LIVING NATURALLY

a community newsletter









LIVING NATURALLY **WINTER 2024**

Nick Seeberger

Ashley Greywitt

Susie Hessburg

Brienna Schleusner Marketing Specialist

Store Hours 8 a.m. - 9 p.m. Daily

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

UPCOMING CO-OP EVENTS AND CLASSES

JAN. 18

 Let it Snow Kids Cooking Class with Jackie Mart

JAN. 22

Veganuary with Robin Asbell

FEB. 6

(Better for You) Game Day Snacks with Robin Asbell

FEB. 8

Have a Ball - Kids Cooking Class with Jackie Mart

FEB. 12

Baby It's Cold Outside with Dr. Sonja Murray

FEB. 15

Chapatti - Ugandan Flatbread with Henry Kisitu

MAR. 14

Eat the Rainbow Kids Cooking Class with Jackie Mart

Scan QR Code for event details or visit www.valleynaturalfoods.com/events-classes



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

As we step into the New Year, let's prioritize our health year-round. This time offers a chance to reassess our goals and commit to behaviors we aspire to. Personally, I aim to read more, incorporate more seafood into my diet, and establish a regular family game night. Progress is underway—I'm diving into more books, coaching my youngest to enjoy game night, and exploring the fantastic seafood options at our co-op's meat and seafood department. Our co-op's seafood is top-notch!

Speaking of seafood, have you checked out our tinned fish selection in aisle 2? Tinned fish is all the rage right now, and a fad that's long overdue in my opinion. The Freshé Brand offers a Provence Nicoise variety that's great for making quick, delicious salads. And, I'm excited about FishWife Tinned Seafood Co. products recently making an appearance on our shelves! If you're feeling inspired to make tasty tuna, sardine or salmon salad sandwiches, make it special by serving it on homemade bread. Find easy to make bread recipes starting on page 12.

Health and well-being often rely on the generosity of others. Blood donations play a critical role in supporting those needing transfusions. Two years ago, Valley Natural Foods collaborated with the American Red Cross for a successful blood drive. Since then, I've committed to regular donations. You'll have your chance to contribute on March 11 in our co-op's parking lot.



February marks Black History Month, while March 8 celebrates International Women's Day. At our co-op, we champion businesses through our Inclusive Trade program, sharing unique stories from diverse vendors. To learn more about these initiatives, check out page 7.

Lastly, I invite you to download our new Co+op Deals app. Discover current sales and craft your shopping lists while anticipating more features ahead. Start maximizing your co-op shopping today!

Wishing you a Happy and Healthy Winter!

Neithol Sufuno

Nick Seeberger

LETTER from the board



Chris Coyle VNF Board Member

As a newly elected board member of Valley Natural Foods, I am thrilled to embark on this exciting journey of learning and experiencing the responsibilities that come with it. Being part of a food co-op means more than just shopping for groceries; it's about being part of a community-driven, sustainable, and ethical organization that promotes high-quality food and supports local agriculture. The strong sense of community within Valley Natural Foods is striking. member-owners come together to support and contribute to the store's success. As a board member, I aim to foster this spirit of community and ensure that the co-op remains a welcoming and inclusive space.

While board members do not get involved with the day-to-day operations of the store, we do play a role in setting the co-op's governance policies. In doing so, we help ensure the store continues to serve its member-owners for many years to come by guiding decisions that align with the co-op's mission and values. In my brief time on the board, I have observed nothing but honed leadership by Nick, the Co-op's CEO, and his highly skilled team. This makes our jobs as board members very easy, so a large thank you to Valley Natural Food's staff is in order.

Going forward, I am eager to learn more about the co-op's commitment to supporting local farmers and producers. By sourcing products from local suppliers, we promote regional agriculture and reduce our carbon footprint. Supporting local farmers not only ensures the availability of fresh and nutritious food, but also contributes to our community's economic vitality. With all these opportunities for learning at hand, I would be remiss in not thanking the Valley Natural Food member-owners for granting me this opportunity. My promise to the membership base is to keep your interests front and center during my tenure on the board. I hope to see you around the store. Happy shopping!

