

ROOTSTOCK

the official newsletter of the BELFAST CO-OP



www.belfast.coop

DAIRY:



THE GOOD, THE BAD, & THE UGLY by John Bagnulo MPH, PHD

Milk and milk products have been important foods for many post-Stone Age cultures. While it is difficult to see how their consumption influenced the health of earlier populations in comparison to those that never adopted dairy products, there are still human populations drinking or eating traditionally made milk products. Numerous populations throughout Europe, Western Asia, and even in areas of Africa (where there is generally a high rate of lactose intolerance), have very good overall health and consume significant quantities of fermented milk products or drink traditionally prepared milk from Old World, Asian, or African dairy breeds. Yet in more industrialized regions, with pasteurization, homogenization and fortification being the normal components of milk processing and with milk largely coming from newer breeds of cows and very little if any coming from other animals (goats, sheep, yaks, water buffalo, and even horses represent milk sources in many areas of the world) increased dairy intake from these processed sources is, in several respected studies, associated with higher rates of diabetes, cancer, autism, osteoporosis, and more.

The first thing to acknowledge is that milk is generally unique to each type of mammal. Milk contains specific immunoglobulins that provide the young animal's immune system with a greater tolerance or physiological compatibility. The second important aspect to appreciate is that milk is an anabolic substance that supports rapid growth, development, and weight gain. I have always said that cow's milk is the perfect beverage to produce a several hundred pound animal in less than a year. The type of protein (high in branched chain amino acids) and amount of protein combined with the naturally occurring milk sugars are able to drive body mass upwards with very little else coming from other food sources. Humans are the only species that drink the milk of another animal with any regularity. These points raise the question of how compatible milk is with our body.

While we have been drinking milk for approximately 8000 years, and there is evidence that some of us have evolved in our tolerance of lactose (genetic testing shows that in many areas of the world people digest lactose much more efficiently as adults), both the type of animals we milk and the methods of milk preparation are very different. Milk has two distinct fractions: casein (the curds) and whey. Each is made up of different chains of amino acids. Whey is typically much easier and casein more difficult to digest completely. Goats, sheep, and older breeds of cows strictly produce a type of casein that is known as A2 beta casein. However, newer breeds of cows (typically the black and white varieties) were developed by farmers through intensive breeding to generate greater and greater amounts of milk. These modern black and white cows experienced the genetic mutation that yielded both dramatically greater milk yields and development of the A1 beta casein (different by only one amino acid than A2). Holsteins are most representative of these changes. A modern Holstein produces approximately 3200 gallons of milk in a 300 day milking cycle, compared to the 600-700 gallons per year from older breeds. They now make up just over 97% of the U.S. dairy herd. Research from New Zealand and Australia has demonstrated unique adverse effects from drinking the milk of cows with the A1 beta casein gene.

CONTINUED ON P5

IN THIS ISSUE

ROOTSTOCK newsletter by Kate Harris & Doug Johnson

Dairy: The Good, the Bad, & the Ugly - P1
Board Corner - P2
GM Corner - P3
A Sustainable Seafood Partnership - P4
Just Picked - P4

The Cost of Cheap Food - P6
Navigating Change - P6
Spotlight on Suecakes - P7
CO-OP Calendar - P8

123 HIGH STREET BELFAST, ME 207.338.2532 7:30AM-8:00PM

YOU COULD SERVE ON THE Board of Directors!

by Philip Prince

Belfast Co-op Board of Directors Member

The Board of Directors (BOD) is seeking director nominees who will make a commitment to our mission, values, and ends.

The Belfast Co-op is governed by a Board of Directors elected by Co-op member-owners to serve those member-owners. The BODs' essential role is to set and monitor policy that guides the Co-op's management team. We are seeking to fill three director seats this election cycle.

The BOD has legal responsibility for the Co-op and is directly accountable to the member-owners to ensure that all business is conducted legally, prudently, ethically, and in accordance with the Cooperative Principles, our Mission and Ends statements, and Bylaws.

Director nominees should have some organizational, communication or group process skills. Also helpful is experience in Policy Governance and facilitating meetings in a cooperative manner utilizing modified consensus decision making. A nominee should have the ability and willingness to make a time commitment of 5–9 hours per month.

