

the  
**thymes**

First Alternative  
NATURAL FOODS CO-OP

*Spring 2018*

Volume 2 • Issue 1  
March • April • May



First Alternative  
NATURAL FOODS CO-OP

A Free Publication



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Spring 2018

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The Co-op Thymes is a free quarterly publication of First Alternative available in our stores and around Corvallis. It can also be viewed at [www.firstalt.coop](http://www.firstalt.coop).

Editor/writer . . . . . Adam Payson  
 Design/layout . . . . . Adam Payson  
 Photos . . . . . Adam Payson, Julia Lont  
 Illustrations . . . . . Julia Lont, Stev Ominski

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# Le Sacre du Print-Thymes

Adam Payson, *Thymes Editor*

Composer Igor Stravinsky's ballet and orchestral work, *Le Sacre du Printemps* or *The Rite of Spring* premiered to quite the fuss in 1913 Paris—a polite way of saying there was some rioting at the theatre that night.

More than a century later, the music no longer throws nobles into chair-tossing fits, but still possesses a lively, stirring power that captures something fundamental about the season—spring itself is a riot.

Blossoming flowers turn fields and trees into light shows. Neighborhoods ring with the songs of crows and scrub jays. The skies swirl with raptors and vultures. Everywhere, bees are buzzing and formerly bare dirt is awash in growth.

The quiet of winter is shattered, the season of reverie is gone, and—look at that—the weeds are already getting out of control. Yes, it's time to get up, get outside and get to work.

Welcome to the Spring Thymes, the first edition of 2018! We're all ready for spring here at the Co-op, and want to help you prepare as well.

This spring-loaded issue includes some garden planning ideas, advice on beating seasonal allergies, courtesy of our Wellness managers Susie and Sara, and we have four amazing new recipes for you from Donna's Kitchen that highlight the season's fresh bounty.

That's not all! We'll also pay a visit to one of the west's premier organic produce distributors, Organically Grown Company, and talk with some of the master woodworkers from the Willamette Woodworkers Guild.

And if you're thinking about possibly running in this summer's Board of Directors elections we've got an article just for you.

So without any further ado, let's spring into the Thymes! 





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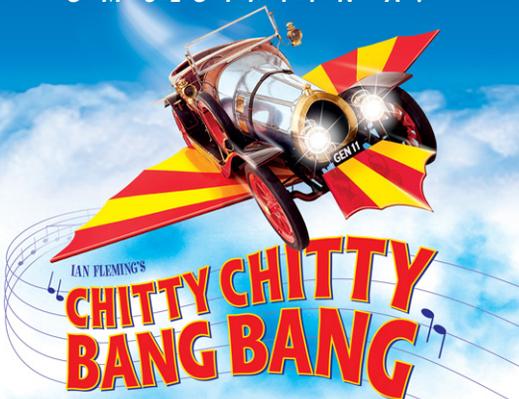
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# An Organically Grown Company

## We Visit with the Largest Supplier of Organic Produce in the West

**O**rganically Grown Company (OGC) sprouted in 1978, watered by the dreams of a group of gardeners, farmers, and activists living in and around Eugene. In those first years it was the Organically Grown Cooperative. The name's changed a little since then, but the mission remains: using organic agriculture to nourish healthy people and improve the health of our planet.

OGC started modestly enough, as a regional way to exchange information and coordinate the purchase of supplies. Before long members were coordinating which farms were growing what crop and using their combined clout to market those crops to businesses around the valley.

By the end of 1983, OGC had six member farms, a loading dock in Eugene, and its first paid employee—hired to sell and deliver produce around the valley, at places like the First Alternative Natural Foods Co-op.

Today, OGC remains locally-owned by regional farmers and employee shareholders. Their fuel efficient "Clean Air" certified trucks make deliveries up and down the west coast and as far east as Montana,

while they send high quality, organic produce further east by partnering with independent wholesalers.

We recently had the chance to visit their amazing facility in Portland, a 119,000 square-foot warehouse opened in 2012 that now serves as the heart of their operations.

Our tour began in an expansive indoor loading dock. Approximately 30 trucks back up to these docks every day, fully loaded with produce. Upon arrival, trucks plug into the building's electric system and cool their trailers with electricity instead of diesel fuel. The warehouse (and OGC's other facilities) use renewable energy, or if that's not available, offset energy use through renewable energy credits.

