

ROOTSTOCK

the official newsletter of the BELFAST CO-OP



www.belfast.coop



by Chris Grigsby

Belfast Co-op General Manager

We made it! The Co-op community has survived the winter that seemed to never end and we have turned our attention to seedlings, soils, and summer fun. Our hope is to recoup the losses incurred during this winter's operating activity and finish out the year on a positive note. We have a lot of ground to cover, but with your help, a strong tourist season, and some cost cutting initiatives, we hope to end the year in the black. As we continue our efforts to meet the needs of our community, we invite you to take advantage of two of our newest programs: our fantastic, new, interactive website and our cashback option at the registers.

A lot of our focus lately has been on increasing competition in the natural foods sector. This concept, in the greater sense, has a lot to do with the fact that for so many years the Co-op had the products that could not be found elsewhere. Bulk foods, organic, local, natural, and sustainable were all buzz words that had no place in conventional grocery stores. The tide has turned, however, and conventional grocers have gotten into the health food industry in a big way. They see the consumer base moving toward the health food sector, and they want in on the action. Leading national chains such as Walmart, Kroger, Target, Hannaford and the like have invested massive amounts of money to secure a piece of this booming market. Essentially, the food co-op movement has succeeded in bringing healthier food and lifestyles to the mainstream. Good news, right? Yes, in a way...more folks are choosing to eat more healthfully. The problem is that they are not necessarily going to their local food co-op to buy these products anymore. As an example, the Belfast Co-op has seen steady reductions in our sales growth and customer count over the past year.

What does this mean for food co-ops? For continued success, we need to focus on competing in this new landscape. This "new normal" includes shrinking market share, smaller sales growth, tighter margins, and a continued strain on the supply of our products. We have seen unprecedented production gaps and out-of-stock ratios due to consumer demand outpacing production capabilities. As an example, Kroger's private-label natural and organic foods line just surpassed \$1 billion in annual sales alone!

"Essentially, the food co-op movement has succeeded in bringing healthier food and lifestyles to the mainstream."

CONTINUED ON P3

IN THIS ISSUE . . .

Why Your Co-op Matters - P1
Board Corner - P2
Your Voice Counts - P3
Take Action on GMO Labeling- P4
Just Picked - P4

ROOTSTOCK newsletter by Kate Harris & Doug Johnson

Cooperative Cafe - P5
Meet a Member-Owner - P6
Stewardship + Economic Growth - P7
Celebrate World Fair Trade Day - P8
CO-OP Calendar - P8

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



This year's Annual Meeting, held March 22 at the Waldo County Shrine Club, featured a local foods dinner catered by the Co-op Deli, and ninety member-owners made reservations. The purpose of this meeting, as laid out in our bylaws, is to provide our member-owners with information about the "general state of the co-op." Reports from the general management team and board committees are shared, financial information presented, and election issues discussed. It is the memberships' opportunity to hear about the past year and a forum for member-owners to share their views and concerns. Our ability to focus the direction of our co-op depends on regular input from our member-owners.

There was social time to visit and snack, peruse copies of the Annual Report and enjoy music by local group "Shades of Blue." A beer and wine bar was available during this first hour, and survey/comment cards were distributed to each table.

The business meeting, facilitated by Board President Bindy Pendleton, began with an introduction of board members, the general management team and the candidate running for reelection to the board.

Zafra Whitcomb, the Co-op's Finance and Information Systems Manager, explained our patronage dividend system and how much money will be returned this year. He also summarized the policy governance process, which the board of directors adopted last fall to help increase the board's efficiency, provide the management team with clear, measurable goals, and differentiate between board governance and management responsibilities.

There was conversation about the election and proposed bylaw changes. A suggestion which arose during that discussion was for more detailed explanations of proposed bylaw changes, sufficient time to present that information, and to do so in a more interactive manner. Member-owners also voiced their opinions about the specific changes to the makeup of the board. Some felt term limits and smaller size were optimal, while others were concerned that term limits may lead to a loss of collective memory. The board will definitely take these suggestions to heart in proposing future bylaw changes.

