



Hampden Park Co-op Mission: The corporation exists to serve its member stockholders and the surrounding community, promoting wholesome, healthful and ecologically sound food consumption, and permitting member involvement both in the procurement of that product and the operation of the corporation.

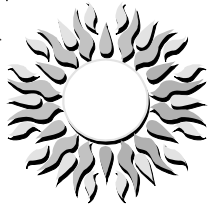
Hampden Park Co-op News

June/July 2006

Volume 17 Issue 3

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Co-op Hours:

Monday–Friday 9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.
 Saturday 9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
 Sunday 10:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

The co-op will be closed Tuesday, July 4, 2006.

Board Meetings:

The Hampden Park Co-op board meets monthly. See the HPC board bulletin board in the entryway for details, including meeting dates and locations.

Newsletter Deadline:

The deadline for the August/September issue is July 1. If you wish to write an article for the newsletter, contact Naomi Jackson at naomijx@juno.com, or leave a note in the Membership Coordinator envelope in the entryway.

HPC Web site:

<http://www.hampdenparkcoop.com/>

In the Buff: The Pleasures of Raw Foods

—by Emma Onawa, HPC member

When most people think of raw foods, what comes to mind are salads, veggie plates, fruits, and sprouts. These foods do provide a staple of a raw food diet and represent a simple and easy way to increase raw foods in your diet. Yet, a true raw food diet includes many of the dishes that normally would be cooked or otherwise processed, such as lasagna, crackers, ice cream, tacos, and cheese. Even meat can be made part of a raw food diet.

Raw food diets are also called uncooked vegan diets, uncooked vegetable diets, and living foods diets. Although historically meat, meaning any animal flesh, was part of some raw food diets, most raw food advocates exclude meat from the modern raw food diet. Aside from other philosophical and health reasons, the modern use of antibiotics in many meats, conditions in slaughterhouses, and the environmental toxins frequently found in fish and other seafoods arguably preclude meats from a true raw food diet. Many raw foodists would also insist on only organic ingredients and no animal-derived products. Dairy products are excluded, since most are processed, and many raw foodists are vegans.

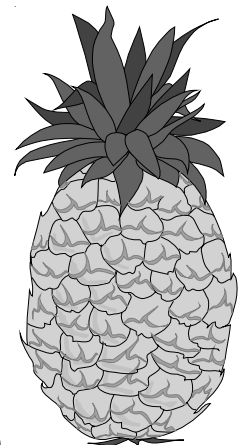
The key word, of course, is uncooked. In raw food preparation, cooking is defined as heating food above 118 degrees.

Why uncooked? It's generally known that cooking reduces the nutritional value of food. What's less well known is that cooking foods causes far more damage than simply a reduction in nutritional value. It creates toxins that gradually accumulate in the body. Cooking destroys and denatures most of the protein in our food, which renders it harder for our bodies to use and digest; and it destroys essential amino acids. Up to 97% of vitamins and minerals are also lost. Pesticides break down into more toxic compounds, which are more easily assimilated into our bodies; and free radicals, mutagens, and carcinogens are produced.

Cooking also damages the fiber in food and changes the structure of fats, which are incorporated into the cell wall and interfere with the respiration of the cell. Cooked food suppresses the immune system and takes much longer to move through the digestive tract, increasing the risk of putrefaction. After eating a cooked meal, the blood shows an immediate increase in white blood cells or immune system response, which occurs whenever the body detects a harmful substance.

One of the most critical impacts of cooking food is on its enzyme content. Enzymes, metabolic and digestive, are the catalysts for every chemical reaction in the body, such as

(cont. on p. 4)



Membership News

—by Naomi Jackson, Membership Coordinator

It's summer—a time of transition for many of our student members, a season of gardening and vacations for our more settled members. If you are moving away, leave a note for the next occupants telling them about Hampden Park Co-op. If you are enjoying sunny days in your garden, remember that volunteering at the co-op is a great rainy-day activity!

By the way, if you are moving or transitioning in any way, remember that I need to know about address changes and additions to/subtractions from your household. (And if you didn't get a Mayfest postcard, we probably need an address update from you!) Leave me a note in the Membership Coordinator envelope, near the calendars in the entryway. And while you are there, take a look at the sign-up guidelines posted just below the morning calendar. You will find hints, suggestions, and reminders that you heard once at orientation but may have forgotten in the intervening months or years.