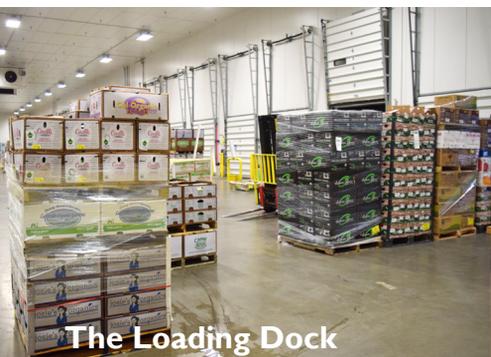
Walking the temperature-controlled dock, we met Nikko Barlow, a member of the Quality Assurance Team as he dug into and took notes and pictures of six-foot stacks of packed vegetables. While the pace of work was quick, it's clear nothing was being rushed.

Every pallet is fully inspected upon arrival, and every fruit and vegetable is given a chance. If the quality is too low for grocery stores, where unblemished produce is the rule, OGC will make sure to find it a home with juice makers, restaurants, or other clients. From farm to warehouse to consumer, sustainability is the key to all of OGC's relations and operations.

The warehouse crews exemplify this by reusing and recycling everything they possibly can, including repairing damaged pallets rather than scrapping them. They're constantly striving to evolve their composting programs and relationships with local food banks. They also have a program similar to the Co-op, awarding staff who bike, walk, skateboard, carpool, or take transit into work.

Chilly from our time in the temperature-controlled loading dock, we passed through an amazing door—pulling itself up automatically with a satisfying swishing noise, like something out of Star Trek. These doors, impossible to accidentally leave open, are a crucial component of the warehouse's elaborate climate control system, which even includes special spore-capture systems that help keep the coolers clean of molds. Additionally, separation of ethylene-producing and ethylene-sensitive product extends the shelf life of all products.\*

We found ourselves in an even colder room, surrounded by industrial shelving and pallets packed with citrus fruit quietly awaiting its departure. Here, we learned about the precise humidity controls employed to preserve the fruit, and the extensive quality checks that will continue for as long as the product remains in the warehouse.



The Loading Dock

✱ Bananas and other fruits like apples, kiwis, and pears release a gaseous hormone called ethylene as they ripen, triggering ripening in other fruits (this is likely the source of the idiom *one bad apple spoils the bunch*.) Because of this, keeping bananas sequestered makes a lot of sense.

# Organically Grown Company

Employee and Grower Owned



Conditions during growth can predispose produce to problems that don't immediately manifest—a moist growing climate, for example, could cause mildew to appear on citrus several days after its arrival at the warehouse. This is just one more thing closely watched for by the Quality Assurance teams and Inventory Managers who keep stock constantly moving into and out of the warehouse.

OGC employs a variety of experts, each specializing in a set of fruits and vegetables, who disseminate up-to-date information on crops and conditions—from market to soil—between growers, warehouse staff, and clients.

We passed into the next room, where conditions were downright frigid. This, we were informed, is the wet room, a space for the truly cold-loving produce (and people). On the racks all around us were pallets of ice-topped broccoli, greens and all sorts of veggies. A forklift passed by, hoisting another pallet up onto a high shelf that functions a lot like top-of-the-aisle "backstock" at the Co-op—a way to preserve freshness by rotating stock so the first to come in is the first to go out.

Next came some relief from the cold—a large room that during the summer becomes a small fruit packing line. Our tour leader, Mike Boyle, Director of Sales & Business

Development, explained that it will fire up again around June, first with blueberries grown in eastern Washington, continuing to operate through the summer as the berries ripen westward and kiwi berries and cranberries come into season.

The small to mid-size berry farms that send their harvests here to be sorted wouldn't be able to stay in business otherwise, because large, factory-like berry farms with their own dedicated packing lines can handily outproduce them. OGC stands for these small to mid-size farmers and helps to keep them in business.



**The Fruit Packing Line**

We moved on again, this time to the Banana Room—a long, corridor with a series of retractable, banana-yellow doors. Inside each door are fully-controlled environments where 20 pallets of bananas, or other slow-ripening fruits like avocados and mangoes, can be "activated" or quickly ripened.

The process was described as "part art, part science," and involves regular assessments of growing conditions and the fruit itself. Properly dialed-in, these rooms can



**Mike Boyle tells us about The Banana Room**

ripen fruit in days instead of a week.

The tour completed, we made our way out of the warehouse and back through the offices where we ran into Bernie Kurten, former South Store Produce Manager, now working in Inventory Maintenance at OGC doing all of the things that Nikko, who we first met on the loading dock, and the rest of the PIM (Purchasing & Inventory Maintenance) team does—checking initial and continuing quality, sending reports and communicating with the sales and buying teams, bringing high-quality organic produce to the west coast and beyond.

It was great to see a familiar face from the Co-op at OGC. Another connection between two businesses that are already so intertwined. The Co-op and Organically Grown Company will continue working to keep fresh, local, and organic produce on every table. 🥒



**Organic Romanesco**

## Look for the Ladybug

OGC's LADYBUG Brand only appears on the finest organic produce from select family farmers operating on the cutting edge of environmentally responsible agriculture.



