Sevananda has a new General Manager, a new Board of Directors, new charged energy, and a renewed commitment to serving our members. We're excited about connecting with you once again. At each Member Meeting, twice a year, the Board of Directors and Member-Owners have an opportunity to connect, conduct general Co-op business, share perspectives and ideas, align in a collective vision, and support each other in creating a sustainable future for Sevananda through discussion.

But who says that's the only time we can connect? To create connectivity, we have to stay connected. It takes dedication and commitment and ongoing communication, but it can be done.

As staff members and managers, day-to-day business directs much of our focus. It's easy to get distracted from what drives our core purpose. But when all the dust settles, the ringing phones are silenced, and the hustle and bustle of the day calms, we're reminded of why we are really here.

Individually, some of us are here to fulfill some personal goal or purpose, or because we believe in some aspect of what Sevananda stands for: the cooperative principles, the cooperative values, the cooperative spirit, or the cooperative movement as a whole. Or we may be here to further explore the issues on which food cooperatives often take a strong position, such as food safety, agricultural sustainability, fair treatment of farmers, and much more. Or it might be just for a paycheck. The reasons vary, but the principles and values that bind us don't change. Those keep us united in a way we may not even recognize.

Collectively, I believe we are here to connect and create the kind of unity that transforms the world for the better. As a member-owner, I see communication as a key factor to real unity in our coop. As a staff member, I see the need for it even more. As the Member Services and Marketing department restructures to better serve our collective needs, we're committed to connecting more with member-owners through every possible form of communication. Holly Blain will be taking on more of the member services role, and I will be more focused on outreach and education. Although we often need to send you information, we'd like to balance that out by providing more opportunities for you to keep us informed as well. That's when real communication occurs and participation can thrive in our Co-op! Through channels such as online surveys and forums, member mixers, monthly conversations with the General Manager, emails, and the suggestion box, we can make sure we hear your voice on an ongoing basis. We just have to start asking the right questions, and we don't have to wait for April and October to do that!

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE ALLIANCE

2nd Principle: Democratic Member Control

Co-operatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary co-operatives members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote) and co-operatives at other levels are also organized in a democratic manner. (www.ica.coop)

According to the ICA's cooperative principle number two, Co-ops are democratically controlled organizations. In theory, the cooperative model provides an opportunity for member-owners to be a part of the leadership that drives the organization through their engagement with their Board of Directors. Outside of the elections process, we don't see much of that here. The only way to engage in a real democratic process is to come together at some set date and time on a consistent basis, frequently enough for data and information to be fresh and relevant. How often do we do that? In my opinion, not often enough.

In practice, it takes ongoing commitment to cooperative principles, (continued on page 11)
Oil. These days, the word can conjure visions of war, smog, an ocean poisoned . . . Such is life in the age of oil. We wreck the Earth for it, we kill our neighbors for it; oil above all else. But this idolatry of oil is not new. Since time began, people have worshipped oil in all its forms. Before fossil fuels were our source for oil, we relied on plants and animals to provide this necessity of life. And a necessity it is. Let’s take a moment to reframe this crucial relationship and rediscover the love in our love of oil.

Beyond facilitating the material comforts of the modern age, oil is an absolute fundamental at the cellular level. Every cell in our body is surrounded by a bi-lipid layer (double layer of fat/oil) -- oil is the vessel that contains life force itself. On a larger level, oil also covers the surface of our skin, in the form of sebum, providing a protective barrier, keeping moisture in and pathogens out. Oil is both vessel and protector.

As we move into fall, the hot, humid summer gives way to a drier atmosphere. We turn on our heaters and the moisture is wicked away in our homes and cars. Our skin, lungs, and noses feel dry, and with this loss of moisture comes a lessening of our defenses. Instead of picking and choosing what from the outside world we want to allow into our bodies, our cracked, chapped skin becomes an open invitation.

Abhyanga, a daily oil massage practice from Ayurvedic medicine, is an easy and enjoyable way to keep our skin supple and healthy. Not only does abhyanga help renew and maintain our protective barrier in a physical way, it also renews our relationship with ourselves. By taking a moment out of our busy day to nurture ourselves, by anointing ourselves with precious oil, we are showing ourselves love. The Sanskrit word “sneha” actually means both oil and love.

To perform abhyanga, choose an oil appropriate for your skin type. For dry and deficient skin, olive and sesame are rich and nourishing. For hot, inflamed skin, coconut is cooling. For sluggish and moist skin, grapeseed is light and penetrating. When in doubt as to your type of skin, try a medium-bodied oil like almond or sunflower.

Gently warm the oil. Fill your bathroom sink with hot water and set your bottle of oil in it for a few minutes.

