

LIVING NATURALLY

a community newsletter



**GREEN BAG
PROGRAM**

**GARDEN CENTER
2022**

**MAKE IT A SEAFOOD
SUMMER**



Valley NATURAL
FOODS

SPRING 2022



LIVING NATURALLY SPRING 2022

Nick Seeberger
CEO

Ashley Greywitt
Marketing Brand Manager

Susie Hessburg
Communications Specialist

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Community Relations &
Marketing Specialist

Store Hours
8 a.m. – 9 p.m. Daily

Drive-Thru Window Hours
7 a.m. – 7 p.m. Daily

Get the latest deals and news
from the co-op by signing
up for our e-newsletter
at: valleynaturalfoods.com



CO-OP HAPPENINGS

April

- 4/11 Virtual Class: Thai Favorites at Home w/ Robin Asbell
- 4/28 Virtual Class: Holistic Healthy Eating & Weight Loss
- 4/28 Garden Center Opens • Valley Natural Foods
Parking Lot

May

- 5/9 Virtual Class: The Magic of Buttermilk w/ Robin Asbell
- 5/19 Virtual Class: 5-Ingredient Recipes
- 5/19 Community Dinner at Valley Natural Foods
5-7 p.m.

June

- 6/18 Burnsville Juneteenth Event • North River Hills Park
1-3:30 p.m.
- 6/25 Burnsville Pride Event • Vista View Park
1-3:30 p.m.



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

CEO UPDATE

Nick Seeberger

Happy spring! Of all of the seasonal menu changes from winter to spring, I most cherish the retirement of lasagna, chili and baked potatoes from our family's menu and the addition of more greens and grilling. Every day I peruse the produce department looking for what's new or especially good. An insider tip for you – ask the produce staff what's their favorite fruit or vegetable at the moment and you'll be eating the best of the best.

Valley Natural Foods is here to meet the needs of our community, and while typically we fulfill this mission through the sale of natural, organic, local and gluten-free products, we also sponsor events to bring people together for causes that align with the co-op values. I am very excited to share that we are relaunching our quarterly Community Dinners event on Thursday, May 19. Community Dinners are a chance to enjoy a wholesome meal at a great price, and with the good company of your fellow co-op shoppers. For more information on our Community Dinner, check out the back page of this issue.

On Monday, March 14 the co-op sponsored an American Red Cross Blood Drive in our parking lot. All of the donor time slots immediately filled up! This drive comes at a time when blood banks are experiencing historic lows in their inventory. Thank you to all 34 donors in our community for your life-saving gift to this blood drive!

This Earth Day the co-op will be furthering our commitment to Environmental Stewardship through an increase in our Green Bag program and the offering of low price home compost kits.



The Green Bag program rewards customers with either a credit toward your purchase, or a donation to a local non-profit, for every bag you bring from home that you use in your transaction. Starting on Earth Day, we are doubling the credit per bag from a nickel to a dime. Also, leading up to Earth Day, find home compost kit materials for sale on the display near the customer service desk. Working together, we can reduce the environmental impact of our food system.

Finally, the co-op will once again have an on-site garden center to help you fill your garden with high-quality, locally-sourced plantings. The garden center will be open daily from 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. and will run from April 28 through June 5.

In Co-operation,

Nick Seeberger

LETTER from the board



Gary Sankary

I've always found spring weather in Minnesota to be frustrating. With too many 60s and 70s temps on work-weekdays and 30s during the weekend, it just feels unreliable. Maybe one-too-many May fishing openers spent watching sleet or snow come down on the dock has made me a little cynical.

That said, the signs that better weather is ahead are everywhere. The snow is gone, the buds are on the trees and the grass is greening up. My favorite thing about spring at the co-op, is the return of locally grown produce. I love that the co-op supports local producers! I feel strongly that consuming locally produced products is a key step towards sustainable living. Plus, locally produced food is always fresh, tastes great and the the quality is outstanding. What could be better?