Here is another rainy-day activity for you. Go to the Web site of the International Cooperative Alliance (<www.ica.coop>) and find out more about co-ops worldwide. The ICA was founded in 1895 and currently has 222 member organizations in 91 countries. As a member of Hampden Park Co-op, you are part of an international movement powered by people seeking to create a better world. That's a thing to be proud of!

Membership Information

Membership in Hampden Park Co-op involves a one-time purchase of one share of stock per household. The cost of a share is \$30. Stockholders can be eligible for dividends at the end of each fiscal year. You may sell back your stock share if you move away.

Volunteer Discounts

One or two non-senior adults in a household may earn:

- 15% discount for 3 hrs./month
- 21% discount for 6 hrs./month
- 28% discount for 12 hrs./month

Seniors

All seniors receive a 15% discount on the first Wednesday of the month. Senior members always receive a 15% discount. Your membership includes you and your spouse or significant other. If you are 65+ and would like a senior card, talk to any coordinator. Senior working members start with a 15% base, plus time worked.

Food Shelf Contributions

Any shopper, member or non-member, receives a 28% discount on food shelf items. When you get to the checkout counter, let the cashier know that you have food shelf purchases.

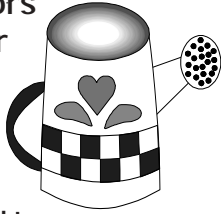
Non-discountable Items

Certain items in the store are non-discountable. These include milk (quart and larger), eggs, non-organic frozen orange juice, baby food, brewed coffee, HPC hot soups, gift certificates, and some sale items. There is no discount on these items because the mark-up on them is intentionally low.



Our Neighbors Garden Tour

Visit 14 gardens
in Merriam Park
and adjacent
neighborhoods!



This self-guided tour

is set for Saturday, June 24, 2006,
from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Master Gardeners will be on hand
to answer visitor questions.

In addition, **Appraisal Specialists
Midwest**, noted professional
appraisers, will be on hand to value
your antiques 10:00 a.m. until
12:00 p.m. at St. Mary's Episcopal
Church. Cost is \$7.00 per item.
(Limit 3 items per person.)

Advance-sales tickets: \$9.00,
available at *Garden of Eva* and *A.
Johnson & Sons*.

Day-of-tour tickets: \$12.00,
available at St. Mary's Episcopal
Church Garden Court, 1895 Laurel
Avenue, St. Paul.

*Hosted by the Merriam Park Living at
Home Block Nurse Program. All
proceeds go to the program. Call
651-646-2301 for further information.*

Organic Poetry

Poetry Column by Jeffrey Shotts, HPC Member

A small anthology of farm poems—
about first fruits, an immigrant worker,
and a contemporary field song.

The Broken Ground

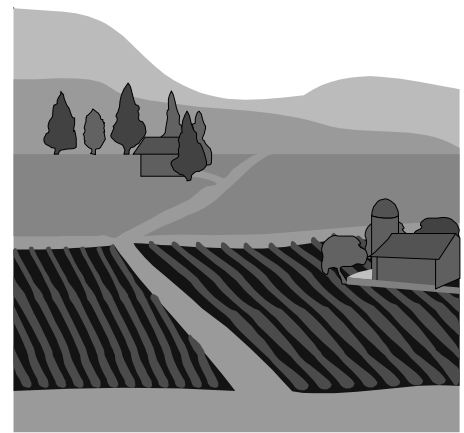
by Wendell Berry

The opening out and out,
body yielding body:
the breaking
through which the new
comes, perching
above its shadow
on the piling up
darkened broken old
husks of itself:
bud opening to flower
opening to fruit opening
to the sweet marrow
of the seed —
 taken
from what was, from
what could have been.
What is left
is what is.

The Right Hand of a Mexican Farmworker in Somerset County, Maryland

by Martin Espada

A rosary tattoo
between thumb
and forefinger
means that
every handful
of crops and dirt
is a prayer,
means that Christ
had hard hands
too



Once We Were Farmers

by Elsa Rediva E'der

Once we were farmers
and we measured time
in distant moments
of new life
and our hopes dwelled
welled up through sweat and skin
unspoken and sacred
and on the rocks we let lie in the fields
we stenciled language
and fed the rainfall upon our stories
and moments circled above the earth
till now
unspoken is our passion
our passion is the moon
lying down
in these moments
in the fields O pen ing
and in the rhythms of stillness
we were life anew
we were farmers and midwives
and blood spilled towards the future
in rituals of ancient powers
we leaned toward the cries
of children who gave sound
to rocks we let lie in the fields
We sing
we sing with eloquent hunger.