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

COMMUNITY IMPACT

REGISTER ROUND-UP: A LOOK BACK AT SHOPPER CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS OUARTER

October **\$2,160**



Valley Natural Foods has a Cooperative Community Fund (CCF), sponsored by Twin Pines Cooperative Foundation. October Register Round-Up contributions went directly to our CCF. Once a year, interest earned on the CCF is donated to a local non-profit organization.

November **\$2,220**



BrainPower in a BackPack is a weekend hunger relief program providing weekend food packages for District 191 students in preschool, elementary, middle school and high school whose families struggle to put enough food on the table.

December \$2,498 MS\$

Midwest Special Services is a nonprofit organization supporting individuals with disabilities. Founded in 1949, they operate six locations that span the Twin Cities metro area. MSS empowers people to live the life they choose by providing opportunities and developing partnerships built on collaboration and community engagement. Round-up proceeds support the Apple Valley and Eagan MSS centers.

IT'S EASY TO CONTRIBUTE TO OUR MONTHLY REGISTER ROUND-UP RECIPIENTS!

At the registers, shoppers have the opportunity to round-up their grocery bill to to the next dollar (or any amount they choose).

Shoppers who bring in reusable bags for packing up their groceries have the option to redeem or donate the 10¢ rebate earned per reusable bag.

If using self-checkout, you can round up at the end of your purchase by hitting "checkout" and then the blue "Charity Round Up" button.

Food Shelf Donations 581 lbs.

Food donations were collected throughout the months of October, November and December for 360 Communities

THANK YOU MEMBER-OWNERS AND SHOPPERS, FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT AND GENEROSITY!



COMMUNITY OUTREACH RECAP

On November 13, 2023, we continued our annual tradition of partnering with The Open Door Pantry and Minnesota Vikings, Camryn Bynum, to provide Thanksgiving meals to 200 families in the ISD 191 Burnsville-Eagan-Savage school district.

We are so appreciative to local business, Ferndale Market, for donating the turkeys for this event. This is an event we will look forward to every year. We appreciate seeing families face to face, hearing their stories and





THE OPEN DOOR PANTRY

The Open Door Pantry is our recipient this quarter for nonperishable food items from our food shelf donation bin.

If you're clearing out your pantry and have unexpired shelf-stable goods you no longer need, or will be purchasing something extra while shopping, simply place your contributions in the donation bin located near our registers!

The Open Door is unlike other food pantries, as they focus on providing as many fresh and healthy options as possible to their recipients.



INTRODUCING The New Co+op Deals App!



Did you know? The great deals you love in our printed Co+op Deals sales flyer are now available on your smartphone via our new Co+op Deals app. Browse deals on the go, find information about our co-op (or nearby food co-ops when you're traveling) and never miss sales on your favorite items!

Save on

your favorite



This new App has been designed to work for Co+op Deals exclusively.

Fresh Deals. Member-Owner Deals and special sales are not included in the new app, however, printed flyers are available in-store or can be accessed online at our website's Savings & Deals page.







Scan to download the Co+op Deals app in the Apple App Store and Google Play.

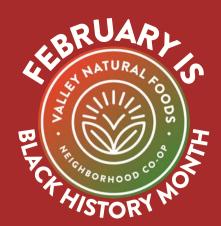












As we enter the month of February, Valley Natural Foods proudly joins the nation in celebrating Black History Month. This annual observance provides us with a valuable opportunity to recognize and honor African American contributions to our shared history, culture, and society.

Diversity is a cornerstone of our cooperative's values, and Black History Month serves as a reminder of the importance of embracing and celebrating the differences that make us unique. By acknowledging the struggles, triumphs, and enduring legacy of the Black community, we not only pay tribute to the past but also commit ourselves to fostering an inclusive and equitable future.

Black History Month has its roots in the early 20th century, starting as a week-long celebration initiated by Carter G. Woodson in 1926. Over time, it expanded into a month-long observance, officially recognized by the U.S. government in 1976. February was chosen to coincide with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, two renowned figures in the fight against slavery and advocates for equal rights.

