



# co-op news

March 2006



newsletter of the Dublin Food Co-Op



## Dublin Food Co-op News Mar. 2006

Welcome to the March/April issue of the Co-Op News. We had recently been producing the news letter on a monthly basis but this proved too difficult to achieve. We will produce it on a bi-monthly basis for the moment.

The Co-Op A.G.M. is coming up soon and in this newsletter we have notice of this and all members are invited to come to the Agm and perhaps put themselves forward for the new Co-Ordinating Body. Nomination forms are available in the Co-op and please do consider putting yourself forward as we need new members for the Board. The Co-op is at an exciting stage in its development. We are also having an SGM beforehand to seek to amend the rules so that members can be elected for two years at a time, thus ensuring more continuity from year to year.

In this issue, we have news from Sonairte, news of exciting "office" developments and some health tips for spring from Dorene Palmer! There are other interesting items including Pauric's now regular Dublin Food Co-op Events listing.

Unfortunately we do not have any letters for our Members Forum for this issue. We would really like to encourage people to write to the Co-op News, perhaps to respond to some of the issues or just to let us know anything you are doing that may be of interest to other members. So many of us are involved in different areas and are doing interesting things! The news letter can provide a vehicle for discussion of issues and also to ensure people are in touch with members own interests.

Monica Haughey (Editor, Co-Ordinating Body)

## A Word from the "Chair"

This will be the last Newsletter published before the Co-op's AGM which the Board is calling for April 5th next at 8.00 PM in St Andrews. At it, besides the usual business, we hope to take stock of the eventful past year and to see what lessons we can all learn from it.

AGMs are important events at which crucial decisions are taken, not the least of which is the election of the following year's Board. As our rules do not permit proxy votes, the (fully paid up) members who do attend these meetings have a greater influence on the Co-op's direction than might otherwise be the case. From the experience of last year's SGM and from the wide ranging views expressed in the questionnaire conducted by this year's Board, it is clear that very divergent and strongly held opinions about our future development are harboured by our membership.

All members - and not just the vocal ones or the CB members themselves- have an equal stake in our future so that all members who care about the Co-op and who wish to have their voices heard should do their best to attend and contribute to the upcoming meeting.

The traumatic events which culminated in our failed attempt to move to new premises in Blackpitts (in accordance with mandates from many past AGMs) have highlighted the weaknesses in our structures which force us to move at the pace of the slowest of our members who care to attend our poorly supported general meetings. Any incoming board should look seriously at those structures with a view to bringing appropriate and measured proposals for change before some future SGM.

In order to assist and kick-start that process, this year's CB has met with an external "Consultant" Mr Sandy Dunlop. He is available and interested to work with the membership through a comprehensive consultative process. This would help us identify the areas of our structure that need addressing, to refocus on our purpose and aims and to assist us in moving forward whilst bringing with us as many members as possible and preserving our core ethos.

We have invited Mr Dunlop to the AGM where we hope to introduce him to those attending and hear him speak, briefly, about the proposed process. Please do your best to attend and participate.

One area that the Board definitely feels needs attention is the way that the term of office of our CB members is dealt with in our rules. Clause 10 requires every director to resign at every AGM although being eligible for re-election for a maximum of three consecutive years.

This has the serious disadvantage that any given incoming Board might be, and often has been, composed of all new members with no knowledge of prior decisions taken thereby preventing any continuity in policy development. This problem has been exacerbated by the lack, until now, of any dedicated staff to support the Board in its work.

To address this problem, we are calling an SGM immediately before (7.30PM) the AGM to consider an amendment to the rules which will provide for a two year term of office for Board members with one half, only, of the directors resigning at each AGM and with a new maximum continuous membership for any one Board member of four years together with some interim arrangements for the first year.

Notices of the SGM and AGM will be circulated soon and I would urge all members to consider them carefully and to come along to the meetings to make their voices heard.

Also YOUR Co-op needs the input of dedicated members

who are prepared to give of their time and put themselves forward for the CB and to carry on the excellent work of the current Board.

So, if you believe you have a contribution to make, your Co-op wants to hear from you now. Please don't be put off by the difficulties involved. The work is very worthwhile and very necessary and, yes, as one member anonymously asked on our website, we are going "all corporate" or, at least, we certainly ought to. The fact that we are a not for profit organisation does not mean that we do not need proper structures.