A nominee will need to have been a Co-op member for at least six months as of January 6, 2015, the start of the nomination period. The nomination period will close Sunday, February 1 with the election commencing Monday, February 16 and concluding at the Annual Meeting Sunday, March 22 or extending, if necessary, to reach a vote quorum of 10% of the total membership.

Nomination application packets will be available starting in January at Customer Service in the Co-op and on our website: www.belfast.coop. These packets contain an application form and information useful to understanding the governance, responsibilities and expectations of the board.

The Belfast Co-op Nominations Committee can be contacted at

boardelections@belfast.coop

Thank you to all with an interest in serving the Belfast Co-op!



for the next
BOARD OF DIRECTORS meeting

January 22 & February 26

6:30PM AT WATERFALL ARTS, 256 HIGH ST, BELFAST, ME

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bindy Pendleton, president
Debbi Lasky, vice president
Jerry Savitz, treasurer
Phil Prince, secretary
Doug Johnson, staff rep.
Nixie Bombardier
Ron Braybrook
Cindy Canavan
Betsy Garrold
Chris Groden
Jean Lenderking
Alessandra Martinelli
Kip Penney
Janis Stone
Zafra Whitcomb

BOARD COMMITTEES

Finance Committee
3rd Tuesday of the month, 3pm
Belfast Co-op conference room
boardfinance@belfast.coop

Membership Committee
1st Tuesday of the month, 11:30am
Belfast Co-op conference room
boardmembership@belfast.coop

Board Development Committee
2nd Tuesday of the month, 9:30am
Belfast Co-op conference room
boarddevelopment@belfast.coop

Long Range Planning Committee
1st Friday of the month, 11:30am
Belfast Co-op conference room
boardlongrange@belfast.coop

Elections and Nominations Committee
Ad hoc
boardelections@belfast.coop
Annual Meeting Committee
Ad hoc
Public Interaction Committee
Ad hoc
Bylaws Committee
Ad hoc



GM CORNER

by Chris Grigsby

It's hard to believe 2015 is here, where has the time gone? We would like to take this opportunity to highlight some of the accomplishments of 2014, and to let you know of a few things to expect in the coming year. As always, we most appreciate all of the community support that keeps our co-op thriving.

As reported in the last newsletter, your co-op was profitable once again this year. The numbers are being finalized by our accountants, and we should have figures to report and dividend allocation information in early spring. We saw a slight reduction in year over year sales growth, which is something we are hoping to address moving forward. Specific areas of solid growth were in our "fresh" departments (meat & cheese, dairy, produce, and deli), as well as our local products (anything grown or produced in Maine). Our center store departments (grocery, health and beauty aids) saw solid gains as well. We will plan to continue these upward trends in the coming year, with renewed focus on increasing our daily customer count, average basket size, and product availability. This last piece, product availability, has been a bit of a challenge for us, due in large part to manufacturer and distributor stock. This problem is not unique to the Northeast, but is a nationwide issue. Due to the increase in awareness and popularity of organic foods, along with very big players (Walmart, Kroger, Trader Joe's, etc.) getting into private label organic production,

the supply chain has been squeezed with demand outweighing supply. Efforts are underway through USDA programs, but it is something we may be dealing with for some time. This is why it is great to see our local food sector continue to thrive, and why it is so important for us to support it.

As we look to the future of our food system and how we can continue to play an integral role in it, the board, along with the general management team, will move forward in 2015 by undertaking a comprehensive market study. This study will help us plan for the future, and help us determine what market potential may be available to us. This information will enable us to define the relevant trade area from which our co-op obtains most of its business, and levels of sales penetration within the various sectors (i.e., census tracts) in that trade area. All of this is aimed at our strategic plan and long-range planning. Why does this matter to you? **In the months of February (lowest sales level) and July/August (highest sales level), we will be conducting "interviews" at the front of the store aimed at capturing essential data for this market study.** We will embark on this project over a four-day period, and will be asking customers post-checkout information such as address, town/city, state, zip code, year-round or seasonal resident, and transaction purchase amount. All of this information is voluntary, but our hope is that our customers will see the value of this information in forming sound strategic planning for our future. The market study should be completed by fall 2015.