Standing on a towel, pour a small amount into your palm and begin rubbing the warmed oil into your body, starting with your head and working your way down your body. Always massage in the direction of your heart, so when you reach your limbs, start at the finger and toe tips and work your way in. Use back and forth strokes over the long bones and circular motions at the joints.

Allow the oils to penetrate for a few minutes before showering. Or you might choose to oil yourself after your shower, while your skin is still damp, to lock in moisture. Find what works best for you. Be present and give thanks—for life, love, and oil.

Lorna, longtime member of the Sevananda community, is an herbalist serving the Atlanta area through classes and consultations. Visit her website at www.herbliaison.com.
The marketing campaign and membership drive that we started on September 1 are both doing well. In September alone, we had about 100 new members join the Co-op and more than 630 people sign up for the Taste of Sevananda trial membership program. By the time you read this, we should have a good idea how many of those people have converted to full membership.

We have learned a lot about how to make this campaign run more effectively along the way. It actually took off faster and stronger than we expected right from the beginning. We have scrambled at times to keep up and have found new ways of making sure that we are better prepared for the interest that the program has generated. We hope that you have noticed the improvements, even if you have been a long-time member, in our customer service levels and our response times to your needs. I continue to solicit your suggestions on ways to serve you better.

In a move to be more environmentally responsible and to cut mailing costs, this will be the last issue of Co-options mailed out to all members. With the new website and its greater ability to provide information and timely updates, we have decided to utilize that avenue to get Co-options content to members. It will be posted every month and is available through the “Co-options Download” button on the front page (and every page) of the website. It will also be available on the racks in the lobby on or before the first of each month, so you can still pick up a copy when you shop. However, if you still wish to have it mailed to you, just let us know. Call Hollie at Member Services or stop by the Customer Service desk and sign up to be on the Co-options mailing list.

I believe that the Co-op is turning the corner on the problems we have had over the last couple of years. Sales are actually moving in the right direction again—September sales were up 2.1% over September 2010. Your Board is working tirelessly to improve communication to the members and engage them with direct contact in the store. A sense of optimism is beginning to prevail where there was once a dark cloud. Because of that, and to help grow sales even more, we will be having some short-term deals on selected products all over the store. These will resemble the old “Member Advantage” deals in that only members will be able to get the deal price. These deals will be so good that no other discounts will be allowed on them (that includes your member discount). They will be published by flyer in the store and posted online on the website. When we are running them, there will be signage and flyers in the lobby telling you what is on special deal at that time.

Thanksgiving is coming, and the Deli will again have a holiday dinner menu that can be pre-ordered for pick-up the night before Thanksgiving. A flyer will be available at the Customer Service desk along with ordering information. Get your order in early to avoid any disappointment and to get the best price.

Last month I mentioned that we need to regain our sense of vision for our Co-op and our community. I asked a couple of questions about your happiness with the level of involvement in the Co-op. I hope that stirred you to think about what you can do as an owner to help your business succeed and grow.

Now I want to challenge you to take the next step. Come to the “Co-op Connect” meetings that I’ll be holding in November and December - see the specific dates and times in the ad on this page - and let’s talk about shaping that future and directing that growth. Bring your ideas and come not just to listen but to participate.  ♦

Tom Pawlenko

Sevananda Co-operatives

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How Your Board is Working for You
by Jen Kato, with Sevananda since 1990, Member-Owner since 1995

There is a lot of living, breathing structure in Sevananda that is rarely recognized, and most of it is you! We, your Board of Directors and fellow members, work within that structure, according to the guidelines that you create, and try to promote your interests every day. Here is a picture of the flow of energy created by Sevananda's bylaws and how we all fit into it:

You see that the chart to the right is really a circle with you at the beginning and end. >

You are our bosses. You hire (elect) us, and tell us how you want us to do our job by creating and modifying the bylaws, which can only be done by a vote of the membership. It's true that according to our bylaws, the Board can temporarily revise a bylaw, as long as it doesn't affect the rights of members. But the revision must be voted on by the members at the very next membership meeting. The bylaws are the guidelines that you hold us to. In addition, we are required to abide by any federal, state, and local laws in effect.

We are a nine-member governance board. This means that we are responsible for hiring and setting compensation for each General Manager in turn, making and revising policies that direct how they do their job, monitoring them according to these policies, and developing/training/monitoring ourselves to best do our job. What we won't do is involve ourselves in the routine operation of the store. If we are aware of a problem, we look at our policies to see if they adequately address the issue. If they are sound, we then check to see if the General Manager's interpretation of the policies is in alignment with the intent of the policy. If it is a policy issue, we fix it. If it is an interpretation or implementation issue, we direct the GM to correct it.

