

Just Local News

news and views published by the Just Local Food Cooperative

Issue 8

January 2005



Walking 2,000 miles to protect Wisconsin Wilderness

In the summer of 2005, a Wisconsin hiker will pack his bags and take a 2,000 mile trek to raise awareness about Wisconsin's forest and wilderness ecosystems. Bill Hogseth is an Eau Claire native; he hiked along the Appalachian Trail for five months in 2003, and has great stories to share about this experience.

Just Local Food is sponsoring a presentation by Bill at the LE Phillips Public Library in Eau Claire on **Wednesday, January 26 at 7pm**. Stop down that night and you can sample some of our products while you hear about long distance hiking, see slides of beautiful wilderness areas, learn why they are in danger, and ways that you can help. You **can** support his journey and join the movement to preserve the health of Wisconsin's wild forests and wild rivers. For more information, go to **www.forthewoods.org**.

You can also hear Bill on "the West Side" Tuesday January 25 from 5-6pm if you tune into FM 88.3.

Introducing: Gluten Free Pizzas from On Fire! Ovens

Jenny at On Fire! has been working hard developing a tasty pizza for those who want or need to avoid gluten. They don't taste like a "special diet" pizza, though! These pizzas (8") come on a handmade crust and are topped with real Wisconsin cheese and organic spices and veggies. Four to choose from: basil & spinach; three cheese; bell pepper & onion; and roasted garlic. Keep one handy in your freezer, or take a Friday night off from making dinner. You won't be disappointed.

These pizzas join Jenny's other items which have been flying out of our freezers: the Mediterranean Pizza and the organic frozen pizza doughs. The doughs, which come two to a package, are ready to be rolled into a pizza crust after thawing just a few hours (even less if you're anxious).

On Fire! Ovens is a one-woman operation based in Menomonie. Our close relationship means we get items made fresh, quickly frozen, and into our freezers on a regular basis. Let us know what you think of her products, and if you'd like to see other items on our order form from her- we'll be sure to pass it on.



Here I'm holding some dough from On Fire!

Buying Club Corner

Fresh Produce

A lot of customers have been taking advantage of the organic produce available through Natural Farms. There are some regional items like potatoes, onions, apples and squash. Mostly there's the staples - carrots, onions, celery, cauliflower... also organic fruits like pears, oranges, lemons, kiwi and even avocados. The quality has been consistently good, and the prices are better than you'll find in the stores.

Natural Value - the organic generic

I have been using Natural Value products for several years. Recently I looked up their website and was happy to learn more about their company. It turns out Natural Value is simply two people working from home. They are providing the exact same products that other "natural food" companies have at drastically lower prices. The following is excerpted from their website:

"Natural Value is a family business. We're small and we like it that way. When you call, fax or E-mail us with a question or comment you will be answered by either Gary or myself (Jody). We personally stand behind all of our products and want to be sure that you, the

Just Local News is published regularly by the **Just Local Food Cooperative**. Our goal is to connect local and fair-trade producers with consumers in the Chippewa Valley. All articles within written by Aaron Ellringer unless otherwise noted.



A sampling of Natural Value products from my pantry...

consumer of Natural Value, are consistently satisfied with their quality.

"Since we are a family business we understand the benefits of doing business with other family owned and operated businesses. As a result, many of our suppliers are companies that have been run by the same family for two and three generations.

"Just like us, they take personal pride in producing a consistently excellent product and also like us, the efficiency and lower overhead inherent in their size allows them to turn out a more economical product. They have managed to survive in today's competitive market place by producing Organic products at prices close to commercial goods."

You can view, at any time, the hundreds of products available from Natural Value online. Just go to our website, justlocalfood.com, and click on buying club, then click on the Natural Farms link. From there you can select "natural value" in the "brand" menu. You can also order a buying club catalog and find the products in there.

Next Buying Club Delivery:

February 10

Orders Due:

February 5

Price Comparisons

Sadly, there are very few products in area grocery stores that we can really compare prices with. So below you'll find most of the comparisons are to our buying club, where there are regional or global products I can compare for you.

