



co-op news

July 2006

newsletter of the Dublin Food Co-Op

Word From The Chair

Welcome to the July/ August issue of the Co-op news. Since the last issue our editorial team has now widened to include Oonagh Duggan and Siraj Szaidi from the Co-ordinating Body and a Co-op member Jackie Bourke, all of whom have great experience. I am delighted that we have this new team and look forward to further developing the scope of the newsletter.

The new Co-ordinating body are meeting regularly and beginning to address what needs to be done over the next year. Working groups are forming around areas which include I.T., Premises, Staff relations and Communications. The Business Plan has been re-named the Development Plan and the group is beginning to consider what needs to be revised in the old document and look at ways to ensure members are consulted and involved around different aspects of the Co-op's development. We are in particular need of someone who would be good on assisting with financial aspects of the Plan. With regard to staffing, Reini is delighted to announce she is expecting her third child in early October. She will be going on maternity leave and we are also on the look-out for someone with good administrative skills to help cover in her absence. The Premises group have still no "concrete" news (excuse the pun) but please do keep in mind that the Co-op still requires something concrete of our own! Rents in St Andrews have increased considerably over the past while and our operations are very restricted. With a view to increasing our turnover we have decided to extend the Saturday market until 4.00pm from September, for a trial period. So do tell your friends who are busy in the morning time and don't manage to make it here in time.

In this issue of the Co-op News we have the usual regular features as well as an interesting piece from Sophie Rieu from Unicorn design who conveys her passion for organic clothing. Lorraine Fitzmaurice from Blazing Salads gives us some insight into how she manages to make whole food cooking appealing to her children. Do remember to get in touch if you have something you'd like to write about or know someone who does!

Monica Haughey (Chairperson)

Clothing which leaves no Footprint

By Sophie Rieu



I began designing when I was working for former Green MEP Patricia McKenna. I was studying part-time at the Grafton Academy and using all my spare time to sew and create. I had tons of ideas rushing through my mind but no time to make them come true. One day I decided to give myself the opportunity to do just that. I knew a bit about GM cotton and about the plethora of toxic chemicals used in the textile industry so I kept my activist hat on, using organic eco-dyed fabrics only. Social issues are also close to my heart so I sourced fabrics fairly and produced locally.

The unicorn is a symbol of purity and I love these fantastic, beautiful creatures so in May 2003 I set up Unicorn Design. The more I design with eco-friendly fabrics the more I discover amazing companies all over the world who have woven the most beautiful cloths (often by hand) and have decided to keep it organic and fair trade. They do not necessarily advertise, but one day at a trade fair you stumble upon them and they casually inform you that only using organic cotton for example has been company policy from the start. When you know the story behind eco-friendly cloths and clothes, it makes them even more beautiful.

Nowadays we pick up a skirt in a department store for a mere €30 and we think it is the 'bargain' that makes the story we tell our friends! But if they heard the true story behind the bargain; the sweat and the tears, the pollution and the destruction, it would definitely not impress our friends.

continued overleaf

Most of our clothes are made in sweatshops and their production pollutes our soil, water, and air - we do not realize the true cost of what we wear.

The textile industry leaves one of the worst ecological footprints on this planet. Many fabrics are synthetic and derived from oil. The rest come from plants and animals which are mostly grown in intensive conditions and, in the case of cotton, require a huge amount of chemical sprays and fertilizers, as well as water. Cotton is cultivated intensively on 3% of the Earth yet it uses 25% of the world's pesticides and herbicides and a huge amount of water. (Source: www.pan-uk.org). Not only do these practices destroy the soil, they also pollute the groundwater, the air and seriously affect the health of growers living nearby. It is estimated that 20,000 people die every year due to pesticide poisoning (Source: www.soilassociation.org).

To give you an even more graphic example as quoted by the Soil Association on its website, it takes one cup full of chemicals to grow the cotton for one t-shirt! Toxic compounds are also poured on the cloth to fix the colours, prevent the cloth from shrinking, make it fire-resistant, optically brighten it, and make it crease-resistant. These harmful, invisible chemicals end up everywhere; in our water, food, and air. Although some of these chemicals are known carcinogens, they are used throughout the textile industry. We have all smelled the disgusting smell at dry-cleaners: it is formaldehyde, a proven carcinogenic substance. Why is it still around? But there is hope. There is, I believe, one "green" dry-cleaner now in Dublin.

The same goes with clothing. I hope that the increasing numbers of companies producing eco-dyed fabrics will be so influential that the entire textile industry will take on those wonderful alternatives. Growing consumer demand for organic, fair trade clothing helps and slowly the change is happening.

Sophie Rieu of Unicorn Design (www.unicorndesign.net) has a stall selling organic clothing every Saturday at the Co-op market at the St. Andrews Centre on Pearse St.

