grocery aisles, and collided with rare ingredients. Among other scenic spots, my Thai Red Curry Lasagna was unpopular, but it kept me alive until the Sloppy Joe Lasagna kicked in. I'll re-attempt red curry next Binge-mas.

Sloppy Joe Lasagna is a nested doll recipe. The easy way to make it is to buy Sloppy Joe sauce ready-made. For an 8"x8" pan:

½ cup walnuts
1 cup minced onion
1 cup minced carrot
1 cup minced parsley
8 oz. pkg. *Red Fork* Sloppy Joe Skillet Sauce
⅔ of 15 oz. can *Muir Glen* crushed tomatoes, fire roasted
2 Tbsp. *Annie's Naturals* Worcestershire sauce
½ of 15 oz. fez of *Organic Valley* ricotta
8 oz. *Cabot's* seriously Sharp cheddar
6 *Bionaturae* lasagne noodles

Slice cheddar thin; save the tail to grate on top. Sauté nuts and vegs, add sauces and simmer. Layer sauce, 2 noodles, ricotta, sliced cheddar, sauce. Then 2 noodles, ricotta, sliced cheddar, sauce. Then 2 noodles, sauce, and grate the last bit of cheddar on top. Sprinkle optional parmesan. Bake at 325 for 30-45 minutes.

A lasagna secret: recipes often skimp on sauce. I seem to always need about 25% more than the recipe specifies.

Why? My theory: Sloppy Joe is an even sloppier writer than me. The top layer of sauce is most important. If you must skimp, short a middle layer. The top keeps the noodles from turning into bark, and leaks into the middle anyway.

You can put the noodles in the pan raw. They'll soak up liquid and make a firmer lasagna. You really, really, really don't want to skimp on the top sauce layer then. A Sloppy Joe secret: since ketchup is the major ingredient, you can patch up a spotty top with squirts of ketchup. Mmm, ketchup...

Open the Sloppy Joe sauce doll and look inside!

1 cup ketchup
2 Tbsp. dry onion
2 Tbsp. paprika
1 Tbsp. ground mustard seed
1 tsp. marjoram
1 tsp. salt
½ tsp. garlic powder
½ tsp. chili powder
½ tsp. black pepper
½ tsp. kelp powder
¼ tsp. ground celery seed

We'll open the ketchup doll another time. I fondly remember our visit to Worcestershire a few years back!



Ken Rich is a long-time Abundance Co-op shareholder. With a passion for "kooking," he concocts special dishes to share with *Rutabaga Rap* readers using stuffs from Abundance.

The Abundance Coop Ambassador project continues! Consider helping spread the word about the cooperative alternative and Abundance Coop Market. There's already a lot of interest in bringing back the Abundance Shopping Cart Drill Team and Tofu Bucket Brigade for local parades; tabling at events, highlighting the coop in social media, bringing our friends and co-workers to the store. What's on your mind? Email Chris Whitebell: chris@abundance.coop



Raising the Minimum Wage – What do Farmers Think?

By Elizabeth Henderson



Raising the minimum wage to \$15/hr. even over five years has raised a lively controversy among area farmers. On January 29, the New York Farm Bureau posted a photo of their entire board holding posters that say “Keep the Barn Doors Open – NO \$15.” By con-

trast, organic farmers want to support low-wage workers, but feel very conflicted because of the pressure this puts on their fragile farm businesses. The farmer-led board of the Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York (NOFA-NY) came out with a public statement in support of raising the minimum wage but linked that with the urgent need to raise the farmer share of the consumer dollar.

Pen Yann organic farmer Mary-Howell Martens sums up the conflicting pressures:

“ We really need careful consideration to what this will do to small-scale employers who are currently working at a take-home-pay level not much different than their employees. When a small-scale farmer or business owner has to increase their employees to \$15/hr, this will come out of their own family income. If the price of the products sold doesn't increase, it will be the farmer's own family that suffers the most. What the media fails to realize often is that you can be in favor of a decent living wage BUT STILL acknowledge this may impoverish small-scale employers, and if it also raises prices for basic goods like food, this may defeat the point of the wage increase to employees, while being devastating to small-scale employers.”



Churchville organic garlic farmer Ed Fraser expresses what many organic farmers think: “I lived in Mexico and Puerto Rico, worked with migrants in camps and with settled out farm-workers here in this country over the years.

Additionally, I have worked on farms in Western NY since I was 14 (now 63) and of course own and operated my farm for the last 23+ years. Our family eats what we grow and buys from my organic farmer friends. I pay whatever they ask and even sometimes more if I think that they are not charging enough. People in this country will have to learn to pay more for their food so that we can have a decent living from the hard and skillful work that we do. I

don't even know if \$15/hr. is enough. When I look at what other skilled labor gets for their hard and skillful work, I think that we should be getting an equal amount as well. That's my opinion and I will continue to pay my workers well and educate as many people as possible about the real cost of food in America.”

