



Alfalfa
House

NEWS

MAY 2009

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Is it time to update our logo?

Alfalfa House turns 21 later this year and some members think it's a golden opportunity to update our logo and indeed our image.

Do you find our logo tired, boring, meaningless? Do we need a design that more accurately reflects who we are and what we stand for? Or is it a matter of if ain't broke don't fix it? Alfalfa House is about to spruce up the outside of the front of the shop and if we were to replace the existing logo, it would be smart to do so now rather than after the paint had dried so to speak.

Well, the co-op's Management

Committee wants to hear from you. What do you think? Are you happy with the image as it is? Or would you like to see a more up-to-date design? If so, any ideas? Perhaps a sketch or some words you think a new logo should reflect? Some guidelines we



could give to artists or designers? If there's clear support for a new look, we'll launch a design competition among the membership.

Please send in your thoughts, one way or the other, and if you like, any sketches as a pdf to feedback@alfalfahouse.org by Friday May 29, 2009.

Thanks.

F+V

what's good in fruit+veg with Renata Field

NEW ARRIVALS

- ▶ **SUNROOT** (aka Jerusalem Artichoke): Try them baked, or in stews and soups
- ▶ **KIWIFRUIT**: Local FD produce
- ▶ **KOHLRABI**: Just peel and eat raw or lightly steamed
- ▶ **POMMEGRANATE**: A colourful and juicy fruit

ON THEIR WAY OUT

- ▶ **CUCUMBER**: fresh local FD produce, apple variety almost finished
- ▶ **FEIJOAS**: have a guava-like taste
- ▶ **GRAPES**: approaching the end of the season

- ▶ **PERSIMMONS**: at their best right now, perfectly ripe when soft and squishy
- ▶ **STONE FRUIT**: the last of the peaches I'm afraid
- ▶ **TOMATOES**: It's the end of the season, so enjoy them while you can!

WHAT'S GOOD NOW

- ▶ **APPLES**: Golden Delicious and Gala are the pic now; Fujis and Pink Ladies coming soon
- ▶ **BEANS, SNAKE and GREEN**: eat them raw or add at the end of stir-fries
- ▶ **BROCCOLI**: crisp Tasmanian produce
- ▶ **CHILLIES**: fresh and spicy local FD produce

- ▶ **HERBS**: Fresh herbs, basil, parsley, thyme, sage, dill and more – they're in the shop fridge and sold by weight so you don't have to buy a whole bunch
- ▶ **HONEYDEW MELON**: Sweet and juicy
- ▶ **LETTUCE MIX**: Tasty local produce
- ▶ **PEARS**: Victorian, biodynamic. Also Brown skinned Buerre Bosc and Williams
- ▶ **RHUBARB**: The go when baked with new season apples
- ▶ **POTATOES**: local FD Sebago and Bison varieties
- ▶ **SQUASH**: three from which to choose, including pimply and table queen.
- ▶ **ZUCCHINI**: perfect right now

Renata

- If you'd like to ask me about anything, or to order in bulk, please email produce@alfalfahouse.org
- FD: Farmer-Direct
- For week-to-week fruit+veg availability: go to www.alfalfahouse.org/html/PRODUCTS/fruit+veg.htm

The FairTrade List

When we think Fairtrade we usually think coffee, tea and chocolate. But there's more and the list is growing. We're continuing to work with suppliers and producers to expand our range and types of Fairtrade products, particularly where there aren't Australian-grown alternatives, be they certified by Fairtrade Labeling Organisations International (FLOI), the Institute for MarketEcology (IMO) Fair for Life, or food produced through other smaller scale Fairtrade programs or projects. Here's what we have.

COFFEE

We stock three types of Fairtrade coffee:

- Tradewinds – FLOI-certified organic ground and beans from East Timor or Ethiopia depending on availability.
- Toby's Estate decaf – FLOI-certified organic ground and beans.
- Three Amigos dark espresso blend, FLOI-certified organic beans and ground, from East Timor.