The policies of Sevananda are a vibrant evolving document, and represent the extent to which the Board directs her. As a Board we are mandated by the bylaws (by you!) to reach decisions by consensus, if at all possible. In the rare cases in which consensus is impossible, a 3/4 majority of a quorum of the Board can carry a decision.

Consensus is a special animal; it looks like a lot of truth sharing, open honesty, respectful attending to divergent views, and coagulation of collective wisdom. Someone who misinterprets the idea of consensus might mistake it for a gaggle of "yes men," or an outcome that is the result of overpowering forces having succeeded. It is neither of those. It takes a special "alpha wave" state of mind to fully grasp the meaning of consensus. True consensus creates the strongest, most thoughtful, broadest outcomes, and meeting face to face, using this decision process. These policies are the instrument of the Board in directing Sevananda's course.

YEAH! We now have Tom, a great GM to steer Sev according to your design! Finding him was the result of a practically year-long search process involving the Board and staff of Sevananda. He joined us in April and is responsible for all operational practices which fulfill Sevananda's "Ends."

The "Ends" or "mission" statement of Sevananda explains why we believe we exist. It is what we strive every day to provide for you, our member-owners, and the world at large. We are constantly improving and changing, but this Ends statement is the direction to which our compass always points.

The major tool we use, as Board members, is listening. I picture each one of us, ideally, with the cranial vault and ears of an elephant. We have our ears to the ground, vigilantly listening to the rumblings of health, environmental, community, and economic trends. We must also listen carefully to each other. But most importantly, we listen to you, whom we serve. We are experimenting constantly with ideas of improving and expanding our outreach to you to find the ways you like best and will participate in the most. I invite you to email your suggestions to board2@sevananda.coop, or write them down and place them in the Sevananda suggestion box, addressed to the Board.

Thank you for being part of the Sevananda community. Jen Kato is a member of Sevananda's Board of Directors. She can be reached at her phone number on page 2, or at board2@sevananda.coop.
For many of us, our pets are part of the family. They provide us unconditional love and they somehow seem to know how to help us cope through the toughest times. We can't imagine being without them, and we certainly can't imagine them being harmed.

Yet in homes where domestic violence occurs, pets are often at risk too. As many as 71% of victims entering domestic violence shelters report that their abusers threatened, injured, or killed pets in the home. Harm to pets is often part of the pattern of power and control exercised by abusers as a way to terrorize, coerce, and/or retaliate against the human members of the family. With fewer than one in eight domestic violence shelters nationwide accepting animals, and abusers frequently threatening to hurt the pets if the victim leaves or discloses the abuse, up to half of abuse survivors report that they delayed seeking safety due to concern about their pets. Others never leave.

Ahimsa House is Georgia’s only nonprofit organization dedicated to helping the human and animal victims of violence reach safety together. (“Ahimsa,” pronounced uh-HIM-sah, is a Sanskrit principle meaning “nonviolence.”) Founded in 2004 by a survivor of domestic violence who had lost her own cat while trying to reach safety, we work to ensure that no one in Georgia needs to choose between personal safety and the safety of a beloved pet.

Ahimsa House’s 24-hour statewide crisis line, 404-452-6248 — available to anyone needing help or any agency wishing to make a referral — offers crisis intervention, assistance with including pets in safety planning, and guidance on such issues as listing pets on domestic violence protective orders and establishing proof of ownership of pets (since abusers often try to use the legal system to gain control of the pets). For individuals who are entering a domestic violence shelter or other temporary housing where animals are not allowed, Ahimsa House provides a confidential safe haven for the pets until their owners have re-established their lives and are able to reclaim them.

We initially maintained our own animal care facility in the north metro area, but since 2007 we have sheltered animals via a growing network of foster homes, boarding facilities, and veterinarians across Georgia. This allows us to provide assistance anywhere in the state, working with all of Georgia’s domestic violence shelters and other human service agencies to fill in the “missing piece” for pets in domestic violence situations. Since 2004, we have provided over 20,000 nights of safe shelter for animals including dogs, cats, birds, hamsters, guinea pigs, ferrets, rats, turtles, snakes, iguanas, horses.

Animals receive both routine veterinary care as well as treatment for any injuries or other maltreatment due to the abuse, and Ahimsa House covers the cost of forensic veterinary exams to investigate and document the abuse — evidence that can aid in the prosecution of an abuser on either misdemeanor or felony animal cruelty charges. We have also assisted in transporting animals to safety (both within Georgia and across state lines); provided pet food and supplies to help survivors care for their pets during times of transition; and helped clients locate affordable transitional housing that is also pet-friendly, assisting with the cost of pet deposits where needed.

