

Community Fair Trade Organic

# co-op news

Feb/Mar 2009

newsletter of the Dublin Food Co-op

## Dear Food Co-op Members,

February is nearly over and plans for our April A.G.M. are already under way. It will take place on Thursday, April 2nd at 8.00 and we'd like to encourage as many members as possible to come along on the night.

The Dublin Food Co-op A.G.M. is a fantastic exercise in democracy, where ordinary members can voice their opinions about any number of issues. It's lively and animated, never dull or predictable, and occasionally, like last year, actually finishes on time! It's also a great way to get to know other members and, as some stalls will be open on the night, you'll be able to eat and debate at the same time!

One of the main functions of the A.G.M. is the election of new members to the Co-ordinating Body. Seven vacancies are due to be filled and we'd like to really encourage members, long-established or newly signed-up, to put themselves forward for these positions. The CB meets each month and works to improve facilities within the Co-op, as well as addressing financial and administrative issues. It's challenging work but, like all voluntary endeavours, very rewarding. The CB works as a team and is in constant email communication between meetings.

Candidates will be asked to introduce themselves to the A.G.M. and, perhaps, give a short speech on what it is they would like to contribute to the CB. If there are more candidates than positions to be filled, an election will follow.

So please, take note of the date and keep it free in your calendar! And, remember, dues must be paid to attend and vote.

And as for this month's newsletter, we have an interview with Dave Dunn, our Venue Co-ordinator, and a recipe from Pat Tobin, our resident vegetarian cookery specialist. And as it's always good to know what's happening internationally, and following on from Linda's article on a French Co-op in the last issue, Patricia, a new member with a lot of experience in the area, fills us in on an organisation representing the co-operative movement in Europe.

Hoping to see a big turn-out on April 2nd!

*Fionnuala Ward (Editor)*

## Note From the Chairperson,

Here what's going on at the Co-op for the next 5 weeks. Appreciate some art, sing, take a few cooking classes, attend a flea market and volunteer. Get in touch with David the "Venue Coordinator" if you have an event you would like to do at the Co-op. We need volunteers, get an extra 10% off on Co-op dry goods by volunteering for the "Help Rota" or new Co-op Shop remodel. Don't hesitate to pull me aside if you have an idea, concern or would like to chat about how we can make the Co-op a better place.

Enjoy,

*Jaan (Co-ordinating Body)*

## Subscription Fee for 2009 is now due!

All members now receive membership cards and, on presentation of these cards, members receive a 2% discount at the co-op tills. The new cards for 2009 are ready to go so, if you haven't already, please renew your subscriptions at the Welcome Desk!

2008 membership cards are no longer valid and at the upcoming AGM on April 2nd only paid up members will be entitled to vote. Subscriptions are €25.00 for an adult, €40.00 for a family (2 cards and votes) and €12.50 on presentation of proof of student, unemployment, social welfare or OAP status.

*Reini, (Co-op Administrator)*

## FÁILTE

FÁILTE - an information meeting for new members takes place on the second Saturday of the month. The next Failte is on Saturday, March 14th. Due to the Easter holidays, April's Failte will take place on Sat April 18th. Each Failte starts at 11 am in our Members Meeting Room.

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## Events at Dublin Food Co-op

### Continuing | Ginni Mills Art Exhibition (Mirrors)

Check out the walls of THE CO-OP for the mirrors made by Ginni Mills from the City Arts Squad. These are very reasonably priced. Contact [ginetix@o2.ie](mailto:ginetix@o2.ie)

### Continuing | Thursday Singing led by Anna Felton

Sing those 2009 recessionary blues away with the regular Thursday evening songs led by Anna Felton. 7.30pm - 9.00pm

### Wed 4th & 11th March | Tales From A Greek Kitchen (Add some sunshine on your plate) | 19 - 21.00

A 2-week course on healthy Greek cooking that will focus on:

- introducing the benefits of the Mediterranean diet as an important practice against heart disease
- preparing a traditional greek meal to take home
- offering notes on the ancient Greek philosophers' views on food
- providing the participants with authentic recipes

Cost: €65 including the organic ingredients Contact: Katerina Psimopoulos, [katgr@mail.com](mailto:katgr@mail.com), 086 302 5513, 01 491 3009

### THUR 19th March | Start of Series of Low Budget Cookery Classes | 7.30pm

We're looking to engage your interest in a series of low-budget cookery classes - exploring how to cook on a recessionary style budget of €5 per night. Everyone will also be asked for a donation, which will go towards the purchase of a mill for grains. (Fee of €20 per night for non-members) The idea is to share knowledge, skills and tricks in order to prepare a healthy, mostly organic meal in a time and money saving way. If you have a recipe that fits this pattern, you are invited to take over one night. At the end of each class, we are going to have a wonderful meal together.

