



The Chronicle

December • January • 2004/2005



THIS ISSUE

Dot-mocracy

plus

AGM review • Winter warmth • Princeton, New Jersey's Whole Earth Centre
• Recipes for homemade cosmetics • Product spotlight

and more...



The Chronicle

December • January • 2004/2005

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The Chronicle is a link between members of this and other cooperative communities; the only viewpoints herein endorsed by Karma Co-op Inc. are those published as reports of the board of directors and its committees.

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Submissions

Submissions may be sent by e-mail, to chronicle@karmacoop.org. Send your submission within the main body of the message. Please do not send attachments. Submissions are also collected from the red box in the store. All envelopes, articles, and disks must be clearly marked with the author's name. Upcoming editorial deadlines are posted on the bulletin board and the box.

The Chronicle will publish any Karma-related material, subject to editorial policy guidelines. Letters to the editor must contain the writer's full name and telephone number, although names will be withheld at time of publication upon request. All published articles are eligible for work credits (letters to the editor and announcements are not).

View from the table Jason Diceman

The Karma Co-op 2004 Annual General Meeting, which was held October 25 at the Palmerston Library, turned out pretty darn good. Eighty-eight members attended the three-hour event, which included a full agenda and too much free tasty food and drinks (I especially liked the cookies and smoothies).

The night started with a short 1990 video documentary on Karma Co-op. This was followed by reports from the president, general manager, treasurer, and auditor. Linda Tomas did a great job facilitating this section. Thanks were flying around for all the hard work of the staff, board, and members during the past year.

Report highlights

- The average product markup was increased in November of 2003 to 32.5 per cent from 30 per cent in order to recover the revenue lost due to the August 2003 blackout.
- Department managers succeeded in reducing out-of-stock rates and improving product mix in order to improve sales.
- The general manager reduced payroll expenses starting in September 2003.
- The new “flat fee” option for non-working members has been well received.
- The board is moving forward with the development of a five-year business plan.
- The co-op currently has no loans or debt.

Elections

Elections were super easy since we had the exact number of nominations as positions available. Congratulations to Lachlan Story, Jason Diceman, Amy Stein, Nina Bregman, and John Deluca-Howard, who each agreed to two-year terms, and Melissa McDonald and Grif Cunningham, who both agreed to one-year terms on the board.

Bylaws

Four bylaw amendments were passed: e-notification, efficient election, clarification of valid ballots, and optional facilitator.

Dot-mocracy

The new dot-mocracy process was conducted mostly during the 15-minute intermission. It was a fun and constructive process that produced 20 proposals, each voted on by about one-half to one-quarter of the attending members. About 17 proposals should lead to board discussion and investigation, including nine proposals that had practically unanimous approval. Below are the first three proposals upon which the board has already initiated action.

#11 Karma should post its history on our Web site.

#10 Karma should develop a five-year business plan.

#5 To increase member and staff participation and input into Karma life, it is proposed that an ongoing in-store dot-mocracy bulletin board be established, where ideas and proposals can be posted and responses received.

cont'd... see View on page 13

View from the floor

Michael Boulger

Walking into the Karma Co-op AGM, held this year at the Palmerston Library Theatre, was like walking into a dry fish bowl sitting at the bottom of the sea. The dark-walled room and its setup reminded me of the underwater show at the Undersea Gardens in Victoria, B.C. Sloped seating led down to a stage in front. On the stage was a dimly lit table where the board of directors sat; the scuba divers who would play with the octopus.

**“Good food,
nice people,
very business-
like meeting”**

This was my first AGM in the six years I've been a member of Karma. I sat beside a smiling new member who epitomized the spirit of community. At one point he even got up to get this famished reporter juice and cookies, without being asked!

Disassembling the octopus

I was very impressed with the AGM information package carefully crafted by new member Jason Diceman. I was also surprised by the professionalism displayed by all who participated. The “everything's working like clockwork to a groovy music soundtrack” atmosphere that I experience when I walk into the store was disassembled on AGM night. I saw the gears that make the machine work. I saw that everything is not as perfect as I had thought.

Forty minutes into the meeting, we were already 20 minutes behind on our agenda. This was partially due to the glowing report given by Graeme Hussey, the president of the board of directors. Graeme spoke his appreciation for all the people who make Karma work so well. He especially thanked the Member Labour Committee — surely the poster girl of this year's AGM. The committee has implemented a successful plan to decrease the number of member work-shift no-shows. The four months prior to the AGM showed outstanding results. For example, September's no-shows were down 62 per cent from the previous year!