In an effort to build the infrastructure of services for victims with pets, we have given dog crates to several domestic violence shelters to have on hand for emergency situations, assisted one shelter in building its own dog runs on site, and consulted with individuals and organizations in numerous other states who want to create programs of this type. Finally, we work to raise awareness about the links between domestic violence and animal abuse, cross-training human services and animal protection agencies on this issue so they can work together to develop a broader and more effective community response to domestic violence in all its forms.

With no government funding and a staff of only two, Ahimsa House relies on a team of dedicated volunteers to help us achieve our mission. To learn more about us, including ways you can get involved, see the sidebar on this page for our website or to contact us.

Organizations
Ahimsa House
Mission: Helping the human and animal victims of domestic violence across Georgia reach safety together
Address: P.O. Box 8181
Atlanta, GA 31106
Website: www.ahimsahouse.org
Contact: Maya Gupta, Executive Director
Phone: 404-496-4038
Email: info@ahimsahouse.org

Ahimsa House
Helping Both Two-Legged and Four-Legged Victims of Domestic Violence

Executive Director Maya Gupta with one of the cats in Ahimsa House’s Emergency Animal Safehouse program.

An Ahimsa House client happily reunited with her pet.
Giving Thanks
By Asata Reid, Life Chef, Sevananda Member-Owner since 2006

This year I’ve had gratitude on my mind a lot. It’s been a tumultuous year for most of us. I’ve lost beloved family, faced health challenges, and like many of us, have been riding a very turbulent current of economic uncertainty. I’ve experienced a lot of doubt, confusion, fear and sadness over my own personal situations and over larger events in our world, our political climate and our community.

And yet . . .

I have also experienced some moments of pure joy, utter beauty, true friendship and unfettered love. I have seen unprecedented generosity from strangers, open and honest dialogue between opponents, and a desire by many to stand up and take responsibility for the world we live in. In these times of uncertainty I’ve seen activism, empowerment, compassion and courage blossom from unlikely sources, hands both big and small, and pockets both deep and shallow. I’ve been inspired by the best that humankind has to give.

For that, I am grateful. I have been reminded time and again that life happens moment by moment. The moment you’re in is the one that matters most, because soon, it too shall pass. As all things do.

In November we enter the time of the harvest. Even if you’re not a gardener or farmer, you can still harvest nourishment for your soul by the works you do in this life. And during the next “What’s Cooking?” class on Saturday, November 12, at noon, we’ll create a mini-harvest meal using the autumnal bounty available at Sevananda.

I hope you’ll join me as we talk about the healing benefits of food and share amongst ourselves the works we do. Breaking bread with your fellow humankind is one way we can nourish our bodies and souls together. ♡

Chef Asata teaches What’s Cooking? all-natural foods cooking series at Sevananda on the second Saturday of each month, at noon in the Education Room. Chef Asata teaches healthy cooking and food advocacy through Life Chef LLC (www.lifechef.net) and has been a Member-Owner since 2006.

What’s Cooking
WITH ASATA REID Life Chef
healthy cooking, meal planning & pantry stocking
Saturday October 8th and Saturday November 12th
12 noon JOIN US!
In the education room $10 members-$12 non-members

Find us online!
Facebook.com/Sevananda.ATL
Twitter.com: @Sevananda

Taste of Sevananda
FREE TRIAL MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM
VISIT 1 VISIT 2 VISIT 3
Free 1/4 lb. of bulk fair-trade organic coffee
$4 off lunch at hot bar or $4 off any dessert
10% off total basket plus add’l 5% off if you join today

WHAT YOU GET
Visit Customer Service Today To Pick Up Your Card

Ask about the Taste of Sevananda Member Referral program

SEVANANDA
Journey to Wellness
NATURAL FOODS MARKET
www.sevananda.coop 404-681-2831
It wasn’t so long ago that conveniently packaged bottles of water were a novelty. Now, we consider our throwaway bottled water a necessity, but why? We are trying to be good to our bodies and drink those recommended 8 glasses a day, but the costs of our habits of convenience hardly make it worth it.

Bottled Water, an Industry

Fresh water is essential to life and is a precious resource that is becoming increasingly scarce around the globe. In July 2010, the U.N. voted overwhelmingly to recognize the right to water and sanitation as a basic human right. Yet the commodification of water is leading to conflict between major corporations and the communities affected by their operations around the world.

We’d like to think we know when an industry has been misleading us, but the bottled water companies have played us with images of cool mountain springs, convincing us that bottled water is the only safe water to drink. And we’re buying it. We’re paying anywhere from 240 to 10,000 times more for water in a bottle than from our tap. As the wimp.com bottled water video says: “Whenever someone is trying to charge you $10,000 for something that’s only worth $1, that’s a scam.”

