



BLUFF COUNTRY CUIZINE

FOOD NEWS, EVENTS & SALES FOR BLUFF COUNTRY CO-OP OWNERS

SUMMER 2016





Bluff Country Co-op

We know good food.

121 W. 2ND STREET
WINONA, MN 55987
(ph) 507.452.1815
(fax) 507.457.0511

www.bluff.coop
bccoop@bluff.coop

OPEN DAILY

Mon - Sat

8am - 8pm

Sunday

10am - 8pm

STORE CONTACTS

GENERAL MANAGER

Dawn Schreiber Bccgm@bluff.coop

MARKETING AND OWNER SERVICES

Melissa Gordon Melissa@bluff.coop

FRONT END

Tina MacGregor-Cordes Tina@bluff.coop

PRODUCE

Jason Strangstalien Jason@bluff.coop

DELI

Emily Richardson Richardson@bluff.coop

CENTER STORE

Trina Barrett Trina@bluff.coop

COMMUNITY SALES

Dennis Zenk Dennis@bluff.coop

WELLNESS

Emily Copeland Emily@bluff.coop

**SUSTAINABILITY
& BODY CARE**

Liz Reach Reach@bluff.coop

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board@bluff.coop

Ann Lichliter, President Ann@bluff.coop

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SUMMER RECIPE: Sweet Onion Panzanella

SERVES 4

TOTAL TIME: 40 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

- 1 day-old baguette, cut into 1/2-inch cubes (about 3 cups)
- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- 1 cup julienned sweet onion
- Large pinch of salt
- 1/4 cup red wine vinaigrette, divided
- 1 (14-ounce) can artichoke hearts, drained and quartered
- 1 cup heirloom tomatoes, chopped
- 1/3 cup chopped, pitted Kalamata olives
- 1 cup roughly-chopped fresh spinach



PREPARATION

Preheat the oven to 300 degrees. Toss the cubed bread with the olive oil, place on a baking tray, and toast until just lightly browned, about 15 minutes. Remove and set aside. In a small bowl, toss the onion with the salt and 1 Tablespoon vinaigrette and let marinate while preparing the rest of the salad.

Mix all of the ingredients, except for the onion, together in a large salad bowl. Rinse and drain the marinated onion, then toss with the rest of the salad. Let the salad sit for 10 minutes to an hour to absorb the vinaigrette before serving.

SERVING SUGGESTIONS

- Chiffonade of fresh basil, seeded cucumber and flaked Parmesan or feta cheese are all common additions to this summery salad.
- The ingredient proportions of this salad are flexible; adjust them to your liking or based on what you have on hand.
- This recipe calls for a prepared vinaigrette, but you can replace it with a blend of olive oil and balsamic vinegar, if preferred.

CALENDAR

OF UPCOMING EVENTS

UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, ALL EVENTS ARE FREE, OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, AND HELD AT THE CO-OP

JUNE

- **Saturday, 4th**, 10am - 11am **Class: Making Kombucha** with Joy Hittner
- **Saturday, 11th**, 10am - 11am **Class: Summer Picnic Salads** with Deli Manager Emily Richardson
- **Monday, 13th**, 11am - 2pm **Demo: Nordic Naturals Omega Oils**
- **Monday, 13th**, 6pm - 8pm **Board Meeting**, Faith Lutheran Church, 1717 W. Service Drive, Winona
- **Saturday, 18th**, 10:30am - 11:30am **Class: Kids Cooking Class (12 and under)**
- **Saturday, 25th**, 10am - 11am **Class: Raising Backyard Chickens** with Deli Employee Joe Smith

JULY

- **Monday, 4th CO-OP WILL BE CLOSED**
- **Saturday, 9th**, 9am - 10am **Class: Picking out Produce** with Produce Manager Jason Strangstalien
 - 10am - 10:45am **Demo: Beginner Knife Skills** with Sarah Fillius
 - 10:45am - 11am **Demo: Knife Sharpening** with Deli Employee Joe Smith
- **Monday, 13th**, 6pm - 8pm **Board Meeting**, Faith Lutheran Church, 1717 W. Service Drive, Winona
- **Saturday, 16th**, 10:30am - 11:30am **Class: Kids Cooking Class (12 and under)**
- **Saturday, 16th Eat Local Farm Tour: Featherstone Farm, Rushford, MN**

Featherstone Farm will host an open house from 10am - 3pm. Bluff Country owners are invited to take a **Guided Tour lead by a Featherstone Farm employee from 10am - 11am**, and participate in a **Backyard Composting Workshop from 11:15 am - noon**. If you are interested in carpooling to the farm, we will be leaving BCC at 9:15AM and returning after the compost class. Space is limited, so please RSVP to Melissa at (507) 452-1815 or melissa@bluff.coop.