Have an idea or questions for the VNF Board? Send us an email at board@valleynaturalfoods.com

On April 28, our very popular garden center will open at the co-op. Our member-owners and customers can jump start their planning or planting their gardens with a vast variety of local, sustainably grown plants to choose from.

Spring is a time for seasonal traditions as families gather to celebrate. For some, the season brings traditional holiday meals that feature salads and savories. For others, it's a chance to dust off the grill and start eating outside again. What a great time to visit the deli, grab a bite and head out to our patio. As the weather warms, we'll see more opportunities for people to meet, mingle and enjoy our beautiful outdoor space.

One activity to put on your calendar is our Community Dinner on May 19th. This is always a fun event, where everyone is welcome to attend and enjoy a tasty meal together. It's a great opportunity to meet co-op member-owners and Valley Natural Foods staff.

I hope everyone is able to enjoy this spring by getting outside often to take advantage of the nice days, and to celebrate this season of renewal.

Gary Sankary
Treasurer

COMMUNITY IMPACT

REGISTER ROUND-UP

A LOOK BACK AT SHOPPER CONTRIBUTION TOTALS FROM OUR PREVIOUS QUARTER

March



\$4,143

Community Action Partnership of Dakota County assists and empowers people to achieve social and economic well-being in partnership with our community.

February



\$3,777

EdAllies works to make sure every child can succeed, by helping historically underserved students—children of color, students with special needs, children from low-income households, and English learners—finally receive the rigorous, engaging education they need and deserve. EdAllies partners with schools, families, and communities to advance equity, and remove barriers.

January



\$4,370

Reaching Up offers an after-school academic enrichment program to provide support to elementary, middle school, and high school students based on financial need and referrals from schools in district 196.



Food Donations
744 lbs.

Food donations were collected throughout the months of January, February and March for The Open Door Pantry.

THANK YOU VNF SHOPPERS, FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT AND GENEROSITY!

Herbal-icious!

Spring is in full swing! Make your dishes explode with flavor by having your own herb garden at home either indoors or out. Herbs not only add amazing fresh flavors, but could provide possible health benefits, too!

Parsley

Potential Benefits:

- Bone Health
- Eye Health
- Reduces bloating & blood pressure

Sage

Potential Benefits:

- Antioxidant Benefits
- Oral Health

Rosemary

Potential Benefits:

- Immune System Support
- Stress Reduction
- Improved Memory & Concentration

Thyme

Potential Benefits:

- Reduces Inflammation
- Respiratory Support
- Gastrointestinal Health

Dill

Potential Benefits:

- Improve Heart Health
- Type 2 Diabetes Prevention

Cilantro

Potential Benefits:

- Brain Health
- Reduced Anxiety
- Blood Sugar Management

Mint

Potential Benefits:

- Brain Health
- Digestive Health

Growing Tips for Herb Nerds

Herbs are fun to grow! Most herbs do best with direct sunlight for optimal growth. They grow well in small and medium pots. Be careful not to over-water—herbs thrive well when dirt is moist to the touch, but not continually saturated. A fantastic selection of herb plants will be available at our Garden Center, which opens on April 28!

Basil

Potential Benefits:

- Heart Disease Prevention
- Improved Mental Health

Lavender

Potential Benefits:

- Helps with Anxiety
- Boosts Sleep
- Skin Health

Oregano

Potential Benefits:

- Decreases Inflammation
- Lower Cholesterol
- Soothe Muscle Aches

Become an Herb Nerd



Scan the code for access to dozens of herb articles and recipes, courtesy of grocery.coop

Get creative and make your own herb butter combos at home for a delectable finish for cooked meat, poultry and fish, or simply spread it over a slice of any artisan bread.

Herb Butter Recipes

Start with:

One stick of your favorite unsalted butter

Fresh or dried herbs of your choice, or try out the herb combos below.