Press Release from the Board of NOFA-NY



As of December 30, 2015, the NYS minimum wage will be \$9 an hour. For employees of fast food chain restaurants minimum wage rose to \$10.50 in New York

City and \$9.75 in the rest of the state, and the base hourly rate for restaurant servers and other tipped workers increased to \$7.50. If the minimum wage had kept up with inflation, the \$1.60 of 1968 would be \$10.96 today.

Like minimum wage, the prices paid to farmers for their products have not kept up with inflation.

The number of farms and the acres in farmland in NYS continue a long decline. In 2002, there were 37,255 farms; in 2012 the number had dropped to 35,537. With the price of milk \$8 lower than a year ago, more NY dairies will go out of business. In January, the price paid to the farmer for winter squash was about 19 cents a pound and the retail price was \$1.29/lb. That is the type of unfair price structure that keeps farms from financial viability. It is time to shift more of the dollars paid for food back to farmers and farm workers.

Given our policy makers' commitment to cheap food, achieving fair wages for all the people who work to bring food to our tables is inherently challenging.

When NOFA surveys our farmer members, many make statements like this: “I certainly believe that farmworkers should receive a fair wage and conduct my business in that way.” Fairness is an important value for NY's organic farmers, yet the wages farmers pay their workers range from only \$9 to \$20 an hour. Most of the farmers are not earning much more, and farmers in the first ten years of their farming careers often pay their workers more per hour than they earn themselves.

Continued on Page 9



There is plenty of money in the US food system. According to their own public financial postings, for the first half of fiscal 2015 net sales for General Mills totaled \$5.3 billion. Its competitors, Campbell Soup, ConAgra Foods, and Mead Johnson Nutrition Company reported revenues of \$2.2 billion, \$2.7 billion, and \$978 million, respectively, for their last reported quarter. The return on equity for Kroger was 35.1%, for General Mills – 28%, for Kellogg – 12.9% and for Whole Foods – 13.67%.

Farmers rarely see a return on equity before they sell their land for money to retire on.

NOFA believes that this has to change.

Raising minimum wage to \$15 an hour will not happen overnight. It should be phased in over a number of years as in Los Angeles where the increases begin with a wage of \$10.50 in July 2016, followed by annual increases to \$12, \$13.25, \$14.25 and then \$15. Small businesses and nonprofits are allowed an extra year to comply.

NOFA members hope to create sustainable farms that provide sustainable livelihoods for a whole range of different kinds of people who are involved with them. In the current situation of climate extremes, farms need to be resilient and that requires workers who are alert and participating in solving the continual new challenges that farms face.

NOFA believes farm work should be recognized as a respected, adequately remunerated profession. But for this to be possible, the prices farmers receive must go up. The prices paid to farmers for farm products must be a fair share of the final consumer price, covering the farm's full costs of production, including living wages for farmers and all farm workers.

It is time to reallocate the food dollar to give a fair share to farmers and to raise the minimum wage for food workers. NOFA-NY calls upon all of you who want locally grown food to join us in the challenging effort to make our food local, and also organic and fair.

Abundance is committed to working toward paying living wages to our full time workers. The model we use to determine what that hourly rate would be is developed by the National Co-op Grocers. Using that model the Living Wage for Rochester is about \$10.50 per hour for a single person. We also annually compare our wage structure with dozens of other co-ops and find that we pay what is in line with those stores.

If we had to pay \$15 per hour we would need to make an additional \$500,000 in sales. Those sales dollars would need to come from all new shoppers or from increasing the prices by about 10%. Since it is unlikely that we could get about 275 transactions a week from new clients above the number of new shoppers we need to cover the expenses of moving to South Avenue and it is very risky to assume we could raise prices in our highly competitive marketplace; it seems that Abundance would be put at substantial risk by the \$15 per hour projection. Businesses like Wegmans and Costco are much better positioned to pay the \$15 per hour because their sales volume is so high that they would only need to raise prices a small amount.

The other issue with the \$15 per hour minimum is that all staff who are not in entry level positions would also need a raise. We already skew our pay scale to support the lowest paid staff which means our mid and upper level people earn less than they could if we made our pay scale more typical.

Our return on equity is less than 5%.

By Jim DeLuca, GM

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First Person

Scratchy Loves Payton

by June Avignone

When I moved here seven years ago from Paterson, New Jersey, I missed my old neighborhood where people talked and shared sometimes absurd exchanges, as people who have come to know each other in a real community tend to do.

My sister took me to the Public Market flea market one day for the first time, which is when I found a beautiful, big straw grocery bag for a mere five bucks. Everywhere I take it, I receive compliments. Store cashiers note how much the bag can hold with amazement. A woman once ran out to me into a parking lot and said, "Where did you get that bag? My grandmother in Peru had one just like it!" I felt a little guilty later on, not thinking to empty the bag and give it to the woman. But, to be honest, not really. I loved the bag so.