This month offers a chance to educate ourselves and others about the pivotal moments and influential figures that have shaped the course of history. It is a time to reflect on the resilience of the Black community in the face of adversity, from the struggles for civil rights to the countless achievements in science, arts, politics, and beyond.

At Valley Natural Foods, we believe that our strength lies in our diversity. By fostering an environment that values and respects individuals from all walks of life, we create a space where everyone can thrive. We celebrate the unique perspectives, talents, and experiences that each member of our cooperative brings to the table.

Throughout February, we will be sharing stories of black-owned businesses whose products we carry. As a resource, you can find our Inclusive Trade webpage which lists all black-owned businesses who have products on our shelves. We invite all members of our community to join us in this celebration of diversity, inclusion, and the ongoing journey towards equality.

WOMEN'S HERSTORY MONTH

As we step into the month of March, we celebrate Women's History Month, and International Women's Day on March 8. This is a time to honor the incredible women who have shaped the course of history, pushing boundaries, and inspiring change. We work to create a space that empowers, uplifts, and celebrates the achievements of women.

Join us in recognizing the indomitable spirit of women from all walks of life, past and present. We as a co-op are proud to have 60% of our leadership roles filled by women, and a strong presence of 50% of our Board of Directors.

In this edition, we're highlighting our newest women-owned brand, FishWife Tinned Seafood Co., who is going above and beyond in their ethical business practices. The company is women founded and led, and has ethical practices! Many of their products we carry have either a Certified Sustainable Seafood MSC logo or Fair Trade, which means it is now a part of our Valley Natural Foods Sustainability Stamp of Approval list!

And, for those driven by packaging, these boxes are sure to stand out in the pantry! Grab Fishwife on your next trip in for a decadent addition to a tinned fish board or your next pasta night!



Jamaican Beef Patties

12 hand pies. Prep time: 50 minutes.

Dough

2 cups all-purpose flour 1/4 teaspoon baking powder I teaspoon turmeric ½ teaspoon salt 1/2 cup vegetable shortening or cold, unsalted butter, thinly sliced ½ cup ice water, plus 2 to 3 tablespoons

Filling

I tablespoon vegetable oil

I pound ground beef

I small onion, finely chopped

3 scallions, finely chopped

2 large habanero peppers, minced

I teaspoon dried thyme

3 cloves garlic, chopped

I tablespoon grated fresh ginger

1/2 cup dry breadcrumbs

I teaspoon curry powder

I teaspoon salt

1/2 cup water

- I. Preheat the oven to 400°F and line two baking sheets with parchment. Reserve.
- 2. Make the dough by mixing the flour, baking powder, turmeric and salt in a large bowl, then cut in the shortening or butter with a pastry cutter or a fork. Drizzle in ice water as you toss the flour mixture with a fork, until all the flour is moistened. Gently press the mixture together until it forms a dough.

- 3. Place dough on a floured counter and form into an 8-inch-long log, then divide into 12 even, round pieces. Form into disks and cover with a damp towel to keep from drying out.
- 4. Drizzle the oil in a large skillet set over mediumhigh heat and add the beef, onion, scallion, habanero peppers, thyme, garlic and ginger. Mix until well combined. Stir, turning and crumbling until the beef is browned and no pink remains, about 5 minutes. Stir in the breadcrumbs, curry powder and salt and mix well, then add ½ cup water and cover the pan. Simmer the mixture for 3 minutes, then uncover and stir until the pan is nearly dry. Let cool.
- 5. Get a rolling pin, a cup with water and a pastry brush. Roll out each dough disk to a 6-inch oval shape. Spoon 1/4 cup filling on half, leaving a ³/₄-inch border. Moisten the edge of the dough with water using the brush or your finger, fold the upper half of the dough over to enclose the filling and seal. Place on a baking sheet.
- 6. Bake at 400°F for 20 minutes, until the pastry is browned along the edges. Serve while hot.

As beloved in Jamaica as hamburgers are in the U.S., these flaky hand pies filled with savory beef and veggies are flavorful and spicy enough that no condiments are needed.