AUGUST

- **Monday, 8th**, 6pm - 8pm **Board Meeting**, Faith Lutheran Church, 1717 W. Service Drive, Winona
- **Saturday, 13th**, 9:30-11:30am **Class: Cheese and Yogurt Making** with Tove Wiggs
- **Saturday, 13th**, 6:30pm - 8pm, Winona County Historical Society, 160 Johnson St.
Deli Tasting & Talk: The Seven Cooperative Principles in Action

Tickets are \$5 for owners, \$7 for non-owners, available at Bluff Country Co-op. For more information, see Deli Article on page 6.

- **Saturday, 20th**, 10:30am - 11:30am **Class: Kids Cooking Class (12 and under)**
- **Saturday, 27th**, 10am - 11am **Class: Worm Composting** with Sustainability Coordinator Liz Reach

GM REPORT

BY DAWN SCHREIBER, GENERAL MANAGER



How's the project going? When does construction start? Soon, these questions are going to usurp the weather as a conversation topic at the co-op, if they haven't already. The answer to these burning questions is: we are still in the schematic design phase of the project. I am working with our co-op expansion team of professionals to ensure a quality project for our community. When we complete this phase and move into the design development phase, we will have a firmer timeline for the project. We are still hoping to begin construction this summer, but the process of planning the financing, construction, and end result takes time and shouldn't be rushed. While it is not our intention to spend years on this step, other co-ops certainly have.

Have you checked out our website recently? We are adding information about our progress — such as bios of our architect and designer and information about the rain garden — on a weekly basis. There's even a special historical piece about businesses and buildings that have previously occupied this space. To find the most current information, go to www.bluff.coop and click on "Recent Posts" at the top of the page. You can read past updates by clicking on the "News" tab from the main page. We will also be updating the space on our wall that currently hosts the draft of the floor plan, so you can check there for news as well.

Want to get involved? There will be several opportunities for you to participate in our growth. First up is the rain garden! The parking lot remodel will happen mid-summer. Once the garden has been created, we will need volunteers to help us create a beautiful, tranquil, and functional rain garden oasis. If you'd like to be a friend of the rain garden to help occasionally with planting or maintenance, please send an email to Liz Reach, our sustainability coordinator, at: reach@bluff.coop. Further down the road we will also be looking for folks who like to paint. Thanks to Taff Roberts, we will be repeating our successful volunteer painting detail for this expansion. Get your brushes ready!

It looks to be another fun and busy summer in Winona! Make the co-op part of your plans. Whether you're hiking, biking, boating, or taking part in one of our activities, we've got the supplies to make your summer fun tastier!

Enjoy your summer!

Dawn
bccgm@bluff.coop

P.S. Thank you to all the owners who donated office furniture to us! We received just what we needed!

BOARD REPORT

BY ANN LICHLITER, BOARD PRESIDENT



Help Our Co-op, Our Community

This fall it will be three years since I joined Bluff Country Co-op's Board of Directors. The experience has been invaluable. I will admit that at first I was not sure that I was qualified to be on the board. Although I worked with nonprofit boards, I had never served on one. As soon as I began, however, I received excellent support from the other board members, the General Manager, and our co-op's consulting partner, Cooperative Development Services. This training provided me with the knowledge I needed to become a confident and adept board member.

I was initially drawn to BCC's board because I believe food co-ops are the link to providing individuals and families of all socioeconomic levels with nutritious foods. Food co-ops also help us to create a stronger community by supporting our local farmers and businesses. Additionally, I joined the board to connect with individuals concerned about healthy food and our community. Being on the board has given me the ability to do just that. It has also allowed me to give back and develop a greater appreciation for the co-op's role in our community.