Recovering from losses

The next report was from Sarah Fairley, Karma's general manager. She reported that Karma had incurred a loss of \$26,000 in the fiscal year ending May 31, 2004. Reasons for the deficit included a poor performance over the summer of 2003 and major losses from the blackout of 2003. Sarah also reported, however, that Karma seems to be on track to creating a surplus for this current fiscal year. This is due to an increase in monthly sales, a raising of our markup to 32.5 per cent from 30 per cent (in response to the losses from the blackout), and a decrease in payroll expenses (the cutting of a middle management position and the reduction of shift manager and clerk hours).

Sarah also reported that the turnover of paid staff has decreased. This is partially due to the improvement of employee working conditions, and the hiring of workers who are trainable and have a long-term commitment. Sarah is the fourth GM since February 2001.

Jerry Berman, of Berman and Lofchick LLP Chartered Accountants, presented the auditor's report. He assured us that despite the deficit from the past year, we are looking favourable to create a surplus for 2004–2005. Jerry has been our chartered accountant for the last 28 years, and no one had any opposition to appointing this firm as the auditors for the next year.

The half-time show

During the short intermission, attendees had a chance to participate in a process called dot-mocracy, which was created by Jason Diceman. It's a way to suggest, to have members give input on, and to vote for new ideas or solutions to issues. One idea was to sell condoms — and another member suggested they be vegan condoms!

The intermission was also our chance to munch on great food donated by our suppliers: breads, dips, soups, and enough Happy Planet juice to fill an Olympic-sized swimming pool. And there were door prizes: 1 litre of maple syrup, a \$25 gift certificate redeemable at Karma, and a folding chair. The fact that this reporter won one of the prizes was mere coincidence! (Really.)

After the break, Howard Kaplan ran the election, which saw new members elected to the board for one- and two-year terms. Epitomizing the spirit of cooperation, newcomer Melissa McDonald nominated herself when no one else stepped up, and filled a vacant spot on the board.

Discussion is... good?

Finally, four bylaw amendments were proposed. Opposition to wording in the last amendment created a discussion. New wording was suggested. Then there was opposition to the new wording. In the end, however, all the proposals were passed. One member noted that there appeared to be a fear of getting into prolonged and heated discussion — yet discussion isn't necessarily a bad thing.

And that, my friends, is the gist of it. To sum up the meeting, one member wrote, "Good food, nice people, very business-like meeting" on his evaluation form.

When he concluded his report, Graeme Hussey gave a list of things each one of us can do to help make Karma a stronger co-operative. This list included: buy groceries at Karma, attend events organized by Karma, provide member labour, find out more about Karma, express your opinions, and support members and staff of Karma.

You know what to do!



Dot-mocracy in action at Karma!

The board's Business Planning Committee wants to know what your ideal Karma would be like. We are using a tool called "dot-mocracy" to give every member the opportunity to contribute their ideas and to indicate support for the ideas of other members.

This tool was used with great success at this year's AGM. Now those of you who didn't attend the AGM have an opportunity to share your opinions. Several ideas have already been posted in the middle of the store (on the upright bins of oats, flour, and rice). Check it out — voicing your opinion is easy! Instructions and dots are provided by the Business Planning Committee. Ideas and opinions can be provided by everyone.



To answer the question: What products would get more members excited about Karma; it is proposed...
that Karma sells condoms

Dotmocracy Grading designed by Co-op Tools

A Strong Approval	B Approval	C Acceptance	D Concern	F Objection	? Unclear
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Vegan condoms

To answer the question: SHOULD WE HAVE A BUSINESS PLAN? ; it is proposed...

Karma should develop a 5-year business plan.

Dotmocracy Grading designed by Co-op Tools

A Strong Approval	B Approval	C Acceptance	D Concern	F Objection	? Unclear
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To answer the question: How to increase member and staff participation and input into Karma's "life" ; it is proposed...

that an ongoing, in-store dot-mocracy bulletin board be established in the store where ideas and proposals can be posted and receive responses

Dotmocracy Grading designed by Co-op Tools

A Strong Approval	B Approval	C Acceptance	D Concern	F Objection	? Unclear
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Hello from your new board

Graeme Hussey, president

The 2004–2005 Karma Co-op board of directors is composed of Nina Bregman, Grif Cunningham, John Deluca-Howard, Jason Diceman, Graeme Hussey (president), Melissa McDonald, Amy Stein (treasurer), Christie Stephenson (secretary), Lachlan Story, and Andy Summers (vice president).

Karma's new board of directors is excited to take on the many challenges identified at the annual general meeting, which was held in October. We have a very experienced board, with six returning members, three returning executive officers, and an increase in financial and legal experience. The board is also excited about an increase in female members (from two to four). This increase will certainly help to provide a more balanced perspective, and one that is more representative of our membership.

