

the *thy***m**es

First Alternative
NATURAL FOODS CO-OP

Spring 2019

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Volume 3 • Issue 1



First Alternative
NATURAL FOODS CO-OP

A Free Publication



First Alternative
NATURAL FOODS CO-OP

the thymes

Spring 2019

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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.

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Thymes for Spring

Adam Payson, *Thymes Editor*

You never know what spring will bring to the valley: will it rain today or be sunny? Will it be hot or cold?

The only thing we can expect with any certainty during a Willamette Valley spring is that you'll probably want to pack along some layers. Preparation, after all, means having what you need before you need it.

The Co-op offers shoppers a unique way to stay prepared with an extensive selection of bulk products across the store. A handy guide on page 12 will answer any questions you may have about shopping in bulk, and explain the benefits.

Before that, we'll take a look at the farm-to-table journey of local produce on page 4 and hear

about our Grocery Assistant Manager's summertime trip to Peru with Equal Exchange to visit the Oro Verde cacao cooperative (page 8).

Get some helpful advice on planning a cheesy picnic with a special "Cheese Please" on page 10. Still hungry? In Donna's Kitchen, on page 14, we're thinking outside the box with recipes using just bulk and produce. Then, we'll work that off with a fun bike ride (page 18).

Finally, we close the issue with a dive into another of spring's uncertainties—seasonal allergies! Susie & Brie explore bulk options (page 20) while Yadira has a great Side by Side on our packaged preventative (page 22). Spring is here, folks, so read on!



Become an Owner!

A refundable, one-time purchase of \$70 is all it costs to become a Co-op Owner, giving you a voice and a vote at a community-owned, environmentally- and socially-focused grocery store.

Co-op Ownership Benefits:

- Choose your own monthly "Owner Appreciation Sale Day" and get non-sale items 10% off
- Vote in Co-op Elections
- Run for our Board of Directors
- And more...just ask in the store!



Monday April 22

Celebrate **Earth Day 2019** with a day of huge savings at First Alternative Co-op

PRODUCE & BULK 15% OFF ALL DAY

All day at both Co-op locations. Offer does not stack with Owner Sale Day and other discounts.

Become an Owner today & join the Co-op Community!



CO-OP COMMUNITY



Marys Peak Watershed Tour



A Co-op Community exclusive guided tasting this spring at the Block 15 South Town Tap Room!

Owners, look for more details soon.

Take a trip to portions of Marys Peak Watershed where the public is rarely allowed. This trip will consist of a bus ride and a light hike. Snacks provided by Co-op!

The Fresh Local Organic Journey

From farms around the valley to tables across Corvallis, here's a look at how locally grown produce gets home



The Willamette Valley is Oregon's healthily beating heart. Roughly seventy percent of the state's residents call these nine million fertile acres home. That's a lot of mouths to feed, but it's a task to which Oregon's farmers are well accustomed.

Statewide, hundreds of thousands of Oregonians owe their employment to agriculture. It's not strictly local. In fact, as much as 80% of the produce grown in Oregon leaves the state. Without us, the rest of the nation would be hungry for hazelnuts and blackberries, and "Oh Christmas Tree" would be a mournful plea, not a joyous tune.

So how do local farmers make ends meet while managing to put food on so many tables?

It's far from easy! Most Oregon farms are small. Per the 2012 US Census of Agriculture, over a quarter of Oregon farms are nine acres and under and another thirty-five percent are under fifty acres.

In the Willamette Valley, and particularly here at the Co-op, it's these small farms we're most familiar with. We work with many of them on a daily basis, after all!

The following infographic charts the farm-to-table(s) journey of produce from a typical small, independent local farm, and hopefully illustrates the amount of hard work that remains for farmers even after the harvest. No one works harder than these farmers, and they deserve our respect and support. Have you hugged a farmer recently?



The Farm

The journey starts with a seed and a dream. To grow, it takes a lot of water and even more hard work. Once the harvest comes, well, that's just the beginning.

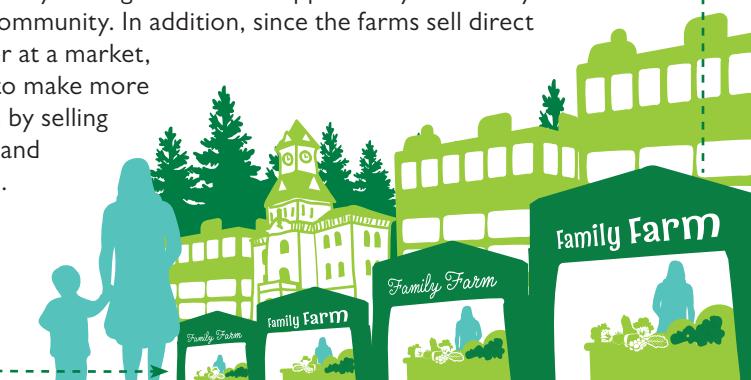


Next, local growers pack up their bounty and travel to markets near and far(ish).