# Mid-Willamette Woodworkers Guild

This Long Running Guild of Local Woodworkers is a Cut Above



**W**oodworkers aren't born; like trees they're grown, and here in the Willamette Valley where the firs scrape the clouds and their roots crowd the ground, it's no wonder the woodworkers grow so sturdy.

The Mid-Willamette Woodworker's Guild (MWWG) sprouted in 1982 thanks to seven friends, all professional woodworkers in the area, who would meet over beers to share techniques and tell tales of triumph and tribulation at the table saw. Builders all, they decided to turn these rough hewn meetings of theirs into something beautiful for the community. Just like that, the Guild was born.

Thirty-six years later, the Guild is going strong. One person from that formative time around the table, Bill Storch, remains an active member today.

*Founding member, Bill Storch poses in his shop for the 1982 MWWG booklet. Bill remains a member today.*

Their purpose is to promote high standards of quality and craftsmanship in woodworking. They achieve this through public workshops, seminars, and exhibitions.

Guild member Kent Stockwell is a great example. He volunteers twice weekly at Crescent Valley High School, assisting woodworking instructors Adam Kirsch and Greg Nicol to demonstrate woodworking skills and guide students. Similarly, Guild member Bob Smith volunteers with Kevin Skillings' Corvallis High School woodworking class, and Gene Stemmann with Philomath High. Another longtime member, Bill Bolstad was recently honored by the Guild of Oregon Woodworkers for an amazing professional career in which he's crafted more than 35,000 pieces.

An important part of being a Guild member is freely sharing knowledge and experiences with one another. The MWWG is not exclusive. Its members encompass a range of skill levels, from novice to master, all with one thing in common—an active interest in woodworking. Anyone sharing that interest is welcome to join.



*A Guild member workbench.*



Interested in joining?  
Visit [www.mwwg.net](http://www.mwwg.net)

*Some tools of the trade on display, mid-project.*

The all-volunteer organization is sustained by contributions from the thirty-or-so men and women who count themselves active members (annual dues are just \$24), along with the kindness of its commercial supporters. Meetings are often held at the workshops of Guild members. Much like the Co-op, the Mid-Willamette Woodworkers Guild is administered by an elected Board of Directors.

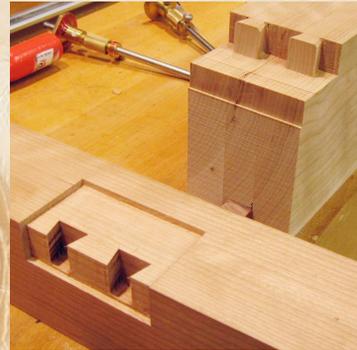


To keep hammering at the wood metaphors, think of the MWWG as a healthy tract of forest, where future growth builds naturally upon growth of the past. Healthy forests grow the strongest trees, similar to how healthy soil grows the best tasting food—a fact Co-op shoppers are intimately familiar with. A healthy community, meanwhile, creates a web of sustainability where successive generations of community members can come together to build enterprises better suited to local needs than any cookie-cutter corporate offerings. The Co-op and the Mid-Willamette Woodworkers Guild are two such enterprises.

The Guild's 35th annual exhibition is the perfect opportunity to take measure of all the incredible woodworking talents we have in our own backyard. It will be held at the Corvallis-Benton County Public Library from Thursday, April 19th-Sunday, April 22nd, during regular business hours.

A reception on Friday the 20th from 6-8pm will give community members a chance to meet many of the artists in person, like current Guild president Jim Good, and this year's exhibition chairman Stan Hall. The following day, Saturday the 21st, there will be a woodworking presentation at 2pm.

Woodworking students from Crescent Valley and Corvallis High School are welcome to display their work. If you are interested in joining the Guild, or just enjoy seeing amazing creations where art and craft intersect, don't miss this exhibition. 🌿



*Guild members flatten an OSU walnut tree slab (above), prepare a dovetail joint (top right), and plane some wood smooth.*



**Mid-Willamette Woodworkers Guild**  
**35th Annual Exhibition of FINE WOODWORKING**  
**April 19-22, 2018**  
**Corvallis Public Library Event Room**  
 Open during Library hours (exhibition closes at 2:00 PM on Sunday)  
 Meet the artists at a reception, 6:00 - 8:00 PM on Friday  
 Woodworking presentation, 2:00 PM on Saturday

We are pleased to partner with Crescent Valley High School and Corvallis High School to include select pieces from student woodworkers!