If we can ignore those cascading waterfalls we will find that not only is bottled water not superior to tap water, it is often far inferior. Consider:

Chemicals in your water

All those chemicals in the bottle itself eventually will be swirling around in the water, which means pretty soon you’ll have all those chemicals swirling around in you—plastic chemicals! While leaving your water bottle in a hot car certainly seems to expedite this process (at a rate which we can actually taste sometimes), those chemicals are going to get out anyway. If you’re concerned about the plastic in Nalgene, you should be a billion times more concerned about the plastic leaching from a dinky disposable water bottle.

Trash

We are using, and wasting, way too much plastic as it is, and recycling, need I remind you, is the third “R”—Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.” In a pinch we should definitely be recycling what we can, but throwing it in the blue bin is no guarantee it’s going to be melted down for reuse. The only certain way to have less waste on our planet is the first R: Reduce. Why waste plastic for something that’s already hardwired into your house?

Energy Waste

The 3.12 billion liters of bottled water consumed annually in the U.S. take more than 17 million barrels of oil to produce—that’s like filling 1/4 of your water bottle with oil! First there are the factories converting oil into plastic; then another factory makes that plastic into bottles. The bottles are shipped again to be filled with water, then they are wrapped up in plastic and cardboard (from yet another factory) and shipped (yet again) to the store and you. Also, according to the Natural Resources Defense Council (nrdc.org), three times as much water is used in production as is sold in that bottle—so much for conservation. By the time you’ve drunk the water and tossed the bottle, you’ve supported some of the biggest polluters on the planet.

So, What About That Water?

Access to sanitized water for the public is something most countries struggle with, and, ironically, those people cannot afford to purchase their 8 glasses a day from some company. Meanwhile here in the U.S., where we do have perfectly good sanitation, we are purchasing water we’ve been told is better. In fact, bottled water regulations (from the FDA) are weaker than those faced by municipal water systems (regulated by the EPA)* [*footnote: findings by the Natural Resources Defense Council, www.nrdc.org/water]. The Department of Watershed Management in Atlanta is required to provide over 750 samples per month to the state for analysis, and community water systems are required to provide customers with an annual report. (You can find it by going to www.atlantawatershed.org). It is widely known that many companies are merely bottling filtered tap water (Dasani) and maybe that’s to their credit, but some studies have found unfiltered tap water in bottles and even unacceptable levels of contaminants. If we’re so concerned, can’t we filter our own tap water for a fraction of the cost?

There are so many alternatives to the disposable (or potentially recyclable) plastic water bottle—home filtration systems, of course, refillable stainless steel bottles, and now many grocery stores including Sevananda offer refillable plastic jugs for much less than a case of bottles. But it often all comes down to convenience, so next time you reach for a plastic bottle of water, consider the costs and hopefully you’ll opt for your own non-disposable, refillable water bottle. Finally, if I have not convinced you, let me direct you to a video that may: wimp.com/bottledwater.

Emily is a Working Member at Sevananda, she puts her graphic design skills to work laying out Co-Options. Emily can be reached at ecavett@yahoo.com.

ALTERNATIVES TO BOTTLED WATER AT SEVANANDA

by Stephen Wing

Sevananda offers several ways to re-hydrate yourself without throwing away one disposable bottle after another. Even recycling your bottles is wasteful compared to these options, since recycling plastic is itself a toxic process.

Between the bulk bins and the freezers you’ll find our state-of-the-art filtration system. Starting with regular Atlanta tap water, it uses high-quality sediment filters to remove suspended particles, activated carbon to remove chlorine and other chemicals, Reverse Osmosis to remove dissolved solids, and ultraviolet light to kill any bacteria that may be present. Choose from five-gallon, three-gallon, and two grades of one-gallon containers. If you bring your own container, make sure it’s clean to avoid contaminating your water. Then bring it back and re-fill it several times before recycling it.

One aisle over, we stock two different options to turn your three- or five-gallon container into a countertop water dispenser: a pump mechanism and a ceramic dispenser with a built-in spigot. Beside them on the same shelf, we also carry three sizes of stainless steel water bottles, making your filtered water conveniently portable. Finally, if you’d rather not come to Sevananda every time your water supply runs low, we offer home filtration systems that mount on your kitchen counter beside the sink, complete with replacement filters.
Veggies Take the Cue
By Mark Mulcahy, Organic Options

Everyone loves to barbecue during these beautiful autumn evenings. And while meat is often on the menu, vegetables may be a smart choice worth considering. Chicken, beef, chicken, pork and fish may be favorites for many grilling parties, but when they are cooked over intense heat they can produce carcinogens called heterocyclic amines (HCAs) which have been linked to pancreatic, colorectal, stomach, lung, breast and bladder cancers.