*Beat the recession and enjoy a sense of community in the Dublin Food Co-op!*

Interested? Get in touch with Reini at [info@dublinfood.coop](mailto:info@dublinfood.coop) and use her favourite phrase: "low budget"!

### SUN 29th March | Dublin Flea Market | 11.00 - 17.00

Dublin Flea Market will be back again for March for a general jumble sale of old and new. Stalls will have bric-a-brac, records, art, hand-made goods, organic goods, food, music, jewelry, clothing (vintage and second hand), furniture, and loads of bits of unwanted junk that may just be someone else's treasure. 11am - 5pm. Contact [dublinflea@gmail.com](mailto:dublinflea@gmail.com)

### THUR 02.APR.2009 | Talking about the Village - Building Sustainable Community | 18.15 - 19.45

The Village sustainable community project in Cloughjordan, North Tipperary was a project that was started by Dublin Food Coop members. As a living community 'The Village' will demonstrate ecological building, renewable energy generation, local food production, natural health care, local livelihoods, and play a part in conserving the genetic biodiversity of Ireland. It will act as model of best practice in sustainability. Davie Philip will give an update of where the project is at, outlining with pictures and film the ideas and technologies being utilised.

## Co-op Walks

### March Walk

**Where:** The Great Sugarloaf and the Rocky Valley, Kilmacanoge, Co. Wicklow. This is a mountain walk with great views.

**When:** Sunday 29th March

**Meet:** At the Glencormac Inn carpark in Kilmacanoge village at 11am.

For all walks bring comfortable footwear, warm and waterproof clothes and some food. For more info. or if you need a lift contact Larry Gordon at 2882957 (Home) or 087-6832827 (Mobile).

## Bean Goulash

½ lb of dried beans of your choice or a mixture of 2 tins of pre-cooked beans

2 tablespoons of oil

½ lb of onions, finely chopped

2 cloves of garlic

1 lb of waxy potatoes, peeled and chopped into 2 inch pieces

1 lb of carrots or other root vegetable

1 teaspoon of caraway seeds

1 teaspoon of whole grain mustard

4 tablespoons of sieved tomatoes or tomato sauce or 2 tablespoons of tomato puree

1 level tablespoon of paprika

1 teaspoon of brown sugar

¼ pint of vegetable / bean stock

½ pint of sour cream or Greek yoghurt

2 tablespoons of chopped parsley

Black pepper to season

Rinse and then soak the beans in lots of water, over night preferably. When they are fully soaked, change the water. Bring to the boil and boil on high heat for 10 minutes. Reduce the heat and simmer for 40 minutes or until the beans are soft. Strain the beans and keep the liquid for stock. If tinned beans are being used, rinse beforehand.

While the beans are cooking, heat the oil in a large pot and gently fry the onions and garlic until they are soft. Add the potatoes and carrots and fry for a few minutes. Add the spices and mustard and coat the vegetables. Stir well while cooking. Add the beans, tomato sauce, sugar and stock to cover. Bring to the boil and simmer for 40 minutes or until everything is well cooked and integrated. Stir in the cream or yoghurt and parsley. Serve immediately. This dish can be made well in advance, just don't add the cream and parsley until you are ready to serve.

*Pat Tobin (Co-op member)*

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## **Interview with Dave Dunn, Venue Hire Co-Ordinator**

Dave has been working with the Dublin Food Co-op since October. With a background in event management and fund-raising, he was a natural candidate for this new and challenging post. A member of the Co-op for over ten years, Dave is very clear in his thinking and is adamantly against 'mundane, boring, over-priced convenience stores' taking over the world!

Dave has hired the Co-op's rooms and main warehouse space to a number of groups: cookery, drumming, yoga and martial arts classes during the week as well as a Flea Market on the last Sunday of every month (11.00 - 5.00). Dave aims to maximise the revenue from hiring out the facilities beyond Thursday and Saturday so that eventually prices at the tills come down.

His vision for the Co-op incorporates its use as a social event space with music events figuring largely. As far as Dave is concerned, our premises have huge potential with a great location and a wonderful sense of light and space. He'd love to see a wooden floor installed and an expanse of cloth (organic, of course) covering the less attractive attributes of the ceiling(!) But licensing and logistics remain an issue.

Dave is very keen that - while aspiring towards a worthwhile return on investment in using the space for venue hire - both events and clients would be compatible with the ethos of the Co-op. If this falls into place, he believes that the Co-op would be in the position to use events to market its own existence. Renting our space to neighbourhood groups would also help the DFC to establish and develop relationships with the local community in Dublin 8.

Although absolutely committed to the DFC, Dave does - occasionally - find time to do other things. He's hikes regularly in the Wicklow hills and is a bit of a coffee aficionado, his beverage of choice being the 'cortado'. Now, for the uninitiated, this is an equal shot of espresso and hot milk and is, apparently the cat's pyjamas, although, oddly enough, this particular pair of pyjamas doesn't make it into a lot of coffee bars. Dave is also partial to a good movie, his favourite one of last year being 'No Country for Old Men', which, as the final curtain fell, saw a death count somewhere in the gazillions and the world immersed in existential despair.