TEAS

Most of the co-op's Fairtrade teas are from Tradewinds and include

- Black Ceylon loose leaf tea
- Green Ceylon loose leaf tea
- Earl Grey Tea bags (50 pack)
- Ceylon tea bags (50 pack)

All are FLOI-certified from the not-for-profit, Tradewinds, Australia's first supplier of Fairtrade tea and coffee. Tradewinds has been importing value-added products wherever possible for 30 years, helping to ensure the economic benefits remain in producer countries. All are certified organic except for the Earl Grey teabags. Alfalfa's Own Chai Masala also contains a base of organic, Fairtrade black Ceylon tea.

CHOCOLATE

COCOLO has a range of flavours, which vary from time to time, including 70% dark, dark almond, dark mint, dark

orange, milk, milk hazelnut, and white almond. All are FLOI-certified as well as being certified organic. In contrast to Green+Blacks, which is owned by Cadbury and which makes mostly non-Fairtrade chocolate, Cocolo only makes Fairtrade chocolate.

RAPUNZEL make bulk organic chocolate – those chunks of dark, milk and white chocolate that live in the shelf at the till. Rapunzel chocolate is part of the Hand in Hand Fairtrade program established under the IFOAM, the International Federation of Organic Agricultural Movements guidelines.

LOVING EARTH chocolate, which is now all in bulk and sold by the kilo – comes in five flavours: dark; dark almond + purple corn extract; goji + camu camu; and maca + lucuma light. All are certified organic, vegan and raw and produced under Fair Trade Federation and International Fair Trade Association programs that work directly with producer co-ops to source products from the indigenous communities where they originated. Loving Earth is also working to go beyond the conventional fair trade system by empowering indigenous communities to add as much value as possible to their raw materials. Our organic cacao beans, butter and powder are produced in the same way under the IMO Fair for Life program.

RICE

Last month, we introduced two new Fairtrade, chemical-free rices (black and purple), along with the return of certified organic white jasmine and coral rices. All are certified by the Fairtrade Labeling Organisations International and Alter Eco pays a premium on top of Fairtrade prices and the producer co-ops involved choose how to reinvest this extra money in their communities.

PASTA+GRAINS

Two of our organic gluten-free pastas –

amaranth and rice penne and quinoa and rice penne – are produced under IMO's Fair for Life program. IMO has a third party certification program with social and fair trade criteria, which allows suppliers to enter the global market for responsibly-produced and traded products. Other Fairtrade approaches and schemes are typically designed for large-scale, single products; IMO provides an alternative for smaller and medium-sized operators and is applicable to a wider range of products and production schemes. As well, Olive Green Organics – who supply most of our quinoa (black, red and white), Andean grain mix and amaranth grain, puffed and rolled amaranth and quinoa – work with Irupana, a Bolivian social enterprise that sources organic produce from small-scale farmers and manufactures certified organic food products. Not only are premium Fairtrade wages paid for clean, high quality products, farmers are required to keep a portion of their harvest, to ensure they can eat the highly nutritious food they produce and thus maintain their culture, traditions and health rather than exporting their entire harvest as a cash crop resulting in farmers having to buy poorer quality imported food to feed themselves.

OLIVE OIL, OLIVE SOAP, COUSCOUS

Alfalfa stocks Fairtrade 75% olive oil soap (the chunky white blocks), five-litre drums of organic Rumi olive oil and sun-dried organic couscous, although the oil and couscous are subject to seasonal availability. All are produced through the Palestine Fair Trade Association (PFTA), a network of producer co-ops, and certified under the IMO Fair for Life program. We're currently awaiting news on the next shipment of olive oil and couscous. Unfortunately, given the value of our dollar, there's not much of a margin for PFTA to export.

■ Fairtrade Fortnight runs from May 2–17. Come for a cuppa. SEE PAGE 5.

The sumptuous world of native spices

PART TWO

Last month we featured two indigenous spices, wattleseed and mountain pepper. This month, we look at native mint and lemon myrtle. First though a word about . . .

USING INDIGENOUS SPICES

In general, as with other spices, much of the flavour is lost during long cooking. So, it's best to add spices towards the end of cooking (last 15 minutes). Long cooking often brings out a slightly bitter eucalyptus flavour. Always store spices in an airtight container, in a cool dark place to preserve their aroma and flavour.