Other topics of interest were touched on, including the impact of the Affordable Care Act on health insurance benefits for worker-owners and labor costs, creating a non-profit 'arm' for the Co-op and how it may help the Co-op do more in the community, the need for more active recruitment of board candidates, and a suggestion that the annual election begin at the annual meeting were all touched upon. It was reiterated to member-owners that there is mechanism available to petition bylaw changes, and member-owner concerns are welcome at the board's monthly meetings.

The business meeting was adjourned and a very delightful dinner was enjoyed by all, accompanied by more music. Three gift baskets created by the Co-op were raffled off during dinner.

Many thanks to the Co-op Deli staff and Goldy and Jenn for their work in providing a terrific dinner, and to all the volunteers who helped with the meeting.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

May 28 & June 25

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
Nixie Bombardier
Ron Braybrook
Betsy Garrold
Alessandra Martinelli
Kip Penney
Zafra Whitcomb
Doug Johnson, staff rep.
Judith O'Donovan, staff rep.

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

If it is no longer the food we offer that sets us apart, then what can we do to compete? Now more than ever we need to emphasize those things which make us unique, such as:

- **The Cooperative Difference** – a co-op exists to serve its members, and the members are also the owners. When we choose to support our local co-ops, we are investing in a local, sustainable business that supports the community from the ground up. More money stays in the community...it doesn't go overseas to a parent company or to stockholders. With ownership also comes an opportunity to participate in decision-making, including electing board representatives, and economic rewards in the form of discounts and, when financially feasible, patronage dividends.
- **Focus on Small Growers and Producers** – as much as the bigger stores would like you to think they source locally and sustainably, the fact is that it is to a large extent a blurring of the lines. Our co-op has historically supported, and given preference to small farmers and producers in ways that larger stores simply cannot. These valued relationships are dependent on paying a fair price, which in turn leads to a stronger, more sustainable local food economy.
- **Co-ops are Community Partners** – since their inception, co-ops have been guided by their mission to serve member-owners and the greater community. Of course the bottom line is important, as without it co-ops cannot do the community building they have been known for, but it is not the only priority. One need only view the cooperative identity, values and principles put into practice by cooperatives around the world to see that being profitable is just one measure of success.
- **Education and Information** – co-ops provide education and training for their member-owners, elected representatives, managers, employees and the broader community so they can contribute effectively to the development of their co-ops. Through product standards, outreach, and educational forums, our co-op strives to maintain trustworthiness in the marketplace.

In closing, we urge each of you to evaluate your relationship with your co-op, and to ask yourself whether you are utilizing it to its fullest potential. In the coming months we will be seeking your responses to brief surveys which will explore how well the Belfast Co-op is meeting your needs. We hope that you will be honest with us, as we look to chart a pathway forward in this increasingly competitive market and enable us to continue to effect positive change in our community...now and for many years to come. Thanks to all of you, we are experiencing unprecedented success in making healthy living a more mainstream concern.

Learn more about the cooperative identity, values & principles at

www.ica.coop

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.

YOUR VOICE counts

Your customer comments and Belfast Co-op Management responses

"Please, please, please get an espresso machine! You have five barristas here. Thank You!"

Wow! Well, we probably would if we could, but we just don't have the space for an espresso service set-up. I believe that both "Chase's Daily" and "Bay Wrap" have espresso machines.

-Pamela
Deli Shift Supervisor

"I would like to eat lunch & work here after 1 PM, but the wifi is awful. Always. I work elsewhere instead and I am not alone"

Thank you for the feedback. I've done some work on it recently and I hope everyone will see some improvement. Please let me know!

-Zafra
Finance & Information Systems Manager

"Might it be possible to change Senior Discount Day to one day (any day) per week rather than only Tuesday, which doesn't always work?"