More information online at: [www.mwwg.net](http://www.mwwg.net)  
 Like us on Facebook: [facebook.com/MidWillametteWoodworkersGuild](https://facebook.com/MidWillametteWoodworkersGuild)  
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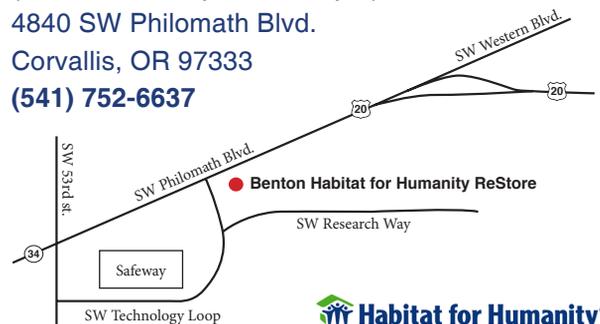
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# Can I? Should I? Do You Have What it Takes to Run for a Seat on the Co-op Board of Directors? By: Chris Peterson

Perhaps you've entertained the idea. You're a Co-op owner, you respect its mission and values and want to support it, beyond just making it your primary grocery store. But you're still not sure if you're cut out to serve on the Co-op Board.

Would the Board want you? It's not uncommon for candidates to harbor doubts about their capabilities, no matter their skills and background.



**Do I Have Time?** Maybe you're concerned about how much time is involved in meetings and committees, prepping for both, and training. According to Judy Forgey, who served on the Board longer (so far) than anyone else—eleven years—and is currently a member of the Board Recruitment and Elections Committee (BREC), “the most-asked question from potential candidates is about the time commitment required.”

As for stories about long meetings, Forgey could tell you some. “When I started on the Board, we met twice each month and the meetings often lasted until 11 or 11:30 pm. Now, if the one monthly meeting lasts past 9 pm, that is unusual.”

Forgey attributes the more reasonable meeting time to a clearer distinction between the Board and Management, measures adopted to streamline processes and make better use of meeting

time, and the fact there are now ten Board members instead of twenty.

**Teamwork and Training:** To learn more about serving on First Alternative's Board, I queried current Board members too. Some had wondered if they had enough experience or skills.

Robert Williams, who has served for 9 years, said, “It turns out that I, like every other member of the Board, had unique knowledge and experience that contributed to the whole in a very satisfying way.”

Camille Freitag, now in her third term, wondered if she'd have a good grasp of the financial information. “I am not the best regarding finances, but the training is good and help is always available from my fellow Board members.”

One of those helpful fellows is James Smith. Now in his second term, Smith, who has a degree in accounting, an MBA and CPA, volunteered on the Finance Committee before serving on the Board. “Initially, I was concerned with getting up to speed with the governing process,” he said. But he quickly learned there is a lot of support from fellow Board members and Management. You're assigned a mentor, there is orientation, and ongoing training. All three current Board members agreed time is the biggest challenge, but they know what to expect. All said the most rewarding part is spending time with people who love the Co-op. “I am impressed at how talented everybody is and continue to learn something at each meeting,” Smith said.

**Surprises?** Smith was surprised to learn Board members get a 15% discount. Williams is amazed at how dedicated the entire staff of the Co-op is to their work and cooperative principles. Freitag was surprised when the General Manager retired while she was serving as Board president, leaving her responsible for leading the search for her replacement. “This seemed overwhelming, at first, but, again, there was help available and the process was very rewarding.”



**Where to Start:** Candidate packets are available at Customer Service at both stores and online at [www.firstalt.coop](http://www.firstalt.coop). You don't need to decide to run before picking one up. Those who wish to run will be interviewed by the BREC to determine their suitability before their name goes on the ballot. Smith recommends candidates attend a few Board and committee meetings. Robert Williams advises you approach it as a learning opportunity, “offer your unique experience and enjoy being part of the arc of the Co-op's history.” Camille Freitag agreed. “Don't brush it off because you hate meetings. There are always interesting things to learn at the meetings, and the food is great!” 🥗

# How Does Your Garden Grow?

## Some Advice for Green Thumbs in Training

It's easy to forget how lucky we are when it comes to food here in our emerald valley. There's no shortage of options for fresh, local, organic eats, from the Farmers' Market to a little grocery store called First Alternative, but one special location is easy to overlook—the backyard! It doesn't get any fresher than food just harvested from your garden.

While our clay-heavy soil can be a bother, the deliciousness of your harvest will make it worthwhile. Here are some simple tips to get your garden growing.

### Seek the Sun

Pick a sunny spot for your garden. Most veggies want "full sun" or 6-8 hours of direct sun through the day. Some crops, like lettuce and other greens do better in partial shade.

Make a lazy day of project of it. Watch your yard as the sun wheels across the sky, taking note of where the shade falls. Keep in mind that as the season progresses, trees will be filling in and creating more shade, while the sun's arc will go higher, shortening many shadows.