LEMON MYRTLE

PLANT INFORMATION Lemon myrtle, *Backhousia citriodora*, is a medium-sized tree found in the coastal rainforests of north-eastern Australia. Its leaves and flowers contain the world's highest concentration of citral (90–98%), an essential oil also found in lemongrass; the leaves also have a strong lemon aroma. Plants are available from most native plant nurseries. Due to growing demand the trees are farmed commercially in northern NSW and Queensland.

HOW TO USE

- As a spice anywhere you would use lemongrass, lime or lemon zest. The flavour is very strong, a combination of lemon flavour with eucalyptus notes in the background and it's best if added just before cooking is finished. It should only be cooked for 10–15 minutes.
- Add to your favourite tea blend or on its own. Place a teaspoon of lemon myrtle in a tea strainer, pour boiling water over and let infuse for 3–5 minutes.



LEMON MYRTLE

- It goes well with tofu and in desserts. Just sprinkle a little on before cooking. Add to steamed rice.
- Blend with oil and vinegar for a salad dressing.
- Lemon myrtle works well with milk products. Add it to dressings and sauces, ice cream, to cheesecakes, biscuits and to plain shortbread.

RECIPES

Lemon myrtle pancakes

- 1½ tsp lemon myrtle
- 200 ml milk
- 2 eggs
- 1¼ cups self-raising flour
- 2 tbsp sugar
- pinch of salt
- butter or oil for frying

Whisk all ingredients until the mix is smooth and bubbly. Grease fry pan with butter/oil. Pour dollops into a thick based frypan over medium heat, flip each pancake after bubbles have risen and popped and the bottom is golden brown. Serve with coulis, ice cream, maple syrup, agave. Sprinkle with a little lemon myrtle as a garnish.

Avocado tomato sandwiches with lemon myrtle-pepperberry seasoning

- 1/3 ripe avocado per sandwich
- 2/3 ripe tomato, thickly-sliced
- your favourite bread
- lemon myrtle-pepperberry seasoning (a mix of ground lemon myrtle leaves and mountain pepper)

Spread the avocado on one slice of bread. Sprinkle well with the seasoning. Lay the tomato over right to the edges. Sprinkle with a tiny bit more seasoning. Top with another slice.

Grilled marinated vegetables

SERVES: 4–6

PREP TIME: 40 MINUTES + 1½ HOURS

MARINATING

COOKING TIME: 30 MINUTES

- 2 eggplants
- 2 capsicums
- 3 small squash/zucchini
- 12 small mushrooms
- 12 walnuts, optional

Marinade

- 50 ml olive oil
- 50 ml white balsamic vinegar
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed/finely chopped
- 1/4 tsp lemon myrtle
- 1/2 tsp mountain pepper, ground
- 1 tbsp broad leaf parsley, chopped

Cut eggplant and squash in 5 mm slices, lengthwise, diagonal or crosswise. Sprinkle with a little salt and leave for 15 minutes. Rinse off and dry. (The salt reduces eggplant's bitter taste.) Cut stems off mushrooms to make it level with the cap. Cut capsicum in strips, removing seeds and membrane. Place ▶ 4

PLEASE NOTE that any nutritional advice given in the eNews is of a general nature only and does not take into account individual circumstances or needs. It is not intended as a substitute for professional advice. Alfalfa House encourages readers to seek specific advice from health professionals as needed.

all the vegetables in a dish and pour the marinade over them. Leave in fridge for 1½ hours. Remove and let sit 15 minutes before you either: 1) fry on a pan, 2) bake under the griller or in the oven or 3) Grill on the barbie. Brush frequently with marinade while cooking.

Serve warm, lukewarm or cold as a side dish, in pita bread, as a sandwich with Turkish bread or with some crisp Italian bread, lemon myrtle pesto or yoghurt dip.

TIP: The marinade can also be used as a salad dressing.

NATIVE MINT

PLANT INFORMATION Native Mint, *Prostanthera incisa*, is dense shrub that grows to 1.5m. It has an overpowering mint flavour and aroma – just brushing past one is enough to release its scent and oil. Our native mint is grown on small organic plantations in northern NSW.