That’s where vegetables and vegetarian products have an advantage. HCAs form when amino acids and creatine in meat interact with high heat. Since vegetables like Portobello mushrooms and soy-based burgers or protein contain neither of these they are a safe and tasty option to steaks, hot dogs and hamburgers. Another added bonus to grilled vegetables is that they are high in cancer-fighting compounds, and meatless burgers have much less saturated fat.

If you are new to vegetable grilling, start with vegetable skewers. The options are endless: you can start with onions, peppers, mushrooms, eggplant, zucchini, and cherry tomatoes, cut into equal-size chunks; a half-inch is a good start. Top with your favorite barbecue sauce or marinade and load some skewers. That grilled flavor you love on other foods will still tickle your taste buds and provide a healthier option.

Once you’ve conquered skewers, try other veggies like corn, endive, fennel, leeks, potatoes, radicchio and even romaine lettuce. All are good on the grill. Each make a nice addition to any outdoor meal. Here’s an easy grilling recipe that uses a couple of Indian summer favorites for an interesting appetizer.

Here’s an easy grilling recipe that uses a couple of Indian summer favorites for an interesting appetizer.

Plus, soluble fibers like apple pectin fight the damaging effects of LDL (bad) cholesterol by preventing cholesterol buildup in the lining of blood vessel walls, reducing the risk of heart disease. Because of apples’ high fiber content, the fruit’s natural sugars are slowly released into the blood stream, helping maintain steady blood sugar levels.

When you enjoy your new diet partner, remember, don’t peel your apple. Almost half of the vitamin C content is just underneath the skin. Apples are a rich source of phytonutrients (plant-based) antioxidants. Two-thirds of the fiber and lots of antioxidants are found in the peel. Antioxidants can help to reduce damage to cells, which can trigger some diseases.

If keeping the weight down inspires you to exercise, an apple is helpful there as well.

Apples are one of the best sources of the mineral boron, which has been shown to strengthen bones—a good defense against osteoporosis.

Stay in Shape with This Fall Favorite

Apples might be the perfect portable snack. They are great tasting, energy boosting, and are fat free. Now they may be your best pre-lunch partners as an easy way to shave off calories. That’s right, eat an apple and you’ll eat less. In a study by Penn State researchers, participants were given an apple 15 minutes before their midday meal. Results showed that after eating the apple, participants ate about 190 fewer calories at lunch than they did when they didn’t eat the apple. If you do this every day for a month, that’s 5,700 less calories consumed.

If keeping the weight down inspires you to exercise, an apple is helpful there as well.

At the end of the month the participants were given an apple 15 minutes before lunch. Each make a nice addition to any outdoor meal. Here’s an easy grilling recipe that uses a couple of Indian summer favorites for an interesting appetizer.

Serve grilled peaches plain, in salads, or turn them into delicious desserts by serving grilled peaches with cool yogurt, whipped cream or with ice cream.

Happy grilling!

This Month’s Tidbit:

Keeping those fresh herbs at home: Roll herbs in damp paper towels, then put the paper towels in a plastic bag and store in the vegetable drawer of the fridge.

Plus, soluble fibers like apple pectin fight the damaging effects of LDL (bad) cholesterol by preventing cholesterol buildup in the lining of blood vessel walls, reducing the risk of heart disease. Because of apples’ high fiber content, the fruit’s natural sugars are slowly released into the blood stream, helping maintain steady blood sugar levels.

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Food Justice
Changing 'There' by Changing Here

Many food justice advocates are brought into their work by an emotional reaction to the tragic hunger that exists in the world, be it in the context of the U.S.'s inner cities or global poverty. Indeed, hunger and emergency food efforts have been the recipients of the bulk of funding in the growing food movement over the last 40 years, a time period that simultaneously saw an expansion of hunger and food-related problems. Focusing on the one issue of food access has only enabled the persistence of the true underlying causes of our unjust food system. Food access, though important, cannot be the focus of efforts. It is more important to restructure the food system in a way that empowers a community to have control in their food system thereby ensuring their continued access.

The radical conceptions of food sovereignty movements and movements such as Via Campesina (an international peasant movement for food sovereignty) were born out of this realization. To advocate for food sovereignty is to advocate for a redistribution of power within the food system so that communities have the ability and control to feed themselves with healthy and quality food.

Despite the increasing popularity of the term “food sovereignty”, funds are still doled out to organizations whose efforts only stand to superficially address food access issues. Often the funders are businesses like Walmart, which have been the major culprits in restructuring the food system and increasing income and health disparities. Philanthropic funds given to emergency food efforts have been the recipients of the bulk of funding in the growing food movement over the last 40 years, a time period that simultaneously saw an expansion of hunger and food-related problems. Focusing on the one issue of food access has only enabled the persistence of the true underlying causes of our unjust food system. Food access, though important, cannot be the focus of efforts. It is more important to restructure the food system in a way that empowers a community to have control in their food system thereby ensuring their continued access.