Farmers' Markets

Farmers' markets thrive in the Willamette Valley. Markets up and down the valley run through the warmer months and sometimes into the winter. They are a grower's best opportunity to directly connect with their community. In addition, since the farms sell direct



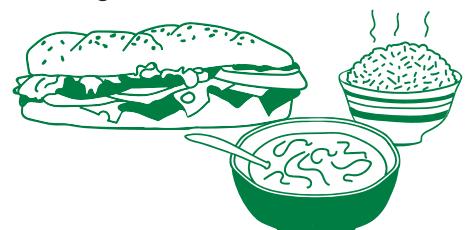
Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

CSAs are another great way for small local farms to get produce directly to consumers. Folks sign up with participating local farms, then receive a regular box full of freshly-harvested produce throughout the growing season. Removing the "middle man" means farmers make more money while consumers pay less.



Local Restaurants

Farm to table restaurants are an excellent outlet for local farms. Since diners only see the produce once it's prepared, farmers can sell less than perfect-looking fruits and vegetables. Restaurants also require smaller quantities than retail outlets, making it easier for small-acreage farms to fulfill orders.



As the demand for organic produce continues to grow, small farms up and down the Willamette Valley will continue to help feed hungry folks across the state, the nation, and the globe with their hard work.



Wholesale Distributor

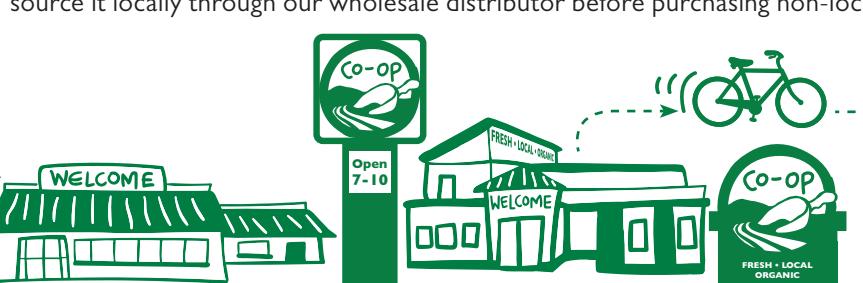


Distributors like Organically Grown Company transport produce to grocery stores and distribution centers.



The Co-op

Much of the fresh, local, organic produce at the Co-op comes to us directly from the farmer—to see, look for the Local Direct tag. Every season we work directly with dozens of local farms, which requires an enormous amount of coordination. When a farm doesn't have enough stock on hand to meet our often very high demand, we then try to source it locally through our wholesale distributor before purchasing non-local.



Your Table

The most important part of the journey for any piece of produce—especially produce grown locally with love—is the destination.

Whether it's for breakfast, lunch, dinner, or a snack, healthful food makes for healthy people. That's what we aim to put on your plate here at First Alternative, and we're proud to be a part of a local food system that shares our values and goals.



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What's in Store for Your Stores in 2019

South Store Retail Space Reorganization and North Store Repaint



In order to better utilize the space available to us at our South Store, and to create a more cohesive shopping experience between our two locations, the South Store will undergo a retail space reorganization. Slated to begin late summer, we aim to create as little disruption as possible to your shopping trip during the reset.

While details are still being finalized and subject to change, we plan to relocate wine to the north end of the store next to the beer

and cider. Wellness will move to aisle one, taking the place of household section, which will move to wine's current location. And various packaged groceries will be rearranged somewhat to mirror the North Store's layout.

Keep an eye out in-store and on social media for further details!

Meanwhile, North Store will be getting a refreshing new paint job! We'll be matching the colors of the recently repainted South Store. Both locations will have their roofs repainted in matching colors as well.

Looks like it's going to be another very busy summer! ☀️



DIY Spring Cleaning with Bulk Soap

Easy Non-Toxic Homemade Cleaning Solutions, by: Brie Lee-Tharp

Easy homemade cleaning solutions are waiting for you in bulk!

The same gentle soap you use on your skin is a great base for biodegradable household cleaners.

My favorite recipe simply calls for unscented hemp oil-based castile soap and essential oils with antimicrobial properties. For more convenience, choose a soap that includes essential oils such as Dr. Bronner's Tea Tree or Oregon Soap Company's Citrus Sunshine.

Certified Fair Trade and USDA Organic, Dr. Bronner's has been at the forefront of the organic hemp industry movement. By purchasing Dr. B's Pure-Castile Soap not only are you ensuring a safe and effective cleaning product but you're also supporting a company that is a leading advocate of regenerative agriculture. Find easy DIY recipes and a dilution cheat sheet on

Dr. Bronner's website: <https://www.drbronner.com/all-one-blog/>.