HOW TO USE

■ Native mint is a strong robust mint with aromatic and cooling qualities. It has a complex mint flavour with a peppery after taste and a woody eucalyptus afternote. The aroma has a 'wet forest' and Eucalypt-type character (camphor). The flavour is quite strong and should be used sparingly.

■ It goes well with vegetarian dishes. When used in uncooked dishes the notable flavour of the leaf will enhance over time. It loses some flavour in baking but is well suited as a liquid infusion.

■ While good on its own, it also works well with ginger and lemon myrtle. Use it to flavour marinades, salad dressings, mustards in chutneys in place of regular mint.

■ Use in sauces, savoury dressings, apple jellies and ice cream.

■ Sprinkle a little on tofu before light pan-frying. Add to your pasta dough or to your sauce. For a savoury bread try adding ¾ teaspoon of native mint to your favourite bread recipe. Mix it with cream cheese and a little crème fraiche or sour cream for a spread or dip. Allow to infuse in fresh boiled water for 3–5 minutes to make a soothing peppermint tea that may also help relieve period pain.

■ Recipes from Kurrajong Native Foods (www.bushtuckerstore.com.au) and OzTukka (www.oztukka.com.au)

SHOULD WE DROP THE SHARES?

When Alfalfa House was registered as a co-op in 1988, all co-ops were required to have shares, in our case, new members would buy twenty \$1 shares, representing their stake in the co-op. The co-op is supposed to hold that \$20 in trust so that should a member resign and want a refund, the co-op can pay him/her out. However, with the passing of the Cooperatives Act 1992, non-trading cooperatives, such as Alfalfa House, were no longer required to have share capital. Shares generally have no real purpose or relevance in non-trading cooperatives, because members don't trade their shares. A non-trading co-op with shares can now convert to one without shares by a change to its Rules passed at a general meeting of members. There are benefits, both in reduced administration and improved financial equity, if Alfalfa House were to make such a change. The Management Committee (MC) is proposing such a change and invites all members to join a sub-committee to draft the Rule changes and necessary resolutions to be put to the Annual General Meeting later this year.

FEWER DIRECTORS?

The MC is also proposing another change to the co-op's Rules to vary the number of directors on the MC. Currently, our Rules specify seven directors, with a quorum of four. For the past few years it's been difficult to entice members to stand for the MC and so it's proposed to alter the number from seven to between four and seven, still with a quorum of four.

Interested in helping draft the rule changes and/or resolutions? Drop a line to Nija (coordinator@alfalfahouse.org). By the way, you don't need a legal mind!

PRICEWATCH

Product	Alfalfa House* Cert. Organic	Health Food Store Cert. Organic	Supermarket Cert. Organic	Supermarket Not Organic
High quality dark chocolate, 100g	\$6.77	\$7.90	\$5.43	\$3.80
Chickpeas, whole 100g	\$1.48	\$1.98	NA	\$0.90
Basil, fresh, bunch	\$1.86	\$3.50	NA	\$2.98
Olives, 100g	\$1.84	\$2.09	NA	\$1.41
Arborio rice, 100g	\$1.26	\$1.31	NA	\$0.56

SURVEY NUMBER 8, MAY 2009 ■ NA: not available

– Compiled by Jo Rose

*PRICES ARE WITH THE BASIC 10% MEMBER DISCOUNT.

SPEND \$40 IN MAY AND RECEIVE FREE A PACKET OF SPIRAL CRACKERS

Don't forget to pick up your free Alfalfa House calendar next time you're shopping or print your own from the website's NEWS page. Each calendar features a number of coupons that you can redeem for free samples and gifts. During May, spend \$40 and receive a packet of Spiral Mung+Soy Bean crackers. PRINT YOUR OWN CALENDAR. GO TO www.alfalfahouse.org/assets/downloads/ah_calendar09.pdf

The sun is good

in the right amount at the right time

THE VITAMINS A^{TO}Z



The slip-slop-slap campaign has been one of the most effective in marketing history. So much so that we've come to believe the sun is our enemy; we wear sunscreen religiously and we avoid the sun, period. And as a result, we're not getting enough vitamin D. In fact, the latest research shows that more than 85% of us are deficient.

