

January 2024

heart beet

A Pulse on What's Happening at the **Viroqua Food Co+op**



Happy New Year!

Olive Reynolds, Secretary/Treasurer

“I am so thankful to be a member of this board, the co-op, and our community”.



On behalf of the board, I would like to wish you all a Happy New Year! Now is the time to reflect on the previous year and look forward to the next 366 days.

In December, the board and VFC leadership team gathered for our annual retreat where we analyzed the current state of our co-op, reviewed our work in 2023, and set goals and aspirations for 2024.

Throughout 2023, the board reviewed and updated our Ends Policies, which state the co-op's purpose and set standards for gauging our success. Ends Policies are a clear and meaningful expression of our mission and are meant to provide long-term direction for VFC management to plan and work towards.

As we look forward to the coming year, the board will next evaluate our bylaws for relevance, accuracy, and language. The bylaws are an important document for our cooperative with

sections about organization, board of directors, and membership. This document is like an owners' manual of our cooperative business and is legally binding among members. If in our review the board determines that changes or amendments to the bylaws are necessary, the suggested changes would be proposed to the member owners for a vote before our annual owners' meeting. Only a majority vote by member owners can approve the amendment of our bylaws. We look at the bylaws to ensure they are congruent with state statutes and remain relevant to our cooperatives work.

This January, we will conduct a market study. We periodically conduct market studies to better understand the community we serve. You can help by answering a few short questions as you go through the registers. Thanks to the work of our GM, the co-op was awarded a grant by the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) to cover the cost of this extensive study.

I am so thankful to be a member of this board, the co-op, and our community. We live in such a unique and beautiful area. One thing I always focus on in the new year, is carrying my appreciation forward and allowing it to inspire me every day. I wish you all a wonderful 2024.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Elizabeth Tigan, *President*
Andrew Anderson, *Vice President*
Olive Reynolds, *Secretary/Treasurer*
Peter Bergquist
Bjorn Bergman
Dustin Skelley
Shana Meshbesh

GENERAL MANAGER

Jan Rasikas

The Board meets at 6:30pm on the 3rd Monday of each month. Meetings are currently hosted online. Changes are posted on the VFC website. To make a presentation or ask questions at a meeting, please contact a Board member 10 days in advance at: viroquafood.coop/board_of_directors.

The Heart Beet is intended as a vehicle for communication among VFC Owners and shoppers. Articles pertaining to health and nutrition are presented for informational purposes only. VFC recommends consulting a healthcare professional for medical problems and advice.

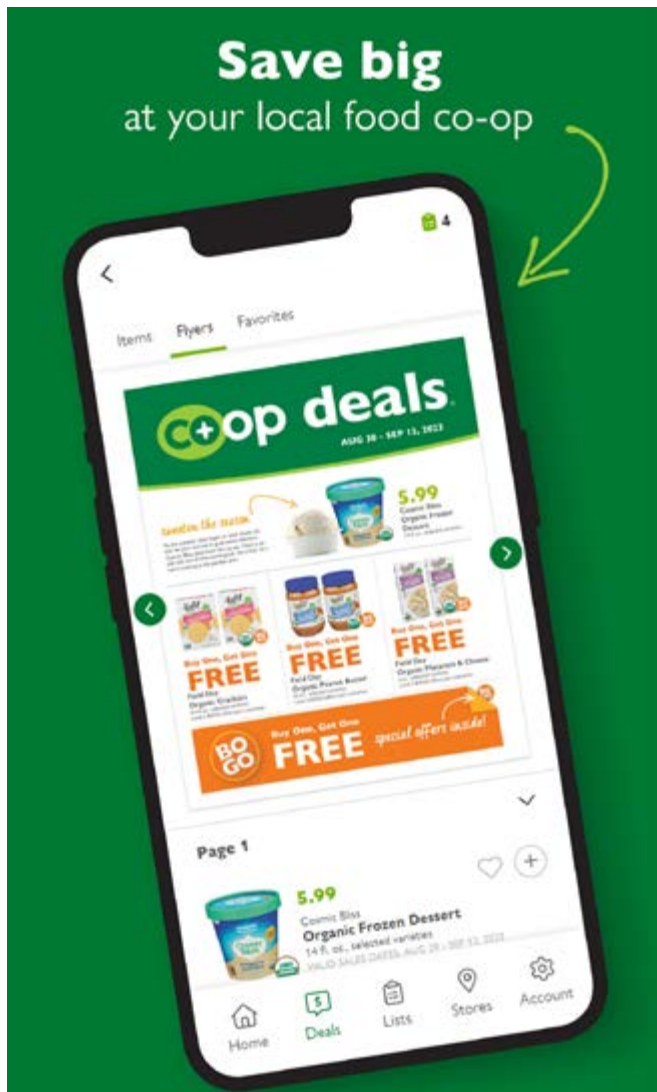
The Heart Beet is printed and available in-store monthly. A digital copy is available online at:

viroquafood.coop/newsletters

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2023 Co-op Community Fund Grant Recipient

The 2023 Co-op Community Fund Grant of \$1000 is awarded to the **McIntosh Memorial Library**. This grant directly benefits their free after school program with the purchase of healthy snacks to help manage hunger, boost nutrition, boost energy and help youth stay focused during the program and supportive activities. Healthy food is also used as a teaching tool with 5th grade students who participate in cooking class programming with staff.



New!

coop deals.

Download the App!

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The first 3,000 registered* users get a free gift and **\$10 towards groceries!**

*Must be within the first 3,000 users in January 2024 to download, create an account on the app and provide name and mailing address.

*Give your skin
extra care this
winter with
ingredients from
the co-op!*



Naturally Sweet Skin with a DIY Honey Facial

Is your skin in need of some sweet relief, but so is your budget? Get a healthy, honeyed glow with just a few basic ingredients from your kitchen! Many high-end skin care products contain ingredients derived from nature: extracts from fruits, plant oils, and honey, for example. Why not put together your own easy, enjoyable and chemical-free DIY facial?

For fresh, clean, moisturized skin your go-to ingredient

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is honey. Not only is honey a natural humectant, (meaning it attracts moisture) but it has proven antibacterial, antiseptic action. Applied to your skin, honey gently disinfects blemishes and kills bacteria while protecting your skin and sealing in moisture. Compare this to conventional skin care ingredients used against blemishes that often contain alcohol and harsh acids which can leave skin dry and irritated. No contest!

Honey Facial Recipes

Here are some recipes for homemade honey facials for a variety of skin types. For maximum benefit, choose raw honey that has not been pasteurized, to ensure vitamin and enzyme content is as high as possible. All recipes assume a base of 2 tablespoons honey at room temperature—enough for one facial.



For normal skin

Mix in 1 teaspoon of fresh lemon juice. Lemon juice contains naturally occurring alpha-hydroxy acids (AHAs) that gently exfoliate dead skin cells and work to even out skin tone.



For oily/acne-prone skin

Mix in 1/2 teaspoon of cinnamon. The addition of cinnamon, a noted antibacterial, doubles the blemish-busting strength of this facial. Not appropriate for people with sensitive skin.



For dry skin

Mix in 1 teaspoon mashed avocado and/or 1 teaspoon plain yogurt. Rich plant-based fat from the avocado moisturizes while lactic acid from the yogurt stimulates collagen production and exfoliates dead skin.



For sensitive skin

Mix in 1 teaspoon aloe vera gel. You can find aloe gel in the supplement section of the co-op, or buy a healthy aloe plant and snap off a leaf and scoop out the gel whenever you need it.

Once you have chosen your formula*, mix ingredients well and apply to clean, damp skin, avoiding eye area. Leave treatment on for 10-15 minutes and rinse well with warm water until no honey remains. Discard remaining honey mixture and enjoy your beautiful, replenished skin!

***Important:** Always do a test-patch with new facial products on the tender skin of your inner forearm before applying to your face to check for negative reactions. If you have an allergy to bees, pollen, or honey seek a professional's advice before trying this at home.



DIY Body Scrub with Essential Oils



Your skin is your body's first line of defense against a host of tough customers—sun exposure, pollution, hot days and freezing cold temps. It's important to take good care of your skin so it can take good care of you. Why not pamper your skin with an easy DIY body scrub?

All it takes are a few simple ingredients from your own kitchen and your co-op. While body scrubs are great in the shower, they're also good for quick spot applications on your hands and feet. Use at the sink, or take a basin of warm water and a towel to a favorite spot, like the den or patio, for a mini spa treatment.