Oregon Soap Company has partnered with Friends of Trees to plant native plant species and help offset the carbon footprint of their production. Made in Portland by employees earning a living wage, Oregon Soap utilizes renewable energy and organic ingredients. For details of their partnership with Friends of the Trees visit: <https://www.oregonsoapcompany.com/about-us>.

All-Purpose Cleaning Spray:

- 1 quart water
- ¼ cup unscented castile soap
- 10 - 20 drops essential oil
- 1 reusable spray bottle

Shake to combine; spray and wipe clean. *Tips:* Re-purpose a standard threaded glass bottle by adding a spray top; fill bottle with water first then soap to avoid overflowing foam.

Soft Scrub:

- ½ - 1 cup baking soda (found in the bulk dept.)
- castile soap, enough to create a paste like consistency

Mix together and use on scrub-safe bathroom and kitchen surfaces.

Cleaning Wipes:

- 2 cups water
- 1 Tbsp. unscented castile soap
- 8-10 drops tea tree essential oil

Mix to combine then place in container with paper towels or re-usable cloths in container. Use as needed. ☀️



North: (541) 452-3115 • South: (541) 753-3115 7

Oro Verde and Equal Exchange

George's trip to a fair trade Peruvian cacao farm was an eye-opener

Jhis past summer, George Brown, our North Store's Grocery Assistant Manager received a letter from Equal Exchange.

"Dear George," it began, "we are delighted to invite you to join us on a delegation trip to visit the cacao cooperatives of Oro Verde...Your Equal Exchange chocolate purchases have helped sustain and grow opportunities for cacao farmers, and we'd like you to see first-hand what that looks like for these particular co-ops and communities."

Too good of an offer to pass up, George packed his bags and spent the end of August in San Martin, Peru, steeped in local culture and taking a behind the scenes look at organic, fair trade cacao production.



Cacao tree heavy with pods



Cacao pod cut open

Fair Trade Chocolate! The large pods from cacao trees are stuffed with bitter seeds that are removed and fermented to develop flavor. The fermented beans are then dried, cleaned, roasted, and dehusked. The different parts of the bean are then recombined in a variety of ways, producing everything from cocoa butter and powder or mixing in sugar and milk to create the chocolates most familiar to us.



of Lamas and the Oro Verde test facilities, the host families and their guests competed in friendly matches of tug-of-war and seeing who could go lowest in the limbo. Roosters crowed through the night. One morning, George recalled, a rooster crowing set off a rippling sequence of cock-a-doodle-doo responses for miles in every direction.

"I sort of had this picture of the farmers living on their farm in a small house...like some of the small scale vegetable farmers here in the Valley," George said. "But what I saw and learned was completely different. Here was a family with a cinder block house with dirt floors. The only items hung on the walls were school pictures of their kids, and Fermin's organic farming certification documents along with a poster showing organic farming best practices...These people barely had

anything but they opened up their home to us and were really proud to host us."

The remainder of the trip was spent in the beautiful town of Lamas, where Oro Verde's central offices are located. Oro Verde was founded in 1999 with two primary objectives: organizing local farmers into cooperatives, and to focus on production of high quality coffee. Coffee has been grown in the region since the late 19th century, but with little success in exports. A group of foreign investors helped kickstart the operation when they donated testing equipment and taught locals the technical aspects of coffee tasting. Not long after, Oro Verde coffees were winning awards and the co-op had grown to over 1,000 members. After a destructive earthquake in 2005, it was decided more crop diversity was needed and cacao was added,

the local climates being amenable to both. Coffee, it was decided, would be grown at 1,000 meters and above, where it is less prone to disease, and quicker-developing cacao would be grown below 1,000 meters. Moving away from dependence on a single crop helps the farmers remain independent.

Equal Exchange began their partnership with Oro Verde in 2012. They installed a cocoa Flavor Laboratory that has since evolved into a small scale chocolate factory, and implemented an agricultural extension program that trains local farm leaders in the technical aspects of cacao production, helping local farms be self-sufficient, successful, and sustainable.



Cacao beans drying in open air



George (left) with his host family and an Equal Exchange representative



Oro Verde Cooperative is dedicated to sustainable farming and education

Cheese Please

Picnic Picks

Henning's White Curds

Spring is here! Dust off the picnic basket and wash the gingham blanket, because it's time to take lunch outside. Whether you're planning an afternoon hike, a leisurely bike ride, a weekend camping excursion, or just taking your lunch break in the grass, we have some tasty suggestions for you.

Pair these four tasty cheeses (and one salami) with some fresh, local, organic produce and some easy-snacking selections from our bulk department. Read on for some delicious suggestions, and remember to enjoy yourself outdoors, be safe, and don't forget the cheese, please!

Montchevre Herb & Garlic Chevre

Spread this flavorful goat's milk cheese on a cracker or crumble over a green salad.

Olli Genoa Mild Salame

Simply seasoned with salt and white pepper, this pre-sliced mild salami stands alone or pairs with any cheese or cracker.