The board extends a special thank you to the AGM committee for a very successful meeting. The dot-mocracy exercise (see details in Jason Diceman's article on page 1) has provided the board and staff with a clear view on issues of concern for our members. The board will use this information and the results from recent member surveys to help develop and implement a five-year business plan.

The board's priorities for the coming year include:

- improving transparency and accountability;
- improving member communication and relations;
- improving staff communication and relations;
- developing a five-year business plan and implementing strategic planning decisions;
- and
- improving the administration and governance of committees.

The Business Planning Committee has put out a request for a proposal to hire a consultant to support the committee of the board in developing the business plan. The request for proposal can be found on our Web site, at www.karmacoop.org/committees/businessplanning.html. If you have experience working with co-operatives or other environmental and social change organizations on organizational reviews and business planning, please contact the business planning committee (via businessplan@karmacoop.org) as soon as possible.

As we stated at the AGM, Karma's financial position continues to improve. We are on track this year for our first annual profit in the last three years. To achieve this we have to concentrate on what we have been doing that has been successful. For Karma to be truly successful, all members — working and non-working — must assess their own contributions toward building Karma into a strong and unique community.

All contributions are valuable, whether you shop, clean, take out the garbage, or promote Karma to your neighbourhood. Members need to communicate to the member labour coordinator the knowledge and skills that they can offer to help build our co-op community. Let us know how the co-op can better tap into your knowledge and skills so that together, we can continue to enjoy in all that Karma has to offer.

I encourage members to contact the board with any concerns or questions (or compliments!) related to Karma Co-operative. You may contact me via president@karmacoop.org.

The busy season Sarah Fairley

We're in our busy season here at Karma. October, November, and December are typically quite busy at the co-op, and this year is no exception. There has been a whirlwind of activity in the store and at the board level. We had a very successful annual general meeting in October, conducted our semi-annual inventory in November, and will be bustling with holiday shoppers as December unfolds.

The AGM provided us with an opportunity to look back over the past couple of years and to report on plans for the future. My report and the report from Graeme Hussey, the president of the board, were both quite positive in tone. We reflected on the challenges of the past couple of years, but highlighted recent positive trends in the co-op. Our positive outlooks were also supported by our auditor, which adds to my sense of confidence about the direction in which our co-op is headed.

As the new year approaches, I find myself reflecting over the past 12 months. I think it was a good year at Karma. Sales were up, which is an indication that members are enjoying their shopping experience at Karma. Changes to the member labour system were introduced last year and met with overwhelmingly positive response. And the board of directors swung into full gear, forming a Business Planning Committee to help steer Karma toward an even stronger future. I think it was a pretty good year all round and I anticipate that the next year will be even better.

Announcement

As you might already know, Karma's general manager, Sarah Fairley, is leaving her position at the end of December to return to school. On behalf of all the members of Karma Co-op, the board of directors would like to thank Sarah for the hard work she has done over the last few years. We wish her the best as she embarks on a new path. Her contributions to the Karma community have been tremendous.

With Sarah's departure, we have a vacancy for the position of general manager. A search committee has been struck, and is in the process of soliciting and interviewing applicants from within the Karma community. We aim to hire a new GM within weeks. For details on the application and hiring process, see notices in the store and on www.karmacoop.org.

We'd like to thank our wonderful staff for supporting us through this transition, and we look forward to seeing every member in the store this holiday season.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to leave a note for the board in the office. You can also e-mail us via board@karmacoop.org.

Karma Co-op Board of Directors

Co-op in the community

Todd Lawrence Parsons

The Whole Earth Center, Princeton, New Jersey

Reading the co-op profile in the last issue of *The Chronicle* inspired some fond remembrances of food co-ops past. Everywhere I've lived, I've sought out co-ops, drawn by the sense of community and by the shared value of co-operation. As I reflect back, one in particular stands out: the Whole Earth Center in Princeton, New Jersey.

The Whole Earth Center has survived for over 34 years, and thrived — in spite of a big-chain organic grocer moving in a block away. It's managed to do this while fostering a strong sense of community. And it's an example I wanted to share with my fellow Karmians.

On the face of things, the Whole Earth Center is a fairly typical food co-op, a place to buy organic produce, bulk goods, and environmentally friendly cleaning products. It differs from Karma a little, particularly in that it lacks member labour, but it's found some interesting alternatives to foster community.

One of the ways it fosters community is by playing an active role in community education and activism around a variety of local environmental, social, and food security issues. The little on-site organic café offers meeting space for groups ranging from the Sierra Club to the anti-globalization collective of which I was a member. The café has also hosted some really great talks, including packed houses with author and economist Michael Shuman speaking about his book *Going Local*, Eric Schlosser sharing alternatives to a *Fast Food Nation*, and co-op board member and cookbook author Fran McManus sharing recipes built around local, seasonal, and organic ingredients. Who would expect a small organic café could offer so much food for thought?