Friendly Sol

### A Head Start

Planting starts gets your garden going quicker, and increases your chance of success since they tend to be varieties tried and tested in our local climate, and grown from the seed by professional farmers.

Look for **Peoria Road organic starts** at the South Co-op this spring. Interested in sewing some seed? Starting from seed is fun and satisfying. The South Store also has local seeds from the good folks at **Thyme Garden, Territorial Seeds, Peace Seeds**, and others.



Pea Starts

### Amend It

Especially if you're just starting to work it, local soils can be difficult (unless you're a potter!) Amend the soil with a nutrient-rich compost, like **Down To Earth Compost**, available at the South Co-op.

Sidestep the soil problem entirely by planting in containers, which, as a bonus, will help you avoid weeds. For container gardening, we've got **Down To Earth Potting Soil**.

Whether you're gardening in containers or directly into earth, keep everything healthful and busy with regular additions of natural fertilizers like **Down To Earth's Bat Guano** or **Fish Meal**.



Compost, aka Humus

### Plan Then Plant

Now it's time to start the planning. It's helpful to start a garden journal where you write what you are planting, where you're planting it, and when. This will get more useful with every passing season.



Plan...

A plot that's 20' x 20' provides ample space for a wide selection of crops. Make sure to do a little research on each of your plants. Do they want full sun, or some shade? Are there other plants you do, or do not, want near them? Are there special conditions that need to be met? Corn, for example, is wind pollinated, meaning it needs other corn very close by and should be planted in large blocks. Placing corn in rows like you would other crops will only lead to a poor harvest.

Arrange the garden into 3-foot wide beds running east to west to maximize sun exposure, and plan for plants that will grow the tallest to go on the northern side of each bed. Weed the soil, work in your amendments and begin planting!



Then Plant.

That's really just scratching the surface. Check out the online version of this article at [www.firstalt.coop](http://www.firstalt.coop) for a list of further gardening resources 🥒

Parts of this article adapted from "Designing Your Own Vegetable Garden" by the National Gardening Association

# Anyway You Slice It

## A Traditional New York Style Pizza Crust Recipe & Gluten Free Pizza Crust Mix Comparison

### GF Pizza Crust Mixes, Tested

In Donna's Kitchen, sometimes cooking a quick dinner becomes an experiment

Donna Tarasawa—Co-op Outreach Specialist and our resident culinary master, just meant to make a quick pizza dinner for her and her husband Mark, when she was unable to decide between the various gluten-free pizza crust options available at First Alternative. Which was right for her family? One way to find out.

She went home with four mixes, and tested three of them. "I purchased Pamela's as well, but discovered it needs 1-2 hours rise time, and it was already 7pm."

The following day, Donna reported that, "What we discovered was we liked them in this order:

1. **Namaste Gluten Free Pizza Crust Mix**
2. **Bob's Red Mill Gluten Free Pizza Crust Mix**
3. **Simple Mills Gluten Free Pizza Dough**

"I like Simple Mills' ingredient list because it's very basic without gums, etc, and it's easy to prepare, but it's also a little gritty. I'd had it before and really liked it, but side by side with the other two, it was the loser.

"The Namaste was very easy to prepare and was the tastiest, with the best texture.

"Bob's was more breadly and, in fact, I had a panicked moment when I was eating of thinking it wasn't gluten-free. It was very good, but a little more trouble to make because it includes a yeast packet which requires a few more steps and a short rise time." 🥰

Turn the page for recipes from Donna's Kitchen.



### New York Style Pizza Crust

Sick of pale, soggy, pizza? You can fuggedahboutit with this traditional NYC-style pie crust recipe

Makes 3 crusts

- 4 ½ cups bread flour, plus more for dusting
- 1 ½ Tbsp. sugar
- 1 Tbsp. kosher salt
- 2 tsp. instant yeast
- 3 Tbsp. Extra Virgin olive oil
- 15 ounces lukewarm water

In large bowl, whisk together flour, sugar, salt, and yeast. Make a well in center of ingredients large enough to hold water and oil.

Add water and oil to well. Using hand mixer with dough hook attachments, slowly work dry ingredients into wet. (By hand, use whisk until just before mixture becomes too thick, then switch to a spatula). Mix until you have formed a shaggy dough ball that pulls away from sides of bowl, 5-10 min.

Transfer to lightly floured surface and continue kneading by hand for another 5-10 min. until a smooth, elastic dough ball is formed that will pass the windowpane test.\*

Divide dough into three even balls and coat with flour. If preparing pizza that same day, cover and allow to rise for 2 hours before shaping into crusts. If storing, place each dough ball in quart-sized deli containers or in a zipper-lock freezer bag. Place in refrigerator and allow to rise at least 1 day, then transfer to freezer to store longer.