Vitamin D is very important. Although called a vitamin, vitamin D is in fact a precursor hormone – the building block of a powerful steroid hormone called calcitriol, which becomes part of the physical makeup of our cells, helping to regulate the processes that keep us well, such as our reproductive, vascular and respiratory systems. It helps us absorb

and metabolise minerals, especially calcium and phosphorus in our blood and bones; it regulates normal cell division and growth; it helps regulate blood sugar; it maintains hormonal balance and a healthy immune system; and regulates more than 200 genes through binding to vitamin D receptors throughout the body.

Vitamin D also helps our sleep patterns, hearing, the aging process, athletic performance, weight management, proper digestion and food absorption and healthy mood and feelings of well-being. Recent studies have also shown that adequate Vitamin D intake is an important factor in the prevention of, and recovery from, cancer.

A deficiency can, long-term, lead to bone softening diseases such as rickets and osteoporosis. A deficiency is also thought to be linked to many chronic diseases including high blood pressure, cancer, multiple sclerosis, auto-immune diseases (e.g., diabetes), cognitive impairment (including memory loss) and chronic pain. As we age, we lose some of our ability to synthesise and absorb vitamin D and as our skin thins, the amount of the vitamin D precursor in it decreases, too. Also at extra risk are women entering perimenopause and menopause who can experience

accelerated bone loss and the elderly, who are at greater risk of falls and fractures.

So where can we get it? Our bodies can't make vitamin D. Instead, the body is designed to make it through sun exposure. In fact, the sun is the best source – always has been, and always will. In theory, we can make enough vitamin D with as little as a couple of hours a week in the sun – provided the UVB rays are strong enough. Or we can take Vitamin D3 supplements, although they're generally synthetic because there aren't enough good food sources and you can overdose on them. There are fortified milk and cereal products – which means supplements have been added to those products – but not only is this a synthetic source, it also may be diminished through heating of the product during manufacture. The best natural food source is fatty fish such as wild-harvested salmon, herring, sardines and catfish, but it would have to be raw as heat destroys vitamin D. Likewise, with eggs – we'd have to eat around 25 raw eggs a day to get enough and

cooking also destroys the vitamin D. The same is the case with liver, we'd have to chomp through 2.5 kilos of it a day. And it'd have to be raw, too!

The recommended daily intake values for vitamin D, which vary from 200 to 600 IUs per day depending on age, are woefully obsolete. Experts now agree the levels are as much as ten times too low. The average healthy body can naturally synthesise 10,000–15,000 IU of vitamin D3 in the skin within just minutes of sun exposure, without ill effect. We have natural mechanisms that shut off vitamin D buildup once we get enough.

So the sun is really the answer. But how much do we need? That's something of much speculation and there's no definitive answer. Most sources say at least 10–15 minutes each day, but our needs vary and depend on several factors such as skin colour (those with darker skin need more as their natural pigmentation absorbs less of the rays), time of day and the season and also how much skin is exposed.

Being in the sun means just that: no clothes (well, you can do bathers!), no sunscreen and exposing at least 40% of your skin to the sun's rays. That doesn't mean going out in the hottest part of a summer's day and baking yourself, although, perhaps surprisingly, a burst of a couple of minutes in the midday summer sun in Sydney is fine, according to a 2005 Manchester University study. In general, choose the gentler morning or late afternoon rays (before 10am and after 5pm), however in winter, the middle of the day may be better given the lower UV count during the colder months. When you've had enough or if feel the sun getting more intense, head into the shade or cover up. It's never a good idea to allow your skin to burn.

So get out there for a spot of bathing in the sun's warm rays. Don't stay out too long, 10–15 minutes of the less intense rays is enough in summer, more in winter. Enjoy the great outdoors and your resultant radiant health.

– Lucy Marinelli and Stevie Bee

vitamin

Keeping the bugs at bay

Winter has come, or so it seems. Almost overnight the cold icy southerly has begun to chill us to the bone. Of course with the colder weather come the sniffles, sneezes and coughs and children are particularly susceptible due to their close interaction with other children. As winter proper approaches, we need to make extra sure children are getting a good serving of vitamins and minerals in their foods.

