

The Firestarter

Newsletter of the
Tonasket Natural Foods Co-op
Fall-Winter 2025



Co-op Board of Directors

Peggy Tofte, *President*
River Jones, *Vice President*
Charlene Baka Rich,
Secretary
Ron Jones-Edwards,
Treasurer
Thom Speidel
Annie Kier
Anne MacDonald

Store Manager:

Sabrina Sofia

Tonasket Co-op Membership Perks

- 3rd Tuesday of each month bulk-order from the UNFI Catalog at 15% above wholesale
- Last Friday of each month members receive a 10% discount on all vitamin and HABA purchases
- In-store exclusive specials for members only

Annual Membership Meeting Highlights

Twenty-six people attended the June 22nd Annual Membership Meeting, which included our Board of Directors and interested Co-op members. The agenda covered important topics that affect our store and its members, such as finances, an amendment to our bylaws, electing and retaining board members, and a comprehensive store report prepared by our manager, Sabrina Sofia. Culminating the meeting, Thom Speidel conducted a brainstorming session on improving our store's viability and sought membership input. We ended the meeting with a delicious meal prepared by our store's Café staff, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended.

Sabrina opened the meeting with the yearly store report, sharing our achievements as well as our challenges. Overall, the store is doing well, but can improve in many aspects, especially our financial standing. In discussing the challenges, Sabrina discussed some of the hurdles we've encountered during the past year, especially operational and supply chain issues and staffing and workplace trials, none of which threatened our viability, just challenging.

Having Sabrina at the helm provides a tremendous benefit in many aspects, and all who attended recognized her expertise, dedication, and positive attitude. As she said, "the Co-op has faced enormous hurdles, but together, we are making progress", and in closing shared, "we appreciate every one of our members, staff, and supporters for keeping this dream alive."

Further Membership Meeting business involved ratifying our

newest member to the Board of Directors, Anne MacDonald, a longtime Okanogan County resident and Co-op member. Anne brings many assets to our organization and a love for our community and our store. We are pleased to welcome her and are excited for her input and enthusiasm.

Additionally, the membership voted to amend the bylaws concerning board terms, changing the term of office to two years from the previous term of three years. The purpose of enacting this change is to encourage members who may have possible time

constraints to join the board of directors.

The final order of business was a lively brainstorming session, which generated excitement and many great ideas. Largely, the members present felt that the store could benefit from more advertising and promotions, along with making memberships more meaningful, thus increasing involvement. While there was a lot of eagerness to bring about some of these visions, we still need to have additional meetings and try to implement the critical ideas presented.

"The only way to make sense out of change is to plunge into it, move with it, and join the dance."
– Alan Wilson Watts



The Co-op booth at the Tonasket Garlic Festival on August 23 & 24 was a tremendous success. We sold a whopping 50 lbs. of garlic over the weekend!

Thanks to everyone who came to help that weekend, we couldn't have done it without you:

Sabrina, Peggy, Anne, Annie, Baka, One Pine, Sunny, Summer, Melanie, Rob, & River. Pictured at the booth are Board Member Annie Kier and her grandson Sol.

The Best Time To Take Vitamins

Many people take vitamins to support their nutritional needs; however, are you taking them at the right time? This question does not necessarily refer to the time of day but rather syncing your usage according to when you eat and drink.

Vitamins are either water-soluble or fat-soluble, so we must consider that. For example, C and B vitamins are water-soluble, so you need water to absorb them properly. Thus, nutritionists say to take these and other water-soluble vitamins with a glass of water between meals. Since B vitamins are generally energizing, taking them in the morning is best.

Fat-soluble vitamins require us

to consume them with fat for maximum absorption. These include Vitamins A, E, D, and K, all of which can help us maintain optimal health, so we should take them with foods that have some fat content.

And we don't need much, according to experts, even small amounts of fatty foods, such as dairy, nuts, or oil-based foods, will suffice.

So, what about multivitamins? This can be tricky since they contain both water- and fat-soluble vitamins. It seems the best time to take a multivitamin is with food so that any fat content can help absorption, although your body won't necessarily fully absorb the water-soluble vitamins as well

as the fat-soluble ones. While consumers enjoy the convenience of taking a multivitamin, some experts suggest skipping the multivitamins altogether and taking your vitamins separately.