We will be moving in this direction. The latest version of software for our POS system should allow this. Hopefully this will be available soon!

-Joe
General Manager

thank you for your cooperation!

TAKE ACTION *-on-* **GMO** labeling

by Kate Snyder

Director of Membership and Programs NEFU

New England Farmers Union (NEFU) supports mandatory labeling of all food that contains ingredients from genetically modified organisms (GMOs). We recognize that consumers continuously voice a strong demand for the information they need to make informed food choices, and polls show that over 90 percent of Americans support the labeling of GMO food.

The issue of GMOs in our food system is complicated, and New England Farmers Union recognizes that farmers come down on both sides of the argument as to whether there's a need to label GMO products and whether there is even a need for GMO crops at all. GMOs have created ethical, environmental, food safety, and structural issues that impact the entire food chain. However, we believe that farmers deserve access to proven farming technologies without being stigmatized. And consumers have the right to know how their food is grown and processed. A label accomplishes these very objectives — it provides consumers with the information they are seeking, but it does not restrict the ability of farmers to use GMO technology if they so choose. Labeling provides critical protections for farmers, and ensures transparency for consumers as they navigate their local supermarket, food co-op, or farmers market.

Unfortunately, legislation introduced in the House by Reps Mike Pompeo (R-KS) and G.K. Butterfield (D-NC) (HR 1599) not only fails to provide consumers with the basic right to identify genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in their food, but it goes even further by blocking future labeling efforts at the state or federal level. And state laws matter, because even with an ultimate goal of a national labeling policy, it will be these state laws that inform and shape the future of a national GMO labeling policy. The bill currently has 20 co-sponsors, and as it quickly makes its way through Congress, it's important that farmers and consumers take a stand against this anti-labeling legislation.

HR 1599: What's it all about?

Blocks State and National Labeling Laws

While a uniform national labeling standard would be the simplest to enforce, the lack of such a standard has prompted several states (including Connecticut, Maine, and Vermont) to develop labeling laws of their own. This bill prevents states from establishing GMO labeling laws and blocks any existing laws. HR 1599 not only eliminates state labeling laws, but it also restricts FDA's ability to mandate national labeling laws, an authority that FDA currently holds. The bill also blocks national labeling laws because it maintains the status quo of voluntary GMO labeling, which has yet to be adopted by a single company.

Allows GMOs to be Labeled "Natural" and Weakens Review

HR 1599 does require FDA to define "natural" in the next two years, but if GMOs were included in such a definition (which the bill does not prohibit), "natural" would fail to provide much needed transparency for consumers. HR 1599 would further block any state provisions that make it illegal to label foods containing GMOs as "natural."

HR 1599 also includes guidance for reviewing the safety of new GMO products, but the bill includes loopholes to automatically approve products that aren't assessed by FDA within 180 days. Furthermore, the proposed "non GMO" USDA certification would still not provide a solution, because the only way this would provide any insight is if everything without GMOs was labeled as such.

GMO Next Steps

Many members of Congress already recognize the need for transparency. Legislation introduced in the House and Senate does represent the GMO labeling concerns of farmers and consumers throughout the country. The bill introduced in the House by Rep. DeFazio (D-OR) and in the Senate by Senators Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) would require FDA to label all foods containing genetically engineered ingredients.

State laws matter. Connecticut, Maine, and Vermont have already responded to consumer demand for transparency around the sources of their food by passing GMO labeling laws, and Massachusetts has introduced a GMO labeling bill, which was recently referred to the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture. This momentum is widespread throughout the country, as nationwide, more than 70 labeling bills have been introduced in more than 30 states.

What YOU Can Do

If you care about GMO labeling and want transparency in your food, please go to this link for more information and to take action:

www.newenglandfarmersunion.org/new-england-farmers-union-take-action-on-gmo-labeling

And please become a member of New England Farmers Union now to support our work to make GMO labeling a reality.

