



News from the Shop

- ▶ Good news. A paper towel holder has been installed above the sink in the shop. Thanks to Basia for the donation.
- ▶ Our back gate saga is close to being rectified with quotes being sought from local fencers to replace the entire gate and install a lock.
- ▶ We're investigating ways to increase the brightness of the shop. We may increase the strength of our eco light globes as well as remove the signs over the window behind the till – we're looking into getting an awning to protect us from the afternoon sun.
- ▶ Shop Co-op t-shirts. Volunteer Annie has been hard at it on the sewing machine and has stylishly transformed a bunch of XXL shirts that had been gathering dust. Check them out when you're next in. They're organic, unbleached cotton and just \$9.50!
- ▶ Annie's also been sewing some new colourful canvas bags for the co-op. These are \$4.90 and most include a little pocket for your accessories.
- ▶ The storeroom is about to get a re-fit so we can better handle our fruit+veg deliveries.
- ▶ The fruit+veg displays will change slightly with work to start soon to incorporate our fresh herbs.

OUR WISH LIST

- ▶ A paper towel holder outside the toilet;
- ▶ More pre-loved glass jars as we're running pretty low – no plastic if possible;
- ▶ Cleaning rags, cloths and tea towels.

If you can help out with any of the above, please call Sarah on 9519 3374.

Tracking our 'food' miles

First it was 'love' miles – the distances we travel to be with our loved ones. Now, there's 'food' miles – the distances our food travels from farm to the table. Alfalfa House has always aimed to keep its food miles to a minimum, by favouring locally-grown foods over the imported. More recently, the co-op has been buying some of its fruit+veg directly from farmers. Now the idea seems to be catching on in the mainstream. The CEO of Britain's supermarket chain Tesco, Sir Terry Leahy, says he wants to devise a labelling scheme that allows shoppers to "compare a product's carbon footprint just as easily as they can currently compare price or nutritional value." Marks+ Spencer has similar plans and the US giant Wal-Mart has started favouring suppliers that aggressively cut greenhouse emissions.

SOURCE: SYDNEY MORNING HERALD MARCH 30, 2007

All soys are not the same

In health food land, the soya bean is considered king. From a nutritionist's point of view, it's the most concentrated plant protein available with all eight essential amino acids, in ratios close to ideal for human needs and it's high in all the vitamins, minerals and essential fatty acids. It has no cholesterol, is high in fibre and low in calories and saturated fats, making it the dieter's dream. Soya beans contain phytoestrogens (isoflavones) said to prevent cancer, lower cholesterol, reverse osteoporosis and ease menopausal symptoms. And to put the icing on the cake, it's versatile enough for even the most creative chef and you don't have to kill anything to eat it.



Yet the elevation of soy to superfood may well be premature. Recent clinical observations suggest that while some soy foods offer distinct benefits, others pose significant risks, particularly when eaten in large amounts.

▶ To read the full story go to www.alfalfahouse.org/html/features.htm

A little natter on natto

Natto, which is made from fermented soybeans, has been a Japanese staple for more than a thousand years. In recent years its medical benefits have been widely recognised in Japan, resulting in natto's increased popularity there. During fermentation, various enzymes, vitamins, amino acids and other nutrients unique to natto are produced. It's these unique elements that give natto its distinctive health benefits, notably nattokinase and pyrazine, which has been shown to reduce the likelihood of blood clotting in lab tests on rats and dogs. Natto is also claimed to prevent heart attacks, strokes, senility, osteoporosis, cancer; improve digestion and prevent intestinal disorders caused by pathogens as well as having antibiotic effects and anti-aging effects. (Before World War II, the Imperial Japanese Navy researched the use of natto to deal with dysentery.)

Natto contains significant amounts of Vitamin K, which helps bone formation, preventing osteoporosis. It is the highest known source of polyamine, which is thought to suppress excessive immune reactions. Natto also contains many chemicals alleged to prevent cancer, for example daidzein, genistein, infrabin, phytoestrogen, and selenium. Recent studies show natto may also lower cholesterol.

The natto we sell in the co-op is made from barley miso, barley malt, kombu (seaweed), and vegetables. It is excellent in salads, soups, sauces and as a spread with avocado on toast.

SOURCES: WIKIPEDIA, www.gaiia21.net/natto/natto.htm

NEWS FROM THE SUGGESTIONS BOX

Here are the latest suggestions courtesy of the little brown box near the breads.