The only other thing that I would like to do is to sincerely thank, again, the current and previous Boards upon which I have served for their collective dedication and support, often in difficult circumstances, and to wish the incoming Board and all our members (even those with whom I have had profound differences of opinion) all the very best for the future.

Let us all move forward together always looking to the greater good of the organisation as a whole.

Anthony Harris  
Executive Chairman  
Dublin Food Co-op.

## Premises Search - An Update

We are currently considering another premises in Newmarket Square, Dublin 8. We were unsuccessful in our tender to the Dublin City Council for the old church we had been interested in but another premises is available across from this. We are still considering this premises which would be a useful stepping stone to establishing ourselves in this part of the city. The area has plenty of potential and has a lovely square which would allow us to have additional open-air stalls if we wished.

Anthony Harris

## News from the Office

There is some good news from the office in that we have now two extra "staff"! The CB on behalf of the Co-op appointed two new enthusiastic and skilled people to assist in the smooth running of the Co-op. Anthony Dillon (Co-op and CB member) was appointed as Operations Assistant. He will assist in the Operational side of things and among his list of duties will be assisting Tim around stock control, ordering and help-rotation management. The new administrator is Rhinhild Boch (Co-op member) who we believe will help transform us around record keeping, office organisation and general administration. Both are very welcome additions to the staff group.

The other good news is that we have purchased some new laptops and updated point of sale software and till receipt printers for St. Andrews. We are delighted to have some new equipment as the old was by all accounts very inefficient.

Una Coghlan / Monica Haughey

## Health and Safety

Thanks to all our members, for ensuring the aisles and floors in St. Andrews are clear of shopping bags. This ensures ease of movement throughout the Co-op and improves safety for all.

Shopping bags can be left, if necessary on the trolley in the front hall. (This is at owners risk but we don't anticipate any difficulties with this arrangement). We do understand this is not very satisfactory but until we acquire our own premises we will have to manage. Please also remember to keep all exits unobstructed at all times and to remain vigilant around health and safety.

Tim has been working with the producers around marking out areas with yellow tape to ensure their goods do not block exits and the aisles. The producers co-operation has been appreciated although Duncan Healy did mention that he normally only heeded double yellow lines!

Miriam Hennessy (CB & Health & Safety)



## Fairtrade Fortnight 6-19 March 2006

Since the dawn of civilisation people have engaged in trade. Trade has progressed from being a simple barter transaction between two people to become a complex, globally linked network of producers, manufacturers, private investors and multi-national corporations. Unbridled globalisation and market liberalisation, particularly in the last twenty years has wreaked havoc on some of the poorest people on the planet...

Many products offered on our markets are much too cheap to assure a decent living to producers. Shoppers who choose FAIRTRADE products play a vital role in alleviating poverty and supporting marginalised producers.

"You can be helping someone all your life but nothing changes. Tell more people that we are producers who are capable of change. It is a worldwide movement which aims to reduce the imbalance between rich and poor. The coffee is produced by capable people and we would like consumers to recognise the value of what we are doing"

Pedro Antonio Haslam, Cecocafen R.L., Nicaragua

(Extracted from [www.fairtrade.ie](http://www.fairtrade.ie))

Dublin Food Co-op supports FAIRTRADE products and endeavours to support fair-trade in general. We have the FAIRTRADE products shelved separately, close to the check-out area.

## Health in Spring

Spring has arrived, it is a time of birth and new beginnings, a time to rise early and be more active. Over the winter, we indulged in warming, heavy foods both to keep warm and nourished. When spring arrives there is a natural urge to eat less and more lightly, to cleanse the body or even fast.

Food preparation becomes simpler and lighter while cooking time is shorter. More raw and sprouted foods are recommended which have a cleansing energising effect. Lots of young greens either steamed or juiced are enriching for the blood. Less salt, oil and fat are needed, in fact it is suggested that for seven days

each spring to avoid all salt in order to purge the body of any excess accumulated over the winter time. Perhaps it is one of the easiest times to consider a detox, or even to make changes to your diet.

Dorene Palmer

Dorene is an experienced vegetarian and macrobiotic cook. Her next course is on the theme of "Spring Detox" and is a six week course on the use of raw foods and new ways to cook sea and land vegetables. It commences on Wednesday 22nd March at Airfield House Dundrum. Please contact Dorene herself for further details or to reserve a place. She can be contacted at 01 2149662 or 085 7062039.