"The Broken Ground" by Wendell Berry from *Collected Poems*, published by North Point Press, 1985. "The Right Hand of a Mexican Farmworker in Somerset County, Maryland" by Martin Espada from *Trumpets from the Islands of Their Eviction*, published by Bilingual Press, 1987. "Once We Were Farmers" by Elsa Rediva E'der from *Returning a Borrowed Tongue*, published by Coffee House Press, 1995.

(Raw Foods cont. from p. 1)

digestion, cellular division, energy production, immune reaction, and brain activity. Cooking food destroys these vital enzymes, requiring our bodies not only to produce the enzymes needed to digest our food, but also substantially reducing the intake of these vital enzymes. Our bodies produce only a finite lifetime supply of enzymes, and cooked food requires us to use more of these enzymes than necessary. The reduction of enzymes can also be called aging.

To support the benefits of raw food diets, raw food advocates point to the absence of diseases such as heart and other arterial diseases, cancer, diabetes, and other diet-related diseases in both animal and early human (prior to the use of fire) populations. Pets that are fed cooked and otherwise processed or packaged foods suffer from human diseases that do not occur when these animals live in the wild. Eskimos, which means "those who eat raw," developed no arteriosclerosis and virtually no incidence of heart disease, stroke, or high blood pressure when they lived on a diet of raw whale and seal blubber.

People who change to raw food diets report weight loss, substantially increased energy levels and stamina, reduced need for and more restful sleep, better emotional health, greater concentration and sharper thinking, and fewer illnesses. Athletes report improved performance and greater strength and stamina.

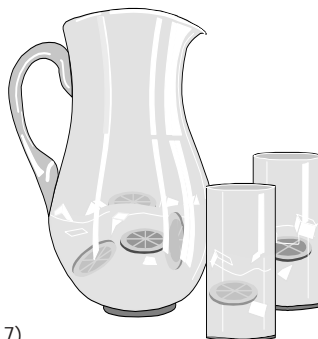
Although relatively few scientific studies, most of which have been done in Europe, have focused on the health effects of a raw food diet, those that are extant support many claims of better health. Uncooked vegan diets have been associated with substantial weight loss, a reduction in high blood pressure, and decreased serum total and LDL-cholesterol levels. Other studies have shown a decrease in fibromyalgia and rheumatoid arthritis symptoms. And, studies have shown healthier fecal microflora, cancer preventative factors, and improved biochemical and metabolic functioning. Two studies showed a decrease in vitamin B12 levels, recommending that raw foodists take a B12 supplement. Another study showed increased intake of fiber, vitamins A, B6, C and E, folate, copper and potassium, and decreased intake of all fats, cholesterol, protein, sodium, zinc, and phosphorus.

Raw foods advocates do have their detractors, many of whom respond to the more purist and zealous advocates, who promote the diet as a panacea for all health problems or as good for everyone, regardless of individual circumstances. Others are concerned about specific nutritional deficiencies that result from exclusively raw food diets. Some vitamins and minerals, such as lycopene from tomatoes, can be obtained only by cooking the food. Nonetheless, there is no doubt that increasing raw, organic foods in the diet can provide great health benefits.

So how can you get started on a raw foods diet? A simple step would be to increase your consumption of raw organic vegetables, salads, and fruits and to reduce your consumption of processed, cooked foods and meat. Even this step can help you to reap the benefits of a raw food diet.

A more serious plunge into raw foods will require a small investment in basic equipment. This equipment includes:

- ◆ **A dehydrator.** The preparation of raw crackers, cheeses, veggie burgers, and similar foods requires dehydration—the only heat process used with raw foods.
- ◆ **A heavy-duty blender,** such as a Vitamix, to handle raw foods such as sweet potatoes.
- ◆ **A heavy-duty juicer,** such as the Champion, to handle foods such as nuts and hard fruits.
- ◆ **A large food processor.**



(cont. on p. 7)

Alive and Well Lasagna

(use organic ingredients whenever possible)

The Sauce

- 2–3 small dates, soaked for 4 hours, or 2 tablespoons raw agave or maple syrup, or raw honey
- 1½ cups sun-dried tomatoes, soaked for two hours
- 1½ cups tomato of choice, halved & seeded (roma or other paste tomato is good)
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil (or part flax oil to get omegas)
- 1 teaspoon chopped shallots
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 2 tablespoons nama shoyu (raw soy sauce)
- ½ teaspoon Celtic or Himalayan salt
- 1 cup fresh basil (or mixed with other herbs such as oregano, parsley, rosemary)

In a blender pulse sun-dried tomatoes until reduced to small pieces. Add all other ingredients except herbs and process until smooth. Add herbs and pulse until herbs are chopped.