Cooking for the Family

Lorraine from Blazing Salads takes the pain out of cooking something everyone will enjoy.

What to feed the family for dinner? The challenge for the cook is finding something everyone will eat and enjoy which is balanced and nutritious – not easy. Most importantly, cooking should be a pleasure. Food cooked with anger or in a stressed manner can create indigestion for the diners.

Noodles are great; light, easy to digest, quick and easy to prepare. Children in particular love them - they enjoy slurping them up!

Udon noodles are flat noodles made from wholemeal flour or brown rice. In my family the brown rice udon are the favourite. For anyone with a wheat allergy udon noodles made from brown rice only are available, as are 100% soba buckwheat noodles. If you don't have an allergy use the soba with 40% buckwheat which are easier to handle. Cooking noodles means less time in the kitchen, and they can be cooked a day or 2 in advance. Refrigerate until needed. To cook noodles, bring plenty of water to a boil. Add the noodles and cook for 10-12 minutes. Rinse the cooked noodles in plenty of cold water to wash away the salt. Set aside and use in dishes of your choice.

Keep meals simple but try to use a variety of good quality ingredients to meet daily nutritional requirements. A simple option is using unrefined oils when sautéing alternating between sesame, sunflower and olive oils.

Keep roasted sunflower, sesame and pumpkin seeds beside your cooker and sprinkle on top of meals before serving. When making soups soak dulse, or wakame seaweed and add a small amount with the vegetables. If the soups are blended fussy eaters will not be aware of the seaweed! Use sea salt which has a lot of minerals instead of table salt. Kuzu is the powdered tuber from the root of the hardy, wild kuzu plant. It is a very good thickening agent. It cools and soothes the stomach and intestine, helping to make them stronger. If using in medicinal remedies, make sure to use 100% organic kuzu.

Noodles in Kuzu Broth

(serves 4)

1 medium onion, diced finely

Unrefined sunflower oil

2 dessertspoons of kuzu

225 ml (8 fl oz) cold water

Half teaspoon juice from freshly grated ginger, optional

Natural soy sauce.

Sauté the onion in a little unrefined sunflower until soft but not brown. Dissolve the kuzu in a little amount of cold water. Then add the rest of the 225ml (8 fl oz) of water. Pour over the sautéed onions. Over a medium heat allow to thicken, stirring constantly to avoid lumps. Add the ginger juice and simmer for 3 minutes. Season with natural soy sauce to taste.

Add the cooked noodles to the sauce and heat through adding a little water if the sauce becomes too thick. Serve in bowls with steamed vegetables and sautéed tofu. A good way to introduce seaweed to this meal is to toast a sheet of nori seaweed over a naked flame and crumble finely. Sprinkle over the noodles and vegetables.

Price Check/ Visibility of Producers Pricing

Last issue, Bernie Walsh drew our attention to the prices of food in the Co-op. In fact we did some price checks and did discover that in fact our prices are quite good, **even before the discount**, which many of our members get anyhow. I have taken six items and compared them with a local health food shop.

I tried to compare the prices with Tesco in Dún Laoghaire shopping Centre and none of the specific organic items chosen for the price check were available. I am sure the items may well be available in some supermarkets for a much better price but it was interesting to note that many of our products aren't yet that widely available.

Item	Health Food Shop	Co-op (full price)
Eleven O Clock Rooibosch Tea 100g	€2.45	€2.47
Equal Exchange Organic Decaff Coffee	€6.55	€6.63
Soya Milk Alpro, (Unsweetened)	€1.89	€1.66
Weleda Deodorant	€8.25	€8.00
Suma Sunflower Margarine	€3.29	€3.09
Basic Muesli 1kg Munster Wholefoods	€3.49	€3.43

With regard to the visibility of some stall holders prices, it does appear that the writer did have a valid point. We do hope that our stall-holders will address the issue and it is something the new Co-ordinating body also needs to consider.

Monica Haughey (Chairperson of Coordinating Body)



Co-Op Walks

Co-op member Larry Gordon leads walks usually on the last Sunday of the month. The walks vary in their intensity from ambling type walks to more strenuous walks. What they all have in common though is that they are fun, they are a great way to meet people, and it is great to get out and enjoy some of the beautiful areas around Dublin.

JULY WALK

WHERE: Ireland's Eye island. This is off Howth peninsula on the north side of Dublin city near Howth village which is on the Dart railway line. The island is reasonably large with spectacular scenery and cliff walks. There is an opportunity to swim there and the island is also home to many seabirds so bring your binoculars if you have them.

WHEN: Sunday 30th July

MEET: 11AM at Howth Dart station in Howth village. We will take a boat from Howth harbour for a small charge out to Ireland's Eye, a short boat ride.

BRING: Comfortable walking shoes, raingear, some food and swimwear if you want to have a dip.