The idea of CoFed was built out of the growing relationships between student food cooperative (co-op) start-ups and is especially linked to the success of the Berkeley Student Food Collective in the winter of 2009-2010. The idea was to create an incubating structure to support students interested in creating food co-ops in their campus food system as well as to address some of the endemic problems, such as high turnover, institutional capacity, and memory, many of these cooperative projects have historically faced.

Student food co-ops integrate into the landscape of the university and operate as beacons for education and hubs for sustainability and activism among students. Student food co-ops as thriving money-making businesses can be a source of direct power for students aiming to transform their campus food systems. Co-ops can have control over the sourcing, the price of food for students, and revenue reinvestment. In addition, co-ops create opportunities for people to gain access to quality food through volunteering and wages. These co-ops educate and expose generations of students to food system critiques and give students a solid way to build food sovereignty. They also provide a means to create a peer-facilitated cultural shift in student communities. Through involvement in food co-ops, student organizers internalize food justice and food sustainability in their daily lives and often continue to build food sovereignty in the communities they join following graduation.

The creation and success of student-run food cooperatives, and the often-accompanying campus farms, serve to legitimize community efforts of a similar nature. . . . We hope that a national co-op organizing effort—in tandem with efforts to start campus gardens and farmers’ markets—can build momentum for food sovereignty on campuses throughout the country. In the process, we seek to increase the influence of food sovereignty as a development model in broader community development patterns both at the local, city, national, and international scale.

A student is an ambassador for all of the values substantiated in the process that enabled the imparting of the privilege they wield. In the context of food systems work, the privilege a student wields is in part made possible by the exploitation of farm workers and by the unsustainable usage of fossil fuels in an industrialized and global agricultural system far removed from their daily life. It is important for all students to be cognizant that they are enabled to focus on their school projects because of a pattern of development that thrives on existing disparities in the world.

The conclusions drawn from the Illich’s paternalist critique should not be that one should throw up one’s hands and embrace blind apathy.
Food Justice
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Rather, it means one should take radical and sometimes more difficult steps to systemically change existing power structures. For students focused on food, the most elemental of our systems, the focus should be their own campus food systems.

Sweeping policy changes such as those made to campus food dining halls or restaurants and the food they serve are often not visible and spearheaded by administration, are rarely systemic, not sustained over time, and largely superficial even if directly and quantitatively significant in the short run. Such policy changes to campus food systems may have the overall impact and image of greening a campus, but such efforts need not involve students, and indeed could occur and be reversed without the broader student body ever noticing. The policies changed are often preliminary and enable the university or a sub-contracted food service provider to shift the power to make decisions on a green face while ultimately making few changes significant in the long-term.

The example of this I always provide is the University of Washington (UW) in Seattle that provides the sustainability of its food service. The crux of their claim to being “green” lies in the university’s switch from disposable to compostable eating utensils and plates in all of their student dining halls and restaurants. They were especially proud of their ability to pressure Coca-Cola to make a compostable cup for the first time. While it is difficult enough to fathom Coca-Cola as sustainable in any form due to its egregious environmental, human rights violations in Colombia, its abysmal environmental track record in India, or its contribution to the obesity epidemic. It is difficult enough to fathom Coca-Cola as sustainable in any form due to its egregious environmental, human rights violations in Colombia, its abysmal environmental track record in India, or its contribution to the obesity epidemic in this country, the compostable plates and utensils they put into use are actually less sustainable than their reusable counterparts that were once employed 25 years or so prior. This is because less resources are consumed through washing and the production of such serviceware. In making its change to compostable utensils and plates, the UW housing and food service perpetuates a fast food model.

Student food co-ops, in sharp contrast to these university-wide policies, provide a democratic cornerstone on which to build food sovereignty and channel power into students’ hands. In a co-op, students wield the power to make decisions about the quality, sustainability, and cost of their food. The potential power these co-ops wield pose a threat to existing power structures and each successful co-op generally must engage in a battle with the existing monopolistic food service provider to be that in-house operation or a sub-contracted corporate food service provider like Aramark and Sodex. Food co-op efforts on campuses, after being established, go on to spearhead the implementation of important systemic changes in the broader food system and increased democracy.

Regardless of where in the food system one focuses one’s efforts, there are injustices present throughout the system. The most blatant exploitation in the food system—that of the farm workers—can be addressed if the power and responsibility of sourcing is put into the hands of consumers. Consumers can then make decisions in collective dialogue with others, which creates the space for considerations of ethics and social values. This is precisely the goal of the student food co-ops I work with.