Basic formula and function

Start with the basic formula: something scrubby + skin care oil. For scrubby ingredients, use food-grade,

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biodegradable ingredients like sugar, salt or coffee grounds (before or after brewing). These will exfoliate the skin, removing dry, dead and dull-looking skin cells and helping to prevent clogged pores. Incredibly, your skin will respond by generating new, fresh skin cells more quickly. Isn't Mother Nature wonderful?

Next, choose plant-based oils that nourish the skin and provide lubrication for the scrubby ingredients. Sweet almond oil is a great choice, with its rich texture and skin-hydrating properties.

Up your game with essential oils

Add your favorite essential oils to the mix and take the benefits of your scrub to a whole new level of luxury and efficacy. Not sure where to start? Try this recipe featuring refreshing, vitalizing peppermint and spearmint, and cheering, uplifting sweet orange. This clarifying, energizing scrub will leave both you and your skin feeling invigorated and refreshed, while the coffee/sweet orange aroma evokes warm comforts of snuggling by the fire. As a bonus, peppermint oil has natural antiseptic properties.

Citrus Mint Body Scrub

Ingredients

- 4 tablespoons granulated sugar
- ½ tablespoon coarsely ground coffee
- 3 ½ tablespoons Aura Cacia® Sweet Almond Oil
- 30 drops Aura Cacia® Sweet Orange Essential Oil
- 9 drops Aura Cacia® Peppermint Essential Oil
- 9 drops Aura Cacia® Spearmint Essential Oil
- 4-ounce wide-mouth jar

Preparation

In a mixing bowl, combine all ingredients and stir until well blended. Transfer to wide-mouth jar.

To use, scoop scrub out of jar with fingertips and apply to skin using gentle circular motions.

Rinse with warm water and pat dry.

Note: For a sweeter, more citrusy aroma, substitute bergamot (bergaptene-free) essential oil for the spearmint. For a more meditative, calming aroma, substitute frankincense essential oil for the peppermint and spearmint.

Share the joy

Body scrubs make great gifts, so why not make a larger batch and share? Scale up the recipe, divide the scrub into jars and tie with a decorative ribbon. You can even modify the oils in the recipe to personalize them to the recipient—use the suggestions above, or your own creativity!

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LüSa Organics Facial Oil

A moisturizing, cleansing oil.



Badger Beauty Balm

A nourishing treatment for face, neck, and under eyes.



Pure Hyaluronic Acid Serum

An intensely hydrating serum.



Warm Comfort

Add comfort to your kitchen with a simmering pot of soup.





Quick Chicken Noodle Soup

Serves 4-6. Total time: 30 minutes

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 large carrots, chopped
- 1 rib celery, chopped
- 4 cups low-sodium chicken stock
- ½ teaspoon dried thyme
- Salt to taste
- 2 ½ cups cooked chicken, shredded
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 4 ounces egg noodles
- ½ cup chopped fresh parsley

1. Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium high heat. Add the onion, carrots and celery and stir until the vegetables begin to sizzle. Reduce the heat to medium low and cook for about 5 minutes, until the onions are softened. Add the stock, thyme, salt and pepper and bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Stir in the cooked chicken.
2. Taste for salt, and grind fresh pepper over the soup. Cook the noodles separately, and add to the hot soup with the parsley just before serving. If you plan to make the soup ahead of time, stir in the cooked chicken, allow the soup to cool and keep tightly covered in the refrigerator for up to four days. Then, when you're ready to serve, cook the noodles, chop the fresh parsley and add to the heated soup.



Thai Seafood Curry

Serves 4. Total time: 20 minutes

- 1 tablespoon oil
- ¼ cup Thai red curry paste (see notes)
- 1 14-ounce can unsweetened coconut milk
- 1 tablespoon fish sauce
- 1 tablespoon palm sugar (or brown sugar)
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 1 cup snow peas
- 1 red pepper, sliced
- ½ pound tilapia (or other firm white fish), cut into bite-sized pieces
- ½ pound shrimp, peeled and deveined
- ½ cup Thai basil (or basil), sliced

1. Heat the oil in a pan over medium heat, add the curry paste and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute.
2. Add the coconut milk, fish sauce, sugar, lime juice, snap peas, red pepper and seafood, bring to a boil, reduce the heat and simmer until the seafood is cooked, about 7 minutes.
3. Stir in the Thai basil and let sit one minute before serving.



Serving Suggestion

Serve with white or brown jasmine rice with lime wedges, if desired.