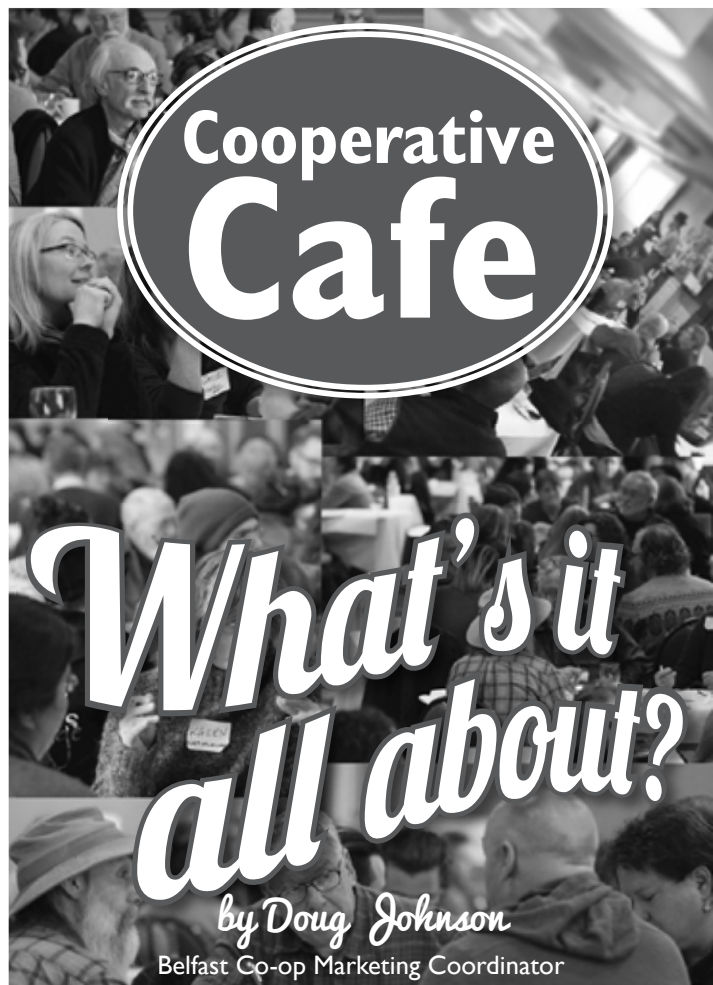
www.newenglandfarmersunion.org/membership/join

Kate Snyder is Director of Membership and Programs for NEFU, a membership based organization committed to protect and enhance the economic well-being and quality of life of family farmers, foresters, nursery growers and consumers in all six New England states.



SIX STATES WITH ONE VOICE AT THE NATIONAL TABLE





In early March, members of the Belfast Co-op management team, board of directors, and worker-owners attended a "Cooperative Cafe", which is a one day seminar hosted by the National Co-op Grocers and the CDS Consulting Co-op via their Cooperative Board Leadership Development (known as CBLD and pronounced C-build) program. The Cooperative Cafe uses a combination of live and video presentations, and thoughtful exchanges to answer fundamental questions about the future of food co-ops.

Using the World Cafe conference format, participants participate in small group conversations inspired by the live and video presentations, then report back to the larger group. These annual events, which are hosted regionally across the country, give co-op shareholders the opportunity to grapple with the bigger questions which co-ops are facing now and in the future, through meaningful peer discussions.

We traveled to Keene, New Hampshire, home of the Monadnock Co-op, to meet with 120 other cooperators from throughout New York and New England. The focus for this session was Thriving in the New Competitive Landscape. The first portion of our day was spent laying the groundwork for our discussions through presentations about the history of food co-ops and the changing landscape of natural foods grocers as larger competitors take exceedingly larger bites out of the marketplace. We also heard from representatives of a number of food co-ops currently experiencing this shift in the market. That introduction led us to our first World Cafe style discussion: **What does it mean to successfully compete in the marketplace?** How do we measure our success when there are so many alternatives to shopping at co-ops which offer similar products? What sets co-ops apart? Why are we different?