The influence of retail is powerful, and as such it is an important medium through which sovereignty can be built. As Raj Patal puts it in Stuffed and Starved (2007):

“The highest temple of the modern food system is the supermarket. The supermarket chain is an empire of logistics, one that governs and regulates the smaller fiefdoms within the food industry, such as the commission agent’s rule over the grower, or the distributor’s clutch on the agent. Through its decisions, and through the distributor’s clutch, even if indirectly and quantitatively significant in the short run, such policy changes to campus food systems may have the overall impact and image of greening a campus, but such efforts need not involve students, and indeed could occur and be reversed without the broader student body ever noticing. The policies changed are often preliminary and enable the university or a sub-contracted food service provider to shift the power to make decisions on a green face while ultimately making few changes significant in the long-term.

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“The highest temple of the modern food system is the supermarket. The supermarket chain is an empire of logistics, one that governs and regulates the smaller fiefdoms within the food industry, such as the commission agent’s rule over the grower, or the distributor’s clutch on the agent. Through its decisions, and through its close supervision of each step in a product chain, supermarket-buying desks can fire the poorest farm workers in South Africa, flip the fates of coffee growers in Guatemala or tweak the output of paddy terraces in Thailand.”

Retail power can be taken from corporate moguls and, through co-ops, be put into the hands of community members. This can happen in a wealthy neighborhood far easier than it can happen in a low-income neighborhood, and happening in the former will help make it possible in the latter. Efforts in one community can help build solidarity for community-based efforts toward food sovereignty in others. Community food co-ops in low-income neighborhoods notoriously fail for a myriad of reasons including but not limited to issues surrounding poverty, such as a lack of human capital, a lack of community buy-in, and a lack of access to capital and credit. A report by UW (Madison) Center for Cooperatives provides some examples of failed cooperatives in low-income communities but identifies that community food co-ops that exist on the periphery between low-income and upper-income communities have been able to be very successful.

Efforts placed in one potential sphere of the food system are absent in other. Ultimately, efforts to reform the part of the food system in which we are active participants will have more impact in changing broader systems and indirectly address the disparities that spur a lack of access. Though hunger and other problems associated with food access are important issues to address, these issues are rooted in the disparities and poverty spawned from systemic and historical injustices that have as much to do with privileged contexts as they do spaces plagued with hunger.

For students, student food cooperatives can build food sovereignty into the food system of the institutions that provide them their privilege. Having food co-ops on universities throughout the country will indirectly influence development patterns by normalizing and legitimizing food sovereignty and food co-ops. Working in your own communities starting food sovereignty projects is just as important if not more important than working in “other” communities.
values, and spirit to transform the theoretical version of a Co-op into a reality. There will always be distractions of some kind, but if we stay focused, it can be done.

Here is a refresher on the cooperative identity, also taken from the guidelines the ICA has set for us.

Statement on the Cooperative Identity

Definition
A co-operative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.

Values
Co-operatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, co-operative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

Principles
The co-operative principles are guidelines by which co-operatives put their values into practice.

Let's Get Connected
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According to the cooperative model, the Board of Directors is in place to listen to the collective voice of the members, and works to carry out the collective will of the membership to the best of its ability. So it is key that a strong relationship be built between the members and their Board. A relationship with integrity and earned trust in one another can create the kind of unity that propels cooperatives forward by leaps and bounds. Without it, a kind of stagnation can occur. This is the perfect time to “be the change we want to see.” It can be challenging, yet very rewarding to win a collaborative victory. Whether we are staff members or member-owners, working members or Board members, collectively, we’re here to master this thing we call the cooperative model. We’ve got everything we need to make it happen. Let’s get busy!

Ahzjah Simons is Sevananda’s Marketing Manager. She can be reached at asimons@sevananda.coop.

For more information about the International Co-operative Alliance, search for ICA online on at www.en.wikipedia.org, or visit ICA’s own website at www.ica.coop.

Let’s Get Connected
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Do you know what’s in your food and where it comes from?

At Sevananda, we make it easy to find out all there is to know about the food you eat. What’s in it, and what isn’t. Where it’s from, how it’s grown, and who it’s grown by. That’s because we sell only the highest quality whole and natural foods — sourced locally and organically grown whenever we can — just as we have since 1974. And with product sourcing policies more demanding than anywhere else you could shop, we fully guarantee the integrity and quality of what we sell. We call that food integrity. And it’s what we live by. To find out more about the food integrity difference at Sevananda, just ask any of our store team members or visit sevananda.coop/foodintegrity.