

"It's just food!"

Brighton Food Coöp Newsletter

March 2013



Key Upcoming Dates:

- **Main Distribution: Tuesday, March 19th** (Terra Bulloch will announce shift times.)
- Initial Orders Due: **Tuesday, March 5th** (by 9:00PM)
 - **UNFI** – Login to the Online System at <https://www.unfi.com> . (Choose **UNFI East Region**.)
 - **Frontier**: Send order to Megan Putnam.
 - **Outside Vendors (OV)**: Send order to Christie Winch at tcwinch@yahoo.com.
 - **Sami's Bakery**: Discontinued – we're now considering local gluten-free alternatives, for example <http://www.nomorebellyaching.com>.
- **Produce**: Include your Produce Share order with your OV order to Christie Winch. To suggest items for inclusion in the Produce Share or to inquire about availability of items for whole case orders, contact Karen Klann at [KarenSKlann@yahoo.com](mailto:karenSKlann@yahoo.com).
- Unfilled Case Orders Due: **Sunday, March 10th** (by Noon)
- **Creswick Meats**: Send order to Gina Barnowsky (ginabarnowsky@gmail.com) by **Sunday, March 3rd**. Orders can be picked up at the church on **Saturday, March 16th at 1:00PM** (but please notify Gina). Otherwise, orders must be picked up at the Main Distribution on March 19th.
- **Vendor 7**: Nuts, Candy, and Honey can all be ordered this time.
 - Those who want Candy should keep in mind that Easter falls on March 31st this year. Because of Albanese's minimum order quantities, lack of organic offerings, and advanced order requirements for special occasion Candy, we are trying an alternative supplier this month: <https://sjaaks.com/categories/show/Easter>.
 - Maple Syrup is still out of stock, but syrup fresh from the trees will be purchased in bulk very soon to support member orders for 12 months (April through next March). Syrup will now be available in two grades: A (refined) and B (robust). In your March OV order, please estimate how much of each grade you expect to order over those 12 months.

Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, March 26th, 10:00AM at The French Laundry in Fenton

Any BFC member is welcome to attend, but if you plan to attend, please notify Michelle Kaloustian (lilichel@comcast.net) so she can contact you in case of any change in time or location.

Distribution Recap

After a long, frustrating distribution in January, the February 19th distribution went like a breeze, with most members able to take their orders home by 1:30. We had a shortage of floor-workers, but only 16 members ordered, reducing the amount of work to be done, and we also had unexpected help from a couple of energetic teens on winter break. Thanks, Amy, for bringing your daughter and her friend!

Some Distribution Reminders

Please be careful with box cutters! Set the cutter at the smallest usable blade-exposure – i.e. make the blade just long enough to cut the tape on the box, but not long enough to cut into the contents of the box. Also, be sure to retract the blade when you're not actually using it. We don't want to have to take anyone to the emergency room!

When processing splits for any bulk item, please go through all the following steps in order:

1. Split the item and bag the individual member orders.
2. Weigh all the individual orders to get a total weight. (Ignore the vendor's total weight.) If all the orders fit on the scale, weigh them together. Otherwise, weigh them separately and then add up the separate weights to get the total weight.
3. Divide the dollar amount the vendor billed us by the total weight from step 2 to get the unit price.
4. Set the scale to the unit price from step 3; then weigh, price, and label each individual order.
5. For pre-printed labels, if the price on the label is incorrect, be sure to circle the old price, then write the new price from step 4.
6. Don't forget to circle and correct the price on the member order sheet, too!

Following this procedure for each bulk item to be split should eliminate inaccuracies in the billing and make life a lot easier for Treasurer Denise Hauk!

Suggestion Box

After each distribution, Secretary Marilyn Mitchell asks for feedback from everyone who ordered to get a sense of how the distribution went and what could have been done to make it better. Whether or not you've ordered recently, we're always looking for suggestions to improve not only the distributions, but also the overall operation of the Coöp. If you have some ideas on that topic, please share them with us. Just dash off an email to Marilyn (mmitchell1945@aol.com) or Michelle (lilchel@comcast.net). Thanks!

New Produce Arrangements

Sadly, schedule conflicts have forced Nicole Brown to resign as Produce Coordinator and even to leave the Coöp. We will certainly miss her! Karen Klann has been training with Nicole for several months and has even gone solo a couple times. Now she's ready to take over the job. Many members were not happy with B&B Organics as our produce supplier, so President Michelle Kaloustian has worked out an arrangement with Livingston Coöp (<http://www.livingstonfoods.com>) to get our produce from new suppliers. The arrangement worked well for the February 19th distribution, providing better quality produce with less time for assembly and distribution of shares. We look forward to an even more efficient process in the future, perhaps eventually allowing for more customized produce orders.

Motave Meadows Transplants

As they did last year, Motave Meadows will offer organic transplants (aka bedding plants) this spring. The transplants they actually grow will, of course, depend on which transplants we order and in what volumes. We'll need to place advanced orders soon so Motave can acquire the appropriate seeds and begin growing the required volumes of transplants in their greenhouse. To see what's available, go to http://www.brightonfoodcoop.com/Motave_Transplant_Descriptions_2013.pdf . To place an order, fill in the form http://www.brightonfoodcoop.com/Motave_Transplant_Order_Form_2013.pdf and email it to OV Batcher Christie Winch.

The Incredible Shrinking Board

Over the 30+ years since the Coöp was founded, the size of our membership has waxed and waned in a fairly typical pattern. In January, when it's time to renew membership, some members realize their circumstances have changed too much to continue with the Coöp, and they decide not to renew. But as the year progresses, new members join, and in some cases former members rejoin, so that by December our numbers may be back up to, or even above, the previous year.

Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons, the past 4-5 years have seen a net decline in membership, and that trend has had adverse effects on our ability to meet operating expenses, to fill case orders, to get order volume discounts, and to put enough workers on the floor to make distributions go quickly and efficiently. The board is taking steps to "cure" the decline in membership, but until the Coöp actually starts growing again from year to year, we also have to take steps to deal with the current "symptoms." One way to help with expenses and floor-worker needs is to shrink the size of the board – fewer chiefs, more Indians, so to speak. In January 2012, the membership approved a proposal to shrink the board from 7 members to 5. That proposal folded the First Shift and Second Shift Work Coordinator jobs into the Vice President's job, effectively putting the VP in charge of each distribution. Now we have a new proposal to shrink the board to 3 officers: President, Treasurer, and Secretary. In this proposal:

- the President absorbs the VP's functions, especially oversight of Distribution Day;
- the Communications Director leaves the board and becomes a home-worker.

Although this proposal provides no net increase in the number of floor-workers (one departing board member becomes a floor-worker, but the other becomes a home-worker), it does at least reduce the Coöp's overhead (fewer board discounts). Since the proposal is a change to the bylaws, it can only be approved by a majority membership vote. The board is now considering how to handle this vote. Alternatives are: (1) hold a special membership meeting to discuss and vote, (2) hold a vote online or by email, (3) wait until next January's Annual Membership Meeting. At this point, the board is leaning toward alternative (2), but stay tuned for further developments on this matter.

More About GMOs

It's often hard to figure out who's responsible for what in the food industry, so when California Proposition 37 (GMO Labeling) went down to defeat last November because of the enormous disinformation campaign waged by its well-funded opponents, it was hard to know where to place the blame. Yes, we know that giant agribusiness/chemical companies like Monsanto and Dow spearheaded the campaign, but most of us don't buy directly from those companies and have no clear way to show our dissatisfaction with them. Yes, we can buy only organic products, which are not allowed to contain GMOs. But many organic brands are actually owned by the same companies who helped defeat GMO labeling. In fact, many of those brands are available through UNFI, and without making the connection, we may be inadvertently supporting the GMO Bad Guys by ordering the brands they own.



In a previous issue of the newsletter, we published a link to a chart that shows the connections: <http://www.cornucopia.org/wp-content/themes/Cornucopia/downloads/prop37-poster.pdf>

This chart is quite colorful, but extracting information from it can be a challenge. For that reason, we've done some more research into these brand associations and created a simple table:

<http://www.brightonfoodcoop.com/GMO-Labeling-Opponents.pdf>

In this table, not all common brands are listed for each company, but many of the best known brands are listed, and the brands available from UNFI are in bold font. If you are staunchly opposed to GMOs, you would do well to boycott not just the companies, but also their brands, even their organic/natural brands.

For more comprehensive information about organic brand ownership, you can go to <http://nutritionwonderland.com/2009/02/organic-corporate-hierarchy>

Unfortunately, these relationships are often muddled by the sheer fluidity of the corporate world. Big corporations routinely buy or sell substantial shares in smaller companies whose brands are billed as organic. A classic example is Heinz (a major contributor to the effort to defeat Proposition 37), which bought 20% of Hain Celestial in 1999, but then sold its share in 2005. You can get a sense of this fluidity in the following animation. (Warning: The file is 9MB, so it may take some time to load and play.)

<http://www.msu.edu/~howardp/OrganicIndustry.mov>

This animation is entertaining in its own way, but it's hard to follow specific developments in such a shifting landscape, so we have to rely on watchdog organizations like Cornucopia Institute (www.cornucopia.org), Organic Consumers Association (www.organicconsumers.org), and Environmental Working Group (www.ewg.org) to keep up with the changes and provide timely alerts.

Solicitation Advisory on the Web

From time to time, the Newsletter presents a list of coöp members who have part-time jobs or small businesses on the side that provide useful products or services. You can find that list on the website at <http://www.brightonfoodcoop.com/solicitors.pdf>. If you're interested in these products/services, you're welcome to contact the associated members about what they sell/do.

Great Recipes

Chocolate Nut Granola (with thanks to Terra Bulloch)

Ingredients

1 cup walnuts;
1 cup almonds;
pinch of salt;
¼ cup raw honey;
3 tbsp butter or clarified butter,
or coconut oil/butter;
3 tbsp cocoa powder;
½ tsp vanilla extract;
½ cup shredded coconut

Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 250 F.
2. Using a food processor, coarsely chop the walnuts and almonds. Nothing too fine, as you will have to put them through the food processor again. Leave the nuts in the processor and set aside for later use.
3. In a small saucepan over low heat, melt the butter with the honey and whisk occasionally. Once combined, add the cocoa powder, vanilla and a pinch of salt. Whisk together.
4. Pour the chocolate mixture into the nuts in the food processor. Pulse briefly, just until the chocolate is consistently mixed in. Add the coconut and pulse one more time.
5. Spread the mixture out over a baking sheet. Bake for 2 hours in the preheated oven.
6. Once the granola has finished baking, remove it from the oven and allow it to cool completely. Break the granola apart into small chunks. You can also break apart about 2 oz chocolate and mix in with the granola if you wish.

If you have any recipes or news items you think would interest members of the Coöp, please send them to jaqbrun@gmail.com.

See you on the 19th!

Jim Brown

BFC Communications Coordinator



*Live long and prosper;
keep life in perspective;
and don't ever forget--
it's just food!*