TRIP TO WEST CORK IN AUGUST

WHERE: Kilcrohane village on the Sheeps Head peninsula 20 miles from Bantry in West Cork. This is a superlative place near the end of one of the most un-spoilt peninsulas in all of Ireland. It is "untouched by globalisation", has magnificent scenery, a pristine coastline with abundant sea life, hills and great walking. We will be walking the Sheeps Head Way, a way-marked trail considered one of the best in the country.

WHEN: From Saturday 19th to Saturday 26th August. We will be staying in a self-catering cottage in Kilcrohane village which has shops, pubs and eating places. There is room for 14 people and those interested need to contact Larry Gordon sooner rather than later in order not to be disappointed. All welcome but places will be offered to those who are first to commit themselves.

SEPTEMBER WALK

WHERE: Church Mountain and Corriebracks. These are two mountains in west Wicklow surrounded by expansive, peaceful valleys and moorland. Church Mountain has a ruin of an ancient church on top, which was a site of pilgrimage in the past.

WHEN: Sunday 24th September

MEET: Hollywood village at 11am

BRING: Comfortable walking shoes, raingear, warm clothes and some food.

For more details on walks or for lifts contact Larry in the Food Co-op on Saturdays or at 2882957(H) or 087-6832827(Mobile).

notice board

Special Orders

Members can now collect Special Orders Fridays up to 6.30pm from DFCo-op, St Andrew's Centre, Pearse St.

Extra opening hour!

The Co-op market at St. Andrews Centre will remain open up to 4pm from 2nd September.

Wanted: Help Rota Volunteers

There are vacancies on the Help Rota especially on Fridays. Any 2 hour period - mornings or afternoons - once every 7 weeks. And, there's a 10% discount at the check-out, when you join the Help Rota. Contact Pauric Cannon for more details 01 8730451 or at the co-op on Saturday.

Films: coming to a co-op near you!

'The Future of Food', 'The Politics of Food', 'The Slow Food Revolution',

'Cuban Food Revolution'

We plan to show the above films over the next few months in Room (2) upstairs in St Andrews on Saturdays at a time and date to be announced shortly.

Help Rota Team Dates For Rest Of 2006

Volunteers: Cut this calendar out and stick it on your fridge so you don't forget your help rota slot!!

A		12 Aug	30 Sept	18 Nov	
B		19 Aug	7 Oct	25 Nov	
C	8 July	26 Aug	14 Oct	2 Dec	
D	15 July	2 Sept	21 Oct	9 Dec	
E	22 July	9 Sept	28 Oct	16 Dec	
F	29 July	16 Sept	4 Nov	23 Dec	
G	5 Aug	23 Sept	11 Nov		

Advertising in the Newsletter

The Co-op News team is considering offering advertising space to co-op members in the newsletter. If you are interested in placing a small ad for your professional services, please contact editor@dublinfoodcoop.com

Some Food for Thought

"If there is a panacea or cure-all for life, it is self-love," Paul Solomon.

"If the development of personal power is the first golden key to psychological and spiritual health, then unconditional self-love is definitely the second golden key. Personal power and self-love are the building blocks of a healthy self-image. The most important relationship in your life is your relationship with yourself. If you are off centre within yourself, how can you be on centre with others?" Joshua David Stone.

Gill Riordan (Co-Op member)

Co-op Events

Saturday 2nd September

Bolivia's Emerging Indigenous Democracy Movement. Latin American aid worker, Claire O'Neill will speak about her recent experience of working in Bolivia on behalf of Trocaire.

Saturday 7th October

Peak Oil and Community. Davie Philip, Events & Communications Director at the Cultivate Centre for Sustainable Living and Learning. Talk and slide show.

All talks will take place in room 2 upstairs in St Andrews at 12 noon. Suggestions for talks and offers to give talks or workshops can be sent to pauric@dublinfoodcoop.com

Pauric Cannon, Development Coordinator, Dublin Food Co-op.

Michael Brennan Remembered

In the memory of Michael Brennan RIP, long standing and valued Co-op member, Mary O'Donnell is compiling stories of how he touched the lives of others. She is hoping to have these ready to share and to celebrate the anniversary of his death in September. If you knew Michael and have a story to share please email your story to Mary at maryodon@gmail.com.

Co-Op News Editorial Team

Any articles or letters to the Members Forum for inclusion in next newsheet should be forwarded to editor@dublinfoodcoop.com or by post to Co-op News, Dublin Food Coop, 12A North King St., Dublin 7, Ireland.

Editor: Monica Haughey, Coordinator: Oonagh Duggan, Layout: Anthony Dillon, Editing: Jackie Bourke, and Siraj Zaidi. Thanks to Graeme Howard for taking photos of CB members and stall holders which you will see in the next few weeks.