Look for a shiny new website in the Spring, courtesy of Belfast's own Al Arthur.

As always, thanks for shopping locally!

Don't forget!
MARCH 1-7

member-owner
SUPER SALE WEEK

MEMBER-OWNERS
SAVE 10%
ON ALL STORE PURCHASES
*one transaction only!

OUR MISSION

The Belfast Co-op is a membership owned and controlled organization that operates a retail outlet for whole natural foods and other goods and provisions. We strive to offer and promote the continued availability of a wide selection of products organically produced and locally sourced whenever available, at reasonable prices, to support healthy lifestyle choices for both our members and the general public. Our intent is to be a resource for information and action concerning health, nutrition, and the source of our products, as well as for building community.

(Approved April 22, 2010)

OUR VALUES

The Belfast Co-op is a member-owned market and café that seeks to foster community, support local producers and educate for healthier food production and consumption. To these ends we hold the following values:

Transparency in operating our business. We work for an atmosphere of honesty, respect and inclusiveness, with open communication among members, employees and management.

Encouraging participation, building an organization that acquires and transfers knowledge, promotes from within, and creates a positive work environment.

Exercising ecological and social responsibility.



by James Benson

Sustainable Seafood Project Manager, GMRI

Even in a coastal state like Maine, access to information about local and responsibly harvested seafood can be a challenge for many restaurants, markets, and customers. To help, the Gulf of Maine Research Institute (GMRI), a Portland-based marine science center, partners with seafood providers throughout the region and spreads the word to customers about where local seafood can be found. GMRI Culinary Partners form a growing community of restaurateurs and market operators committed to sourcing seafood from the Gulf of Maine region and educating themselves and their customers about seafood sustainability. The Belfast Co-op recently joined this community as the first Culinary Partner in the Belfast area.

These partnerships connect chefs and managers with fisheries scientists to foster responsible seafood decision-making and support the region's fishing industry. More than ever, customers are seeking foods that are sourced locally and harvested sustainably. The Culinary Partners program provides a platform of credibility for customers seeking seafood they can feel good about, and provides staff with the objective science-based information they need to make seafood choices.



GMRI Culinary Partners commit to sourcing at least 20% of seafood items from the Gulf of Maine, which ranges from Cape Cod to Nova Scotia, and offering a minimum of one species from the Responsibly Harvested list. The list includes species such as lobster, pollock, hake, redfish, scallops, and others, and is based on the fishery being managed and harvested in a manner that does not compromise its long-term viability. In addition to what's available, all partners set annual goals towards the continuous improvement of the overall sustainability of operations.

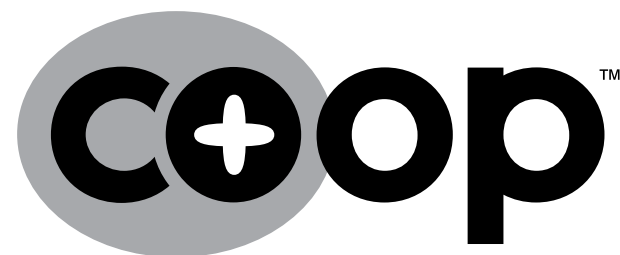
Culinary Partners frequently collaborate on opportunities to promote Gulf of Maine seafood and raise awareness of sustainability issues. This spring, seven partners came together to feature local seafood dishes at the first annual Gulf of Maine Seafood Celebration, held at GMRI in conjunction with talks given by scientists. Open to the public and capped at 150 guests, this event quickly sold out and was a huge success both in raising awareness of Culinary Partners, and spreading the word about sustainable fisheries. Just last month, numerous Partners and staff from GMRI cooked local seafood dishes at Harvest on the Harbor, Maine's largest food and wine festival, to spread the word about eating the types of seafood that support our local fisheries and maintain healthy marine ecosystems.