*That's the crust! Need help with the rest? Check out an expanded version of this article with topping ideas, cooking instructions, and an extra slice of advice in the online Thymes at [www.firstalt.coop](http://www.firstalt.coop).* 🥰

✳️ Pull a one-inch chunk from the dough, flatten and with both hands slowly pull apart. If it can stretch into an elastic membrane through which light easily passes, it passed!

Adapted from a J. Kenji López-Alt recipe on [seriouseats.com](http://seriouseats.com)

# Donna's Kitchen



**Donna Tarasawa**  
Outreach Specialist

Spring has come to Donna's Kitchen, and with it a return to fresh, light fare. Seasonal eating is a simple way of putting your body in closer touch with nature.

As the world around us returns to an inspiring sort of vibrancy, what better way to capture it than through harvest and joyful consumption! Here are four dishes that you can combine into one fresh feast, or enjoy however you please—we recommend dining outside in the invigorating springtime air.

**Toasted Parmesan Salad** This fun meal-starter begins with a fresh salad and a tangy dressing. Then it goes a few extra miles with the addition of the eye-opening flavor and crunch of toasted Parmesan cheese rounds. Break them up and sprinkle into the salad or just enjoy them on their own.



**Spring Quinoa** Keep the picnic going with a bowl of this uplifting blend of quinoa—a complete protein—fresh snow peas, and fresh dandelion greens. If that wasn't a lively enough blend already, the zippy dressing along with chives and crumbled feta will have you rolling merrily in the grass.

**Lamb Chops & Mint Sauce** What is it that's so magical about the combination of lamb and mint? Maybe it's that the complex flavor of lamb stands in such stark contrast to the bright simplicity of mint. Then again, maybe it really is just magic, in which case we should just stop asking questions.



**Honey Semifreddo** Semifreddo is an Italian term for *half-cold*, often associated with chilled desserts made primarily from eggs, sugar, and cream. We changed up the tradition a bit, replacing granulated sugar with local honey. Keep it frozen until serving time, and if you're eating in the sun-warmed outdoors, don't eat too slow, but we doubt that will be a problem.



Find everything you need for these recipes and a whole lot more every day at the Co-op. Donna's Kitchen will see you all again in the summer! 🥒



*Toasted Parmesan Salad*



*Spring Quinoa*



*Lamb Chops & Mint Sauce*



*Honey Semifreddo*



## Spring Quinoa

### Ingredients: Serves 6

1 ½ cups quinoa  
2 ¾ cups water  
1 tsp. sea salt, divided  
¼ lb. snow peas, cut into ¾" pieces  
2 cups dandelion greens, chopped  
¼ lb. feta, crumbled  
3 Tbsp. chives, chopped  
½ cup walnuts, roughly chopped

### Dressing:

⅓ cup freshly squeezed lemon juice  
⅓ cup olive oil  
½ tsp. dill weed  
½ tsp. lemon pepper  
½ tsp. tarragon  
1 clove garlic, minced

**Dressing:** place lemon juice, olive oil, dill, lemon pepper, tarragon, garlic and remaining salt in a blender and blend for 30 seconds.

**Salad:** Rinse quinoa in a fine mesh strainer under running water to remove bitterness. Place in a pan with water and ½ tsp salt. Cover and bring to boil; reduce heat and simmer 15-20 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool completely before adding other ingredients. Place cooled quinoa into a large bowl. Pour dressing over top and toss. Add peas, dandelion greens, feta and chives and gently toss.

## Toasted Parmesan Salad

### Ingredients: Serves 6

¾ cup shredded Parmesan cheese  
2-3 romaine hearts  
1 can quartered artichoke hearts, drained

### Dressing:

2 Tbsp. coarse-grained mustard  
1 Tbsp. finely chopped shallot  
3 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice  
¼ cup fresh basil, chopped  
¼ cup olive oil  
¼ tsp. sea salt  
⅛ tsp. fresh ground pepper

**Toasted Parmesan:** Preheat oven to 350°F.

Divide cheese into 6 mounds on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Spread each mound into a 4" round. Bake until melted and golden brown, about 10 minutes. Let cool on a wire rack.

**Salad:** Whisk together mustard, shallot, lemon juice, basil and olive oil, salt and pepper to make dressing. Cut romaine lettuce into bite-sized pieces. Cut endives into quarters, lengthwise. Place lettuce and artichoke hearts in a bowl and toss with dressing. Serve with Toasted Parmesan.