As a new board member, I quickly learned the co-op board is a professional working board. The role of the board is to create a vision for our co-op based on the voices of our owners. At the same time, we provide leadership and fiduciary oversight through policy governance while entrusting the General Manager with facilitating daily operations. Board members participate in monthly meetings and serve on one or more board committees.

BCC's Board of Directors is currently looking for individuals who want to give back and make an impact in our community. Board elections will take place at the **Annual Member Meeting on Thursday, October 27, 2016**, and elected board members will begin in December 2016. If you are interested in getting involved but are not ready to commit to being on the board, you can participate by serving on one of our committees. Our current committees include Member Outreach, Social Equity, Expansion Project, and Board Development. To learn more about being on the board or assisting with a committee, please do not hesitate to contact me at ann@bluff.coop or Charlotte Roraff, our Board Development Chair, at charlotte@bluff.coop

Sincerely,

Ann Lichliter, President



Soup's On! (and so much more)

by Melissa Gordon, Marketing and Owner Services Manager

Since Bluff Country Co-op first opened as Famine Foods in 1972, we have served our community with healthy food. But what this looks and tastes like is different for different people. When some folks think of BCC, they think of our bright and colorful produce department, which focuses on local and organic fruits and vegetables (see page 9). Others picture our meat department, boasting 76% local products, 18 of which originate within Winona County (see page 12). Still others see our bulk department with its great savings and reduced waste. But for an increasing number of shoppers, when they think of Bluff Country Co-op, they think of our deli.

BCC's deli opened in 2000 in response to customer requests. Since then, demand for prepared food – especially prepared food that emphasizes fresh and healthy ingredients, like BCC's deli – has skyrocketed. Recently The Hartman Group published a study that reveals nearly half of the time Americans eat, we are alone, and eating is our secondary activity (for example, we are also driving, working, watching TV or checking social media). Perhaps this explains why the food we eat is changing just as much as the way we eat it. Meals are declining – half of our eating occasions are now snacks – and when we do eat meals, we are more likely to pick something up on the go. One in four Americans eat fast food every day and 60% of dinners are planned within an hour of eating.

BCC customers aren't unaffected by these trends. We recently collected more than 300 customer comments regarding what they'd like to see in their expanded co-op, and about one out of every five comments was about the deli and the kind of prepared food they'd like to pick up and eat on the go.

Ever mindful of meeting our customers' needs while maintaining our commitment to food that's good for people, good for the environment, and good for the community, BCC's deli is gearing up to respond to customer requests and America's changing eating habits. As the store expands and the deli gets bigger, the deli can play a significant role in addressing the intersection between whole food and fast food. Deli Manager Emily Richardson understands this at its core – she, too, eats lunch at BCC's deli several times a week (and she's not the only one!).

Emily was introduced to Bluff Country Co-op by her massage therapy instructor, longtime BCC owner Debi Niebuhr, who brought her class to BCC to talk about the importance of diet in a person's health. Something about the co-op “just felt right,” says Emily. “If you know where you belong, you're drawn there. I was drawn here, and it's been easy for me to work here.”

Emily began her career at BCC as a cashier before moving into the deli. “What I liked about being a cashier is that even though I wasn't making things for the customers like I am now, I got to see them and interact with them all the time. Now I don't get to see the customers much, but I get to make things for them,” Emily says.

Continued on next page.



Six months after Emily transferred to the deli, BCC's deli manager moved, and Emily took over the position. "[The former deli manager] stayed around to help train me in before leaving," Emily says. Since then, Emily has carried on BCC's tradition of making great-tasting food from scratch. Perhaps the deli's most well known feature is its soup. Many customers come to the co-op several times a week to get soup for lunch, and in February BCC's grass-fed chili won 2nd place in the Ready - Set - School Chili Cook-Off. Emily says the creamy wild rice and chicken gnocchi soups are her favorite to make, though she admits, "that's probably because they're my favorite to eat!"

Emily says working at BCC is "a good blend of seriousness and fun. People care about what they do, but it's also laid back. Mistakes aren't looked at as a life or death situation. There's much more of a human feeling here than other places I've worked." This kind of camaraderie is essential, as the deli can be a bustling place. A regularly rotating menu (every three months the deli introduces a new seasonal menu, and within each season's menu, different items cycle through about every week and a half) combined with a small space, poses challenges, but these challenges will make the deli all the more prepared for the expansion.