The Veggie Blend

- 1 bunch fresh spinach or kale, stems removed
- Small amounts of olive oil, lemon juice, and salt

Chop in a blender

The Noodles

- 3 medium zucchini (8–10 inches long)
 - Lemon juice, salt, and olive oil
- Slice lengthwise very thinly with a mandoline or by hand. Marinate for an hour or so in lemon juice, salt, and olive oil.

(cont. on p. 7)

From the Hampden Park Co-op Board of Directors

About Our Board of Directors:

Each board member is elected at our November Annual Meeting and serves a three-year term. Board members can be re-elected. In addition to attending regular board meetings, each member serves on one or more committees. Current board members, along with their committee assignments, include:

Jay Dregni

Board Development
Personnel
Long-Range planning

Karen Gill-Gerbig

Personnel
Finance Committee

Kjersti Hanneman

Board Development
Personnel
Membership Committee

Marcia Hanson

Finance Committee
Long-Range Planning

Naomi Karstad

Finance Committee
Physical Plant

Gregg Richardson

Membership Committee
Board Development
Long-Range Planning

John Rogers

Physical Plant

Lisa Scribner

Membership Committee
Long-Range Planning

Sophie Teyssier

(staff representative)

Physical Plant
Personnel



In the coming year, Hampden Park Co-op will pursue the following strategic directions:

- 1) Create sustainable growth in real income (sales and profit) without compromising the integrity of our mission.
- 2) Build and support a viable and resilient organization.
- 3) Create a space that optimizes our potential for growth.
- 4) Build relationships with other co-ops and like-minded organizations.
- 5) Play an integral role and be a leader in our changing community.

These Strategic Directions were established in February of 2006 by the Hampden Park Cooperative Board of Directors. The Board of Directors established these five directions in an effort to develop a pro-active approach to our changing neighborhood and community.

The most significant challenges and opportunities facing Hampden Park Co-op in 2006 include:

The Changing Natural Foods Market

Organic and natural foods sections in conventional grocery stores
Bigger supermarket style cooperatives
Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs)
The arrival of new niche grocers, such as Trader Joe's

Development in the Neighborhood

Rapid development of new high-density housing
Plans for light rail along University Avenue
Increasing values of commercial property in the light rail corridor

Membership Structure

Optimizing our membership and discount structure

Space Limitations

Identifying strategies to optimize our space and location

To make smart decisions regarding HPC's future, we seek to understand what our membership and customers think. The board is taking an ongoing survey to give you an opportunity to express your opinions and ideas about the future of HPC.

A Conversation with Gregg Richardson, HPC Board Member

—by Kjersti Hanneman, HPC Member



KH: How long have you been an HPC member?

GR: Nearly eighteen years. I believe we joined in the fall of 1988.

KH: How did you get involved in the co-op?

GR: We had belonged to Bloomingfoods Co-op in Bloomington, Indiana, when I was a graduate student there in the early 1980s. We were very happy to find a thriving co-op community in the Twin Cities when we arrived.

KH: How long have you been a board member?

GR: I am in my third year on the board.

KH: What are your current committee assignments?

GR: This year, I am on Long-Range Planning, Board Development, and Membership. I am also a board co-chair this year.

KH: Do you have family in town?

GR: Well, we're emptying our nest. My wife, Beth Richardson, is a RE/MAX realtor. Our daughter, Hillary, graduated from Earlham College last spring and moved to Chicago to work, and our son, Emory, (who worked as a storekeeper and cashier at the co-op last year) is in his freshman year at St. John's College in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

KH: What is your current neighborhood?

GR: We've lived a block from the co-op on Hampden Park since 1989.

KH: What is your occupation (or previous occupations)?

