

# NEWSLETTER



Moscow Food Co-op



## AND THIS MONTH, FOR YOUR READING PLEASURE...

This month, it's a return to normal (whatever that is) with a variety of articles on a variety of topics.

Our one deviation this issue is the enclosed questionnaire. The concept of a whole foods restaurant/bakery in Moscow is an old one. Perhaps now is the time to move past the conceptualizing to planning. So, what would you like to see here in Moscow? And what kind of support should the Food Co-op offer to the new enterprise? Please take time to fill out the survey and return it to the store.

Those of you with good memories might recall the long story in the December 1984 Newsletter on the subject of sprouting seeds and their use in combatting hunger in the Third World. Well, the good news is that somebody is actually doing something about it. Johnny Alfalfa Sprout, a non-profit organization from Pennsylvania, has sent hundreds of pounds of seeds and sprouting information to hungry people around the world. And they are still doing it, gathering seeds and supplies, packaging them and sending them on. For those of you who want to help, or learn more about the project, subscribe to Johnny's Journal (published bimonthly, with sprouting information and recipes, as well as updates on the project - and they only ask for \$1 for each subscription, though you might want to send more). The address: Johnny's Journal, PO Box 294, Lewisburg, PA 17837.

Bill London -



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### MOSCOW FOOD CO-OP NEWS LETTER

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# A REPORT FROM MONTANA :

## The Co-op in Bozeman

By: Dana Huschle,  
Manager/Coordinator

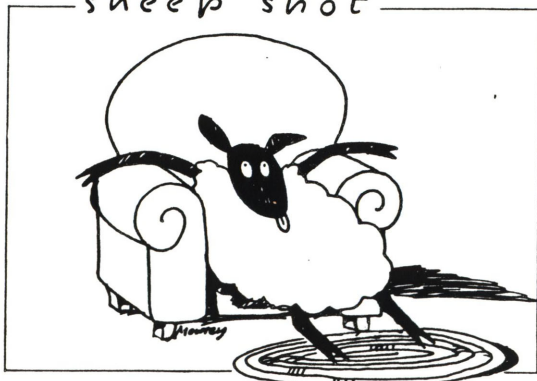
The Community Food Co-op started out modestly in 1978 as a direct charge co-op. It has been through many painful changes since which I won't belabor. In early 1984 a strong Board of Directors (BOD) borrowed nearly \$12,000 (\$3,000+ from members and \$8,000 from a bank) and moved the store from a hidden back street to a bright, visible 1200 sq. ft. location near the university (1011 W. College in Bozeman; (406) 587-4039). The influx of capital doubled the inventory to \$12,000 and improved the store and equipment. This past year has seen at first rapid growth followed by what appears to be steady growth. Our membership a year ago numbered approximately 250. Now we are almost 700.

The Co-op is a whole foods grocery, attempting to meet most of the needs of its customers. We specialize, however, in natural, organic and locally produced foods. Our sales are over \$15,000 monthly. We welcome the public, who, after their first visit, are charged 10% more. Shelf prices are member prices. Working members receive discounts - 3 tiers depending on level of commitment. We are committed to a working member kind of operation with members participating in almost every phase of operations: cash-iering, stocking, cleaning, packaging, cheese cutting, pricing, ordering, book-keeping and more! There is one full-time manager-coordinator with a half-time assistant soon to be hired.

The membership is addressing work requirement and membership cost issues currently. The BOD and management are focusing on training, long term goals, planning and financial analysis. Having settled in, we are directing more energy to nutritional information, community outreach and organizational needs.

We have our problems: under capitalization, shortage of workers, burn-out and turn-over of committed members, long range blindness, etc. But we are definitely a viable organization, and serving the Bozeman community better than ever.

— sheep shot —





# A Visit to a Nicaraguan Cooperative

By: Tomas Lamar and  
Pamela Palmer

Nicaragua is an impoverished country. The people and the government rely upon cooperatives to produce food and material goods. When poor people pool their labor and assets, the results can be impressive. We joined a group of 14 Americans from Idaho and Washington, two months ago, on a trip to Nicaragua. We were able to see the new cooperatives in action -- like the Felix Pedro Carrillo Baile Chicken Cooperative.