"I'm looking forward to the growth of the deli and being able to do more. It'll be great to be able to give people more of what they're asking for," says Emily. In the meantime, customers can continue to look forward to the deli's delicious, healthy "fast food."

LEARN

Join Emily in the co-op's deli seating area on Saturday, June 11, from 10-11am for a class on healthy summer picnic salads.

TASTE

Help us choose our fall menu! Saturday, August 13, from 6:30-8pm at the Winona County Historical Society. Tickets are \$5 for owners, \$7 for non-owners. For more information, see page 6.

CONNECT

Visit our Facebook page every Monday for deli updates, including instructional videos and cooking tips.

FOOD NEWS: GMOs

by Liz Reach, Sustainability Coordinator

Earlier this year Minnesota Senator Amy Klobuchar was criticized by consumer advocates when she voted for a bill that would ban state-level labeling rules for Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) in food. GMOs are living organisms whose genetic makeup has been altered using genetic engineering techniques in a laboratory. GMOs are not produced in nature, like hybrid plants or animals. Since the first GMO was created in 1973 there has been much controversy surrounding them, particularly when it comes to GMOs that are produced for consumption. Key aspects of the controversy include:

- Whether GMOs should be labeled and/or regulated
- Effects of GM crops on our health and the environment
- Impact of GM crops for farmers
- Effects of GM crops on pesticide resistance
- The role GM crops play in feeding the world population
- The accuracy and adequacy of studies that have lead the scientific community to conclude GMOs are safe
- The consolidation of control of the food supply by companies that make and sell GMOs

Several countries already have restrictions or bans on genetic engineering as well as on the labeling of GMO products. Although polls show that nine out of ten American consumers would prefer to know if their food contains GMOs, currently GMO labeling is not required by U.S. federal law and as much as 80% of conventional processed food contains GMOs.

In 2014 Vermont became the first state to pass mandatory GMO labeling. This legislation had an incredible effect on Big Food industries, resulting in the beginning of GMO labeling across the U.S. Campbell's and General Mills have already announced that they will begin labeling GMO ingredients.

There are several third-party non-GMO certifiers that already label products that do not contain GMO ingredients. This is a voluntary decision that anyone in the food industry can apply for. USDA Organic certified products also guarantee that the product does not contain GMOs. Look for the following labels on your food packages.



Sources: Wikipedia.org, nongmoproject.org



What's in Season?

by Jason Strangstalien, Produce Manager

The local season is upon us! June, July and August are always exciting months for us in the produce department. Because of our partnerships with great local growers who grow wonderful, fresh, quality produce, we are able to provide our customers with all of the local fruits and vegetables you've come to expect. If you can't make it to the Farmer's Market on Saturdays, stop by and see us any day of the week and we will have the local organic produce you're craving! You also won't want to miss our summer events. We are offering a **class on picking out ripe produce**, followed by **demonstrations of proper knife skills and knife sharpening** on July 9, and a **Farm Tour of Featherstone Farm** in Rushford on July 16. See our calendar on page 3 for details.

And don't forget to stock up on fruit this summer! Whether you're freezing or canning, preserving fruit is an excellent (and economical) way to enjoy its succulent goodness all year round! For more information on our seasonal offerings and tips for preserving, see page 10.

Ask the Produce Manager



Customer Question: Is your local, non-certified produce grown organically?

Jason's Answer: With the exception of our local apple growers, all of our local, non-certified farms grow their produce organically. We verify this through our own screening process based on organic standards as well as periodic farm visits.

We like to support our local growers who grow organically, whether or not they are certified. Of course, we prefer that they become certified or are working toward becoming certified. To that end, we provide our local farmers with resources and information on how to go through the process of becoming certified.

Photo courtesy of Winona Post.

Berries, Cherries & Peaches

JULY

- 5-pound cases of Michigan Blueberries
- LOCAL Barky's Blueberries (Galesville, WI)
- LOCAL Blue Fruit Farm (Winona, MN): This certified organic farm produces more than just blueberries — in fact, some of these tasty berries you may never have even heard of! Check out their website at bluefruitfarm.com for recipes and a taste of anticipation.
- Door County Cherries: They're back! If you didn't try them last year, don't miss out this year. Watch for an announcement of their arrival on our Facebook page.