GR: From 1988 to 2002, I was an academic librarian at the St. Paul Campus of the University of Minnesota, developing collections in biological sciences, food science and nutrition, and rhetoric, coordinating reference, doing library instruction, and coordinating reference services the last several years I was there. I decided to take some time off to rethink my career; and four years later, I am a (more than) full-time volunteer, serving on the St. Anthony Park Community Council and other community and church organizations, taking care of a couple of rental properties we own in the neighborhood, and doing bookkeeping for my wife's business. I think I'm just too busy to get a job....

KH: Where did you grow up?

GR: I'm a dyed-in-the-wool Hoosier, born (literally) on the banks of the Wabash, far away, where my family has been since the 1820s.

KH: What are your hobbies and interests?

GR: I'm a pretty competent amateur classical pianist, dabbling in composing and musicology. I have been the cook in our home for 20 years and especially enjoy making homemade pickles, everything from bread-and-butters, to

fermented dills, to sauerkraut. I'm a serious gardener, growing heirloom tomatoes, among other things. I'm also a voracious reader—of history, philosophy, theology, science, and poetry. Each summer, I also get to indulge my enjoyment of history and baseball simultaneously, when I don a black frock coat and stovepipe hat, as the umpire of the Quicksteps, a vintage baseball club that recreates the game of baseball as it was played in 1862.

KH: Tell me about your most interesting travels.

GR: I wish I had more time and money for travel. Probably my favorite trip in the past 20 years was revisiting, when my kids were young, my own childhood vacation in South Dakota. The Black Hills are a wonderful combination of the most beautiful and the most tacky America has to offer.

KH: What is your favorite thing about the co-op?

GR: It's personal and local. I know the staff, I've met a number of the producers, I meet friends and neighbors every time I visit, and I can walk to it. It's what community and sustainability is all about.

KH: What is your favorite experience at the co-op?

GR: A couple of years ago, a woman with a toddler got to the check-out to buy lunch, then discovered she'd forgotten her wallet. The man in line behind her told her, "Never mind, lunch is on me." She was a little chagrined, and offered to arrange to repay him, and he said, "Don't worry about it, somebody did the same thing for me a couple of years ago. You'll get your chance someday. Just pass it on." Can you picture that happening at Rainbow?

KH: What is your favorite "treat" from the co-op?

GR: Cedar Summit mint chocolate chip ice cream. Winter and summer both.

KH: What is your favorite restaurant in the metro area?

GR: The Signature Cafe, hidden on a residential street in Prospect Park and run by a couple of former Wellstone staffers, is really excellent. They use a lot of local meat and produce. I also highly recommend Palestinian carry-out from Abu Nader, at the corner of Raymond and Como.

KH: What is your favorite meal to cook?

GR: I don't actually cook it, it's raw—gazpacho! I have a very authentic Spanish recipe (verified by a friend who lived in Spain for eight years), and every summer I wait for my first ripe tomatoes to make my first batch. It's also my favorite snack on a hot August night.

KH: Is there anything else HPC readers should know about you?

GR: No, they should just use their imaginations. That's always more interesting than reality...



(Lasagna cont. from p. 4)

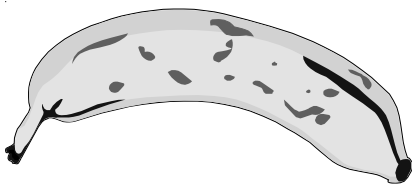
The Cheese

3 cups pine nuts or cashews
 Juice from ½ lemon
 1–2 tablespoons raw tahini or other
 nut/seed butter
 1–2 cloves garlic
 2 tablespoons nama shoyu (raw soy
 sauce)

Blend in food processor or blender until smooth and dehydrate for four hours. If you don't have a dehydrator, it's okay to use the mixture as is.

The Assembly

In a glass pan, place a layer of marinated zucchini. Follow by a layer of cheese, a layer of veggie blend, and a layer of sauce. Repeat until all ingredients are used. Cut and serve.



Banana "Ice Cream" with Cacao Sauce

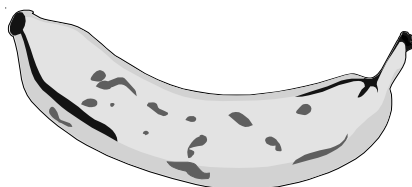
The "ice cream"

Freeze several peeled bananas. Puree frozen bananas in a heavy duty juicer. (You need a Champion to get the smoothest texture.)