Using a hand mixer or a fork, whip together room temperature butter and herbs until smooth. Store in fridge to preserve herbs for up to a week.

Lavender + Honey:

1-2 tsp. dried lavender, 2 tbsp. honey

Garlic + Herb:

2-3 cloves fresh minced garlic,

1-2 tbsp. parsley, 1-2 tsp. oregano

Rosemary + Olive Oil

1-2 tsp. olive oil, 1-2 tbsp. chopped rosemary

Lemon + Dill:

2 tsp. lemon zest, 2 tbsp. dill

SUSTAINABLE SWAPS

It's the little things that can make a BIG difference. Nobody's perfect at being 100% sustainable, but being perfectly imperfect still makes a world of difference. In honor of Earth Day, here are some easy environmentally conscientious swaps, so you can help protect our planet without batting an eye!

Reusable sponge cloths can replace up to 15 rolls of paper towels



Reusable straws made with bamboo, silicone or metal are better for the environment



Laundry detergent eco-strips reduces plastic container waste



Cloth spice bags are great for teas, stocks and stews



Reusable storage bags cut down on waste



Beeswax wrap replaces plastic wrap and is washable



Buy in bulk!



Bring in your own containers, old spice jars and more and make the aesthetic pantry you've always dreamed of!

GREEN BAG PROGRAM



Formerly known as the Green Stamp Program, the rebate rate of 5¢ will be increased to 10¢ per reusable bag shoppers use for their groceries, starting on Earth Day, April 22!

Shoppers have a choice to either redeem the amount at the end of their purchase transaction, or donate to our Register Round-Up recipient of the month.

To align with our commitment to being a sustainable business, we encourage our shoppers to remember bringing in reusable bags.

Check out the sturdy co-op branded bags, and a variety of eco bags we have available for purchase on your next shopping trip!

Eco Bags - Lunch Sack & Produce Carry Sack



Remembering to bring your reusable bags has a big impact!

What our Co-op is Doing to be More Earth-Friendly

- Recycling of organics and plastics
- Timed lights
- Eliminating all plastic water bottles under one liter
- New glass bulk water jugs
- No plastic bags at registers
- Run on 100% renewable energy (wind credits)
- Receipt paper is BPA-free and recyclable
- First retailer in the world with an in-store GOATOTE kiosk (Returning soon!)
- Compostable juice bar cups and straws
- Green Bag program- redeem or donate 10¢ reusable bag credit
- VNF Green team meets monthly to brainstorm and execute ideas for the store to be more green!

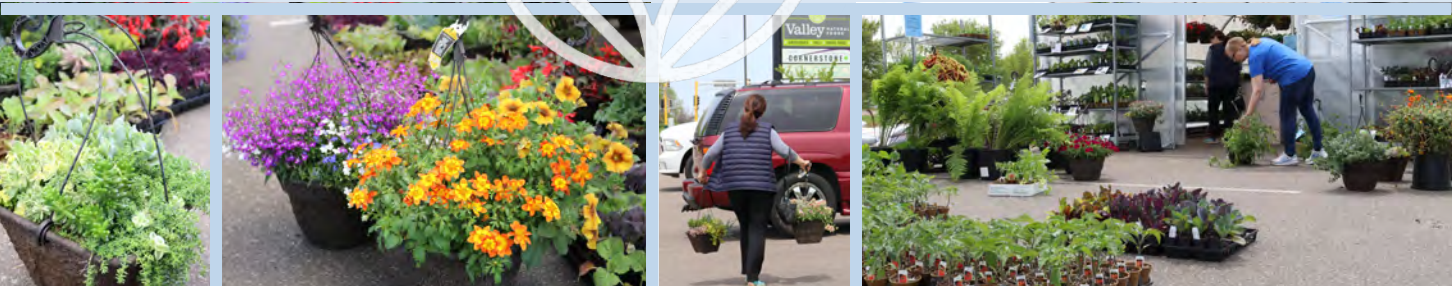
STAFF GREEN TEAM



Recycling Guidelines

- Don't "wishcycle." When in doubt, throw it out!
- Recycling containers need to be clean.
- Paper/cardboard cannot be recycled with oils or other residue.
- Plastic containers can be "spoon clean."
- Items smaller than 3" are too small for recycling machines, keep caps on bottles to assure proper recycling.