That co-op is located within a small village (population 239) several kilometers north of the city of Leon. It was named after a guerrilla commanding officer who formed an army and fought against the Somoza dictatorship. The community, which is now home to the chicken cooperative, supported the guerrillas by providing them with food. The guerrillas, in turn, protected the people from Somoza's National Guard, and showed them how to hide underground during periods of heavy fighting.

The co-op began in May of 1982 with financial help from the Protestant Committee for Aid to Development (also known by its Spanish acronym of CEPAD). CEPAD is an ecumenical non-governmental Christian organization formed after the 1972 Managua earthquake. It continues to function after the 1979 revolution as an aid organization.

The co-op consists of six members. To be a member, one must choose simply to volunteer the work. There is no fee to belong.

Our group saw most of the 1400 chickens which the co-op had recently purchased. We were told that all profit generated from the sale of chickens and eggs is being reinvested into production. Most families within the village buy chickens and eggs from the co-op. This is of real benefit to the community because of the reasonable prices asked for this food. Any extra chickens or eggs are marketed in Leon.

The co-op suffers from lack of construction materials. Present needs are for roofing and wire fencing. Since its original grant to the co-op in 1982, CEPAD has been offering material assistance, as well as technical advice. CEPAD is also involved in coordinating the communication between the co-op and village members and the Sandinista Government.

Decision-making both within the cooperative and the village is accomplished during assembly meetings of all residents. Problems are discussed as a community, and then presented to the government. This form of democracy has been working very well, according to co-op members.

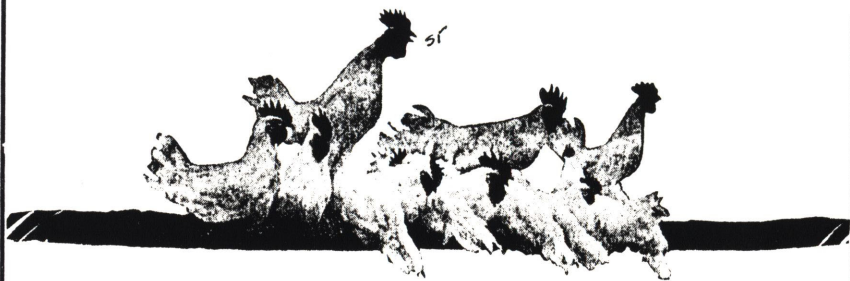
The Nicaraguan government supports the co-op by supplying teachers so that the community may run a school for its children. The government has also promoted the local adult literacy campaign.



One female member of the co-op told us that she has been trained to vaccinate the chickens. She and the other co-op members had a good laugh when we told them that in our community some people go to college for many years to become qualified to vaccinate animals.

The most fun of our visit was being with the children. They sang songs for us and we left them a baseball and a hackey-sack. They all play baseball, but hackey-sack was something new for them.

Our visit to the chicken co-op was a valuable experience. We learned something of another co-op in another country, and were able to see that wherever you are, co-ops exist for the people, something positive in our troubled world.



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# NEEDED.

# ARE YOU READY...

FOR A WHOLE FOODS RESTAURANT/BAKERY IN MOSCOW?

By: Phil Lettieri

Over the years, the idea of a natural food restaurant has been discussed casually and informally by several people, but for one reason or another it has never gotten off the ground. Perhaps this is just the latest in a long line of queries, but I wonder if the time has now come for the idea to take shape.

Moscow is a town of restaurants, from the usual array of fast-food joints to the more elegant "wine with dinner" establishments. You have your buffets and brunches and breakfast specials; your burgers and tacos and chicken to go; you have Chinese, Italian and good ol' down home American ... but where have you got vegetarian? I don't know about you, but there are times I would like to go out to a restaurant and get a good meal. I don't mean an expensive meal, nor do I mean "steak and all the trimmings." What I'm talking about is something as basic and simple as a plate of rice and vegetables. I'm seeking a restaurant with a vegetarian emphasis that would use the freshest ingredients available to create nutritionally-balanced meals. I would like to dine in an atmosphere of healthful eating, knowing that my meal was prepared with skill and care by people who shared my concern for what I consider to be good food.