## Honey Semifreddo

### Ingredients: Serves 8

¼ cup sliced almonds  
1 egg  
4 egg yolks  
½ cup honey  
1 ¼ cups coconut cream  
Mandarin orange slices

Place almonds in a skillet over med-low heat, stirring occasionally, until golden brown. Let cool. Line a loaf pan with plastic wrap. Sprinkle bottom with toasted almonds. Bring water to a simmer in the bottom of a double boiler. Place egg, egg yolks and honey in the top of the double boiler, making sure the bottom of the bowl does not touch the water. With a handheld mixer, beat the mixture until pale yellow and thick, 10-15 min. Remove from heat and let cool.

Whip coconut cream until thick peaks form. Whip cream and cooled honey mixture together. Transfer to the loaf pan, smooth top and freeze at least 3 hours. When ready to serve, turn dessert out onto a platter. Cut into slices and serve with mandarin oranges. Store leftovers in freezer.

## Lamb Chops & Mint Sauce

### Ingredients: Serves 6

6 lamb chops or lamb shoulder steaks  
¼ tsp. salt (or more to taste), divided  
Fresh ground pepper to taste  
2 Tbsp. olive oil

### Yogurt-Mint Sauce:

½ cup fresh mint leaves, chopped  
½ cup plain yogurt  
2 green onions, chopped  
¾ tsp. dill weed  
1 Tbsp. minced fresh dill  
1 garlic clove, minced  
2 tsp. fresh lemon juice  
pinch of salt

**Yogurt-Mint Sauce:** mix all ingredients and refrigerate until ready to serve.

**Lamb:** Rinse lamb chops and pat dry; season with half the salt and pepper. Heat oil in a large skillet. Add chops and cook for 6 minutes; turn, season with remaining salt and pepper, cook for 6 minutes more. Top with Yogurt-Mint Sauce and serve.



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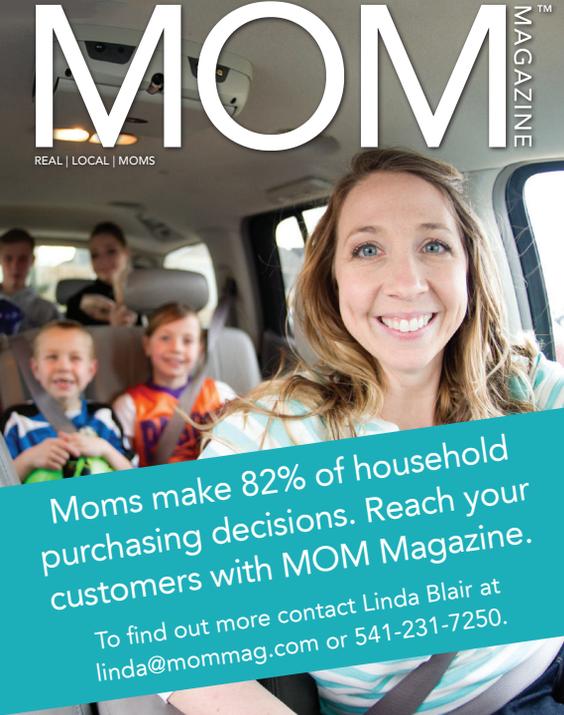


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# Side BY Side Yogurt



Yadira Ruiz,  
Sunbow Produce

**R**ecognizing and setting aside bias is a “writing basic” but folks, let me just tell you this right now, I have a very slanted, deep and strong bias towards thick and creamy yogurt. There, I said it. With that out of the way, I think I can be objective in presenting information and letting you decide what your own preferences are. This season we put our cultured cups of cream under the microscope.

Here are my taste test impressions. In the online version of the article we will also take closer look at essential information like fats, sweeteners, protein, and additives, like thickening agents. It was simply too much information to fit into the print edition!

It's worth noting that none of these yogurts contain aspartame, sucralose, artificial colorings, preservatives or high fructose corn syrups because the grocery buyers at First Alternative have strict standards to adhere to. #coopstandards FTW!

**Breakfast Basics:** The yogurts in this category will satisfy your “first meal of the day” requirement without sending you into a sugar coma.

### Wallaby Organic Aussie Smooth

**Lemon:** Well balanced sweet and tangy, lightly flavored with a creamy texture.

**Pavel's Plain Original:** a mild plain yogurt, low in fat and sugar with a texture that makes it a suitable substitute for sour cream or buttermilk in baked goods.



### Organic Valley Grassmilk Plain

**Yogurt:** Thickest of the grass fed milk yogurts. Grass fed cow's milk has a distinctive “cheesy” flavor. This one is best for those of who prefer savory to sweet at breakfast.

**Maple Hill Creamery Vanilla:** This grass fed cow's milk yogurt has a thin texture and that distinctive grass fed flavor with a tangy, light hint of vanilla.

**Green Valley Organics Lactose Free Lowfat Yogurt Vanilla:** This is the dairy yogurt for folks who suffer from lactose intolerance. It contains lactase enzyme which makes it easier to digest. It has a thicker texture with a nice tang and isn't overly sweet or strongly flavored.