GARDEN CENTER 2022



TIME TO GET GROWING!

Every spring, we anticipate the arrival of warmer temperatures, renewal of plant life and the opening of our annual Garden Center. This year, the garden center opens at 10 a.m. on Thursday, April 28 and will run through June 5. We are excited to offer a wide variety of healthy plants from four local growers:

- Glacial Ridge Growers from Glenwood, MN, is a family-owned greenhouse business, offers a wide variety of Minnesota hardy perennials, unique annual plants, and certified organic vegetable and herb plants.
- Twin Organics from Northfield, MN is owned and operated by twin brothers who provide high quality organic garden plants.
- Green Earth Growers from Prior Lake, MN, is a small women-owned greenhouse, growing certified naturally grown quality flower and vegetable plants.
- Rush Creek Growers from Spring Valley, WI, is a women-owned business that uses sustainable growing practices with organic fertilizer, compost tea and beneficial insects to provide us with premium quality bedding plants, herbs and unusual plants.

SAVE SOME ROOM FOR CURIOSITY!

Though you can always count on finding your favorite starter plants in the garden center each year, shoppers can also look forward to the discovery of new and unusual varieties. If you're ready to spark some extra curiosity in the garden this season, consider saving a little room for planting something uncommon which may result in a surprisingly fun harvest!



Last season, colorful harvests of Lucid Gem Heirloom Tomatoes, Purple Bell Peppers, Pumpkin Spice Jalapeños, Ghost Peppers, and Armenian Snake Cucumbers – just to name a few – were reportedly among the most prolific and tastiest veggies to grow. Look for these and dozens of other unusual varieties to add to the excitement in your garden!

We look forward to seeing you at our garden center.

Garden Center Opening Day: Thursday, April 28
Hours: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Daily



SUSTAINABLY-GROWN AND ORGANIC STARTER VEGGIES, HERBS, FLOWERS, NATIVE PERENNIALS, HANGING FLORAL & HERB BASKETS, AND MORE!

Fresh Seafood Highlight



When it comes to ocean fish, shellfish or freshwater fish, come talk to our friendly, knowledgeable Meat and Seafood Department team to help you choose fresh, sustainably sourced options.

In addition to fresh offerings, we also carry locally-smoked, ready-to-eat salmon, whitefish and trout! Smoked fish is fantastic when stirred into cream cheese for an easy and tasty gourmet appetizer spread.

Need some cooking inspiration?
Flip to the next page for some
tasty seafood recipes!

Fresh & Local

The return of spring also means local seasonal produce starts "ramping" up – literally! Among the first hints of spring arrivals are fresh ramps – a tasty, wild leek with abundant cooking possibilities. It's also fun to see the bright color pop of local radishes offset vividly next to all the fresh greens! Ask our friendly produce staff about ramps and other spring treats now making an appearance on our shelves. You will be eating the best of the best in no time!





Make it a Seafood Summer

Salmon Veggie Packets

Serves: 4. Prep time: 30 minutes; 15 minutes active.

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
 - 1 small red bell pepper, chopped
 - 1 small red onion, slivered
 - 8 large green olives, pitted and chopped
 - 1 teaspoon dried thyme
 - ¼ teaspoon salt
 - 4 6-ounce salmon fillets
1. Heat oven to 375°F. Get a baking sheet with a rim to hold the packets. Cut 4 square sheets of parchment, about 14 inches long, then fold each corner to corner to form a triangle, and crease the paper. Open each sheet and place on the work surface.
 2. In a medium bowl, combine the olive oil, red pepper, onion, olives, thyme and salt.
 3. Place a salmon fillet along the fold of each parchment square, leaving at least an inch and a half around the edge closest to you uncovered to seal the packets. Place a quarter of the

veggie mixture on top of each fillet. Fold over the parchment to enclose the food. Starting at one corner of the packet, fold short sections of the edges of the parchment to crimp the edges of the packet closed.