Sno-Pac Organic frozen corn, 10oz
them \$2.19 us \$1.35

Amy's Vegetable Pot Pie, 9oz
them \$2.53 us \$2.17

Organic Valley Mozzarella Cheese, 8oz
them \$3.99 us \$3.83

East Wind Organic Almond Butter, 16oz
them \$7.33 us \$7.75

***Organic Milk, half gallon**
them \$3.57 us \$3.00

*The organic milk at local grocery stores is from Organic Valley, so it is fairly local. Most stores only carry the Ultra-pasteurized varieties of the milk, though. Through this process they get longer shelf life, but the taste and quality are diminished significantly. This milk is also homogenized, breaking up the fats for longer shelf life. We're probably picking up your empty bottle returns before the OV milk even makes it to the shelf at the grocery store!

Please note: "them" prices do not reflect your transportation costs or time it takes to walk around the store. Our prices include delivery to your door!



Our new "cold storage" warehouse at 104 Gibson Street. The Chippewa River is in the background. Future storefront?

Coop News

We've expanded our delivery area to a few spots outside of Eau Claire. We now go down the **Hwy 93 corridor** a few miles, and off either way. We're also now delivering to **Altoona**. If you know anyone in these areas let them know they can sign up! Thanks!

This month we are **hiring** a "cooperative development specialist" to help guide our coop through the growth and changes we're experiencing. We've had several highly qualified applicants and I hope to be introducing you to a new coop worker in the next issue of the *news*.

Due to a **great article** in *the Country Today* and the *Leader Telegram*, we've had quite a few calls from new suppliers and new customers. This is the most new customers we've had all at once, so you may notice the route times change a bit as we adjust to meet new demand. We're also nearing the point where we'll have to add another truck or another day.

It has now been just over **one year** since the folks that formed the Just Local Food Coop met for the first time. Thanks to all of you for helping us grow to what we are today!

Menomonie Market

I hope you have been to the Menomonie Market Food Coop. If not, please consider a trip to our neighbor city - you won't regret it. The Menomonie Market is a full service grocery, but still small enough to feel like a corner store. They have a wide selection of bulk and packaged food, health and beauty products, breads, frozen foods and a great cheese case.

My favorite part of the Market is their produce selection. The folks at Menomonie Market know how to handle and care for fresh organic produce, and they always have an incredible selection. They also often have samples and suggestions for in-season imports, and handle a good variety of local items as well.

My family takes turns with friends going to Menomonie about every week, and we help each other out by bringing fresh stuff back to one another. Help beat the winter doldrums, take a trip to Menomonie. And in the middle of winter, it's a special treat to enjoy some real, fresh, organic produce supplied by a locally owned food cooperative.

Grow your own Local Food

When we moved into our new house here on the East Hill, one of the first things I did was spread out a bunch of compost & peat moss on the back section of grass lawn. Then I hired a fella with a tractor to come in and till it all up. That summer we enjoyed tomatoes, carrots, broccoli, delicata squash, onions and lots more. Later that year I built a small hoophouse out of some scrap hose and some plastic I found. In the fall I planted spinach, kale and lettuce inside. To my surprise, healthy

spinach plants were found in March after I ignored it all winter!

Well, another growing season is near, and I wanted to share with you a great source of seeds I use. It's a worker-owned cooperative in Maine called FEDCO. They carry an amazing amount of organic and heirloom seeds, along with some more familiar and popular varieties. They do not knowingly carry genetically modified seeds, so you can be sure you are growing real food! Prices are great, and you can order as few or as many as you want. Most packets are available in sizes under a dollar.

I ordered a few extra catalogs this year, in case some of you might be interested. If you'd like one, let me know at 552-0849 or preferably by email at aaron@justlocalfood.com. They also have their catalogs available online at fedcoseeds.com. If I hear a lot of interest, I'll consider coordinating a group order before their Feb 25th deadline...

Local soap

Originally added as a holiday special, we continue to carry the handmade goat milk soaps from Coon Creek family Farm. They come in two fragrances, four sizes and seven shapes. Julie Maro at Coon Creek expertly combines her hand-milked goat milk with other pure ingredients to make a soft, mild soap. She then sets them in decorative molds for added flair. All options are listed on our order form, prices start at \$2.50.

Once you're clean, you might want to seal that moisture in with our best-selling beeswax handcream from Honey Hill Apiary!



Lotus Flower Soap