The sauce

½ cup ground raw cacao
 ¼ cup agave nectar or pure maple
 syrup (grade B)
 ½ cup raw almond butter
 2 tablespoons coconut oil or butter
 ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
 almond milk, enough to achieve a
 smooth consistency

Blend all ingredients in a food processor until smooth. If mixture is too dry, add almond milk until moistened to desired texture.



(Raw Foods cont. from p. 4)

In addition, you will need to stock your pantry with a variety of staples, such as grains and legumes, dried fruits and seaweeds, oils, seasonings, and raw nuts.

The transition from a cooked to a raw food diet may involve a detoxification process that can cause temporarily unpleasant symptoms, such as fatigue, skin breakouts, diarrhea, and sinus congestion. It's your body's natural process of shedding toxins it has carried. A gradual change to raw foods may lessen these effects. Numerous raw food recipe books are available to help you with the transition.

To sample a raw dish that goes beyond a salad, try the recipes in the sidebars. The lasagna is delicious and satisfying. The cacao sauce will make chocolate lovers and non-lovers alike feel as if they've died and entered nirvana. And, if you didn't know the ice cream was made solely from frozen bananas, you'd swear it is the real fat- and dairy-filled thing. Also, check out Ecopolitan, a raw food restaurant in South Minneapolis, located at 2409 S. Lyndale Ave. (612.874.7336).

Sources and For Further Information:

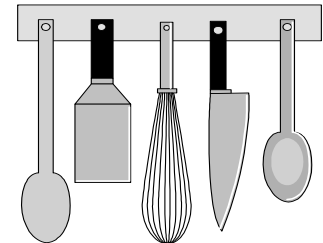
For recipes, information about raw foods, and links to additional Web sites, try these sites:

<<http://www.rawfoods.com/>>

<<http://www.rawfood.com/>>

<http://dir.yahoo.com/Society_and_Culture/Food_and_Drink/Eating_Practices/Raw_and_Living_Foods/>

<<http://www.rawguru.com/>>



I also found these books to be useful:

The Complete Book of Raw Food, Lori Baird, ed., Hatherleigh Press, New York, 2004. A very complete guide to raw foods with over 350 recipes, basics, and tables of resources, raw food chefs, and services and suppliers.

Raw, Charlie Trotter & Roxanne Klein, Ten Speed Press, Canada, 2003. A beautifully illustrated guide with full-page color photos of foods and dishes.

The UNcook Book: New Vegetarian Food for Life, Juliano (Brotman), Harper Collins, New York, 1999. Includes color photos with unique recipes and information on basics.

Feasting on Raw Foods, Charles Gerras, Rodale Press, Pennsylvania, 1980. An early work from Rodale Press, well before raw foods became a fad.

About Those Food "Choices"

"The typical supermarket contains no fewer than 30,000 items. About half those items are produce by 10 multinational food and beverage companies. And 138 people—117 men and 21 women—form the boards of directors of those 10 companies. In other words, though the plethora of products you see at a typical supermarket gives the appearance of abundant choice, much of the variety is more a matter of branding than of true agricultural variety. And rather than coming to us from thousands of different farmers producing different local varieties, these products have been globally standardized and selected for maximum profit by just a few powerful executives."

—Frances Moore Lappé and Anna Lappé, quoted in *World Ark*, a publication of Heifer Project International, January/February 2006 issue.

Have You Tried...? The HPC Aisles Revealed

—by Katharine Holden, HPC Member

Hampden Park Co-op is packed with products you may not have tried before. Here's the squeak on a few:

Organic Oat Groats from Arrowhead Mills

Oat groats, according to <www.arrowheadmills.com>, are a hulled whole grain that is naturally high in thiamine, phosphorus, iron, and fiber. Nice, but what's truly important is that oatmeal made with oat groats is the best oatmeal on the planet. Pick up a bag and see for yourself.

Eden Organic Tart Cherry Butter

Made with apples and Montmorency cherries and blended to a smooth consistency, Cherry Butter (and its sister Apple Butter) makes a great peanut butter and jelly sandwich. Or peanut butter and butter sandwich. Or peanut butter butter sandwich. Well, anyway, it's good. Not too sweet and free of fat and sodium. You'll find Cherry Butter on the shelf with the other jellies and curds in jars. See <www.edenfoods.com> for recipes.