4. Place the packets on the sheet pan and bake for 20 to 25 minutes, until the packets are puffed and the salmon is cooked through. Place each packet on a plate and serve so that diners can open the paper packet and release the fragrant steam at the table.

Variations: Change up this dish to suit your family's taste and incorporate seasonal veggies. Combine cauliflower florets, chopped tomato, capers, basil and olive tapenade, or try snap peas, carrot, tamari and toasted sesame oil. The key is to chop or slice the vegetables small enough so they will steam quickly inside the packets.



Citrus-marinated Shrimp Skewers

Serves: 4. Prep time: 45 minutes; 15 minutes active.

- 2 pounds extra-large shrimp, peeled and deveined, patted dry
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 2 teaspoons orange zest
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- 2 tablespoons orange juice
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 clove garlic, pressed
- 1 teaspoon minced ginger
- 2 tablespoons fresh parsley
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1. Skewer the shrimp, four shrimp per skewer, and place in a baking pan or similar container.
2. In a cup, whisk the olive oil, orange zest, lemon zest, orange juice, lemon juice, garlic, ginger, parsley, salt and pepper. Pour the marinade over the shrimp and turn to coat.
3. Refrigerate the shrimp for 30 minutes to 1 hour.
4. Preheat the grill. Pour a tablespoon of vegetable oil into a cup, then use a wadded paper towel, held with tongs, to oil the grate. As you take each skewer out of the marinade, let it drip for a few seconds, then place on the oiled grate. Discard the marinade. Cook for about 2 minutes per side, until the shrimp is browned and cooked through. Transfer to a plate and serve.



Chipotle-lime Grilled Arctic Char

Serves: 4. Prep time: 1 hour, 30 minutes; 25 minutes active.

- 4 6-ounce arctic char fillets
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled
- 1 cup cilantro or parsley leaves
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon chipotle powder
- Lime wedges (for accompaniment)

1. Pat dry the char and let it come to room temperature.
2. In a food processor, combine the garlic and cilantro or parsley. Process to mince finely. Add the lime juice, 1 tablespoon olive oil, salt and chipotle powder and process until smooth. Reserve.
3. Preheat the grill to medium heat on one side (leave one side with no coals underneath if using a charcoal grill). Just before grilling, pour a couple of tablespoons of olive oil in a cup and use tongs and a wadded paper towel to swab the cool side of the grate with oil. Place the fish on the heated grate, skin side down, and close the lid; cook for 4 minutes. Carefully turn the fish and place on the cool side of the grill for about 2 to 3 minutes, or until the fish is cooked through but still a little pink in the middle. Turn again, flesh side up, and drizzle with the prepared sauce.
4. Transfer to a platter and serve.

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Coconut Curry Cod and Veggies

Serves 4. Prep time: 35 minutes; 15 minutes active.

- 1 cup coconut milk
- 2 cups cauliflower, small florets
- 1 large carrot, thinly sliced
- 1 pound cod, halibut, salmon, or other fish, about 1-inch thick, cut in portions
- 1 tablespoon curry powder
- cayenne, optional
- ½ teaspoon salt

1. Heat the oven to 375°F, and set up a steamer for the vegetables. In a cup, mix the coconut milk, curry powder, cayenne to taste (if using), and salt.
2. Steam the cauliflower and carrots for 2 minutes, then let cool.
3. Place the fish in a 2-quart baking dish and cover with cauliflower and carrots, then pour over the sauce. Bake at 375°F for 20 minutes. When the fish is cooked through and flakes easily when pierced with a paring knife, serve.