Recently, the Co-op received an offer of \$100 toward the purchase of a baking oven. This is a strong indication of how serious some people are about having a reliable source of whole-grain bakery items offered at the store. Now, the Co-op isn't quite prepared to jump into the baking business, but it is something that would fit in naturally with a restaurant. In combination restaurant/bakery, it is uncertain if both would be equally successful, but no matter, really, if it comes down to one supporting the other. The important thing is that the venture would be able to offer an alternative to what is currently available in Moscow.

Needless to say, the food service industry is a risky business. Tastes are fickle and fads come and go, and in order to be successful, it's necessary to offer a menu that will appeal to a stable market. The terms "natural" and "organic" or "whole foods" tend to conjure up in some peoples' minds an elitist and fanatical philosophy towards food and this could be a problem for such a restaurant. On the other hand, to an ever-growing population concerned with health, these same terms could instill a confidence to support the restaurant.

The ingredients necessary for all this to be successful, along with the community support, include financial backing, an appropriate building to locate in, and last, but certainly not least, dedicated people to provide all the good food. The community support seems to be there, a suitable location is vacant and available, and I know of several people who are ready to make it all happen. The only ingredient missing is the money, and with options available through creative financing, this doesn't seem to be an



insurmountable problem. The old expression about nothing being more powerful than an idea whose time has come is a truth, and one that may be applicable here; we shall see.

Included in this issue of the newsletter is a survey designed to elicit your ideas and opinions on the matter of a Natural Food Restaurant/Bakery. Your participation is vital in determining the feasibility of such a project. If you have any interest, whatsoever, in seeing it happen, please take the time to answer the prepared questions.



## WHAT'S HAPPENING in the Produce Case...

By: Lynda Herrick

Fresh herbs, crisp greens and lots of locally-grown, organic vegetables are part of what you'll find these summer months at the Moscow Food Co-op. If you miss the Farmer's Market on Saturday you can still find local vegetables all week long at the Co-op.

This summer our produce section has become a local grower's market, abundant with fresh Palouse produce. You'll find such delightful tidbits as locally-grown, organic kale, spinach, sugar pea pods, fresh basil, thyme, tarragon, oregano, and garlic. As the summer progresses and canning time nears, some produce will be offered at discount rates for bulk purchases.

Most of the local vegetables are supplied by Dave and Kris McRae Skinner, a pair committed to organic farming. These folks will also be expanding their selection of Oriental vegetables this year to include bok choy, chinese cabbage and edible chrysanthemums. Of course, even though the Palouse soil and climate is not conducive to the growing of bananas, avocados, or lemons, we will continue to supply these items. So, happy guacamole!

The Co-op has recently purchased a scale for the produce section. No more guessing if that bunch of beets weighs more than one pound.

CAROLYN YOUNG  
"MOTHER ON BOARD"

By: Phil Lettieri

Carolyn Young came to Moscow in 1977 as an exchange student from Illinois State University. Growing up in the middle of the country and presented with the opportunity of choosing another school to attend, she naturally wanted something as far east or west as she could get. She settled for the University of Idaho where she planned to major in art, but a lifelong interest in teaching prompted her to switch to education.

After graduation she worked at the Community School where she taught all subjects to grades 1 through 4. Her tenure was brief, though, as the school shut down a year and a half after she started. She then landed a part-time job at the University as an instructional assistant for a reading course being offered university students and at the same time began taking courses toward a Master's Degree as a reading specialist. Aside from a year teaching kindergarten at St. Rose's, her professional interest and involvement has been focused on the University work and continues so today.