This summer, Out of the Blue promotions raised awareness about some lesser-known and underutilized species from the Gulf of Maine, such as dogfish and whiting. Specialized seafood dinners at Culinary Partner locations featured these species and created opportunities for customers to expand their palates and learn more about what they're eating. The Seafood Dining Series creates unique dining experiences that may be continued year-round. Diversifying the menu to incorporate what's available and sustainable is not just forward thinking; it adds value to our communities and environment.

Opportunities to showcase Partners' commitments to sustainable seafood are not limited to events. Rack cards at tourist locations, social media, the website www.gmri.org/culinarypartners, magazine ads, and an upcoming smartphone app Find Seafood are a few of the ways Culinary Partners efforts are shared on an ongoing basis, not to mention frequent news coverage. Each month, GMRI sends Culinary Partners a newsletter to keep staff abreast of local fisheries issues and seafood topics. Half-day staff education seminars are also offered during the off-season, recognizing that the more staff know about their seafood, the more customers can learn. Every partner is also provided with a high-quality seafood binder containing important information about all commercially harvested species in the Gulf of Maine, which can often be found on the seafood counter.

This past October, GMRI formed a partnership with the Belfast Co-op in support of their commitment to offer sustainable and delicious seafood from the Gulf of Maine. To learn more about how GMRI is engaging communities and stewarding coastal ecosystems please visit

www.gmri.org.



stronger together

DAIRY

CONTINUED FROM P1

Here are the most important differences in how A1 beta casein influences human health, that have been discovered thus far:

1. Increased Low-density lipoprotein (LDL) oxidation in the presence of A1 beta casein. LDLs are the packages of cholesterol that circulate within our body and ultimately require oxidation to form arterial plaque or cause coronary artery disease.
2. High rates of type I diabetes in children and adolescents compared to children consuming A2 beta casein.
3. Increased urinary excretion of bovine-casomorphin 7 (BCM7) in children with autism and schizophrenia. The one amino acid different in the newer version of casein (A1) causes incomplete digestion, resulting in the absorption of these small protein chains intact. These proteins circulate throughout the body and affect the brain and other areas.
4. Addictive opioid activity by A1 casein's BCM7, not demonstrated by A2 casein proteins. These proteins (casomorphins) actually occupy and stimulate opioid receptors like certain drugs.
5. Higher rates of mortality from coronary artery disease and coronary heart disease in populations predominantly consuming A1 vs A2 beta casein.

As expected, most U.S. dairy industry representatives dispute these claims made by researchers in New Zealand and Australia, stating that it is more of a theory than proven science. However, the fact that the governments of both of these countries have acknowledged this issue and several hundred large scale dairies in these countries are working to eliminate the A1 gene from their dairy herds speaks volumes to the strength of these observations. Slowly, this topic is gaining more interest, appreciation, and respect by both researchers and farmers around the world. The solution is, of course, to revert back to an older, more compatible type of dairy animal. All goats and sheeps' milk are free of this concern. Breeds of cows that have significantly less A1 casein are Jersey, Guernsey, Brown Swiss, Brahma, and Red Poll, among others. A general rule of thumb is that tan, brown, or brown and white cows produce a much healthier milk, albeit in much smaller quantities. This represents a trend in agriculture where efforts to have plants and animals produce greater and greater yields have resulted in the development of proteins that cause problems for our health.

Of course it gets worse when we consider the practice of using rBGH, or bovine growth hormone, to further increase milk production. Also, milking pregnant cows with their much higher, elevated, naturally-produced hormones, is an area of major concern to many endocrinologists who are attempting to explain the rapid rate of sexual development and increasingly younger ages that our children are reaching puberty. There are many who feel it is not simply the increased levels of insulin-like growth factor that result from eating more of this particular type of animal protein, but that it is more a function of this cocktail of cow hormones that are accelerating endocrine changes in our children. Again, comparisons to dairy-centric populations in other areas of the world where these are not normal agricultural practices, shows that children can consume significant quantities of milk and yogurt without the same increased rate of sexual maturity.