► Bring back Nutrisoy tofu

REPLY We've discontinued Nutrisoy tofu in favour of Earnest Bean tofu. While it is more expensive, Earnest Bean tofu is unpasteurised and of a higher quality. We are supporting a small business, which expects that as its tofu gains in popularity, the price will drop. If you prefer Nutrisoy tofu, you can order it. If you place your order by 5pm Monday, it will be ready for pickup Wednesday afternoon.

► Chocolate-coated coffee beans

REPLY Now in stock.

► Chickpea miso

REPLY We would if we could. Domestic chickpeas are in short supply due to the drought and our supplier doesn't want to import chickpeas and is concentrating on other types of miso.

► Aluminium-free, chemical-free deodorant in bulk

REPLY We currently stock the rock crystal, which lasts a number of years. However, if the shopper who left this suggestion knows of a source of bulk deodorant could they let us know.

► Hijiki (seaweed)

REPLY It's only available in 200g packets. Members can order this item individually.

► Blueberry leaves

REPLY We're talking to suppliers.

► Soap flakes instead of soap powder

REPLY Excellent suggestion. You're right, the powder does get up your nose. We are looking at an alternative.

► Puffed wheat

REPLY This product hasn't been in stock for about 12 months. We've only had a couple of requests for it, and space is limited. Multigrain and spelt puffs are close alternatives.

► Melrose shampoo and conditioner

REPLY Quite a number of shoppers have wanted these back. So they are now.

► There's a rumour that we'll be discontinuing the apple and pear juice concentrates.

REPLY Not so. They're staying.

WHAT'S NEW

- **WHITE KIDNEY BEANS** and **PUY LENTILS**, both organic from France
- **DULSE, LAVER & KOMBU** seaweeds, all organic from Maine, USA
- **PAPRIKA** organic, in bulk
- **ROOIBOS TEA** organic, in bulk, from South Africa
- **GREEN TEA** organic, in bulk from China; a cheaper alternative to the Sencha
- **ROASTED DANDELION** wildcrafted, in bulk, from Germany
- **SPROUTS** broccoli, sunflower, buckwheat, bean shoots, alfalfa, mung, organic, in packets
- **THE KEEPER**, a truly sustainable option for tampon users, has arrived. The Keeper is a reusable lightweight rubber cup, worn internally like a tampon; not absorbent, rather it collects the monthly flow; not known to be linked to Toxic Shock Syndrome; has a life expectancy of at least 10 years; and is ideal for bushwalking and travelling. It's been in use in North America and Europe since the 1940s. There's a pamphlet on The Keeper in the shop or visit www.moonpads.com.au/keeper.html.



THE KEEPER

DID YOU KNOW? Over their lives, women on average spend more than \$5000 on about 10,000 pads or tampons. In Australia that equates to 1385 million disposables annually, either to be incinerated or sent to landfill, where they can take up to 500 years to partially biodegrade.

RECIPE OF THE MOMENT *from Dominika Grossy*

Quinoa salad

Serves 8. Vegan, gluten-free

- 2 cups cooked quinoa (use absorption method as you would with rice; only takes 15 minutes)
 - 1/2 small bunch or 1/4 large bunch of celery, chopped
 - 1 bunch parsley, chopped
 - 1-2 cups walnuts and/or pecans, whole
 - 1 cup apricots, chopped
 - lime rind, grated
 - juice of 1-2 limes
- place all, except lime juice, in a large handy bowl and mix together
■ add lime juice to each serving as you go – stops edges of celery going brown
- OPTIONS:
- add oil of choice (olive, flax, evening primrose)
 - use more nuts (pepitas or almonds)
 - substitute lemon for lime or orange for the lime and apricots

STAY CURRENT. Make sure the eNews goes with you should you change email address. Any change of address (email or postal) can be emailed to manager@alfalfahouse.org.

Ooops . . .

Bit of a mistake in the last eNews. Marrickville Council doesn't recycle plastic bags. It will take those plastic takeaway food containers, however. The solution to the plague of plastic shopping bags: don't collect them.

100 grams

While just about all the produce sold from the bins, jars and drums is priced per kilo, the herbs and spices and some higher-priced products are priced per 100grams. This is because shoppers tend to buy smaller quantities of these items and a per kilo price isn't as meaningful, particularly when comparing supermarket herbs and spices, which are sold in as little as 25g containers. Our higher-priced products have a circular label on the top of the jar lid indicating they're priced per 100g.

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