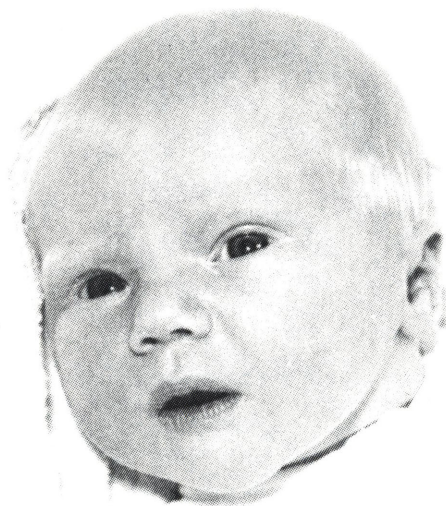
The summer following the close of the Community School, she participated in a children's reading program sponsored by the North Idaho Writer's Project. Stemming from an original theory by the San Francisco based Bay Area Writer's Group, the program sought to help children learn to read through the use of their own writing. Her current involvement is as a reading specialist in a federally-funded University reading program aimed at first generation, low-income and handicapped college students.

Carolyn's first exposure to the Co-op was back during her time with the Community School. She tells of being sent over to the Co-op to buy something for a class project and upon entering the store, thinking what a strange place it was. She had never seen anything like it before and was immediately struck by all the bins and confused by the old pricing system with its series of prices. She managed to survive her first excursion into the world of Co-op, though, and through friends and other influences her involvement continued and grew. Through the normal route of shopping and volunteer work, which included her contribution to the composition of a training manual for clerks and cashiers, her interest and curiosity took her to board meetings as an observer and ultimately to the board itself as a member.

Her four year board membership has been highlighted by the culmination of her efforts to remodel the store. It was also her idea to organize the annual Co-op yard sale, with last year's profit going towards a new floor for the store. Her philosophy for the Co-op is to have it open and available and appealing to as many people in the community as possible. She understands that change and growth are inevitable and desirable if handled properly, and sees the Co-op as possibly someday occupying a space as large as neighboring Empire Foods.



Along the way, Carolyn married David Cook, the present General Manager for the Co-op and also fellow board member, and this union produced their soon-to-be-two year old son, Sam. Busy though her life may be, she also finds time to serve as a volunteer counselor for the Pregnancy Counseling Service. And, if you'll remember way back to Carolyn's original intention for coming to Moscow, art is still a lingering, albeit mostly shelved, interest which occasionally has time to emerge.



*Young Carolyn in 1957*

# WHAT'S WRONG with irradiating food?

by  
Cinda Thomson

Protest groups such as C. S. F. I. (Coalition to Stop Food Irradiation), and CUFFS (Consumers United for Food Safety) want to see a slowdown in the government's plans to establish irradiation as a common method of food processing. Why? There are three main reasons these and other groups are concerned over the issue of irradiation.

TIME--Legislation has been introduced in the forms of H. R. 696 and S. 288 to alter the Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act of 1958. If passed, citizens would no longer be protected against irradiated, unlabelled food. It is the goal of these consumer groups to alert the public to the issues to provide input to legislators before the bills are passed. Concerned citizens should demand more of a voice in establishing gamma radiation plants across the United States. Do you know the possible hazards of eating foods bombarded with rays from cobalt-60 and cesium-137? Do you approve of the location of the plants? Are you sure the plants will not contaminate your air or water? If you want more information, these consumer groups are willing to help, and urge you to act now in questioning your legislators on these serious concerns.

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY--Another pressing concern is legal accountability. Suppose legislation is passed to permit food irradiation and there are serious problems. If the already irradiated food is subjected to more processing, for example, and labelling to this effect is not legally required, what is the consumer to do? Who do you sue when a law is not broken? Suppose hazardous wastes spill from a train en route to a processing plant and contaminates your town. Who is liable: the railroad, the handlers who packed the waste product, the government, or none of the above? If responsibility is not clearly spelled out, will stringent precautions be taken? Or, if the buck seems likely to be passed around, will agencies and companies evade costly safety practices?

