

# LIVING NATURALLY

a community newsletter

SUMMER 2020

COFFEE &  
JUICE BAR:  
REOPENED!

CHIFFON  
CAKE MAKES  
A COMEBACK

SHOP THE  
CO-OP  
ONLINE



Valley NATURAL  
FOODS™



## LIVING NATURALLY SUMMER 2020

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CEO

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### Store Hours

10 a.m.–8 p.m. Daily  
9 a.m.–10 a.m. is reserved for  
seniors, first responders and  
healthcare workers

**Drive-Thru Hours**  
8 a.m.–7 p.m. Daily

Store hours of 8 a.m.–9 p.m.  
will resume on August 3

Get the latest deals and news  
from Valley Natural Foods by  
signing up for our e-newsletter  
at: [valleynaturalfoods.com](http://valleynaturalfoods.com)



Keep up to date with what's  
happening at the co-op  
[@valleynaturalfoods](https://www.instagram.com/valleynaturalfoods)

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# CEO UPDATE Nick Seeberger

The last three months at Valley Natural Foods presented extraordinary challenges that persistently required us to consider our co-operative identity and our mission of, "health and well-being." These challenges include a public health crisis and a social justice movement. From the International Cooperative Alliance's Statement on the Cooperative Identity:

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

We are an association of people who choose to cooperate for access to a selection of products that meet our health and wellness needs. By choosing a cooperative path, we commit to an organization that embodies all values listed above and measure our success by our community impact.

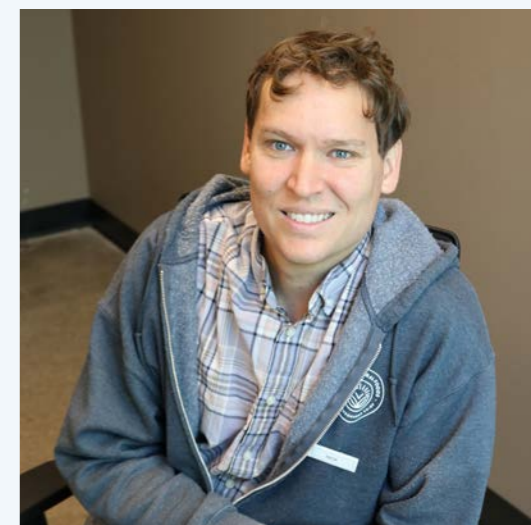
The movement for racial equity and social justice is at a critical point in our community, and our nation, as we all reckon with systemic unfairness that harms some people based on race. As a cooperative, our values of social and racial equality and equity compel us to stand in solidarity with

**"As a cooperative, our values of social and racial equality and equity compel us to stand in solidarity..."**

those working to erase all these harmful inequalities, and to focus on becoming a more welcoming and inclusive organization for all who shop or work here. In June Valley Natural Foods donated to the We Love Lake Street Recovery Fund to support the restoration of community businesses damaged during the protests.

This year our leadership team will begin diversity, equity and inclusivity training as we strive to create a co-op environment that is inclusive of all. As the movement for equality and equity moves forward, so will Valley Natural Foods.

From the first day of this pandemic, the co-op has been committed to making decisions that put the safety of our staff and customers first. A few ways we've made the co-op safe are cart sanitization, physical distancing requirements, symptom checking with staff and requiring masks be worn in the store. Our policies and practices have been guided by public health recommendations from the Minnesota Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).



Recommendations continue to change as more is learned about the virus. As public health recommendations change, so will our practices. Thank you all for supporting a safe co-op environment by staying home when ill, sanitizing and washing hands frequently, honoring physical distancing and wearing a mask.

In May we launched online ordering for delivery and curbside pick-up. Thank you to all who have used the service to meet your grocery shopping needs. Online fulfillment comes at a cost, with the co-op incurring around 15% additional costs and labor per transaction. To help offset that cost, we charge a 5% transaction fee (which we are working to change to a flat \$5). Some items may have a higher cost than what you find in-store. This strategy does not fully cover additional costs we incur but it allows us to offer this valuable service. Look for incentives to try online delivery in our weekly e-newsletter. To shop online, visit our website at: [www.valleynaturalfoods.com/shop](http://www.valleynaturalfoods.com/shop).