After a break, we returned to hear inspirational stories from co-ops that **ARE** thriving in a competitive landscape by taking bold steps, staying true to their ends, and working with their shareholders to create vibrant cooperative communities. It is easy to limit our view of our co-op as simply a grocery store, but the truth is that our co-op can be whatever we want it to be. The power in the cooperative model is that the success or failure of the organization is limited only by the imagination of those invested in the cooperative. Co-ops now, more than ever, need to be more than they have been in the past. To survive in a marketplace where the changes in the food system which we have been championing for decades have become mainstream, we must adapt and be more than grocers.

From these examples we were led to the second question we were asked to explore: **Imagine that we're heading off on a journey into a future that includes cooperatives thriving in a competitive marketplace. On our journey, what should we take, what should we leave behind?** The answers that participants provided were heartfelt, relevant, and spoke to the common challenges that co-ops have faced throughout our history. The Cooperative Cafe helps to harness and direct the collective passion and energy behind the cooperative movement. As workers, managers, directors, or owners, we all have an integral part to play in the success of our co-op, and there is no better time than now to start the journey toward thriving in a competitive marketplace!

For more information on the Cooperative Cafe and to access the entire CBLD Library visit:

www.cdsconsulting.coop

**BELFAST
CO-OP**

**BOARD-of-
Directors**

ELECTION RESULTS

389 ballots were cast, all were validated as members being in good standing; 6 ballots were blank and not counted— for a total of 383 good ballots cast— exceeding the 10% quorum of membership (375), and thereby making the election valid.

RON BRAYBROOK - YES 340/NO 16/ABSTAIN 20

Ron Braybrook received more than 25% of the total votes cast; and reelected to the board for a 3-year term.

BYLAW CHANGES:

#1 ADDITION OF ARTICLE XI. PATRONAGE DIVIDENDS YES 350/NO 15/ABSTAIN 14

#2 DECISION MAKING LANGUAGE YES 306/NO 48/ABSTAIN 25

#3 NUMBER OF DIRECTORS ON BOARD YES 331/NO 32/ABSTAIN 16

#4 BOARD DIRECTOR TERM LIMITS YES 307/NO 54/ABSTAIN 18

All bylaw changes have been passed by membership.

MEET A MEMBER-OWNER

by Roger Qeuhl

Belfast Co-op Worker-Owner

presentation at her junior high school. Rhonda and her peers were given complete creative freedom, and they created a presentation which addressed current environmental issues in each classroom, and had the students move from room to room. It influenced her thinking about ways to effect change, while building confidence which contributed to her decision to become a practitioner and entrepreneur.

When Rhonda was 12 she began playing guitar and singing and was greatly influenced by jazz. At the age of 13 or 14, Rhonda ran into John Lennon at a small bowling alley near her home. As a fellow musician, she thought perhaps she should sing for John, as though auditioning. Instead, Rhonda resolved to simply ask for his autograph. John responded by saying that if he signed one for her he would have to do so for all the people there. She attended the High School of Music and Art where she studied music and participated in the chorus amongst a diverse student body, as the school attracted students from all over the city. During her high school years the Vietnam War was at its peak, and Rhonda participated in protests and war moratoriums in Central Park.

After high school, she attended New York University where she majored in sociology and political science, and considered pre-med. Rhonda continued her musical inclinations singing jazz and playing guitar, and spent her junior year abroad studying in England. After college, Rhonda went to work for Mayor Koch as a member of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York. Rhonda then made her way to Boston, where music took precedence. She studied at the Berklee College of Music, then went to work as a sound engineer for WBUR radio. She happily recalls extensively recording jazz artists during this time, including some of her personal favorites like Sheila Jordan and the World Saxophone Quartet. Rhonda was also practicing and teaching yoga during this time and learning about the mind, body, spirit connection.