And on that feel good note, we wish him all the best!

## **Co-operatives Europe**

Co-operatives Europe (or Coops Europe) is the European arm of the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA). Coops Europe ensures that the interests of the 263,000 European Co-operatives that are serving their 163 million members (1 in 3 EU citizens) actively contribute to the economic and social objectives of the EU. It aims to enhance the identity of the co-operative organisation by representing and promoting it at EU level and it works towards uniting European co-operatives by building co-ordination and synergy amongst them.

Coops Europe aims to enforce the plurality of business forms in Europe, which is sometimes forgotten by others. It wants to grow the co-operative model of enterprise so provides a consultation, research and development service to members, along with up-to-date news and events that are relevant to the sector. This is badly needed for the co-operative sector, which in the past has been very fragmented and lacking in confidence.

Thirty-seven out of the forty-two countries of the European Regions are members of Coops Europe. Coops Europe consistently promotes the co-operative organisation at political level. It is responsible, for example, for the current "Hands off our Coops" campaign, which was, initially, directed at the then president of the European Commission, Mr. Jose Manuel Barroso, and the Competition Commission Ms. Neelie Kroes.

This campaign centres around the issue of Competition Law. A number of large shareholding companies made an official complaint to the European Union that retail co-operatives were being given special treatment and advocated a change in national tax rules for co-operatives.

Co-operatives, however, are not looking for special treatment. But they do have a unique legal and financial structure that needs to be recognised in law. According to Coops Europe "the European Commission cannot be allowed to pretend that they are comparing the same things when they compare co-ops with private sector businesses" ([www.coopseurope.coop](http://www.coopseurope.coop)).

This campaign "Hands off our Co-ops" is web-based. So far 100,000 signatures have been collected, which demonstrates the support that co-operatives are building across Europe.

Coops Europe works at a very practical level. Its Development Policy group has mapped more than 320 cooperative development projects in 80 countries and has invested more than €100 million in co-operative development. This group has discussed common strategies and plans, and defined some geographical priorities such as the Balkans and CoopAfrica.

Another project is Le Grand Magasin. This is the title of an exhibition that opened last October in Berlin which displays and sells products from European Cooperatives. The exhibition aims to raise awareness about alternative forms of trade, production, and consumption.

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Co-ops Europe also serve to showcase Best Practice co-operatives on their website, such as the Phone Coop, Film Distribution Co-op or co-operative ventures in Mexican, Spanish and French secondary schools. It also keeps its members informed of the many interesting conferences and events that are taking place, such as Coops Europe General Assembly, the Social Dialogue Conference in Sofia, Bulgaria, the ICA's general assembly in Geneva in October and the annual European conference on Social Economy that is taking place this April in Prague.

It is becoming clear that with the help of Coops Europe, there is only one way the Co-operative movement is heading in Europe and that way is ....UP!  
Long may it continue.

Written by Patricia Keane  
Contact keanepatricia@hotmail.com

## Co-op News Team

Fionnuala Ward (Editor), Anthony Dillon (layout). Any articles, letters, opinion pieces for inclusion in next newsheet should be forwarded to: info@dublinfood.coop (subject: newsletter).

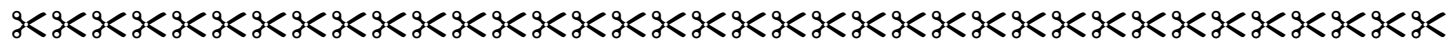
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## Help Rota Dates 2009

Write them in your diary and cut out this calendar for your fridge door, highlighting your team!



dublin food co-op help rota 2009 needs you!											
<b>A</b>		29-31 Jan	5-7 March	9- 11 April	14-16 May	18-20 June	23-25 July	27-29 Aug	1-3 Oct	5-7 Nov	10-12 Dec
<b>B</b>	Sat 3 Jan	5-7 Feb	12-14 March	16-18 April	21-23 May	25-27 June	30 July- 1 Aug	3-5 Sept	8-10 Oct	12-14 Nov	17-19 Dec
<b>C</b>	8-10 Jan	12-14 Feb	19-21 March	23-25 April	28-30 May	2-4 July	6-8 Aug	10-12 Sept	15-17 Oct	19-21 Nov	
<b>D</b>	15-17 Jan	19-21 Feb	26-28 March	30 April - 2 May	4-6 June	9-11 July	13-15 Aug	17-19 Sept	22-24 Oct	26-28 Nov	
<b>E</b>	22-24 Jan	26-28 Feb	2-4 April	7-9 May	11-13 June	16-18 July	20-22 Aug	24-26 Sept	29-31 Oct	3-5 Dec	