RESEARCH--There is great room for disagreement on the wholesomeness and safety of irradiated food. It is too soon to say widespread use of irradiation should be promoted. Consider the results of these studies:



\*\* In a March 1984 report, the U.S. Department of Agriculture stated "possible adverse findings which will require careful consideration before the process can be declared safe." In 12 sets of studies, mice and flies were fed the irradiated meat. The mice showed an increase in testicular tumors, cancer and kidney disease. The flies' lifespans were shorter, possibly due to the meat.

\*\* The Environmental Protection Agency, in a 1984 report, said "irradiation of grains and vegetables stimulates the production of toxins some 1,000 times more deadly than EDBs." EDB, Ethylene DiBromide, is a pesticide found to be carcinogenic, and is now banned from use.

\*\* The United Nations Agency for International Development's study published in the February 1975 American Journal of Clinical Nutrition stated that 10 children fed irradiated food developed blood abnormalities linked to leukemia, whereas a control group not subjected to an irradiated diet did not.

While reasonable doubt exists as to the possible dangers of eating irradiated food, which undergoes molecular and nutritional changes, it is prudent to look further into the process before popularizing it.

To readers wishing in depth information on food irradiation, C. S. F. I. and CUFFS can help you:

\*\* Coalition to Stop Food Irradiation  
44 Montgomery Street, 5th Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94104

This group will provide up-to-date reports on pending legislation.

\*\* CUFFS c/o Linda Copper  
5215 S. Dawson  
Seattle, WA 98118

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JULY 85



NATURAL FOOD RESTAURANT/BAKERY SURVEY

1. Would you support a Natural Food Restaurant/Bakery in Moscow?

YES \_\_\_\_\_

NO \_\_\_\_\_

2. What type of support would you be willing to offer?

FINANCIAL BACKER \_\_\_\_\_

WORKER \_\_\_\_\_

CONSUMER \_\_\_\_\_

3. Which would you be more interested in supporting?

RESTAURANT \_\_\_\_\_

BAKERY \_\_\_\_\_

BOTH \_\_\_\_\_

4. What type of food would you like to have served?

VEGETARIAN WITH EGGS AND DAIRY PRODUCTS \_\_\_\_\_

VEGETARIAN EMPHASIS/INCLUDING MEAT \_\_\_\_\_

STRICTLY VEGETARIAN/WHOLE GRAINS \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

5. What price range would you like to see?

BUDGET \_\_\_\_\_

MID-RANGE \_\_\_\_\_

EXPENSIVE \_\_\_\_\_

ALL OF THE ABOVE \_\_\_\_\_

6. What type of service would you like to have?

CAFETERIA-STYLE (U-DISH/U-CARRY) \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTER SERVICE (WE-DISH/U-CARRY) \_\_\_\_\_

TABLE SERVICE (WE-DISH/WE-CARRY) \_\_\_\_\_



7. What hours would you like to see the Restaurant/Bakery open?

BREAKFAST \_\_\_\_\_

LUNCH \_\_\_\_\_

DINNER \_\_\_\_\_

LATE-NIGHT \_\_\_\_\_

24-HOUR \_\_\_\_\_

8. What type of atmosphere would appeal to you?

MERCY BEANZ \_\_\_\_\_

MAIN STREET DELI \_\_\_\_\_

HOYT'S \_\_\_\_\_

JOHNNIE'S \_\_\_\_\_

MULTI-ATMOSPHERIC \_\_\_\_\_

9. Where should the Restaurant/Bakery be located?

DOWNTOWN \_\_\_\_\_

MALL \_\_\_\_\_

OUT OF TOWN \_\_\_\_\_

RESIDENTIAL \_\_\_\_\_

SUGGESTION \_\_\_\_\_

10. What degree of involvement would you like to see from the Moscow Food Co-op?

MOSCOW FOOD CO-OP OWNED/OPERATED \_\_\_\_\_

AGREEMENT TO PURCHASE PRODUCTS \_\_\_\_\_

PARTIAL FINANCIAL BACKING \_\_\_\_\_

NO INVOLVEMENT \_\_\_\_\_

11. Suggestions/Comments

12. Name/Phone Number (Optional)