Bulk Fresh Mozzarella

Drizzle fresh mozzarella, sliced tomatoes, and torn basil with olive oil and balsamic vinegar to enhance the delicate flavors of the cheese. Perfect with a crusty baguette.



Rumiano Organic Sliced Havarti

Creamy, pre-sliced havarti makes sandwich assembly a cinch! Try this mild cheese with Big River Rye and sliced Diestel Pastrami or Roast Turkey from the Deli counter.



Holly Smith
S. Store Deli Manager



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Why Shop in Bulk?

1 USES LESS PACKAGING

Bulk items use far less packaging, especially when containers can be reused.



2 REDUCES SHIPPING

Bulk items ship more efficiently, using less fossil fuel in the process



3 KEEPS IT FRESH

You never need to get more of an item than you need or can use.



4 SAVES YOU MONEY

Bulk items typically cost less than their packaged counterparts



Get as much or as little as you need with an extensive selection of bulk products throughout the store. Here's how and why!

I Can't Believe it's Available in Bulk

At First Alternative Co-op, we know a lot about bulk. In fact, when we first opened our doors all the way back in 1970, bulk products were all we carried!

Nearly fifty years later, bulk remains essential to the Co-op. We believe shoppers shouldn't need to buy a whole box of

something just to get a pinch. It wastes money, packaging, even fuel!

With that in mind, we'd like to point out some surprising or lesser known items you can find for sale by the ounce or pound throughout the store.

Bulk spices: don't keep knocking the dust off an old jar of flavorless cloves,

or breaking the bank to buy a new jar of bay leaves when a recipe calls for just one. Bring the flavor while you save money with fresh spices in bulk!

Bulk body care: You can never be too clean, but you can have too much cleanser! Buy just what you need to stay fresh and clean, from soap and

body wash to shampoos and conditioners. Buying in bulk is also a great way to try something new without the commitment. (See pg. 20 for more bulk wellness info.)

A lot more: bulk cheese, bulk eggs, bulk tofu, bulk cooking oils, bulk laundry detergent, bulk pet food, and more!

How to Shop in Bulk

1 SELECT

a new or reused container for the product you wish to purchase in bulk.



2 WEIGH

empty container and write "tare" weight on container or piece of tape.



3 FILL

the container with desired quantity of product.



4 LABEL

the container with the bin number for the product.



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IMAR CELTIC SUPERGROUP MARCH 16

BABY BOOMER COMEDY SHOW MARCH 30

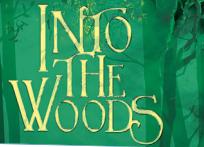


COURTROOM DARK COMEDY THE LAST DAYS OF JUDAS ISCARIOT APRIL 5-14

EIGHT 10 MINUTE PLAYS BY LOCAL WRITERS THE MAJESTIC EIGHT APRIL 20

IMPROV SMACKDOWN APRIL 26

INTO THE WOODS MAY 3 - 19



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Donna's Kitchen

EAT outside the box



**Donna Tarasawa
Outreach Specialist**

Last September several of us here at the Co-op took a challenge we decided to call "Eat Outside the Box". The goal was to buy all of our food for the month of September without single-use, non-compostable packaging. It was definitely a challenge. We tracked the ups and downs of the experience on our @firstaltcoop Instagram Story, using the hashtag #EatOutsideTheBox. And, while it was an extremely educational month, we couldn't wait for October to roll around.

Overall it was a worthwhile experience. We tried foods and products we wouldn't have otherwise, learned some nifty tricks, and added some great recipes to our collection. We'd like to share some of those recipes with you. These four recipes consist almost entirely of foods purchased in the bulk and produce departments at our store (for expediency's sake, we used canned chickpeas in the Waldorf recipe, but it just takes a little extra planning to include bulk chickpeas.)



Excerpts from our Instagram Story



Whole Wheat Pita Bread



Lemony Tofu "Egg" Salad



Chickpea Waldorf Salad



Chocolate Torte



Lemony Tofu "Egg" Salad

Dressing:

4 Tbsp. Vegenaise
2 Tbsp. mustard
2 Tbsp. red wine vinegar
1 Tbsp. olive oil
½ tsp. turmeric
½ tsp. lemon zest

Salad:

1 (20-ounce) block firm tofu
½ cup sliced almonds
2 Tbsp. capers
¼ cup chopped chives
½ tsp. fresh thyme leaves
Salt and pepper to taste

In a large bowl, whisk together all the dressing ingredients. Using your hands, crumble the tofu into roughly $\frac{1}{2}$ " pieces. Stir together with dressing and add almonds, capers, chives, and thyme. Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve with greens in whole wheat pita.

Whole Wheat Pita Bread

1 cup lukewarm water
2 tsp. active dry yeast
1 tsp. honey or agave
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups whole wheat flour

In bowl of stand mixer, mix water, honey and yeast and let sit for about five minutes. Add flours, salt, olive oil and mix until it comes together. Turn out dough on floured work surface. Knead for 5 min. or until smooth and elastic. Add flour only if necessary.