Scoville Scale

The level of heat in a pepper is expressed in Scoville Heat Units (SHUs). Spicier peppers, which contain more of the chemical compound capsaicin, earn a higher SHU number. See where your favorite peppers land on the Scoville scale.



Green Pepper 0 SHUs Bell peppers are thick-walled, crisp and sweet with no heat...



Sriracha 1,000-6,700 SHUs The popular hot sauce is not that hot in terms of SHUs, adding a delicious depth to many dishes.



Jalapeño 6.000-11.000 SHUs Still on the lower end of the Scoville scale, much-loved jalapeños bring the heat without overpowering other flavors.



Serrano 10.000-25.000 SHUs Fiery serrano is smal but mighty, with a bright flavor. Add fresh-diced or grillcharred serranos to salsa and sauces.



Habanero 100.000-325.000 SHUs Beware! Habaneros pack ten times the spice of serranos. Beneath the extra-hot heat is a sweet, fruity flavor.





Chorizo Cornbread Stuffing

Serves 4. Prep time: 40 minutes; 20 minutes active.

1/2 cup ground Mexican-style chorizo (casings removed), or plant-based version

I large onion, chopped

I rib celery, chopped

I small green pepper, chopped

I large carrot

3 cups cubed cornbread

I cup chicken stock

½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon pepper

- I. Preheat the oven to 375°F, and lightly oil a small casserole or baking pan.
- 2. Place a large skillet over medium heat, then crumble the chorizo into the pan, stirring and breaking into pieces as you cook until browned. Pour off any excess fat. Add onion, celery, green pepper and carrot and cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in the chicken stock.
- Turn off the heat, add cornbread, salt and pepper, and fold to mix. Spread in prepared pan and bake for 20 minutes. When the top is lightly browned, cool on a rack briefly before serving hot.

Spicy chorizo sausage gives the whole pan a bit of heat. This recipe works well as a main dish or as a hearty side with simple roast chicken.

Reprinted by permission from grocery.coop. Find recipes, plus information about your food and where it comes from at grocery.coop.

Sriracha Glazed Turkey Meatballs

Serves 6 (24 meatballs). Prep time: 40 minutes; 15 minutes active.

<u>Meatballs</u>

I pound ground turkey, or plant-based version

3 green onions, minced

2 tablespoons minced garlic

I tablespoon minced ginger

I egg, lightly beaten

½ cup panko breadcrumbs

2 tablespoons Sriracha

I teaspoon tamari

1/2 teaspoon ground white pepper

I teaspoon sesame oil

Glaze

 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup apricot preserves

I to 2 tablespoons Sriracha
I ½ tablespoons rice vinegar

I tablespoon tamari

I tablespoon sesame oil

- I. Preheat oven to 375°F.
- 2. In large bowl, gently combine all meatball ingredients until everything is evenly distributed. Form mixture into small balls, using I to 1½ tablespoons of meat per ball. Place the meatballs onto a rimmed baking tray and into the oven. Bake for 10 minutes and turn the meatballs. Bake for another 10 minutes until cooked through.
- 3. While the meatballs bake, combine all glaze ingredients in a small pot. Whisk and cook over medium heat for 5 minutes or until mixture is slightly thickened. To serve, toss or brush meatballs with warm glaze.



Turkey Banh Mi with Quick-Pickled Cranberries

Serves 4. Prep time: 40 minutes.

Quick-Pickled Cranberries

½ cup sugar

1/2 cup rice vinegar

½ teaspoon salt

1/2 cup chopped cranberries

I cup shredded carrot

Sandwich

I or 2 baguettes, cut into

4 6-inch lengths

4 tablespoons mayonnaise

I teaspoon vegetable oil

I small onion, chopped

4 cloves garlic, chopped

I tablespoon chopped fresh ginger

2 cups shredded turkey

2 tablespoons fish sauce, more if needed

I teaspoon five-spice powder

I tablespoon sugar

12 slices cucumber

I small jalapeño, sliced

 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fresh cilantro, torn

Sriracha sauce (optional)

Inspired by Vietnamese banh mi sandwiches, this variation melds traditional fresh vegetables and herbal flavors with savory turkey and tangy cranberries. Top it with sliced jalapeños and Sriracha sauce.