Valencia orange season is now over and the navels are not quite ready, although they will soon. Until then we need to draw on other rich sources of vitamin C, one of the body's main vitamin requirements to help keep those bugs at bay along with the other essential vitamins and minerals.

Colourful fruits are vitamin-rich – the richer the colours, the more vitamins they contain. The gorgeous red and orange pomegranates, passionfruit and persimmons are a very good indication. They're packed with lots of vitamin C as well as a good array of B vitamins, vitamin K, some vitamin E and a cross section of minerals, including zinc, which is also important in keeping colds away.

Moving from red to green, we find kiwifruit, probably one of the best sources of vitamin C and they also have some of the B vitamins that are

generally good for supporting the adrenals. So if you or your children are prone to stress, these are ideal to help keep it in check. Feijoas are a lesser known fruit that's both tasty and nutritious and don't forget the humble apple and of course grapes, both also excellent for their large water content, which helps keep us hydrated. (It is so easy to become dehydrated in our constantly heated and airconditioned rooms and offices.)

And then there's the citrus family. Apart from oranges, don't forget grapefruit, lemons, limes and even mandarins – which are just starting to come into season – provide ample vitamin C along with many other vitamins.

A gorgeous natural winter warming drink is the classic Lemon, Honey and Ginger. Simply grate some ginger into a tea pot, squeeze in lemon and add boiling water. Only put in a very small amount of ginger for children – a piece around one centimetre in diameter is plenty but you may want to put in even less. Strain into cups, add honey to taste and cool to warm before giving it to them. Just the thing on a cold day, ginger warms, lemon provides vitamin C and honey soothes so it is especially good at the first sign of a tickly throat or a sniffly nose.



WORMS FOR SALE

Our wormfarms are happy and thriving, so we're selling them off so members can start their own farms. And they're a bargain: 1000 worms for \$30! Plenty to start a wormfarm. Members can buy worms 11am-2pm on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. BYO ice-cream container or plastic bag. Call ahead if possible, limited stocks only.

We also have plenty of free worm fertiliser for members. BYO container and fill it up from the labeled drums in the garden.

Wormfarms are an ideal way to recycle food scraps in the city as they're small, efficient and easy to maintain. The Watershed in Newtown runs regular workshops on how to keep a wormfarm; for dates and times go to www.alfalfahouse.org/html/links.htm or download an infosheet at www.alfalfahouse.org/assets/downloads/general/wormfarming_guide.pdf

Join us for coffee and cake on May 13

Alfalfa House is hosting a coffee break as part of Fairtrade Fortnight (May 2-17) and we'd like to invite you to join us for a casual cuppa Fairtrade coffee or tea, cake and a chat between 1-3pm on Wednesday May 13 at the co-op. Please RSVP to groceries@alfalfahouse.org by Monday May 11 with your membership number. Gold coin donation.



SUSTAIN COOK'S RIVER ECO FEST SUNDAY APRIL 19



A big thanks to all the volunteers who helped out on our stall at the Sustainability Day

POSITIONS VACANT: Two spots on the MC

There are two vacancies on the co-op's board, known as the Management Committee (MC). If you'd like to help shape the direction of Alfalfa House, why not join? To find out more, including Directors' Duties and the minutes from the meetings, go to www.alfalfahouse.org/html/who_are_we.htm. If you'd like to chat to an MC member about it, email coordinator@alfalfahouse.org.

Recipe of the moment WITH MONIKA BAUMANN

Eggplant+Table Queen Squash Green Curry

GLUTEN-FREE. VEGAN. SERVES 6

- 2-3 medium sized eggplants (more if using the smaller farmer direct ones)
- salt for salting eggplant
- 2 medium-size table queen squash
- 1-2 chokos
- 2-3 tins coconut milk
- 1 tin coconut cream
- 2-4 tbsp rapadura sugar
- 200g green beans (use farmer-direct if available) or 2 bunches snake beans
- 3-5 tsp Blue Kitchen green curry paste
- 2-3 tbsp oil for frying (coconut preferably)
- 800g rice (especially try black, purple or coral rice the co-op sells or quinoa – red, black or white – or andean grain mix)