Make a ball, place it into an oiled bowl; cover and rest until doubled, about 1 hour. Gently deflate dough and turn out onto floured work surface. Divide it into 9 equal pieces, shaping each into a ball. With rolling pin, roll each ball into circle about $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick. Lift and turn the dough frequently to prevent sticking. Sprinkle with a little extra flour if it starts to stick.

Cover circles with plastic wrap or clean damp cloth. Preheat oven to 450° F with baking stone or sheet on the middle rack. When oven is ready, transfer 3 pitas at a time onto the baking surface and bake 4-5 minutes, or until the pitas balloon fully. Remove bread from the oven and repeat. Cool and serve as desired.

Chocolate Torte

Chocolate Torte:

4oz. 100% chocolate liquor discs
½ cup coconut oil
¾ cup pure maple syrup
4 eggs
½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder

½ tsp. vanilla extract
¼ tsp. salt

Peanut Butter Caramel:
½ cup maple syrup
¼ cup peanut butter
½ tsp. vanilla extract
⅛ tsp. of salt

Caramel: In a small sauce pan, heat all ingredients over med. heat, whisking continuously. Once boiling whisk for about a min. until starts to thicken. The longer you cook it, the thicker it gets. It thickens as it cools. **Torte:** Preheat oven to 375° F. Grease 8" springform pan. Melt chocolate and coconut oil together on low heat in med. saucepan. While the chocolate melts, whip eggs 3-5 min. with electric mixer, until slightly lighter in color. When lifting mixer, eggs should fall in thin stream not clumps. When chocolate melts, remove from heat. Stir in syrup, slowly whisk in eggs. Stir in vanilla and salt. Sift in cocoa powder with a sifter or fine mesh sieve. Stir to just combine. Pour into pan, gently shake back and forth to settle batter. Bake 20 min. or until middle is set. (If toothpick comes out clean, cake is ready.) Remove from oven, cool 5-10 min. in the pan before transferring out of the pan and onto a cooling rack.

Chickpea Waldorf Salad

Dressing:

½ cup mayonnaise
(or Vegenaise)
2 Tbsp. apple cider vinegar
1 tsp. Dijon mustard
1 tsp. honey
½ tsp. fine sea salt
⅛ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
⅛ tsp. freshly ground black pepper

Prepare the dressing by combining mayonnaise, apple cider vinegar, mustard, honey, salt, crushed red pepper flakes, and pepper in a bowl. Whisk until well-combined. Combine chickpeas, celery, apple, kiwi, parsley, and walnuts in a large bowl. Stir in the dressing and toss until evenly coated. Refrigerate for about 30 minutes before serving, or up to 5 days.

Salad:

1 (14-oz.) can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
2 ribs celery, finely chopped
1 medium apple, chopped into small pieces
1 cup kiwi, strawberries or red grapes
¼ cup chopped parsley
¾ cup walnuts, roughly chopped
4 cups fresh spinach