- In a medium bowl, combine the sugar, rice vinegar and salt, then stir to combine. Add the cranberries and carrots and toss to coat. Let stand at room temperature while you make the rest of the sandwich.
- Preheat the broiler. Slice the baguette pieces almost all the way through lengthwise and open each like a book. Spread a tablespoon of mayo on the cut sides of each piece. Place on a sheet pan and reserve.
- 3. In a large sauté pan over medium heat, drizzle the oil and add the onion. Stir for 5 minutes, until softened. Add the garlic and ginger and stir for a minute, then add the turkey and sprinkle with fish sauce, five-spice powder and sugar. Stir until the turkey is heated through. Remove from heat and keep warm.
- 4. Place the prepared baguette slices under the broiler and broil until the mayonnaise is bubbly. Fill each baguette with the turkey mixture, then top it with cucumber slices, cranberry mixture, jalapeño and cilantro. If desired, drizzle with Sriracha sauce. Serve immediately.



10 ValleyNaturalFoods.com







Slow-Cooker Whole Wheat Bread

Servings: 10 slices (1 loaf). Prep time: 3 hours, 30 minutes: 20 minutes active.

I ½ cups lukewarm water 1/2 teaspoon instant dry yeast

I tablespoon honey

2 cups whole wheat flour

2 cups unbleached flour

I teaspoon salt

- 1. Place a piece of parchment paper in the cooker, covering the bottom and at least part way up the sides.
- 2. In a large bowl, stir the water, yeast and honey. Let the yeast bubble a bit; it should be foamy in about 5 minutes. Add the flours and salt and stir with a wooden spoon until the dough is stiff, then switch to kneading with your hand. In the bowl or on a lightly floured counter, knead the dough for about 5 minutes.
- 3. Form the dough into a round ball and place in the slow cooker on the parchment paper. Cover and let stand for I hour to rise.
- 4. Turn the cooker on high and cook for 2 hours. Use an instant-read thermometer to test the temperature of the middle of the loaf; it is baked through at 180-200°F. If the loaf has not reached that temperature, cover and cook for another 15 minutes, until it reaches 180°F.
- 5. Use the parchment to lift the finished loaf out of the cooker, and cool on a rack.

Irish Soda Bread

Servings: 12 slices (1 loaf). Prep time: 1 hour; 20 minutes active.

I ½ cups all-purpose flour

I cup whole wheat pastry flour

I teaspoon baking soda

½ teaspoon salt

I tablespoon caraway seeds

6 tablespoons cold butter

3/4 cup buttermilk, plus 2 tablespoons for brushing the top

1/4 cup honey

1/2 cup raisins or currants

- I. Heat oven to 375°F. Mix flour, baking soda, salt and caraway seeds in large bowl. Use the large holes of a grater to grate the cold butter into the dry mixture, then toss until it resembles coarse crumbs.
- 2. Add ³/₄ cup buttermilk and honey to flour mixture; stir to make soft dough. Press the dough together; it will be dense like biscuit dough. If some of the mixture is too dry to incorporate into the dough, sprinkle in an extra tablespoon or so of buttermilk just to moisten loose flour. Stir in raisins.
- 3. Shape into rounded disk about 8 inches across and place on greased cookie sheet. Brush top with the reserved buttermilk. If desired, cut an "X" in the top with a sharp knife. Bake for 40 to 50 minutes, until golden brown and crusty. Keeps tightly wrapped at room temperature for three or four days.



Honey Whole Wheat Bread

Servings: 12 slices (1 loaf). Prep time: 2 hours; 20 minutes active.