Natracare Products for Your Menstrual Cycle

Developed in 1989, Natracare pads are made from natural materials, including BioPlastic made from plant cellulose. Materials are not bleached with chlorine as is the practice with the big-name brands. Pads are compostable, and 95% of the pad is biodegradable. Little Known Fact: Big-name pads often use latex to strengthen pads yet keep them flexible. If you're sensitive to latex, who wants it right next to your skin? Natracare products are free of latex. They also make panty liners, wipes, and 100% cotton tampons. Check the hygiene and household items aisle opposite the bulk bins for Natracare products.

Eden Organic Barley Malt Syrup

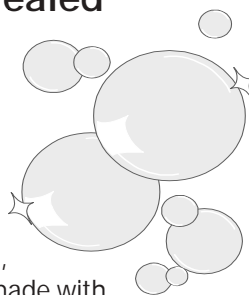
I've never quite understood how they start with grains of roasted barley and end up with thick, dark brown syrup. Perhaps it's good to have a few mysteries left in my life. Barley malt syrup is an alternative sweetener. It's great in baking, especially banana and other tea breads, cakes, and gingerbread. It's a common ingredient in "natural" sodas and ice creams. However, it's the marriage of barley malt syrup and baked beans that is made in heaven. Ahhh, sweet but not too sweet. You'll find jars of Eden Organic Barley Malt Syrup in the baking items aisle opposite the coffee beans.

Halvah (Hahl-vah or Hahl-ee-vah)

The taste of halvah always takes me back to Cecil's Deli when I was an innocent College of St. Catherine student who really believed them when they said I could do "anything" with an English major. Halvah is a Middle Eastern sesame confection. I know that doesn't sound very appealing, but you'll have to trust me on this. It's sweet but not sickly sweet. There's a sort of crunchy texture. Well, not really crunchy so much as grainy. The flavor is kind of nutty...sort of. Well, I'm telling you halvah is good. Try it for yourself. In Jewish delis, they slice a chunk for you off a wheel the size of a small hubcap. At HPC, you'll find wrapped hefty chunks of vanilla, carob, or chocolate halvah in the back cooler, next to the olives.

Sea Salt

The jury is still out on whether or not sea salt is "better for you" than regular table salt. Some say yes, some say no. I say that sea salt tastes better than the salt that comes in the blue container with the picture of the girl who needs to hold her umbrella straighter if she wants the rain NOT to come sliding off the umbrella down her back and end up seeping into her underwear. Sea salt at HPC can be found in a container in the baking aisle or buy it in bulk from the bin.



Katharine's Soothing Bath Salt Recipe

- 1 cup magnesium sulfate crystals (a.k.a. Epsom salts)
- 1/3 cup sea salt
- 2 tablespoons of baking soda
- 28 drops of lemon or lime essential oil
- A plastic or glass bowl (not metal)
- A plastic or wooden utensil (not metal)
- A jar with tight lid or reclosable plastic bag

Stir salts and soda together thoroughly in the glass or plastic bowl. Make sure to use a plastic or wooden utensil, not metal. Add the 28 drops of lemon or lime essential oil. Mix thoroughly. It helps at this point if you can put a lid on your bowl and shake the bowl hard up and down and around to mix in the essential oil. If no lid is available, just stir very thoroughly so there are no clumps. Pour the mixture into the jar or bag and seal. To use: Pour two tablespoons under the faucet as you run your bath.

Hint: Substitute peppermint essential oil to perk yourself up and relieve some of the pressure of a headache. Substitute rosemary essential oil to reduce depression.

[Katharine Holden is an HPC member. She states categorically that those who claim her fondness for Amy's Black Bean Refried Beans is unnatural and excessive are both mistaken and mean.]



Probiotics Primer—Food for Health

—by Ellen Sushak, HPC member and Registered Dietitian

You've been hearing a lot lately about probiotics, and you'll hear much more in months ahead. If you're curious to know what I'm talking about with that "probiotics" word, then read on for some up-to-date information that could improve your overall health!

According to the American Dietetic Association (ADA), "Probiotics are live bacteria that may promote health by improving the balance of good bacteria in the intestine." Think of foods such as blue cheese, yogurt, kefir, kimchee and (natural, non-canned) sauerkraut. Eating these foods puts living organisms into your gut with the potential to alter the kinds and numbers of flora within your body! A Japanese microbiologist discovered that a daily helping of yogurt reduced halitosis (bad breath caused by germs) in 80% of volunteers.