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Take a Ride

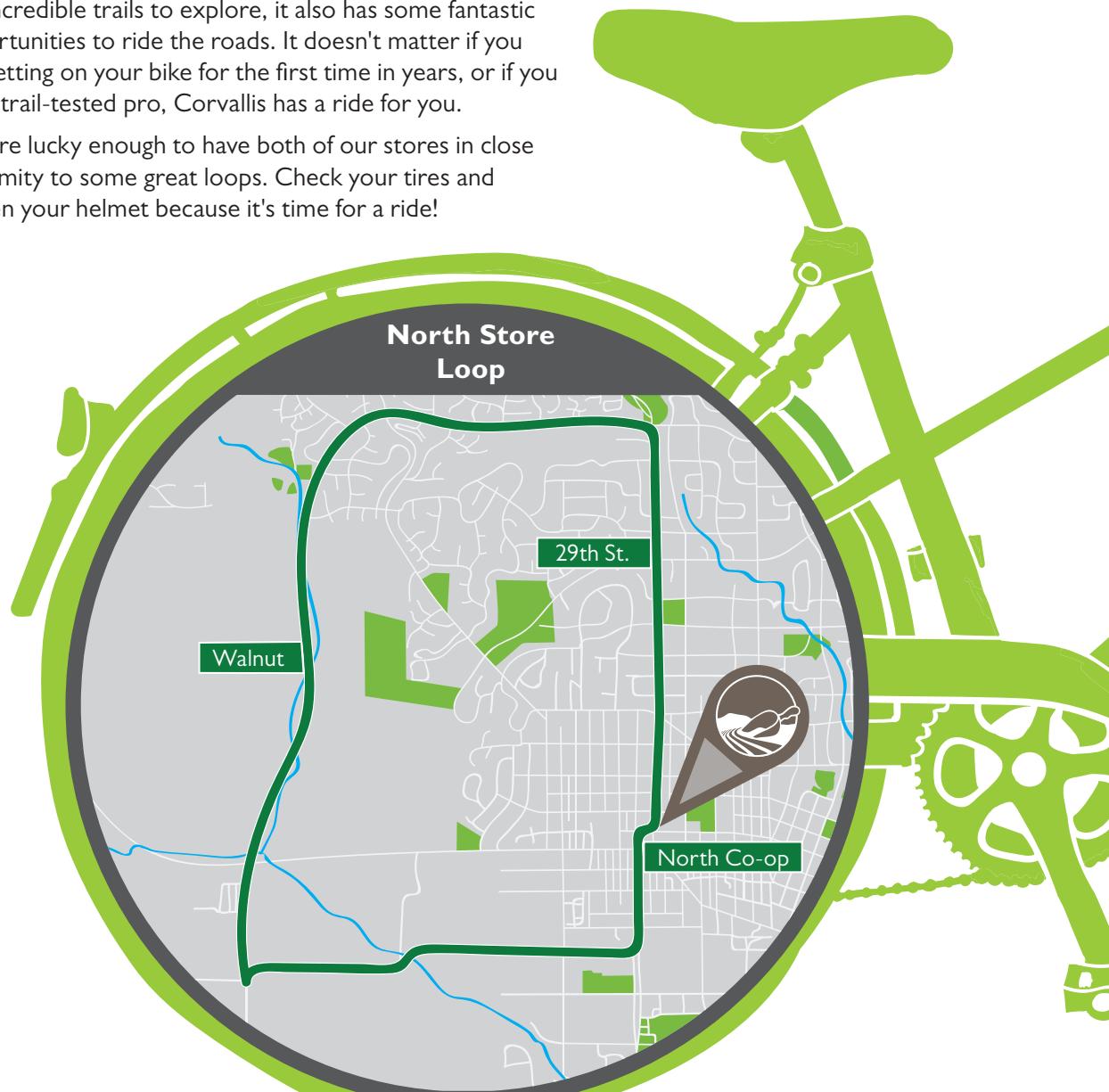
The sun is shining and the road is calling

The days are longer, warmer, and perhaps even sunnier, and that means it's time to get outside. Although Corvallis has incredible trails to explore, it also has some fantastic opportunities to ride the roads. It doesn't matter if you are getting on your bike for the first time in years, or if you are a trail-tested pro, Corvallis has a ride for you.

We are lucky enough to have both of our stores in close proximity to some great loops. Check your tires and tighten your helmet because it's time for a ride!



Don't forget to pack a snack!
Suggestions on page 10.



Easy



6.4mi



<50ft



Moderate



6.4mi



190ft

Road Ride Checklist

Essentials

Bike, Helmet

Clothing

Shorts, Rainwear, Gloves, Reflective Gear

Accessories

Headlight, Rear Bike Light, Lock

Repair

Patch Kit, Multi Tool, Spare Tubes, Pump





Our Wellness Managers are here to help you prepare for allergy season one ounce at a time. Grab your reusable containers and droppers, because it's time to....



Bulk Up Against Allergies

Susie sez:

Healthforce Truly Natural Vitamin C is one of the most effective nutrients available in its purest form. The only ingredient is tropically-grown Acerola Cherries. "One of the highest natural sources of vitamin C on the planet," according to Healthforce. Vitamin C from foods include important compounds that assist the body with absorption, making it more bioavailable than vitamin C that uses vitamin isolates, which don't occur in nature.

Acerola cherries are high in vitamin B, carotenoids, bioflavonoids, and alkalizing minerals like magnesium, potassium, iron, zinc, and calcium.

Get as much or as little as you need of this bulk powder in the Wellness aisle, or find it packaged in the vitamin C section. It's vegan, kosher, and gluten-free!

First Alt Sinus Blaster is formulated to support the sinuses and help alleviate congestion. Aromatic herbal compounds produce pungent vapors that open and dilate the sinuses. Look at all these herbs! For enhanced circulation in the sinuses: fresh horseradish root, cayenne fruit, garlic bulb, and onion bulb. For decongestion and clearing of the lungs: horehound herb, licorice root, wild cherry bark, and osha root. And for immune system support: echinacea angustifolia root, elderberry, garlic bulb, goldenseal root, spilanthes herb, and olive leaf.

In our bulk wellness section, get however much you'll need to keep you breathing clearly through the season.



Pump, squeeze, or scoop however much you need in our wellness department bulk sections!



Brie sez:

Organic Stinging Nettle: As we head into spring and the Willamette Valley pollen production kicks into high gear, I use medicinal herbs to support my body against the allergen onslaught. My favorite plant ally is Urtica dioica, or stinging nettle. Rich in minerals and vitamins A and C, this prickly plant is worthy of wildcrafting or cultivating.

