



## A NEW FACE IN THE NEW WELLNESS DEPARTMENT

Shoppers who frequent the co-op's wellness department can attest to the careful attention they have always received when obtaining the natural health and beauty aids they seek. Continuing that tradition, the new manager, Steve Goldberg, is on a quest to provide the best wellness products available to meet the diverse needs of the store's customers.

Steve's thirty-year study of health food and homeopathic remedies has solidified his relationships with vendors in the wellness industry and acclimatized him to the ebb and flow of product trends. His experience ranges from management positions in major gourmet food stores to entrepreneurial work with local businesses, including coffee and ice cream distributors. Working in the food, drink, and vitamin industries has made Steve especially attuned to the importance of having a healthy diet as part of a comprehensive wellness plan. He sees the co-op's fresh produce and other foods as added values for wellness customers, and does not recommend relying on popular "super foods" to resolve ailments. He encourages shoppers to utilize the literature available within the department to find out more about the products they seek, and to consult their physicians about chronic illnesses.

Steve values brands that utilize basic, high quality elements like natural oils and minerals. He believes that researching product developments and getting to know suppliers

are essential aspects of his work, and looks forward to introducing new products from trusted vendors to the co-op.

This spring, shoppers can anticipate learning more about the co-op's health and beauty aids and trying new wellness products. Also, items with similar qualities will be shelved together to the extent that it creates a more user-friendly shopping experience. Steve looks forward to getting to know more of the store's shoppers and connecting them to the resources they need to achieve holistic wellness.



**BOARD PRESIDENT'S LETTER**

This April 22nd marks the observance of the 40th annual Earth Day, a good time to look at our own commitment to living sustainably and healing our planet. A good way to get inspired is by joining Co-op members and neighbors at our next Flatbush Food Forum Movie Series, showcasing *No Impact Man* on April 21st.

Find out what happens when a Manhattanite decides to completely eliminate his personal impact on the environment for the next year, enlisting his reluctant, fashionista wife and two year old daughter into eating vegetarian, buying only local food and turning off the refrigerator – and that's just for starters! Also come meet our partners, Sustainable Flatbush and Ditmas Park West Neighborhood Association.

The second film in the series on May 26th, *Grown in Detroit*, gives us hope for how we can turn our urban failures into green stories of reconnecting with nature and renewing the spirit. Look for more details on the series in this newsletter.

And remember that Flatbush Food Co-op has a longstanding commitment to support organic food and local farmers like New York-based Markristo Farms, featured on page three. As part of our history of being pioneers in several local cooperative organizations, FFC was one of the first co-ops to start working with Finger Lakes Organics in the 80s – and has continued this relationship for more than 20 years.

So celebrate the spirit of Earth Day with us during April at the same time as you shop for seasonally grown local produce and help us continue our tradition of supporting our local farmers. Now that's a good start at living sustainably!

Jan Andrew

**ASPARAGUS RECIPES**

In late February, Director/Producers Kirsten Kelly and Anne DeMare shared their movie *Asparagus, Stalking the American Life* at the Flatbush Food Forum Movie Series, co-sponsored by FFC, Sustainable Flatbush and Ditmas Park West Neighborhood Association. Following up, in this issue we extend the theme by focusing on some asparagus recipes:

**THE NATIONAL ASPARAGUS FESTIVAL "MICHIGAN ROLL-UP"**

By Kirsten Kelly

- ASPARAGUS STALKS - STEAM, ROAST (WITH SALT AND PEPPER AT 450 DEGREES FOR 8 MINUTES), OR DO IT UP RAW!
- TAKE DELI SLICES OF HAM, TURKEY OR ANY MEAT OR MEAT SUBSTITUTE.
- SPREAD PLAIN CREAM CHEESE (ADD GARLIC SALT, PEPPER AND SPICE) OR FLAVORED CREAM CHEESE AND SPREAD ON EACH DELI SLICE.
- SET ASPARAGUS STALK ON ONE EDGE AND ROLL UNTIL DELI SLICE IS DONE.
- REFRIGERATE UNTIL READY TO SERVE.

**ASPARAGUS SOUP** (Serves four)

By Gill Smith

- CHOP ONE LARGE ONION, AND ONE BUNCH OF ASPARAGUS STALKS.
- DICE FOUR LARGE POTATOES.
- SAUTE ONIONS IN OIL IN LARGE POT. ADD ASPARAGUS AND POTATOES.
- JUST COVER WITH WATER, BRING TO BOIL. LOWER HEAT AND SIMMER.
- ADD ONE VEGETABLE BOUILLON CUBE.
- WHEN POTATOES ARE SOFT REMOVE FROM HEAT.
- FOR A SMOOTH SOUP, PUT ENTIRE CONTENTS IN BLENDER OR FOOD PROCESSOR AND BLEND. FOR A CHUNKY SOUP, BLEND APPROXIMATELY HALF OF THE CONTENTS AND LEAVE SOME OF THE POTATO AND ASPARAGUS PIECES INTACT.
- ADD SALT, PEPPER AND ADDITIONAL WATER IF NECESSARY.



**MARKRISTO FARM: SMALL GROWERS BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE**

**F**or more than twenty years, Martin and Christa Stosiek have managed a forty-three acre organic farm in Hillsdale, New York, securing a coveted lifestyle while making a strong impact on local businesses and fellow farmers. Operating the farm has enabled the Stosieks to connect with agriculture, work together, spend more time with their children, and have winters off. Martin warns, however, that despite its benefits, the farming lifestyle requires that growers be prepared for inevitable challenges, and that they accept that every year will be different.