- 1/4 cup lukewarm water
- 2 teaspoons active dry yeast
- 3/4 cup low-fat (2%) milk or other milk
- 3 tablespoons honey
- I egg, lightly beaten
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- I cup unbleached flour, divided
- 2 cups whole wheat flour (not pastry flour), plus up to $\frac{1}{4}$ cup more if needed
- I teaspoon salt
- I. In a large bowl or a stand mixer, stir the lukewarm water and yeast to dissolve. In a small saucepan over low heat, heat the milk and honey just to dissolve and bring the milk to lukewarm temperature; if it's too hot it will kill the yeast. Add the milk mixture to the yeast mixture and stir. Let stand for 10 minutes; the mixture should be bubbly.
- 2. Stir in egg and olive oil and blend well. Mix in the flour and salt to make soft dough that begins to come away from sides of bowl and can be handled. Knead by hand or with the dough hook until smooth and elastic, about 5 to 8 minutes. Lightly oil a large bowl and put the dough in the bowl, turn the ball of dough to coat with oil. Cover and let rise in a warm spot or near the oven until dough doubles in size, about 45 minutes to an hour. Heat the oven to 350°F.
- 3. On a lightly floured counter, pat the dough to a 12 × 8-inch rectangle. Roll up from short side. Pinch seam and ends to seal. Place seam side down in greased 9 × 5-inch loaf pan. Cover; let rise in warm, draft-free place until doubled in size, about 45 to 60 minutes. It should rise to the top of the pan. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes or until golden brown, and it sounds hollow when tapped. Remove from pan to wire rack to cool.

No-Boil Whole-Grain Bagels

Servings: 8 bagels. Prep time: 2 hours; 15 minutes active.

- I cup water
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1/4 teaspoon rice vinegar
- I 1/2 cups whole wheat bread flour
- I cup all-purpose flour
- I tablespoon sugar
- 2 teaspoons quick-rise yeast
- I teaspoon salt
- I large egg

Optional toppings: 2 tablespoons poppy seeds, sesame seeds or everything spice

- Heat water in a small pot over high heat until it starts to bubble. Measure the temperature with an instant-read thermometer, adding cool water until the temperature drops to 130°F. Pour I cup of the water into a measuring cup and add the vegetable oil and vinegar.
- In a large bowl, mix the whole wheat flour, allpurpose flour, sugar, yeast and salt. Stir in the warm water mixture until it becomes a shaggy mass (lumpy yet well-mixed), then switch to kneading with your hands. Knead until it forms a soft dough.

- 3. Oil a large mixing bowl and scrape the dough into the bowl. Cover tightly with plastic wrap and let rise in a warm place for at least 45 minutes or until dough has doubled in size.
- 4. Line two sheet pans with parchment paper. Heat the oven to 375°F. Divide the dough into 8 even portions.
- 5. To form bagels, roll each portion under your palm on the counter to make a 6-inch long rope. Coil the rope around two of your fingers and press the ends together to seal, then roll between your fingers to make a smooth circle where the joint is sealed. Place each on the prepared sheet pan, leaving 2 inches between the bagels. Cover lightly with a damp kitchen towel and let rise in a warm spot for at least 30 minutes or until the dough has again doubled in size.
- 6. Just before baking, whisk the egg with I teaspoon of water and brush the bagels with egg, then sprinkle the bagels with any desired toppings. Bake for 15 minutes at 375°F. Slide the bagels off the pan onto a rack to cool.



14 ValleyNaturalFoods.com

STAY IN THE KNOW!

Keep up to date and support the brands you find common values with! Our inclusive trade webpage and Valley Natural Foods Sustainability Stamp of Approval webpage both have a list of businesses that have unique attributes. What's the difference?



Inclusive Trade is a broad term for a minority-owned business. Go deeper on the webpage and support Black-Owned, Women-Owned, Hispanic-Owned, AAPI-Owned, LGBTQIA+ Owned and more!



Scan this code to visit our Inclusive Trade Webpage!





Valley Natural Foods established our own Sustainability Stamp of Approval and a webpage list in 2023! We put ethical businesses that hold sustainable practices on the list, and currently have only third party certified companies, examples being Certified B Corporation, Sustainable Seafood MSC, Fairtrade Certified, among others.



Scan this code to visit our Sustainability Stamp of Approval Webpage!









It's no wonder why
people keep coming
back for more classes
with our amazing
instructors! Check out
our upcoming classes
on our classes & events
webpage by scanning
this code!