AUGUST

Peaches! Bluff Country Co-op is the only place in town to get cases of organic peaches. Watch for them in mid- to late August.

Get Your Fruit On!
Reserve your cases as early as June! Stop by the store or call 507-452-1815.

How to Freeze Berries

- 1) Remove stems.
- 2) Rinse berries gently with cool water and allow to dry completely. (Note: Blueberries are the exception. Rinsing blueberries prior to freezing can make their skins tough. Unless you will be using them frozen, for example, in a smoothie, skip this step. Just remember to rinse them after they've been thawed.)
- 3) Arrange dry berries in a single layer on a pan. Set in freezer.
- 4) Once frozen, store your berries in a container in the freezer.

Tips for Canning Peaches

- You'll need an average of 17½ pounds for 7 quarts and an average of 11 pounds for 9 pints. A bushel weighs 48 pounds and yields 16 to 24 quarts - an average of 2½ pounds per quart.
- To remove the skins, thinly slice an "X" on the bottom of the peach. Dip the peach in boiling water for 30-60 seconds to loosen the skins, then quickly dip the peach in cold water. Skins should slip off easily.
- Prevent browning by keeping peeled peaches in an ascorbic acid solution. Mix 1 teaspoon ascorbic acid crystals or finely crush six 500 mg Vitamin C tablets in one gallon of water. Alternatively, mix 1/4 cup lemon juice with 4 cups water. Commercial products are also available.
- Peaches can be hot packed or raw packed, but raw packing generally results in a poorer product.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

BCC is excited to be partnering with Big Brothers Big Sisters Winona in a variety of ways. First, by expanding our free banana program to kids who come into the store with their “Big,” BCC helps more kids have access to healthy food. We are also hosting workshops on healthy eating for “Bigs” and their “Littles” as part of Big Brothers Big Sisters REACH program. Finally, BCC and Mon Petit Cupcake have teamed up to offer all new Big Brothers Big Sisters matches a free mini-cupcake to make their first meeting that much sweeter!



Through a wellness partnership with the Winona Family YMCA, BCC employees can now receive a 10% discount on Y memberships, as well as get the one-time joiner fee waived.



In 2014, Minnesota became the fifth state to draft a food charter. The Minnesota Food Charter serves as a “roadmap to healthy, affordable, and safe food for all Minnesotans” (mnfoodcharter.com). Since January, food leaders throughout the Winona area, including representatives from Bluff Country Co-op, have met on a monthly basis to review the charter and discuss strategies for improving access to healthy food in the area.



Did you know that earlier this year Bluff Country Co-op was awarded the Bronze Award for Bicycle Friendly Businesses by The League of American Bicyclists? According to Liz Reach, BCC’s Sustainability Coordinator, several factors lead to BCC receiving this award, including the number of employees who bike to work as well as the amount of bike parking available to customers. BCC’s investment in bicycling is “playing a central role in making the country a safer, happier, and more sustainable place to live and work,” says Amelia Neptune, League Bicycle Friendly Business Program Manager. Next time you come to the store, why not ride?



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Sun 10am - 8pm

It's Summer. Grill Local.

Earth-Be-Glad Farm, Lewiston, MN

- Hamburger • New York Strip Steak
- Wild Rice Brats

Hidden Stream Farm, Elgin, MN

- Pork Chops (Bone-In and Boneless)
- St.Louis-Style Ribs

O'Neill Family Farm, Winona, MN

- Boneless Lamb Kabob Meat
- Rosemary Garlic Brats • Ground Lamb

Pork and Plants, Altura, MN

- Brats • Ground Pork

Pronschinske Elk, Winona, MN

- Sirloin Steak • Ground Elk

Buffalo Gal, Houston, MN

- Ground Buffalo Patties

Thousand Hills Cattle Company, Cannon Falls, MN

- Sirloin Steak • Round Tip Steak
- Hamburger

ALL PRODUCTS ARE AVAILABLE AT BLUFF COUNTRY CO-OP