Challenging times require courageous leaders and we are looking for a few to serve on the Valley Natural Foods board of directors. If you have interest in serving your community through board service, apply online at: [www.valleynaturalfoods.com/board-candidate-application/](http://www.valleynaturalfoods.com/board-candidate-application/). Applications are due by July 31.

As we move forward through the pandemic and social change, our values will continue to guide our actions and inform how we best support our community. We will remain committed to our many local vendors and farmers while ensuring that our customers and staff have as safe of a shopping environment as we can possibly provide. Together, we will support ours, and our neighbors, health and well-being.

Stay safe, stay well,

Nick Seeberger

Some photography included in this issue was taken prior to Covid-19

# LETTER from the board

DEANNE SHEA, VICE PRESIDENT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Summer greetings!

I hope you are enjoying the warm summer days. Although many of our days and activities may look somewhat different due to the coronavirus, hopefully you and your family are still finding joy in the simple summer pleasures of going for a walk in the woods, back yard grilling, spending

time at the lake or relaxing on the porch with a good book.

Gardening, cooking and eating local produce are some of my favorite summer pastimes. I can't think of a better place to find all the fresh summer bounty of local produce than right here at the co-op. Supporting our local farmers and in turn our local economy, is at the heart of what we stand for as a cooperative. Now, more than ever, it's important to spend our dollars to support local farmers and producers. From fresh local melons to juicy ripe tomatoes to that long awaited sweet corn and everything in-between, the co-op is brimming with fresh produce. You can feel good investing your dollars into the local community.

It's so great to see our juice bar and drive-thru window open again as well as our patio to enjoy the beautiful summer days, social distance style of course. Be sure

to check out the wide assortment of prepackaged to-go items at the hot bar as well as fresh options and family size prepared meals ready for purchase at the salad bar. Whether you're taking a night off from cooking, or headed to the park for a picnic, or grabbing lunch on the go, you'll find a variety of healthy and seasonal options.

I'm proud to be a member owner of a co-op that prioritizes partnering with local and minority owned businesses, invests in our community with monthly register round-up recipients and donates to local food shelves and local school programs. It truly is a cooperative partnership.

I'm also proud to be a member of a co-op that is committed to taking tangible and measurable steps forward on diversity and inclusion. We declare our values through the vendors we partner with, the diverse range of food products we carry, and our staff policies and practices. Together, and cooperatively, we will work to take a stand against racism and fight for fairness and justice throughout our community and for future generations to come.

A huge thank you to our CEO and tremendous staff who have worked tirelessly to keep the shelves of our co-op stocked and the employees and us, the member owners and shoppers, safe and informed.

Be safe, be well and I'll see you at the co-op!

DeAnne

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

## GIVING BACK THROUGH REGISTER OUR ROUND-UP PROGRAM

Valley Natural Foods' shoppers are invited to round up their grocery purchases. 100% of round up proceeds benefit local community organizations that share our values of improving the health and food security of others. As a cooperative, we give back to our community as part of co-op principle number seven: Concern for the Community. Thank you for rounding up your spare change at the registers!

## NEW FOCUS ON URGENT COMMUNITY NEEDS

New Register Round-Up recipients for the fiscal year normally are chosen each June. Given the uncertain state of the economy, we are currently choosing recipients who focus on urgent food needs and racial equity in the community. We plan to reassess at year's end, to decide if we'll return to our traditional Register Round-Up program. New Recipients will be notified within 10 days of their selected month start date, if they will be receiving round-up contributions that month. We plan to reassess at the end of 2020, to decide if we'll return to our traditional Register Round-Up timeline.

## JULY'S RECIPIENT: 360 COMMUNITIES



**360 Communities.**  
Help in the moment. Hope for the future.

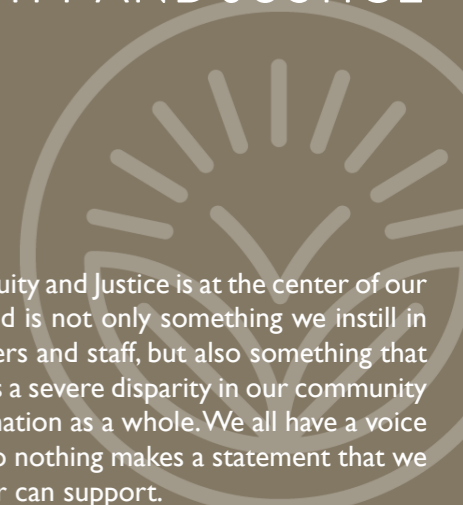
360 Communities is a non-profit organization in Burnsville, providing food security, school success, and domestic and sexual violence support services in Dakota County. July Register Round-Up proceeds raised at Valley Natural Foods will be matched and used toward 360 Communities' **Open Your Heart to the Hungry and Homeless Campaign.**