Guernsey cows in the U.S. are around 85% A2 casein without efforts to completely eliminate the A1 gene from a dairy herd (luckily this is happening with a small number of small scale farmers here in the U.S. who respect the research, and are also shifting away from feeding grain to their herd). Jersey and Brown Swiss cows are generally more than 65% A1 without these similar efforts. It should be noted that in areas of India, Southern and Eastern Europe, Western Asia, and Africa, most cows are completely A1-free. With more interest by consumers in the benefits of grass-fed milk and milk products, there will be a shift away from the modern Holstein which require a significant amount of grain to support the massive volume of protein-rich milk they generate daily. In the U.S., we have cars, corn, and cows that were developed in a system centered around cheap oil. With increasing oil prices making both gasoline and fertilizers more expensive, these models of transportation and agriculture have been shown to be both unsustainable and unhealthy.

In the end, whether to drink milk or eat dairy is a personal decision. The question should not be whether or not dairy is bad. Rather we should ask ourselves whether or not we like it. If we do, then we should identify those factors that shape the way a glass of milk, a bowl of yogurt, or a piece of cheese influence our health. There are many ways to incorporate very healthy dairy products into one's life, but it is critical that they are sourced properly.

John Bagnulo MPH, PhD, holds a doctorate in Nutrition and Food Science, is a faculty member of Kripalu Healthy Living Programs, and has a private practice at 39 Main Street in downtown Belfast. For more information, visit John's website at:

johnbagnulo.com



THE COST OF CHEAP FOOD

by Susie Dexter
Belfast Co-op Worker-Owner

At the Belfast Co-op, I frequently hear that the Co-op is “too expensive” and that, consequently, many members shop primarily at the chain supermarkets. Certainly with some items, the Co-op is offering a higher quality product than is available elsewhere. But there are many other situations where it is unclear why the higher price is justified and you may suspect the Co-op, farmer, and/or producer, of being a bit greedy. It’s a complicated subject, but in this short article I can offer a few points to consider when parting with your hard-earned dollars.

How can Idaho potatoes at Hannaford be less expensive than Maine potatoes at the Co-op? With fewer transportation costs and fewer middlemen, we know that trading with our neighbors is more economical for ourselves and beneficial for the community...and yet. If no one is getting rich from your purchases at small, local independent stores, and if large corporate food producers and national retail giants reap huge profits, how do we account for the price discrepancy?

The price of mass produced and distributed food is often less than local alternatives because it does not include all of the public health, economic, and social costs of industrial agriculture and food processing. In the U.S., lobbyists for large scale producers have succeeded in implementing tax codes and regulatory policies that keep company profits high and shelf prices low by letting these companies evade much of the cost of growing, raising, processing, transporting, and ultimately consuming their products. Some examples provided by the Environmental Working Group and other consumer watchdog organizations of these “externalized costs” include:

- Taxpayer subsidies to agribusiness. Between 1995 and 2012, U.S. taxpayers provided \$292.5 billion in agricultural subsidies. Of this amount, \$84 billion went just to support corn and 75% went to the top 10% of recipients (indeed 25% went to the top 1%). The majority, 62% of U.S. farms, collected nothing.
- The livelihood of your rural neighbors. Sustainable, diversified family farms are among the 62% who don’t get taxpayer handouts, but must compete with those who do.
- Tax breaks to the oil industry. Industrial agriculture requires huge amounts of petroleum and natural gas, not only to power agricultural machinery and fleets of trucks and tankers transporting products around the globe, but also for the production of fertilizer and an array of “biocidal” chemicals.

CONTINUED ON P8

NAVIGATING CHANGE

... in ... NEW ENGLAND agriculture

by Kate Snyder
Director of Membership and Programs, NEFU

Winter is a time when farmers who grow food for the Belfast Cooperative put tools and equipment to bed, plan budgets, order seeds, and do all the catch-up work they can’t do during the busy growing season. They may attend farm shows where they learn best practices for production, managing employees, record-keeping and finances, marketing and policy-making.

New England Farmers Union (NEFU), a member-driven organization that advocates for the region’s family farmers, recently met for its fifth annual convention in downtown Portland and many Maine farmers attended. We were proud to be able to feature engaging speakers such as Representative Chellie Pingree (D-ME), and Risk Management Agency Administrator Brandon Willis as speakers. Pingree, a farmer herself, laid out a vision for the future of New England agriculture that harkened back to Maine’s early role as the nation’s breadbasket, the supplier of food for the Union army during the Civil War. “We had the expertise. We had the infrastructure. We can do it again,” she said at the welcome dinner.