Markkristo Farm has remained viable by serving a variety of clients and connecting with other farmers. The farm provides a mixture of vegetables, bedding plants from their 5,000 square foot greenhouse, and fresh cut flowers to farmers markets, nearby restaurants, and regional retailers. Farming near the Berkshire region of Massachusetts has proven lucrative in that the area houses many restaurants to which Markkristo Farm provides fresh greens. Also, it has allowed the owners to serve as board members for Berkshire Grown, a non-profit organization that provides consumer education and networking opportunities for farmers and buyers.

The farm rents thirty acres, tripling its capacity and allowing the owners to regularly rest and rejuvenate their land, an essential principle for sustainable farming. It employs up to five full-time employees and also offers select six-month apprenticeships annually throughout the planting and harvesting seasons. Martin values the opportunity to share the joys and challenges of organic farming with future growers. To enrich their experience, apprentices work with other organic farmers through the Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training (CRAFT), a small group to which Markkristo belongs.



By utilizing a regional distributor, the Markkristo farm is able to provide produce to Flatbush Food Co-op and others in the tri-state area. They are also selling more garden plants from their greenhouse in response to a heightened interest in organic planting and growing food at home. The farm also supplies processors that specialize in canning and freezing products, thereby providing more organic products during the winter. By listening to customers, employing efficient practices, engaging local businesses, and partnering with other farmers, Markkristo remains a sustainable independent farm.

**UPCOMING PROJECT WILL IMPROVE REFRIGERATION**

At the end of April, we will embark on an upgrade at the store that will boost the efficiency of our refrigeration and thus save energy. When we remodeled the store two years ago, we retained the freezers and refrigerator cases that had been part of the former supermarket. They have proven to be inefficient to operate, and we have had a number of breakdowns. As a result, we are planning to change all the freezers as well as the dairy and meat cases and to replace the 20 old compressors that we have currently with a rack system and seven compressors.

We will be cutting a hole in the floor of the produce department to drop the 3,000 lb rack into the basement and once it is installed we will bring in the new refrigerators and cases. We estimate that it will take approximately 2½ weeks to complete the project once the rack is in the store and we are hoping to complete the entire project with minimal disruption to shoppers.



## SUPPORTING HAITIAN RELIEF EFFORTS



Following the earthquake in Haiti, the co-op set up a contribution jar at the customer service desk and committed to match whatever was donated. A total of \$271.07 was collected from shoppers, and

the Board made the decision to go beyond a one-to-one match and send a total contribution of \$1,000 to the American Red Cross in the Co-op's name.



## FLATBUSH FOOD CO-OP VALUES

### A DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURE

We embrace a cooperative culture that includes ownership and opportunities for participation by our members, a work environment that involves and empowers our employees, and a positive, respectful shopping environment.

### COMMUNITY

We value and seek to build our cooperative community of staff, members, and shoppers, embracing the diverse community where we are located and supporting and aligning ourselves with the global cooperative community.

### SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE, ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND PRACTICES

We support sustainable agriculture, the consumption and use of organic products, and the fair and ethical treatment of workers in the production process.

### EDUCATION

We seek to educate ourselves and the broader community about cooperation, health, nutrition, and environmental issues.

## CONTRIBUTORS

Marc Anatol, FFC Member  
Deborah Parkinson-Anatol, FFC Member  
Gill Smith, Board Member

## UPCOMING DATES

### FLATBUSH FOOD FILM FORUM:

*Co-Sponsored by Sustainable Flatbush and Ditmas Park West Neighborhood Association*



**Wednesday, April 21st, 7:00 p.m.**  
**No Impact Man**

Colin Beavan decides to completely eliminate his personal impact on the environment for the next year. Laura Gabbert and Justin Schein's film provides an intriguing inside look into the experiment that became a national fascination and media sensation, while examining the familial strains and strengthened bonds that result from Colin and his wife, Michelle's struggle with their radical lifestyle change.

**Wednesday, May 26th, 7:00 p.m.**  
**Grown in Detroit**

Grown in Detroit focuses on the urban gardening efforts managed by a public school of 300, mainly African-American, pregnant and parenting teenagers. The young mothers, often still children themselves, are learning by farming to become more independent women and knowledgeable about the importance of nutritional foods. "Back to the roots", a simple yet effective solution for a city that has to start all over again and perhaps a lesson to be learned for the rest of the world.

Where: Prospect Park Temple Isaac,  
1419 Dorchester Road (entrance on Marlborough Road)

Flatbush, Brooklyn  
(Q or B train to Cortelyou Road)

Free popcorn provided by FFC  
Kosher snacks available for purchase

### PLANT SWAP

*Co-Sponsored by Flatbush Food Co-op and Sustainable Flatbush*

**Saturday, April 24th, Noon - 3p.m.**

Rain or Shine - Outside the Co-op

- Trade Plants
- Swap Gardening Tips
- Get Started with a Garden

*You Don't Have to Bring Something to Take Something! We reserve the right to limit quantities taken.*

## DISCLAIMER

*The views expressed in these newsletter articles represent those of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Flatbush Food Cooperative.*