A big move came at this point in Rhonda's life, when she relocated to Minneapolis where she worked as a sound engineer for KTCA TV Public Television. She recalls that every neighborhood had a food cooperative. Rhonda found her way back to radio when she was employed with Minnesota Public Radio and volunteered for KFAI Fresh Air Community Radio in Minneapolis. In 1984, Rhonda participated in the International March for Peace in Central America which lasted several months and brought social awareness to problems of the region such as the need for medicine, the plight of poverty, as well as a call for social justice. With activism in her heart, Rhonda returned to Minneapolis and began work with Clean Water Action. During this time Rhonda developed tendonitis from playing guitar and became a client of a local acupuncturist, bringing awareness of the mind, body, spirit connection to a higher, and more personal level.

Rhonda was off to Santa Fe where she received her Master of Science degree in Oriental Medicine from Southwest Acupuncture College in 1992. After graduation, Rhonda spent a few months in New York City. Following up on a connection, she and her spouse visited the midcoast of Maine, where they decided to stay. Rhonda shared a story of how the Belfast Co-op immediately became an important part of her life. A local woman spotted a bumper sticker on Rhonda's car which read: "I've been helped by acupuncture." The woman pondered where she might find the type of person who would be sporting this bumper sticker? The Co-op. The woman found Rhonda at the Co-op, while it was still housed where the Green Store is today, and the two spent hours talking, and Rhonda stayed with the woman for the summer and had an office before a residence! The Co-op continues to be an important part of Rhonda's life both personally and professionally.

Rhonda has her own Chinese pharmacy which she draws from to support her clients. Individualized Chinese herbal prescriptions are an integral part of her practice as are nutrition and wellness counseling, and Qi Gong. Her practice addresses many types of chronic and acute conditions using time-tested, sophisticated diagnostic techniques of East Asian medicine. She also recommends great fruits and vegetables to her clients, for which she sends them to the Belfast Co-op.

Rhonda has presented numerous workshops and classes on women's health, Qi Gong, Chinese herbal medicine, nutrition, stress reduction, strategies for dealing with cancer, and more. As one of three hosts of the monthly Healthy Options radio program on community radio WERU-FM, Rhonda has covered a wide range of topics. The Acupuncture Clinic of Rhonda Feiman is located at 18 Harbor Street in Belfast, Maine. For more information and to set up an appointment, please call (207) 338-4454 and visit her website: belfastmaineacupuncture.com

Belfast Co-op member-owner Rhonda Feiman is a licensed acupuncturist and Chinese herbalist who has been in private practice in Belfast since 1993. In her practice, she primarily uses the Toyohari method of Japanese acupuncture, which utilizes gentle and powerful non-insertion needle techniques. She also practices Japanese acupuncture in the style of Kiiko Matsumoto, Chinese acupuncture, and pediatric acupuncture.

Rhonda spent her childhood in the Bronx, with two older siblings; sister Gloria and brother Jules, and her kind and loving parents. A clear childhood memory is organizing the first Earth Day



photo by Lynn Karlin

Featuring

Rhonda Feiman

The Acupuncture Clinic of Rhonda Feiman

STEWARDSHIP + *Economic* -GROWTH-

by *Hannah Kreitzer*

Belfast Co-op Worker-Owner

The Gulf of Maine is a rich bioregion, teeming with an abundance of marine species. It has sustained generations of human beings along our coast, keeping income and nourishment flowing into our communities with each season and tide. Yet these waters, like those all over the globe, are subject to a broad range of threats. Overfishing, destructive harvesting techniques, pests, diseases, temperature changes, and ocean acidification are all undermining the stability of Maine fisheries.