## News from Sonairte's Irish Produce Stall at the Food Co-op

Sonairte is the Ecology Centre located in Laytown Co.Meath.

It is part of an area that includes Bettystown and Mornington and is known as Meath's Gold Coast!

Since the early 1990's we have had a stall at the Dublin Food Coop and are proud that all our fresh produce is home grown. Our organic fruit and vegetables are grown along the river Nanny in an old Georgian walled garden, circa 1760. This includes rare varieties of ancient knarled apple trees which continue to produce delicious fruit.

Nothing fresh is imported. As an Ecology Centre this is important for minimising impact on dwindling energy resources. It also means more seasonal produce which is kinder to our bodies, warming us in winter and cooling for summer.

In February's newsletter we welcomed attention brought to using plastic bags, which hang around forever. We are guilty of resorting to plastic occasionally and have since changed to providing only biodegradable and recycled paper packaging and reusing plastic containers.

Sonairte is a registered charity and is presently staffed by volunteers who take turns selling on Saturdays. This explains why you see so many varied faces at our stall!

The aim of Sonairte is Education in all areas of Sustainability and respect for our resources. You can wander through the organic garden and down to the nature trail, following the river to a bird hide or up to the adventure playground and tree nursery. You may like to start your visit with a cup of tea in Mustard Seed Café, browse in the Eco-shop or take some free info for sustainable living in Reception.

The Centre is open again Friday to Sunday from April. Our next Farmers Markets are Sunday March 19th and April 9th. 12 to 4pm.

Sonairte has an Alternative Energy courtyard that urgently needs some love and attention before it can be open to the public again. If anyone has mechanical or electrical skills to spare we would love to hear from you.

Contact us on 041 982 7572 or info @ sonairte.org

## The Tide is turning for Ireland's Waters

From Lough Swilly to the Lakes of Killarney, from Lough Derg to Dublin Bay, Irish environmental groups have been championing and defending Ireland's waters for many years. It has been an onerous and frustrating task, in the face of powerful vested interests and political apathy and, at times, hostility. Often, it's seemed a losing battle. Run-off from intensively farmed land, discharges from sewage treatment works; effluent from septic tanks, discharges from industry and runoff from forestry, worked bogs and urban areas, all pose a huge threat to our rivers, lakes, estuaries and coastal and groundwaters.

But help is at hand and water protection campaigners are now supported by one of the most radical and far-reaching pieces of environmental legislation to ever emerge from the EU. The Water Framework Directive (WFD) does many of the things ecologists and environmentalists have been calling on for years:

" It requires waters to be managed at a natural catchment (River Basin) level, recognising that water is no respecter of county and country boundaries;

" It emphasises holistic, ecological measurement of water quality, rather than focusing narrowly on traditional chemical water testing;

" It places real public consultation & participation of all interested citizens 'centre stage' more than any previous EU legislation

Of course the WFD is only as strong as the will to implement and enforce it. And Ireland's environmental community, have moved a step closer to ensuring that the WFD does work, with the formation in January 2005 of the Sustainable Water Network (SWAN). Realising the huge significance of the WFD and buoyed by a new sense of optimism, 30 of Ireland's leading national and local environmental organisations have joined forces under the SWAN umbrella to ensure that the WFD really does deliver for Ireland's waters.

Sinead O' Brien

Sustainable Water Network (SWAN), 9 Upper Mount Street, Dublin 2; (01) 6425583; sobrien@swanireland.ie

Please note:

Sinead O'Brien of SWAN will be coming to give a talk in the Co-op on Saturday 29th April at 12 noon. We do hope as many members as possible can attend this interesting

For further information see [www.swanireland.ie](http://www.swanireland.ie)

## Dublin Food Co-Op Events

Saturday 18th March at 12noon.

**'Co-ops around the World: a slide show of visits to co-ops and organic food projects in Russia, Mongolia, China and the US.**

A talk and slide show presented by Pauric Cannon.

Saturday 25th March at 12noon.

**'What's unfair about World Trade?'**

A talk presented by the Comhlámh Trade Group.