Still the bag's truly magical personality did not come alive until one day to Abundance. And that's because of absurd and much welcomed interchanges with a cool cashier named Payton.



True Payton, like most cashiers, noticed the incredible amount of groceries the bag can hold, it's hard not to. But Payton also mentioned the rough texture when he would put his arm inside to put the groceries in and pulled it out again against the coarse straw each week when I would return to Abundance. "Ohhhh, it's that scratchy bag," he would say seeing me come toward him with the bag feigning horror. So much so that the bag eventually received a much deserved name. Scratchy.

Thing about Scratchy is that he started to break at the seams. And one day, when I came in I brought in some other bags, plastic ones. You know, the predictable run of the mill kind. "What happened to Scratchy?," Payton asked. I must have looked a tad distraught. "He is ripping at the seams," I said dejectedly.

Then something amazing happened. "Well, I can sew it," Payton said. I can't sew at all. There was hope. "Really, you would?" I replied.

Turns out Payton loves to sew and is great at it. He managed to find the right thick course thread. And Scratchy was returned to me all healed up in no time. That was almost two years ago, and Scratchy is still in tip-top shape, raking in wonderment and compliments as always.

It is difficult to really explain sometimes what starts to make a place seem real to you. But Scratchy knows. Scratchy thanks Payton for that. And so do I.

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RAVS membership, potluck dinners, and lectures are open to all. You don't have to be vegetarian or vegan to participate. Potlucks usually on third Sunday of the month. See calendar on website. Visit our website to learn more: www.RochesterVeg.org

Peacework Organic CS
Community is at our roots.
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If you are looking to get more involved with the co-op, consider joining the Abundance Board of Directors Owner Linkage committee. Contact Katie Malarkey, Katie.Malarkey@gmail.com, or 671-6378

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Tour a Farm that Puts Carbon in the Soil! May Day Celebration at Peacework Farm

Peacework Organic CSA invites you to a festive May Day celebration, Sunday, May 1 from 2 to 6 pm at Peacework Farm, Newark, New York. At 2 pm, riding her high-spirited nag, farmer Ammie Chickering will lead in dancing around the May Pole. No previous dance experience necessary. Next we will take a wild flower walk in the woods of the Kraai Preserve, a nature preserve open to the public. Then, there will be a tour of Peacework Farm with a focus on the methods organic farms use to take carbon out of the air and restore it to the soil where it contributes to fertility and water retention. You will see the new team of draft horses in action. There will also be a tour of the Johnson Brothers Food Forest Permaculture Project, including culinary mushrooms. At 4:30, we will have a potluck supper.



One of the oldest CSAs in the country, the farm is located at 2231 Welcher Road (across from 2232 Welcher, but that is a private home so use farm parking areas to left of barn). Please bring a dish to pass, a place setting and folding chairs. The farm will provide beverages. All are welcome! Peacework Organic CSA 585-442-1364

If you would like to join in Community Supported Agriculture and get a share of Peacework's certified organic produce every week from mid-May through November, please come to the party and let the farmers know. The Peacework farmers grow over 200 varieties of 70 crops to supply weekly packets for many families in Wayne and Ontario Counties and the greater Rochester area. Joining the CSA is a good way to save money if you want to feed your family organic produce at a reasonable price and support a local farm.



CALENDAR



MARCH

March 10 BOD Meeting
 March 24 Purim
 March 27 Easter (closed)

APRIL

April 14 BOD Meeting
 April 23 Earthday Birthday event
 April 28 Take Daughters and Sons to Work

You can sign up on-line at www.peaceworkcsa.org. For more information, call 585-442-1364 in Rochester or contact Ammie Chickering, 315-398-4007, New members are welcome to join Peacework's Community Supported Agriculture cooperative. Every week of the 26-week season, members receive a packet of fresh produce: from 7 to 10 vegetables in a Full share, and 4 to 6 in a Partial share. Pick up is at the Abundance Coop for city members and at the farm for Wayne County members. The price for Full shares is \$22 to \$33 a week, on a sliding scale and the farm accepts food stamps (SNAP), and \$15 a week for Partial shares. Members agree to share the risks and benefits of the season with the farmers and to work one 4-hour shift at the farm helping with the farm work or two transport only shifts during the season as well as two distribution shifts at Abundance Coop in Rochester. Membership is open to anyone in the Greater Rochester area. Families are especially welcome, and we arrange the farm work schedule to include children to the greatest extent possible.

* **Our Shopping Bag Policies:** Avoid 5¢ & 10¢ bag surcharges by bringing your own bag. Get 5¢ back, and you save *twice!* Also, please do **NOT** place merchandise in your personal bag(s) until paid for at the cash register. This will help avoid any confusion and speed up the check out. Thanks!

62 Marshall Street
Rochester, NY 14607

(585) 454-2667 (-COOP)
www.Abundance.coop



Store Hours:
Monday - Friday 8am - 8pm
Saturday 9am - 7pm
Sunday 10am - 7pm