**Kite Hill Artisan Almond Milk Yogurt Vanilla:** Vegan yogurt! It's free of soy, dairy, and gluten and they use only non-GMO almonds. If you like the idea of almond milk with a creamy texture, you'll love this yogurt. Sadly, I don't like almond milk so this one didn't win me over.

**So Delicious Dairy Free Coconut Milk Yogurt Alternative Peach:** Ding, ding, ding, this was the non-dairy winner. If you're reluctantly dairy free, try this. It's the closest thing to the dairy based products. It's like creamy sorbet with peach bits, need I say more?



Too many choices can be overwhelming, especially when you're hungry. Side By Side is here to help!



**Power snack in a cup:** The yogurts in this category will supplement your bigger meals with high protein content and give you the extra boost you need when you are highly active.

**Siggi's Triple Cream Vanilla:** The name says it all. Icelandic style yogurt is so thick and can leave a mouth feel much like whipped cream or butter because of the fat content but is comparatively low in sugar so it has a pleasant tang.

**Siggi's Whole Milk Plain Yogurt:** Gorgeous tang without making you pucker. Versatile, could be used instead of sour cream or buttermilk in recipes.

**Smari Organic Icelandic Whole Milk Yogurt:** Comes in non-traditional flavors like coffee and key lime. Yum! Medium thick texture with a nice tang.

**Daiya Greek Yogurt Alternative Peach:** The upside is that it has actual delicious fruit chunks in it and has the highest protein content of all of the non-dairy yogurts. The downside is the slightly bitter, chalky texture.



**Dessert quality:** Move over ice-cream, these yogurts are creamy and decadent with a higher sugar content.

**Greek Gods Seriously Indulgent Yogurt Lemon:** Yes it is. Great, creamy texture. Has fruit in the bottom, and flavor all over.

**Noosa Lemon:** Silky, lightly creamy and thick. Perfect balance of sweet and tangy. I confess, I couldn't put the spoon down.

**Smari Organic Icelandic Non-fat Yogurt Vanilla flavor:** This yogurt has actual flecks of vanilla bean in it. It has a buttery thick texture that makes you do a double-take at the "non-fat" part of the name but it's true! This low sugar, low fat, and decadent yogurt is an excellent way to cut back unhealthy treats without giving up deliciousness.



## Hungry for the Data?

Visit [www.firstalt.coop](http://www.firstalt.coop) and view the expanded online version of the Thymes for an in-depth nutritional comparison that we simply didn't have space for here in the print edition!

**DIYY (Do It Yourself Yogurt)**  
Voracious yogurt eaters may want to look into making their own. Not only will it save money, it also cuts packaging waste and gives you the opportunity to create your dream yogurt. Look for **Yo'gourmet Yogurt Starter** near the rest of the yogurts. A ww starter is also available.



# Susie and Sara

If you've spent much time in our Wellness aisles, you may already know Susie, our South Store Wellness manager, and Sara, our North Store Wellness manager. Their new column gives them a chance to spread their wisdom to the community at large, and not a moment too soon, because with the return of spring comes the return of not just great weather, but the pernicious pollens and dastardly danders that come along with it. Never fear though, because it's Susie and Sara... *Versus*

## Seasonal Allergies



☞ **Aller-Aid from Oregon's Wild Harvest** is immensely popular with seasonal allergy sufferers. It combines herbs like nettles—which modulate inflammation in key receptors and affect the enzymes that produce allergic reactions—with quercetin and N-A-C, both of which are known for their strong antioxidant properties. It's a combination that's proven effective for the many shoppers year after year.

☞ Personally, I've had great success with **Wish Garden's Tree Country**, formulated with herbs specifically from our region, including one of my personal favorite sinus comfort herbs, Yerba Santa. It has the unique quality of being an astringent with an affinity for the mucous membranes in our sinuses, meaning it can provide relief for a constantly running nose. ☺

☞ **Boiron Sabadil** is my go to allergy medicine for seasonal and the occasional non-seasonal allergies. It temporarily relieves one or more of my symptoms of hay fever or other upper respiratory allergies: itchy and watery eyes, sneezing, runny nose, and itchy throat and nose. If you have these symptoms persistently, this medicine has the potential to give speedy relief!

☞ **Neti Pot** rinses are another tactic I use to ward off sinus infections that can be caused by excess allergens. Using a neti pot to do a salt rinse can relieve pain, pressure, and congestion by liquefying the excess mucus in your nasal passages and flushing it out. It also keeps the tiny hairs in your nasal passages moving so they block out bacteria, allergens and other irritants. It is generally recommended to use a neti pot once a week but I find using it once a month is sufficient. ☺



# Sara and Susie



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