(Comhlámh is a returned Development Workers Organisation)

Saturday 1st April at 12 noon

**Let's talk about organic...**

How the organic movement developed in Europe - what we have achieved - what could be the organic future. A talk by Christine Neidhardt, of Ec Menta, Germany who played a leading role in the development of BioFach -Europe's largest Organic Trade Fair – from 1995-2005. She works today as a trainer, coach and project manager in the organic food market.

Saturday 29th April at 12 noon

**The Tide is turning for Ireland's Waters**

Sinead O'Brien, Coordinator of The Sustainable Water Network (SWAN) - a network of 30 water protection groups - will speak on how a radical piece of EU legislation could help water protection campaigners in their quest to protect Ireland's fragile water resources.

Saturday 6th May 12 noon

**Homeopathy**

Siobhan Burke, an established Homeopathy practitioner, will speak on the above. Qualified in 2001, Ms Burke runs a professional Homeopathy practice at 5 Knapton Tce, Monkstown, Co. Dublin. Tel: 2301292.

Saturday 27th May at 12 noon

**Peak Oil and Community.**

Speaker: Davie Philip, Events and Communications Director at the Cultivate Centre for Sustainable Living and Learning.

All talks will take place in Room (2) St. Andrew's Centre, c/o DFCo-op

Note: All talks will take place in room 2 upstairs in St Andrews.

## Food Co-Op Walks

**March:** Joint walk with the Food Co-Op and the Gillbillies Walking Group

**WHERE:** Kocksink wood and Prince Williams seat. This is a moderate walk through deciduous woodland, farming and hill country.

**WHEN:** Sunday 26th March.

**MEET:** Either at the Yellow House pub, Rathfarnham at 12 noon or at the clock monument in the centre of Enniskerry village at 1pm (please wait if we are late arriving in Enniskerry).

**April:** Dublin Food Co-Op Walk

**WHERE:** A circuit of Glendalough from near Laragh. This is a moderate walk through woodland, up a mountain and back by the famous lakes.

**WHEN:** Sunday 30th April.

**MEET:** At Laragh village outside Lynams pub at 11.30am

Bring comfortable walking shoes, warm rain proof clothing and some food.

For more details or if you need a lift contact Larry Gordon at 087-6832827(Mobile) or at 2882957(H)

## Help Rota Teams & Dates

Team	Dates 2006
A	18 Mar 6 May
B	25 Mar 13 May
C	1 April 20 May
D	8 April 27 May
E	15 April 3 June
F	22 April 10 June
G	29 April 17 June

## Members' Notice

### Special General Meeting

7.30pm

### Annual General Meeting

8.00pm

of

**Dublin Food Co-op Society Ltd**

**Wednesday 5th April 2006**

at

**Saint Andrew's Resource Centre,**

**Pearse Street, Dublin 2**

Registration of members entitled to vote will take place between 7 and 7.30pm. Light refreshments served.

Please ensure that your annual membership subscription is up-to-date to enable you to vote!

## Recipe Section

Bernie's tea brack

115g (4 oz) organic sultanas

115g (4 oz) organic sun-dried raisins

115g (4 oz) organic currants

350 ml (12 fl oz) boiling water

225 g (8oz) organic spelt flour

1 ½ teaspoons baking powder

2 teaspoons mixed spice

1 teaspoon cinnamon

1 free range egg

1 unbleached (Luaka) teabag

Oven gas 5, 190degrees centigrade, 375degrees Fahrenheit

Wash the fruit well. Place in a large bowl. Add the teabag and the boiling water. Soak the fruit overnight.

In a separate bowl mix the flour, baking powder, mixed spice and the cinnamon.

Whisk the egg and add to the soaked fruit. Add the flour and spice mix to the fruit and mix very well. Pour into a well oiled 450g (1lb) loaf tin. Smooth top lightly.

Bake in the centre of a pre-heated oven for one hour. Remove from the oven and allow to sit for 10 minutes then turn out on to a wire cooling rack to cool completely.

This lovely ( and pretty fool- proof!) recipe is courtesy of Blazing Salads and features in their most comprehensive and useful cookbook. This is available from their Co-op stall and also available in their shop.

## Co-Op News:

Any articles for inclusion in next newsheet should be forwarded to editor@dublinfoodcoop.com . Any members interested in helping with the newsletter please also get in touch.

Editor of this newsletter is Monica Haughey (Co-ordinating Body). Layout and Design by Anthony Dillon (Co-ordinating Body).