While eating a variety of healthy foods is the best way to meet your nutritional needs, there are some instances where supplementing our diets with vitamins and minerals is beneficial. However, Mayo Clinic stresses that vitamins "cannot replace a healthy, well-balanced diet. The body recognizes and absorbs the nutrients naturally found in foods much better than a supplement." Before starting on any vitamin regimen, it is best to consult your health provider.



The Co-op Café has recently seen some changes. We have closed our deli window and not offering custom lunches anymore.

However, we still provide some of the best and healthiest lunches in town, along with a lovely setting for dining, our Garden Room.

"Grab and Go" sandwiches and hot soup will still be available all day until they're sold out. We also offer delicious house-made salads and new and exciting sandwich selections.

Please look for our daily soup schedule on our Facebook page, updated weekly.

Come have lunch with us!

The Co-op uses Facebook and Instagram to promote our store. One way you can support us is by sharing our posts when you see us on social media. Sharing isn't your thing? You can simply tap the "like" button, which will let your friends know how much you love your Co-op!

Good News for Customers Who Like to Order From Azure Standard

Did you know you can order your Azure products directly from the Co-op? We can get your goods for nearly the same price that Azure charges. This way you don't have to be available at the delivery drop and you can use your SNAP benefits to pay.

Ask one of our cashiers for more details.

MEMBERS

Look for the storewide SALES throughout the Co-op, displayed with red shelf tags below the items. Current Tonasket Co-op members receive special discounts on these products – some are a one-time special, some are monthly sales, and some are introductory promotions.

Price tags reflect member prices and non-member prices.

These specials also apply to visiting members from other Co-ops. Just show us your membership card.

We welcome our customers to bring your own clean containers for all your in-store bulk purchases.

Dear Valued Members:

Regrettably, we have had to make the tough decision to temporarily turn off our free Wi-Fi. This is due to a high volume of copyright violations, such as illegal downloading of movies and other protected content.

We're working with our provider and the affected parties to identify those responsible, and content owners may rightfully take legal action, which is beyond our control.

Thank you for your understanding as we work to improve security and hopefully restore this service soon.

Volunteer Jobs

Your Co-op relies on our dedicated volunteers to help us improve and grow our business.

We have several one-time jobs, and others that are ongoing, such as creating product displays and helping with deep cleaning. Other tasks include driving to Chelan occasionally to pick up products, cleaning and sprucing up the building (outside), some small painting jobs, and help readjust the awning out front, which might require 3 people. Additionally, the city has requested that we resurface the sidewalk.

If you have time and skills PLEASE consider pitching in!

Dear Lifetime Members:

To our Lifetime Members who signed up before June 2024.

We're hoping that you consider donating a yearly \$10 amount, which will become your standard contribution to the financial health of our store.

Members voted on this decision at an Annual Membership Meeting, and if you can contribute it would help YOUR Co-op tremendously.

Just to put it in perspective, that breaks down to 83¢ a month or less than 3¢ a day. And with over 580 members, even if half contributed in this way, it would bring in a sizable amount each year. It really doesn't take much to make a big difference!

Do you have a favorite product you would like to see us carry?

Feel free to make a suggestion.

If it's available from our suppliers, and there's room on our shelves, we'll give it a try and see how it sells.

Also, please know that we can special order items for you.

Talk to a cashier for more information on our policies and bulk-order

The News About Mary's Turkeys

Unfortunately, we will not carry frozen turkeys for the holiday season this year. Our meat provider, Western Box, which has been the only company to deliver to our remote location, has gone out of business without any warning. This situation has caused us to lose our opportunity to order turkey from Mary's, who grow the birds for us. We have to order our fall products in February. We hope this situation can be remedied for next year, allowing us to carry organic and free-range turkeys again.

International Cooperative Alliance: What is a Co-op?

People often ask, what is a Co-op and what are the benefits of becoming a Co-op Member? To answer that, Cooperative identity, values and principles are explained by the International Cooperative Alliance (<https://ica.coop/en>). Our Co-op supports and abides by this global movement.

Co-ops are defined as an independent association of people voluntarily united to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and objectives through a jointly owned and democratically

controlled undertaking.

Cooperatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and solidarity. As practiced by their founders, cooperative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility, and caring for others.

The seven cooperative principles are guidelines by which cooperatives put their values into practice.

The seven cooperative principles are:

• Voluntary and Open Membership • Democratic Member Control • Member Economic Participation • Autonomy and Independence • Education • Training • Information, Cooperation among Cooperatives • and Concern for Community.

All of these principles embody what the Tonasket Natural Foods Co-op stands for, and we strive to uphold these values. We invite you to join with us in this endeavor.