Visit: [www.360communities.org/](http://www.360communities.org/) to learn more.

## YOUR ROUNDED UP TOTALS ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

June's Register Round-Up recipient, The Sheridan Story, is a non-profit that works to fight child hunger in Twin Cities communities. Thanks to our shoppers who rounded up in June, The Sheridan Story received \$3,858.60. Visit [www.thesheridanstory.org/](http://www.thesheridanstory.org/) to learn more.

## A MESSAGE ON RACIAL EQUITY AND JUSTICE



Racial Equity and Justice is at the center of our values and is not only something we instill in our leaders and staff, but also something that we see as a severe disparity in our community and the nation as a whole. We all have a voice and to do nothing makes a statement that we no longer can support.

Because of this, we have increased our efforts to support organizations who focus on racial justice and equity, including our contribution to the Lake Street Council for the We Love Lake Street Recovery Fund, which supports rebuilding of small businesses that were affected by the riots surrounding the unjust death of George Floyd.

As a community we have felt pain, anger and sadness in the recent events in our community and the way humankind has shaped society to be an unequal environment for black, indigenous and people of color.

To further the mission of Racial Equity and Justice, we will be selecting an organization in August as our Register Round-Up recipient that supports those values.

*Thank you for your ongoing support of our Register Round-Up program!*

## RUN FOR YOUR CO-OP BOARD

CALL FOR  
CANDIDATES



Share your talents and serve our cooperative community as a member of Valley Natural Foods' Board of Directors. Applications are available on our website and due by July 31, 2020. For more information or to apply, visit: [www.valleynaturalfoods.com/board-candidate-application/](http://www.valleynaturalfoods.com/board-candidate-application/)

# LOCAL SPOTLIGHT

## BABA'S HUMMUS

“Baba means father. Our baba, Jamal, brought an authentic flavor of his home Jerusalem to America in the late 1970’s. His creamy and bold hummus was created in the kitchen of his restaurant, **The Mediterranean Cruise Café** in Eagan in 1979. It quickly became our most requested dish—and remains so—four decades later.”



### Roasted Cauliflower Steak with Buffalo Hummus and Feta Cheese

- 1 large cauliflower head, sliced lengthwise through core into 4 “steaks”
- Extra-Virgin Olive Oil
- 1 10 oz. Baba’s Traditional Hummus
- Hot Sauce
- Handful crumbled feta cheese
- Handful sliced green onions
- Handful roasted pine nuts
- ¼ cup chopped parsley
- ½ lemon
- Salt and pepper

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. Place cauliflower steaks on baking sheet, drizzle with olive oil on both sides, season with salt and pepper and bake until golden brown, 20-25 minutes, flipping after first 10 minutes. Meanwhile, whisk 6-8 tablespoons of hot sauce into hummus until smooth. Assemble dish by adding a few tablespoons of buffalo hummus to the bottom of a shallow plate. Place roasted cauliflower on top. Top with more buffalo hummus, feta cheese, green onions, roasted pine nuts and parsley. Squeeze fresh lemon over the roasted cauliflower and drizzle with olive oil. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Recipe provided by Baba’s Hummus

Baba’s kids, Rana and Khalid, always knew that Baba’s hummus was special. Baba’s Hummus was born with the vision of what a modern Middle Eastern product line could look like, giving Rana and Khalid a goal to provide the community with the highest-quality of Middle Eastern foods. It was decades of love and fierce loyalty that patrons had shown for their father’s homemade recipe that led them to brand their signature hummus and share it with the rest of the community.