Yogurt has always contained "active cultures." Just like cheese, yogurt is made by organisms that transform plain milk into a special product. Usually, both cheeses and yogurts contain a mixture of many strains of organisms. Eating yogurt can not only improve your breath, it can help maintain your immune system and literally help you digest your food more fully. Truth is, you need to replenish the supply often, especially if you've recently had treatment with antibiotics. Antibiotics can—and usually do—kill off beneficial organisms as they destroy the unhealthy ones.

When choosing a probiotic food such as yogurt, look for a label stating it contains "active cultures." Select one that has multiple different strains and includes *Lactobacillus acidophilus* and *bifidus*. As with any natural ecosystem, diversity enriches the outcomes. Hampden Park Co-op has many varieties of cheeses, yogurts, kefir, and kim chee to choose from. Also, watch for Nancy's cottage cheese with active cultures. Plan it into some summer meals and snacks combined with fresh fruit. It will supply benefits beyond good taste and texture.

Of course, people have been eating probiotic foods for ages, but it has recently become trendy, too. You'll see a new yogurt in the big box groceries that promotes itself as "helping maintain regularity." Many people are trying it these days, if my clients in the clinic are a representative cross-section. This new product joins a growing list of "functional foods" to be found in the grocery store, foods that support health in some way beyond basic nutrition. (Other functional foods include calcium-enriched orange juice, enriched grain products, and fiber-added cereals.)

But let's get back to the probiotics—"natural" kinds of foods that add certain strains of organisms to the gut. Fascinating research has recently been published about intestinal flora. (That's a proper term for organisms living in your gut!) It seems that everybody's internal ecology is a bit different. Here are some data to get your attention: On average, a typical person's stomach is host to about 128 different types of bacteria. Moreover, the types vary a

lot from person to person. Amazing that these little bits of life survive in such an environment! In addition, another recent study identified 395 species of microbes living in human colons. Here, they provide beneficial and detrimental effects, too.

Researchers are thinking that some of these colonic microbes play a role in irritable bowel syndromes, especially Crohn's disease. That theory fits well with the fact that certain types of ulcers are the result of *Helicobacter pylori*, bacteria that live in the strongly acidic environment of the stomach. Getting more fascinating all the time, this research is now examining the bacterial communities living in the mouth, on the tongue, and so on.

As the strains of organisms in the gastrointestinal tract vary from person to person, they also vary within one person. The living organisms change depending on what has recently been eaten. What you ingest affects your intestinal flora in at least two ways. First, new organisms arrive with the food you eat. Some may die; some may ride through; and some may live on inside you. Secondly, colonies of organisms thrive or die depending on the supply of nutritional support they derive from your diet.

Certain foods help supply needed nutrition for beneficial gut bacteria to thrive. Technically, these foods are called "prebiotics," defined by the ADA as "nondigestible food substances that may stimulate the growth and activity of health-promoting, or good bacteria in the intestine." In the intestine, they provide nourishment to certain kinds of gut bacteria already established there. Bacteria digest and use the "indigestible components" that we can't. So, they flourish and multiply when given the right organic materials, and the byproducts are beneficial to us as well.

One example of a familiar prebiotic is the fructo-oligosaccharides found in shallots. Fructo-oligosaccharides (FOS) are naturally occurring polymers of fructose. As undigested parts of shallots pass through to the colon, bacteria "eat" the FOS and make byproducts that benefit us in some way. Eating shallots—and garlic and onions—is linked to lower blood pressure, lower cholesterol, and better gastrointestinal function. Researchers connect these benefits to gut bacteria. Chicory, a coffee substitute, is another example of a prebiotic. It supplies nourishment for *bifidobacteria* in the colon.

One note of caution: Some people should avoid probiotics—the foods containing living organisms—or use them only with specific directions from their primary care physician. Those with a compromised immune system—for example, anyone taking chemotherapy, or anyone with HIV/AIDS—will want to talk with their doctors before consuming probiotics.

Finally, as a dietitian, I recommend real food as a source of prebiotics and probiotics, rather than dietary supplements, which may not contain the advertised strains or may contain harmful bacteria. Besides, food tastes good and satisfies in countless ways that a pill cannot.

Happy, healthy eating!!