METHOD

- 1 Slice eggplant into 1cm thick rounds, then cut into 1cm wide strips. Salt and leave to sit 5 mins; salting draws out any bitterness.
- 2 Cut squash in half, scoop out seeds, cut off hard bit at bottom and dice into 2cm square chunks. Cube choko (smaller than squash).
- 3 Pat down salted eggplant.
- 4 Heat wok, add oil and coat sides of wok.
- 5 Add eggplant, quickly fry 1-2 minutes.
- 6 Add curry paste and mix to cover eggplant.
- 7 Add coconut milk and cream and mix through. Add sugar, squash and choko. Stir until it starts to bubble. Taste test, adding more curry paste or coconut milk as desired,



but it will get spicier as it cooks. Liquid should cover the veges, so if there's not enough add water or coconut milk.

8 Put lid on wok, reduce heat to low simmer.

Cook the rice using absorption method or a rice cooker. Brown, black, coral and purple rice absorb more water than white rice so add more if needed.

Cook curry for about 20-30 mins, stirring occasionally: eggplant should be mushy, squash should hold some of its shape. Add beans, cook 2 mins, beans should stay crunchy. Taste test and add more coconut cream or curry paste if needed.

TO SERVE

- 1 Put rice in bowls, keeping 1-1½ cups aside.
- 2 Dollop curry, but to maintain colour contrast, don't cover all the rice if using black, purple or coral rice.
- 3 Place 1-2 tablespoons of set aside rice to middle of bowl and garnish with a handful each of pepitas and sesame seeds on top along with fresh coriander. Sprinkle chopped fresh chilli on top if desired.

OPTIONS

- To increase protein, add tofu cut into strips when frying eggplant.
- Add or substitute pumpkin or golden kumera for squash.
- All past recipes are on the website. Go to www.alfalfahouse.org/html/recipes.htm

Eggplant Pickle

by Sarah Bock

- 8 eggplants, cut into ½cm wide slivers
- 2 cups white vinegar
- 2 cups apple cider or white wine vinegar
- 2-3 cups olive oil
- 400g fresh herbs (thyme, oregano and basil are good)
- 6 garlic cloves, sliced
- 2 brown onions, sliced
- 4 chillies, if desired

METHOD

- 1 Bring eggplant, onions and garlic to the boil in a mix of ½ water, ½ white vinegar.
- 2 Leave eggplant to cool in mixture. Drain.
- 3 Prepare pickling jars by boiling, ensuring not to touch the inside of jars or lids.
- 4 Fill jars with eggplant. Combine onion, garlic, herbs.
- 5 Fill jars with a combination of half good quality vinegar, half olive oil, ensuring the eggplant is completely covered with oil.
- 6 Store in a cool dry place, start eating after one week.

■ All past DIY World recipes are on the website. Go to www.alfalfahouse.org/html/diy_world.htm



NEXT ISSUE

In AI: Allergies and Intolerances
**Natural food chemicals
in fresh foods**

- An overview of the three main chemicals: salicylates, amine, glutamate
- A table of winter fruit and veg, their chemical makeup, and a rating from low to very high.
- A 'low-chemical' recipe, how to create a low chemical diet, a few stats and a brief reference to artificial additives.

Spare books on yoga?

The Govinda Valley Spiritual Retreat Centre just south of the Royal National Park is building a reference library of yogic study and spiritual texts to be used by visitors and is after donations of relevant books, both new and second-hand. Subject areas include yoga, meditation, Ayurvedic health and philosophy, vegetarian cooking and diet, physiology and they can be from any spiritual tradition. The centre, which is volunteer-run and a recognised charitable organisation, conducts yoga retreats and courses in Ayurvedic cooking and health. It can collect books or you can post them to the centre at Lot 1, Lady Carrington Road, Otford 2508.

MORE www.govindavalley.com.au

FEED THE eNEWS

This newsletter is your voice and a great way to communicate with other members.

Please feel free to send in your hints, tips, ideas, suggestions and recipes to feedback@alfalfahouse.org

E-News is edited and designed by Stevie Bee for Alfalfa House Community Food Cooperative Ltd

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