In the months leading up to allergy season, I drink an infusion of nettle leaves as a daily tonic. Place 1 oz. dried herb in 1 quart boiled water, steep overnight, strain in the morning, and drink throughout the day. Every day during the height of allergy season, I drink an additional cup of nettle, brewed 10-15 minutes in hot water.

In bulk, I get as much or as little nettle as I need, while also conserving packaging and money. The harvesting, drying, cutting and sifting is already done for me. Convenient and sting-free!

Another benefit of purchasing in bulk is the ability to adjust the quantity of herb I ingest as well as make custom blends. For example, combining milky oat tops and passionflower with the nettle provides additional adrenal support.

Check out the bulk medicinal herb section at either Co-op location and find the right herbs for your needs! Need some help? Just ask us!

Side by Side Allergy Remedies

By: Yadira Ruiz,
Sunbow Produce



Those of us who suffer from seasonal allergies know they are no laughing matter. The spectrum of how they affect us is vast. When I was younger, I thought it was a matter of will and endurance. I spent a few bleary, itchy-eyed weeks in Greece and repeated the experience in an olive grove in Baja, Mexico before I decided the fountain of snot could not be fought with the fountain of youth.

Untreated seasonal allergies can cause mental fog, fatigue, and even mood disorders in addition to the more commonly known visible reactions. According to allergy tests, I'm allergic to over 60 different trees and grasses, so my allergies are just about year-round. Most people are only affected during a specific season. The following is a breakdown of common season allergens:



Spring

Tree pollen,
flower pollen



Summer

Grass pollen,
mold,
fungus



Fall

Ragweed
pollen,
mold,
fungus



Winter

Tree pollen,
mold

Since allergic reactions vary from person to person and can change as you age, it's critical that you assess your own needs based on your experience.

I sought the help of two allergy specialists and have monitored the severity of my symptoms which have changed over time. In general, it's important to be aware of your existing health conditions and potential reactions you might have to allergy treatments.



Pollen alert!

I can't say I've tried them all, but I've tried many and generally have to take a combination of prescriptions and over the counter meds to maintain daily functionality. I decided to wean myself off of the stuff I normally take and test each product listed below for at least a few days or until I ran out of that particular product if it was working.

Don't worry, dear cooperators, I didn't put myself in any harm. I'm otherwise really healthy and while my allergies are numerous, the only one that's actually life threatening is cats and my exposure to them is extremely limited.

Though they come in the form of powders, tablets, sprays, liquids, and teas, I've divided all the allergy remedies I tested into one of the following three categories: **Dietary/Herbal Supplement**, **Homeopathic Medicine** and **Nasal Spray/Mist**.

In general I can admit that I'm less likely to take something that tastes gross or requires multiple doses per day. Folks, don't buy something that you know you won't take!

I've made notes next to each product for those of you who don't like bitter or aren't good with multiple doses. Turn to the next page to read my results.

Side by Side Allergy Remedies

Dietary and Herbal Supplements come in tablets and capsules that are easy to take. Liquid supplements are alcohol-based and not nearly as easy to take because of the bitter taste. I also tried an herbal supplement tea because an acquaintance of mine sings its praises. Since this category includes a broad variety of treatments, the effectiveness of each was also very different.

Gaia Turmeric Supreme



These vegetarian "phyto-caps" are filled with liquid and promote healthy inflammatory function. The active ingredients are quercetin, turmeric root, nettle leaf, feverfew and goldenseal. I took these as recommended after meals for a month and had very few noticeable allergy symptoms, the ones I did notice were minor in nature—itchy or dry eyes.

Oregon's Wild Harvest Aller-Aid

The active ingredients in these vegetarian capsules are quercetin, vitamin C, N-Acetyl Cysteine (NAC helps build antioxidants and may also help break up mucus) and nettle leaf. This one warns against possible adverse reactions to nettle if you've never tried them, and recommends a "test dosage". I passed the test and continued to take two after meals until they were gone. Much like the Gaia Supreme, this worked like a charm. I took this with XLEAR Nasal Spray.



Urban Moonshine Aller-Blast

This liquid herbal supplement is the only one I tried that was made with organic herbs. It promotes healthy eyes, nose, and sinus. I had really high hopes about this one because the active ingredients are nettle, reishi, and elderflower to name few, but it was the least effective for me and tasted of alcohol and medicine. Not a good combo. But if you happen to like Jagermeister, you might actually like this flavor. I only tested this one for two days and then wimped out.



Wish Garden Kick-Ass Allergy

This liquid herbal supplement features yerba santa, nettle leaf, echinacea and orange peel as the active ingredients and uses non-GMO organic alcohol. Dosage is 6-8 pumps under the tongue or in liquid and additional doses as needed up to four times in a row. It worked well to reduce acute hay fever symptoms but didn't do much during tree pollen season. It seemed to function best to alleviate severe symptoms but not so much as a preventative. Taste wasn't great but wasn't awful.