Coconut milk mixed with a flavorful curry powder creates a creamy sauce with enough complexity to turn a simple piece of fish into an exciting meal.



Roasted Salmon and Vegetables in Pesto Broth

Serves: 4. Prep time: 35 minutes; 20 minutes active.

- 2 pounds salmon fillets, cut in 4 even portions
- 1 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 cups vegetable or chicken stock
- ½ cup dry white wine
- 2 medium Yukon gold potatoes, unpeeled, cut in 1½-inch chunks
- 8 ounces green beans, trimmed and cut in 1-inch pieces
- ¼ cup jarred pesto
- 4 sprigs basil (optional)

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment and place the salmon portions on it. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper.
2. Pour the stock and white wine in a medium pot and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Add the potatoes and return to a boil, then cover and reduce heat to hold at a simmer for 10 minutes. Add the green beans and cook, covered, for about 5 to 7 minutes, until the potatoes are tender when pierced with a knife. Uncover and keep warm.
3. Roast the salmon for 10 to 15 minutes if wild caught, 15 to 20 minutes if farmed. When cooked through, remove from oven and, if desired, use a metal spatula to lift the flesh of the fillets off the skin.
4. Stir the pesto into the warm potato and bean mixture, and divide the broth evenly into 4 bowls and serve, topped with a fillet of salmon. Garnish with basil, if desired.



Catch of the day:
An almond crust gives
homemade fish sticks
a healthier touch.

Baked Fish Sticks with Tartar Sauce

Serves: 4. Prep time: 30 minutes.

Tartar Sauce

- ¼ cup fat-free plain Greek yogurt
- ¼ tablespoon mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon capers, drained
- 1 tablespoon sweet pickle relish
- 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

Fish Sticks

- Vegetable oil for pan
- 1 cup whole almonds
- ½ teaspoon paprika
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 pound skinless Alaskan cod fillet, about 1-inch thick (thawed if frozen)
- 4 buns or lettuce leaves

1. Combine yogurt, mayonnaise, capers, pickle relish, lemon juice, salt and pepper in a small bowl; set aside. Heat the oven to 425°F. Lightly oil a sheet pan and reserve.
2. In a food processor, pulse the almonds until they are ground to the size of coarse breadcrumbs. Transfer to a medium bowl and stir in the paprika and salt. In another medium bowl, whisk the eggs and Dijon mustard. Divide the fish fillets into pieces about 1 inch wide and 4 to 6 inches long. Dip the fish into the egg mixture, then the almond mixture and place on the oiled pan. If there is any almond mixture left over, pat it on top of the fish to fill in any gaps.
3. Bake for 10 minutes, then check to see if a piece of fish will flake when pierced with the tip of a paring knife. When the fish is cooked through, cool on a rack. Serve the fish on a bun or in a lettuce leaf, with the tartar sauce.

Community Dinner Returns!

We are very excited to finally bring back our Community Dinners! After putting this event on hold for two years, we can now all look forward to Thursday, May 19, 5-7 p.m. for the co-op faithful, and new friends to come and gather in our spaces to enjoy a \$3 dinner of brats and fixings!



All are invited, and we encourage you to bring as many family members and friends as you like to enjoy our event together. It will be great to see familiar faces again, and also make new friends! For event updates, be sure to visit our website and sign up to receive our weekly e-newsletter!



CO-OP EMPLOYMENT



IF YOU LIKE SHOPPING AT VNF, YOU'LL LOVE WORKING HERE!

- Discount on store purchases
- Increased discount for staff member-owners!
- Minimum starting wage of \$15/hr.
- PTO for full & part-time positions
- Health & dental benefits for full time employees
- 401K
- Flexible schedules



**SCAN THE CODE TO
VIEW AVAILABLE
OPENINGS!**

valleynaturalfoods.com/careers