ONE-POT ROASTED SQUASH SOUP**Ingredients**

- 2 kabocha or Kuri squash (3½ to 4½ pounds total), skin on and quartered, seeds, pulp and hard stems discarded
- 1 large yellow or white onion (about 12 ounces), peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 large or 2 medium carrots (about 8 ounces), peeled and roughly chopped
- 4 coin-size slices of fresh, peeled ginger
- 2 apples or pears, cored and roughly chopped
- A few sprigs of fresh thyme or rosemary (optional)
- 6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for serving
- Salt and black pepper
- 6 cups homemade or store-bought stock, or water, plus more as desired
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup or honey (optional)
- Juice of ½ lemon or ½ orange

Preparation

Step 1: Adjust an oven rack to the lower-middle position and heat the oven to 375 degrees. Combine the squash, onion, carrot, ginger, apples, herbs (if using) and olive oil in a large Dutch oven or large, ovenproof saucepan. Season with salt and pepper and toss to combine.

Step 2: Place the pot in the oven, uncovered, and roast until the squash shows no resistance when poked with a paring knife or cake tester, 1 to 1½ hours.

Step 3: Transfer the pot to the stovetop and discard any woody herb stems (if using). Add the stock or water and place over a burner set to medium-low heat. Stir with a wooden spoon to scrape up any bits stuck to the bottom of the pot. Using an immersion blender, blend the soup until it's as smooth as you like. (You can also transfer to a standing blender or food processor in batches if you prefer.)

Step 4: Stir in the maple syrup (if using) and citrus juice. Adjust the consistency with more water or stock if desired. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve with a drizzle of olive oil and freshly ground black pepper.

Makes 6-8 servings

Zero Waste Movement Matters

The Zero Waste movement is a holistic ideology and a set of practices intended to eliminate waste and conserve resources by rethinking how products are designed, produced, and used. In moving away from disposable and unmindful consumption, Zero Waste aims to create an entire economy where resources are continuously reused and repurposed. Encompassing a wide range of approaches, Zero Waste goes beyond reducing consumption and reusing items; the goals are to move to larger-scale strategies that will include industrial and

municipal actions to prioritize design for durability and longevity. The Co-op tries to keep this concept in mind by supporting those companies that engage in this endeavor. Some of our Zero Waste products include *Rebel Greens'* Small But Mighty Laundry Sheets, the Ultra Concentrated Laundry Powder by *Ingredients Matters*, many of the *Island Thyme* products, several bar shampoos, and of course, our bulk foods selections. We are always on the lookout for more so if you have suggestions, feel free to enquire about them.



Shoppers may have noticed that many products are out of stock lately. This issue is due to a few factors: several companies have gone out of business, along with transportation issues which are out of our control. We will continue to try and keep our shelves well-stocked and continue looking for alternatives to your favorite products.

Supporting local farmers and the Community since 1977

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E-MAIL:

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We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.tonasketcoop.com

Fall-Winter Hours:

10am-6pm Monday - Saturday

11am-4pm Sundays

The Co-op Board of Directors meets monthly. Check Facebook or call the Co-op for more information if you wish to attend.

For more information on the Co-op and updated news, past Firestarters, and other pertinent articles visit our website at <https://tonasketcoop.com>

Thank-You!

To everyone who has continued to support the Co-op for over 45 years.

As a member-owned nonprofit business, this is your store. We encourage you to use the suggestion box. It is a great way to communicate with us about what you like about the Co-op and make kind recommendations. We take your suggestions to heart & do our best to provide what our customers are looking for.

Moon says, try our **Organic Edamame Fettuccine**

"It's high protein, gluten-free, and so, so yummy. If you're on a gluten free diet and missing noodles, this is a must to try!"

"I really like all the **Island Thyme** products from Orcas Island. The lotions and deodorants are my favorites!"
— Lisa

Aneka loves our **Yerba Mate Awakening Orange** drink.

She says they give her great energy without getting the jitters and they're clean and refreshing.

Masha's latest favorite is our **Joyva Halvah-Vanilla Bars**.

"They're a fantastic Persian sesame snack and a nice alternative to chocolate bars."



John Eskelson (right) and Dave Kligman (left) collaborated on our new outdoor rolling sign. Thank you to our talented Co-op members for their beautiful work!

Our Fresh Organic Produce Delivery Comes Every Monday, Wednesday, And Friday

Shop Early For Your Best Selection