In 2018, Rana and Khalid launched Baba’s Hummus. Today, Baba’s Hummus—produced right here in Burnsville—is found on the shelves at grocery stores and co-ops across the Twin Cities. Currently, there are five savory flavors: Traditional, Roasted Red Pepper, Sriracha, Olive and Mediterranean Salsa. Stay tuned, as Baba’s Hummus will soon be extending their product line to include pita bread, Tabouli salad, Baba Ganoush and new hummus flavors!

Baba’s Hummus is proud to note that during this Covid-19 pandemic, they partnered with Fairview Healthcare and gave generous donations of hummus to our medical heroes on the frontlines.



# SUMMER PRODUCE FROM OUR LOCAL GROWERS

Talented, dedicated produce farmers and providers offer co-ops an abundant summer bounty, including heirloom and cherry tomatoes, kales, cucumbers, collards, chards, broccoli, zucchini, green onions, lettuces, muskmelons, fresh herb bunches and more. Each of the following is known and loved for their own specialties...

- Featherstone Farm - Rushford, MN
- Living Water Gardens - Wells, MN
- Twin Organics - Northfield, MN
- Urbanize Farm - Edina, MN
- Wisconsin Growers - Mondovi, WI
- St. Croix Valley Produce - St. Croix and Chippewa Valleys, WI



# ALL ARE WELCOME TO OUR GARDEN PATIO



## Valley NATURAL FOODS

### ENJOY SAFE DISTANCING IN OUR VIBRANT GARDEN PATIO

The garden patio is open! New landscaping was completed in September 2019, just in time to kick-off our Celebrate Local Fest. This beautiful space delighted scores of folks, all enjoying music, food samples and cool beverages during our lively event.

This year, relishing time in our garden patio looks a little different with safe distancing in mind. Come have a seat and enjoy a coffee, smoothie or an entire meal at any of our tables, benches or even on the flat rocks! Please stay safe by creating your own 6-ft zone utilizing the many areas in both the upper and lower garden levels.

And while you're here, have a little fun exploring all the surrounding nature the garden patio offers you. Peruse the posted placards to learn about the various pollinator plants in our plots, all carefully planned to bloom at different times throughout the seasons. If you're lucky, maybe you will see some of the "Three B's" in action near your table—busy bumble bees, butterflies or birds showing their true colors!



# COFFEE & JUICE BAR

## WE HAVE REOPENED!

Looking for a fresh and healthy start to your day, or an afternoon refresher to break up the summer heat? Our Coffee & Juice Bar is back and brings you even more of what you love!

Try the Raw Juice Refresher to cool you off, made to order from only the freshest ingredients. Looking for an easy meal? The Antioxidant Burst Smoothie Bowl is packed with nutritious berries, bananas, and granola for an easy lunch you can enjoy on our Garden Patio.

Did you know we partner with Pyramid Sprouters for our organic, locally grown wheatgrass? Their family farm in Buffalo, Minnesota grows our wheatgrass especially for Valley Natural Foods. You can also pick up fresh flats of wheatgrass in our produce section! We press each wheat grass shot for you using the best equipment available to preserve nutrients and freshness.

Our locally roasted, fair trade and organic coffee beans come from Peace Coffee in Minneapolis. We grind our beans daily for the freshest brew. Our team is ready and waiting to bring you that steaming (or iced!) fresh cup of coffee to start your day. We look forward to seeing you back in store and at the drive-thru window to serve you your favorite hand-crafted coffee beverages, fresh raw juices and smoothies.

To view our Coffee & Juice Bar menu and hours, please visit: [www.valleynaturalfoods.com/drive-thru-window/](http://www.valleynaturalfoods.com/drive-thru-window/)



# SHOP THE CO-OP ONLINE

FOR CURBSIDE PICK-UP  
OR HOME DELIVERY

Have you had a chance yet to enjoy the advantages of ordering your groceries online with the co-op? Valley Natural Foods recently launched an online ordering service to help shoppers reduce their time spent inside the store due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In partnership with Mercato—a respected online grocery-shopping platform—Valley Natural Foods customers can appreciate the convenience of ordering most of their favorite items without setting foot inside the co-op.

Online shoppers can opt for contactless grocery pick-up at a designated parking area. Valley Natural Foods staff will carry your order out to your vehicle and load it up as a free service for you!