Traditional Medicinals Nettle Leaf Tea

I tried this tea to help prevent allergy symptoms because one of our farm helpers uses it and swears by it. The packaging makes no mention of effectiveness against allergies but nettles are included in the active ingredients of several remedies on this list, so I figured it was worth a shot. I learned that unless you make a really big batch and drink it every few hours, you can't really expect it to do much. It was tasty but didn't do much to help with my allergies.



Homeopathic Medicines were my least favorite because many of them, when first introduced into your body, have to be taken every 15 minutes for an hour and then followed up on every few hours with a "booster" dose. However, several of them worked for me! Inconveniently frequent doses aside, they were pretty effective.

BioAllers Pollen Hayfever Allergy Treatment

This alcohol-based formula can be taken in water or directly under the tongue. The idea of drinking watered down medicine doesn't sit well with me so under the tongue it went. For someone who's a wimp when it comes to medicinal flavors, I thought this one was OK. Some tingling but nothing off-putting. Active ingredients are numerous, so carefully review the list. Its



recommended dose is every three hours, but in early February I found every six hours did the trick. There is a warning for potential asthmatic reaction to this medicine. I did not have any negative reactions. I took this one in conjunction with Neti-Mist sinus spray.

Boiron Allergy Relief Histaminum 30C:

The active ingredient is Histaminum Hydrochloricum which is an antihistamine. This one requires taking the first dosage every 15 minutes for an hour and then three times daily under your tongue. The pellets are small but you have to take five of them at a time. It took me a minute to figure out how to work the dispenser (rotate the lid until it clicks, each rotation dispenses one pellet). Once I was "front loaded" I found that I only needed to take an additional dosage once or twice a day. I took this product to help combat a persistent gummy throat and it worked immediately.



Hyland's Hayfever

Easy to take, only two tablets under the tongue every four hours as needed and the tablets dissolve really fast. The main ingredients are unique, in that I did not see the majority of them in other remedies I tried, though it does contain sabadilla like several others. Consistent with other remedies containing sabadilla, this one was not effective for me.

Boiron Allergy Relief Sabadil

The active ingredients promote relief from itchy, watery eyes, sneezing, runny nose and itchy nose and throat. Dosage requires taking two pills every 15 minutes for an hour and then three times daily after that. I did not find this one to be effective on my symptoms.



Source Naturals Allercetin Allergy & Sinus

The active ingredients in these tablets include quercetin and histaminum hydrochloricum which were effective in other homeopathic remedies I took but they didn't do much to relieve my symptoms. Dosage is every 2-4 hours and then as needed. I took this one during hayfever season but did not test it against tree pollen season.



Similasan Allergy and Sinus Relief

These tablets are antihistamine free, the active ingredients are cardiospermum, galphimia glauca, lufta operculata and sabadilla. The recommended dosage is one tablet every 4 hours up to 6 times daily. I did not find this product to be effective against my symptoms.

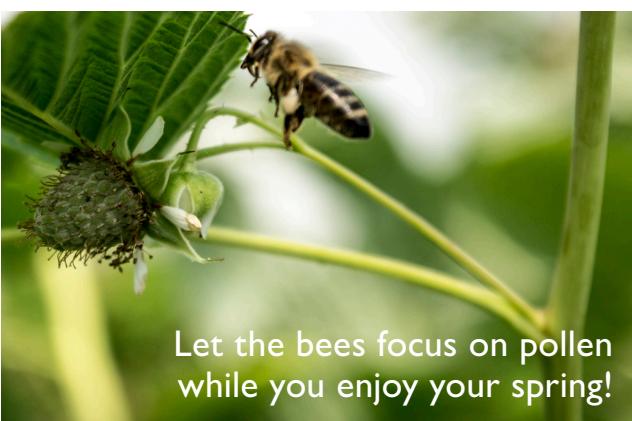
Nasal Spray/Mist: Unless you have a severe aversion to momentarily putting a nozzle slightly into your nostril, you should really consider a daily nostril cleansing routine. Neti pots are the DIY, enviro-friendly version (less waste) but there are also readymade sprays, mists, and powders that accomplish the same thing. I used these in conjunction with either herbal supplements or homeopathic remedies as a booster for sinus health and infection prevention.

XLEAR Natural Saline Nasal Spray

This nasal spray alleviates congestion and relieves sinus pressure just like the box says it does. It is not intended to relieve acute allergy symptoms. The addition of xylitol (explaining the uniquely spelled name) moisturizes sinus and nasal passages, alleviating some of the dryness and irritation that can come along with nasal sprays.

Neti-Mist Homeopathic Sinus Spray

This spray has an active ingredient and is considered medicine. The spray function is very gentle so I actually couldn't feel it. I accidentally double-dosed and then noticed a spicy sensation that made me want to sneeze. My sinuses felt nice and clear and stayed that way all day. ☺



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