The Gulf of Maine Research Institute (GMRI) is dedicated to restoring that balance in the long-term interest of flourishing Maine ecosystems and communities. The institute works through many channels, including science research and education, helping fishermen test and implement innovative gear, and providing education materials and consultation services for buyers and sellers of Maine fish. "In a nutshell," explains James Benson, GMRI's Sustainable Seafood Program Manager, "the Gulf of Maine Research Institute catalyzes solutions to the complex challenges of ocean stewardship and economic growth in the Gulf of Maine bioregion."

Economic growth is often perceived to be at odds with conservation priorities, but with due attention paid to all species concerned, a harmonious balance of resource harvest and regeneration is not out of reach. Benson notes that the program "is committed to strengthening the ecologic and economic sustainability of the Gulf of Maine seafood industry. We work with different stakeholder groups in the seafood supply chain, from the boat to the consumer, to raise interest in and value of the rich marine resources right off our coast."

One branch of those stakeholders are what GMRI terms Culinary Partners: small markets, restaurants and businesses with a vested interest in the health of their communities. Culinary Partners commit to training their staff in sustainability practices and stocking their cases with fish that have received the Gulf of Maine Responsibly Harvested brand. As explained on the GMRI website, "We are building the knowledge and predictive tools needed to successfully manage fisheries experiencing environmental change, take advantage of any new opportunities that emerge, and sustain this incredible resource for future generations. The Gulf of Maine Responsibly Harvested brand is a promise that the seafood hails from the clean waters of the Gulf of Maine and the fishery is managed in a way that contributes to the long-term health of the resource."

A large part of this work lies in recognizing the potential of stable fish stocks that are underrepresented in the traditional market. Rapidly warming waters, invasive species and ill-used fishing techniques have depleted many mainstays of the familiar Maine fish counter, but there may still be plentiful harvests to glean from less utilized species like dogfish, redfish, pollock, whiting and mackerel. Through its Out of the Blue program, GMRI seeks to promote these and other species through education, outreach and even creative meals hosted by Culinary Partners. The institute also offers input for businesses seeking to bolster or create sustainability-conscious seafood policies.

As a result of the Co-op becoming a GMRI Culinary Partner, Jeff Butler, the Co-op's Meat and Seafood Department Manager, attended a GMRI seafood education seminar in late February. The seminar covered many subjects including some fish populations, Gulf of Maine fisheries management, fishing gear and fishing strategies, consumer trends and some of the challenges we face growing consumer demand for less familiar fish species which are bountiful and well managed, yet vastly underharvested. Jeff was very impressed with the general atmosphere and encouraged by the discussion. Most of the participants were from restaurants from around Maine. He enjoyed the opportunity to get a look at fishing gear which GMRI is developing to help limit by-catch, sea bed damage, and fuel costs within the Gulf of Maine fishery. According to Jeff, "As consumers, we are the end of the road for these fish and our buying decisions have direct consequences for the health of their populations. By building demand in the market for underutilized species, we encourage fishermen to fish for these more abundant species whose populations have stabilized while alleviating pressure on more threatened species." An example of one of these underutilized species in the Gulf of Maine is spiny dogfish, whose demand is currently limited to European markets for fish and chips. As we no longer have seafood processing plants in Maine, the catch is now sent to New Bedford for processing before export. This harvest could, and should be utilized right here in Maine, providing a local market for a local fishery, keeping all the benefits here. Jeff felt it was an excellent seminar, though far too short for the breadth of what was presented, which gave participants a valuable glimpse of GMRI's commitment to the Gulf of Maine.

Our planet's marine environments have weathered considerable challenges throughout its venerable history, but the current stakes are steep. Maine waters are warming at an alarming rate (faster than 99% of seas worldwide), many old methods of harvest damage the ocean environment or generate wasteful bycatch, and once-dependable fish populations may be damaged beyond repair. Through the concerted efforts of fishermen, scientists, educated consumers, and supportive entities like GMRI, however, we may still serve as responsible stewards of the Gulf of Maine for generations to come.