Whether you're unable to pick-up your groceries, or simply don't want to leave your home, many shoppers have taken advantage of Mercato's home delivery service.

To manage the logistics and operations for online-ordering, Valley Natural Foods repurposed its extended eating area into a dedicated order-processing and bagging area that's sanitized daily. The classroom refrigeration and freezer unit has been redirected to provide safe and sanitary storage for completed orders waiting to be picked up or delivered.

Let Valley Natural Foods do the shopping for you! Get started by visiting [www.ValleyNaturalFoods.com/Shop](http://www.ValleyNaturalFoods.com/Shop) to peruse the selections and order with ease. Search for your favorite items and discover new items that are being added daily. Once you finalize your order, choose a day and time slot for curbside pick-up at Valley Natural Foods, or select Mercato's home delivery option.



# SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL FAMILY MEALS MONTH™



## WHAT IS NATIONAL FAMILY MEALS MONTH?

Created by the FMI Foundation, National Family Meals Month™ kicks off an industry inspired movement to raise consumer awareness of the health and societal benefits of sharing frequent family meals at home. Each September, the food retail industry will rally together in support of National Family Meals Month™ to promote the role grocers and food manufacturers play in helping busy families of all shapes and sizes share more meals at home more often. [fmi.org](http://fmi.org)

## DO FAMILY MEALS REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Research supports that children who share regular family meals benefit from better grades, improved nutrition, stronger family relationships, higher self-esteem, and are less likely to use drugs and alcohol at an early age.

According to a recent study published online by The Journal of Pediatrics, adolescents who participated in just one or two family meals per week were less likely to be overweight or obese in adulthood as compared to adolescents who never participated in family meals. People eat healthier when they eat together at home. People reporting to eat the most home-cooked meals end up having healthier diets and consuming, on average, 130 fewer calories when compared to people who eat fewer home-cooked meals. [fmi.org](http://fmi.org)

Read More:  
[www.fmi.org/family-meals-movement](http://www.fmi.org/family-meals-movement)

## MAKE FAMILY MEALS SPECIAL FOR EVERYONE

Eating together as a family is more than just a meal, it's an opportunity for families to come together and strengthen their bonds. There are many things you can do to make family meals a positive experience for everyone.



## EASY FAMILY MEALS CO-OP STYLE!

Stop by our deli area and look for tasty, deli-roasted whole chickens, take & bake pizzas, fresh pre-packaged family size salads, sides and deli-baked treats to-go!

# JUST PLAIN GOOD

## —NOT JUST GOOD FOR GLUTEN-FREE

Gone are the days of picking a side—decadent or gluten-free. When gluten intolerances began popping up more commonly, many of the gluten-free dessert alternatives could barely be considered “dessert.” Many of these replacements were dry, lacking flavor, gritty, and anything but indulgent. While misconceptions persist today, living a gluten-free lifestyle doesn’t mean you have to choose feeling great over treating yourself.

Valley’s Own Bakehouse is among the bakeries leading the charge against breads and desserts being labeled, “Good for Gluten-Free.” They’ve set out to remove the stigma of low-quality gluten-free alternatives with a mission to make all their breads, desserts, and sweets, “Just Plain Good”—no caveat needed. Many of Valley’s Own certified gluten-free desserts surprise even the most refined of palettes.

The popular vanilla chiffon cake is a perfect example—a light and airy vanilla cake, with a flavor profile that won’t compete with the endless topping opportunities—juicy strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, and fresh whipped cream have proven to be a crowd favorite!

Originally introduced in 2013, the chiffon cake quickly developed a loyal following of fans who purchased it as a “half-ring” cake at Lunds & Byerlys but was discontinued after only four years due to complications with purchasing requirements. Since then, the cake has been made seasonally available at Valley Natural Foods at the request of our customers. “We get calls every year at the bakehouse starting late spring, asking when it will be back in stock again,” says Valley’s Own Bakehouse general manager, Renee Johnson.

2020 has brought a lot of change, but none as welcome as the recent decision to bring the chiffon cake back as a full-ring size to provide more cake at a cost-savings for the customer. “We are continually working on providing better value options for our customers. It’s great plain, makes a great substitution for strawberry shortcake for those that need gluten-free and/or dairy-free alternatives and it makes a beautiful berry trifle,” Johnson adds.