Willis thanked NEFU for its role in shaping a Whole Farm Insurance program, which provides insurance for diversified farms, not a single crop. New England’s farmers often grow a variety of crops,

and traditional federal crop insurance that covered particular commodity didn’t serve the needs of New Englanders. These tools provide farmers “peace of mind,” he said.

Belfast Co-op General Manager Chris Grigsby served on a panel discussing food system infrastructure. He called out a number of difficulties farmers face in getting their food to market, and how food co-ops can help. Maine Farmland Trust’s John Piotti also served on the panel, and described the Belfast Co-op as a vital piece of infrastructure for the region.

NEFU and co-ops are natural allies. Farmers Union’s founding principles are Legislation, Co-operation and Education, and through our relationship with sixteen retail food co-ops across New England, we support both the co-operative business model and the farmers who receive better pricing for their goods through co-ops.

As we close out 2014, the International Year of Family Farming, we at New England Farmers Union want to thank you for your support of New England’s family farmers through your membership in the Belfast Co-op, and we invite you to join as an individual member of NEFU at our secure website:

www.newenglandfarmersunion.org

New England Farmers Union (NEFU) works to protect and enhance the economic well-being and quality of life of family farmers, fishermen, foresters, nursery growers, and consumers in all six New England states. The Belfast Co-op is a business member of NEFU.

When Suzanne Coolbeth first moved to Maine in 2002, she landed in the Rockland area. We are so fortunate that she had moved to Belfast by October 2011, when she began exploring baking as a life plan. Her small bakery business, Suecakes, specializes in vegan, gluten free pastries, or, as her website puts it so well: “dairy, egg, and gluten free yummy madness!” And if her creations are madness, none of us should aspire to be completely sane.

On the day we chatted in the Co-op Café, she brought some samples of a couple of her latest taste sensations; a coconut almond bar with homemade apple-ginger jelly, and a quinoa brownie with flax seed chocolate chips. Yes, you heard me right, she makes her own jellies for inclusion in her recipes. This, her enormous work ethic and absolute commitment to producing the highest quality food possible, all lead to her being a typical small business owner who works when she should be sleeping. On baking days (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday) she is up all night mixing and stirring. She spends the next day delivering to her wholesale customers which include the Belfast Co-op, Good Tern Co-op in Rockland, and the Juice Cellar (her first wholesale account in 2012.) On Fridays from 9am-1pm you can find her at the Belfast Winter Farmer’s Market in Aubuchon’s greenhouse, and in the summer, she is a vendor at both the Belfast and Rockland farmers markets, as well as various farmstands.

Sue says that the farmer’s markets are her favorite venue, because she gets to interact directly with her customers. The feedback she receives on her flavor choices is invaluable; feedback from friends is what got her started in the business to begin with. She has been cooking since she first became a vegetarian at a young age. It was a friend’s request for gluten-free baked goods that first started her on the road to Suecakes. She began with cupcakes and has had fun expanding from there.



SPOTLIGHT

on

SUECAKES!

BELFAST • MAINE

by Betsy Garrold
ThePopulistFarmer.wordpress.com

Sue has a degree in graphic design and would like to have more time to spend on the business end of things but, during the summer especially, she is just too busy to do much more than keep up with her standing orders and any special orders she might receive. This past summer saw her biggest growth, but it is still a one person operation with Sue taking care of all the sourcing, baking, delivering, advertising, and bookkeeping.

On top of her standing orders, she does attend events. Her first official big event was the WERU Spring Fling Music Sale in Belfast. Since then she has baked for the spring CSA Fair here in Belfast and for the Co-op’s own annual meeting. This coming summer she has orders for a couple of wedding cakes.

As with any small business looking to grow, she faces not only time and energy constraints but also some infrastructure challenges. She is close to outgrowing her present kitchen space and would really like to move into a space of her own, designed specifically to fit her business and her work style. This is much easier said than done. Not only is time a factor but also, as with most small businesses, financing. Sue is dedicated to allowing the business to grow in an organic way without debt, which is a challenge.