For more information on GMRI and its programs, visit

www.gmri.org

Join us Tues. 7/14 6:30pm, Belfast Free Library - James Benson, Sustainable Seafood Project Manager for the GMRI will give a free presentation titled "Seafood Sustainability in the Gulf of Maine."

now available @ YOUR **Co-op**
CERTIFIED ORGANIC SEEDLINGS!
from Village Farm & Roots - n- Shoots Farm

celebrate

WORLD FAIR TRADE DAY May 9

Join us this May 9 as we celebrate World Fair Trade Day. When you choose products from committed fair trade brands like Alaffia, Alter Eco, Canaan Fair Trade, Dr. Bronner's, Equal Exchange, Farmer Direct Co-operative, Guayaki Yerba Mate and Runa, each fair trade product you choose supports:

- Long-term direct trading relationships
- Prompt payment of fair prices
- No child, forced or otherwise exploited labor
- Workplace non-discrimination, gender equity and freedom of association
- Democratic & Transparent Organizations
- Safe working conditions and reasonable work hours
- Investment in community development projects
- Environmental sustainability
- Traceability and transparency

Your purchase is powerful! Learn which of your favorite products are fair trade. Choose them with pride on World Fair Trade Day and throughout the year.

What is World Fair Trade Day?

World Fair Trade Day is an annual global celebration occurring each May. Celebrations bring consumers and businesses, nonprofit organizations, churches, student groups, and advocates together to host thousands of events worldwide. This year, World Fair Trade Day is May 9.

What is Fair Trade?

Fair Trade is a social movement and market model that aims to empower small-scale farmers and workers in underdeveloped countries to create an alternative trading system that supports equitable trading, sustainable development and long-term trading relationships. Fair trade supports fair prices for producers, safe working conditions, investment in community development projects, and the elimination of child labor, workplace discrimination and exploitation.

Learn more about fair-trade practices and the Fair World Project at:

www.fairworldproject.org

CO-OP CALENDAR

MAY

5/4 Deadline to order Organic Field-grown Native Perennials from Rebel Hill Farm

Catalogs available in-store and on our website: belfast.coop. Plant delivery Sat. 5/9.

Round Up for Community recipients: Come Boating, Waldo County Open Space Festival

Featured Artist: Dan Kirchoff

5/5 "Growing Local" screening Tues. 6:30pm, Belfast Free Library - free screening followed by discussion. Sponsored with Maine Farmland Trust and the Library.

5/9 World Fair Trade Day 2015 theme "Stand with Small-Scale Farmers: Together We Can Cool the Planet"

5/9 Rebel Hill Farm Plant Delivery Sat. 9-11 am pick-up at the Co-op, Pendleton Lane side lot.

5/12 Tick Talk Tues. 6pm, Belfast Free Library - free presentation with Lyme disease specialist Dr. Beatrice Szantyr, sponsored with the Library.

5/16 Guided Store Tour Sat. 10am - meet at Co-op entrance.

5/22 Wine Tasting & Art Opening Fri. 7-8pm, Café - Featured wines 10% off during tasting.

5/28 Eating from the Maine Landscape Thurs. 6:30pm, Belfast Free Library - free presentation with local chef Frank Giglio about adding wild foods to your diet.

5/29 Love LOCAL Day Fri. - Appleton Creamery, 10% off all Maine-made products all day.

JUNE

6/1-7 Member-Owner Super Sale Week

Round Up for Community recipients: Greater Bay Area Ministerium, WeCARE

Featured Artist: Ed Moffitt

6/20 Guided Store Tour Sat. 10am - meet at Co-op entrance

6/26 Love LOCAL Day Fri. - Cheryl Wixson's Kitchen (Stonington), 10% off all Maine-made products all day.

6/26 Wine Tasting & Art Opening Fri. 7-8pm, Café - Featured wines 10% off during tasting.

For more information about Co-op events, visit our online calendar at: **www.belfast.coop**