As a certified gluten-free facility, Valley’s Own Bakehouse adheres to specific regulations and has passed a testing process designed to protect consumers with celiac disease and other gluten-related ailments by confirming that the food, drink or supplement meets strict standards for gluten-free safety.

Many of Valley’s Own Bakehouse products come with a shorter shelf life than traditional bakery products by withholding unnatural additives and preservatives from their recipes. As many consumers have found, keeping Valley’s Own Bakehouse desserts in stock in their homes is actually more difficult than eating every last morsel! Pick up a new treat for the entire family (or just a special indulgence just for yourself) today and see just how long you’re able to keep it around!

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## Gluten-Free Chiffon Trifle

### Ingredients

3 C. heavy cream  
1/2 vanilla bean, seeds scraped from pod  
Zest of half a lemon  
1 Tbsp. honey  
1 Valley’s Own Bakehouse Vanilla Chiffon Cake, cut into cubes  
3 lbs. mixed fresh berries (strawberries, blueberries and raspberries)

### Preparation

Beat heavy cream with vanilla, lemon zest and honey until soft peaks form. Layer cream with cake and berries, creating three layers in a trifle dish or glass bowl and finishing with berries on top.

Recipe note: 1.5 tsp vanilla extract can be substituted for the vanilla bean



Photo by Bre McGee  
Food Styling by Ashley Greywitt

# Hummus Veggie Wrap



Photo by Susie Hessburg

WHEN IT COMES TO INGREDIENTS, WRAPS ARE VERY VERSATILE AND EASY TO MAKE! FOR A HEARTIER WRAP, ADD SOME SHREDDED COOKED CHICKEN, BEANS OR TOFU.

## Ingredients

- 4 9" flour tortillas\*
- ½ C. Baba's Roasted Red Pepper or Mediterranean Salsa Hummus, divided
- 1.5 C. of baby spinach or mixed greens, loosely packed
- 1 medium cucumber, thinly sliced
- ½ C. carrots, shredded
- 1 C. red cabbage, shredded
- Salt & pepper to taste

Optional add-ins or substitutions: Cooked, shredded chicken, thinly sliced deli sandwich meats, firm tofu slices, drained canned beans, sliced cherry tomatoes, chopped olives.

\*Tortilla substitutions: whole wheat, sprouted grain, gluten-free, coconut flour or butter lettuce leaves offer a variety of options to meet your dietary needs. Several varieties are available in the fresh bread or freezer sections at Valley Natural Foods.

## Preparation

Spread each tortilla with 2 Tbsp hummus. Layer on spinach leaves, cucumber slices, carrots and cabbage. Finish with a sprinkling of salt and pepper.

Fold in the sides and roll up the wrap, securing with toothpicks or wrapping tightly with parchment paper.

# Mojito Watermelon Salad

SERVE THIS REFRESHING SALAD WITH GRILLED OR BLACKENED STRIP OR FLANK STEAK.

## Ingredients

- 2 cups seeded watermelon, cut into ¾-inch cubes
- 1 large red heirloom tomato, cored and chopped
- 1 large yellow heirloom tomato, cored and chopped
- ¼ cup fresh-squeezed lime juice
- 2 tablespoons tequila (optional)
- 1 tablespoon white wine vinegar
- 2 teaspoons agave nectar
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh mint
- Pinch each of salt and freshlyground black pepper

## Preparation

Place the watermelon and tomato pieces on a paper towel to absorb excess moisture. In a large bowl, whisk together the lime juice, tequila, agave nectar, vinegar, mint, salt, pepper and olive oil. Add the watermelon and tomatoes, toss well to coat and serve immediately.

## Serving Suggestion

This salad is a refreshing complement to grilled or blackened strip or flank steak. Add cucumber for extra crunch, feta cheese for a sweet/salty contrast, or papaya and jicama for a colorful Latin-style treat.

Reprinted by permission from WelcometotheTable.coop. Find more recipes and information at [www.welcometothetable.coop/](http://www.welcometothetable.coop/).



Photo provided by Canva.com





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Valley Natural Foods Co-op works in partnership with the South Metro community to support health and well-being through education and expertise in local, sustainable food and wellness services.

— Valley Natural Foods Mission Statement