It is easy to see the dedication Sue brings to this thriving small enterprise. She says “I have a real passion for food and what I put in my body. I want it, as much as possible, to be local and organic. I put a lot of love and positive energy into the food I make. It is beautiful when my customers pick up on that on their own. This is very important to me.”

As we left the Cafe that day Sue turned immediately to the bakery section and perused the display, always attentive to the food and the customers. She had told me that she might have room to add a few more items to the selection at the Co-op. I vote for the coconut almond bar; the apple-ginger jelly filling was definitely yummy madness!

- **Environmental degradation.** Industrial scale farming and livestock operations rely on intensive applications of chemicals and produce huge amounts of toxic waste which contaminate the soil, air, and water. For example, the expansion of herbicide-drenched wastelands of genetically modified corn and soy has so reduced milkweed habitat that monarch butterfly populations are crashing and may be beyond recovery. Bees and other crucial pollinators are assaulted by a growing variety of toxic agricultural chemicals. The genetic havoc caused by GMO crops, especially the "Terminator" varieties, is yet another impending catastrophe caused by the short-sighted priorities of industrial agribiz.
- **Funding social programs** (food stamps, etc.) to support poorly paid workers in corporately owned California fields and "associates" stocking the aisles of big box stores.
- **Medical expenses** to treat diseases such as obesity and diabetes associated with diets high in cheap calories from subsidized corn and highly processed foods.
- **A vibrant local economy.** Much of the profit that chain stores make leaves the local community (and in the case of Hannaford, owned by the Belgian multinational Delhaize Group, it leaves the country).

"Healthy Foods Healthy Communities: Measuring the Social and Economic Impact of Food Co-ops," a study by the National Cooperative Grocers Association, found that food co-ops outperform conventional grocery stores in five categories: Supporting Local Food Systems, Creating Quality Jobs, Local Economic Impact, Environmental Stewardship and Promoting Healthy & Sustainable Foods. This study clearly demonstrates the "cooperative difference." For more about the report, visit: www.s.coop/foodcoopimpact.

A final quote, from farmer Fred Kirschenmann, offers some useful context: "We're now spending 9 or 10% of our gross income on food where we used to spend between 20 and 30%. We also used to spend 7 or 8% on health care. We now spend 18%. You can't say it's entirely because of our diet, but certainly we know that a major portion of our increased health costs are due to the food we eat."

WE'RE TURNING 40!

In 2016, we will celebrate our

40th ANNIVERSARY

and we're seeking any memorabilia
you may have about the



(photos, news clippings, stories, etc.)

Please contact: 40th@belfast.coop

to let us know about your treasures, which we promise to
take the utmost care of and return quickly.

Thank you, in advance, for sharing

CO-OP CALENDAR

JANUARY

1/1/15 Closed New Year's Day

Round Up for Community recipients: Belfast Poetry Festival, Waldo County Peace Activist Award

Featured Artist: The River School student's photography

1/17 Guided Store Tour Sat. 10am – meet at Co-op entrance

1/29 Tibetan Singing Bowls: Sound Healing Journey presentation Thurs. 6:30pm, Belfast Free Library – Lori LeBlanc will give a free demonstration of the unique harmonic vibrations of Tibetan singing bowls.

1/30 Love LOCAL Day – Local vendor samples, lunch special highlighting local ingredients, 10% off all Maine-made products all day.

FEBRUARY

Round Up for Community recipients: Expanding Opportunities, Belfast Maskers Theater

Featured Artist: Lexicon of Sustainability photo collages, courtesy of Maine Farmland Trust

2/17 "Open Sesame: The Story of Seeds" Thurs. 6:30pm, Belfast Free Library – free documentary screening; co-sponsored with the Library. FMI: www.opensesamemovie.com

2/21 Guided Store Tour Sat. 10am - meet at Co-op entrance

2/27 Love LOCAL Day – Local vendor samples, lunch special highlighting local ingredients, 10% off all Maine-made products all day.

SAVE THE DATE... **MARCH 22 2015** ...

2015 BELFAST CO-OP ANNUAL MEETING