Spicy Miso Egg Soup

Serves 2. Total time: 25 minutes, 15 minutes active

- 2 large eggs or 8 ounces tofu
- 1 tablespoon avocado oil
- 1 inch fresh ginger, minced
- 3 cups water
- 1 tablespoon tamari
- 2 teaspoons rice vinegar
- ½ teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 2 ounces fresh shiitake or button mushrooms, patted dry and sliced
- 1 ½ cups snow or snap peas, stems removed
- 2 tablespoons red miso

1. If using eggs, place the eggs in a small pot and cover with water by 1 inch. Over high heat, bring to a rolling boil. As soon as the water boils, remove from heat. Cover and let stand for 14 minutes. Drain and rinse with cold water, and place in an ice water bath to speed cooling. Peel the eggs and reserve.
2. In a medium pot, warm the avocado oil over medium heat, add the ginger, and stir for about a minute to soften. Add the water, tamari, rice

vinegar and pepper flakes and bring to a boil. Add the mushrooms and return to a boil for a few seconds, then add peas and simmer briefly until crisp-tender. Ladle half a cup of the hot soup into a small bowl and use a fork to stir the miso into the broth until smooth. Return the miso broth to the pot.

3. Place halved eggs in two wide bowls, ladle 2 cups of soup over each, and serve.



If using tofu:

Drain and cube the tofu and reserve. Then, divide between two wide bowls and ladle two cups of the soup over each.

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Lemony Lentil Spinach Soup

Serves 4. Total time: 50 minutes; 15 minutes active

The High Five

- 2 large carrots, chopped
- 1 cup green or brown lentils
- ½ large lemon, seeds removed
- 4 cups fresh spinach, chopped
- ½ cup fresh parsley, chopped

Pantry and Kitchen Items

- 4 cups water
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon oregano
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1. In a large pot, warm the olive oil over medium-high heat for a few seconds, then add the carrots. When they start to sizzle, lower the heat to medium-low. Stir often for about five minutes.
2. Add the lentils, water, lemon half and oregano. Increase the heat to high and bring to a boil, then reduce to medium-low and place the lid on the pan, slightly ajar.
3. Cook until the lentils are tender and starting to fall apart, about 40 minutes. Use a slotted spoon to remove the lemon, and let cool, then squeeze the soft flesh into the stew.
4. Stir in the salt, pepper, spinach and parsley, and simmer until the spinach wilts, about two minutes. Remove from heat and serve hot.



Italian Sausage Soup

Serves 6. Total time: 50 minutes; 25 minutes active

- 1 pound bulk Italian sausage
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 pound sweet potato, ¾" thick chunks
- 1 large red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 4 cups chicken stock, low sodium
- 1 bunch kale, chopped

1. In a large pot over medium-high heat, crumble the sausage and stir as it starts to sizzle. Add the onions. Stir and cook until the onion is softened and the sausage is browned, about 5 minutes.
2. Add the garlic and stir for a few seconds, then add the sweet potato and red bell pepper. Stir, then add oregano, salt and chicken stock.
3. Cover, bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium-low to simmer. Cover and cook for 10-15 minutes, until the sweet potatoes are tender when pierced with a paring knife.
4. Stir in the kale and cook for five minutes to soften the kale.
5. Serve hot, or cool completely before storing, tightly covered in the refrigerator, for up to 4 days.

Serving Suggestion: Pack in a thermos for a hot lunch or make it heartier with thick slices of garlic bread for dunking in the broth.

Nominate in October. Vote in November. Donate all year round.



Round up this month for RedLou Library

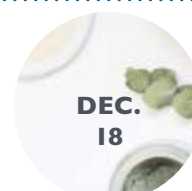
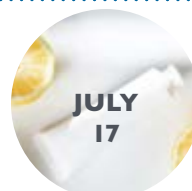
RedLou Library is a nonprofit organization that provides literary opportunities for individuals living in the greater Viroqua area. They serve people of all ages from infants to the elderly and those with special needs.



Recipients based on VFC Owner votes each November. Register round-ups plus the donations in the collection boxes at each register, combined with 1% of VFC's total sales on the 2nd Wednesday of the month make up our monthly Give Where You Live total donation. Learn more about GWYL on our website.

2024 Wellness Wednesday

save
10%



Every 3rd Wednesday, all shoppers receive 10% off supplements and body care items!

**no further discount*