I was equally inspired by the co-op's commitment to giving back to the community. The Whole Earth Center might be called a profitable non-profit, because it invests its surpluses into the local land trust (The Stoneybrook-Millstone Watershed Association, which, incidentally, included an organic farm that was a sometimes-supplier for the co-op). The co-op also supports the community gardens created by Isles, a community economic development corporation in nearby Trenton, New Jersey (an all-too-classic example of a depressed rust-belt city).

I'm still inspired by the Whole Earth Center. It provides some exciting examples of how a food co-op — committed like our own to environmental education and to fostering a healthy connection between people and their food — could bring that message to a broader community, offer a fantastic selection of locally grown and organic foods, and still manage to stick around over 30 years, beating the bottom line.

Bread, bread, beautiful bread

Suzanne Molina

Karma carries an abundant supply of breads, bagels, and buns. Lisa McLean, Karma's "head of bread," says the store deals with approximately 10 bakeries at any given time. Most of the products are designed specifically for the health-food market — this means they feature whole grains, sourdough culture, and other healthful alternatives to the usual white-flour-and-yeast concoctions you find in mainstream stores.

Karma does carry a few mainstream breads, but they're largely organic, artisan breads made by socially conscious bakeries such as the St. John's Bakery (a Toronto business that employs refugees and psychiatric consumers/survivors) or Ace Bakery (which donates a percentage of its profits to the Calmeadow Foundation, an organization that provides seed loans to microbusinesses across the globe).

The range of products on the bread shelves varies according to the whims of the membership. The store can only stock bread that will sell well — meaning, products that will appeal to a large cross-section of shoppers. But members who don't find what they want on the bread shelves can always order products using the special order forms in the overstock room.

"Some products might not sell that well," Lisa says, "but it's not because they're bad products. It might be because they're for people with very particular diets. All members have to do is ask, and I will get a product for them."

Memories of Grainharvest

Grainharvest is a small bakery based in Waterloo, Ontario. They used to supply Karma with a variety of breads and bagels, but these products have recently become unavailable. According to Lisa McLean (aka Head of Bread), the products were "really, really good, but really, really hard to get." The distributor for the Toronto area was unreliable, so Lisa decided to stop dealing with him. The good news is, the products are still available by special order. Members will have to pay courier costs, but Grainharvest has offered to go halves on that cost. If you want to order any Grainharvest products, just fill out a special order form — but be prepared to pony up a few extra bucks to get the stuff here.

Little Stream Bakery

Some of the most popular products on the Karma bread shelves come from Little Stream Bakery, a small business located in a renovated dairy in the hamlet of Glen Tay, in the Upper Ottawa Valley.

This six-year-old business makes every loaf by hand. The bread is leavened with sourdough culture, but Little Stream's unique recipes allow the grain taste to come through — the breads are not sour-tasting. The sourdough makes Little Stream products easier to digest, since the starches and bran are partially broken down by the fermentation process of the sourdough. Once the sourdough is incorporated into the bread dough, it's left to rise for 12 to 20 hours, which releases valuable minerals.

The bakery grinds its own wheat, spelt, rye, and kamut flour, and uses it within 72 hours. The folks at Little Stream believe fresh grains are more flavourful and more nutritious, since natural oils in the grain begin to oxidize within a few days of milling, breaking down the B vitamins within.

Little Stream breads are baked in a wood-fired brick oven. The fire is built in the oven, and left for a few hours so the heat seeps into the bricks. Then the breads are placed inside. The heat from the brick and the escaping steam from the dough bakes the bread. Yummy!

All of Little Stream's breads are certified organic. Karma carries a range of Little Stream products: some wheat-based products (such as sesame bread), a brown rice loaf, a kamut loaf, a spelt loaf, and a quinoa loaf (which Lisa says is "expensive but really popular with the gluten-free crowd").

Little Stream breads are best bought unsliced, since that maintains the original moisture content. Slice the loaves once you get home, and store them in the freezer. Then take out as many slices as you need at any one time.

Winter warmth

Jae Steele

When I first set out to write this piece, it was going to be about the winter solstice. I was looking forward to doing some research and reporting back about the origins of yule festivities in order to encourage the addition of more earth-worshipping traditions to the typical December celebrations. However, the reading I have done has simply strengthened my feelings about winter — ideas that have been burrowing a place at the back of my brain since it started to get cold this year.



*This is the season for appreciating
darkness and rejoicing in the light.*

As a student in this age of production and consumerism, the month of December seems to be filled with the panic of getting papers in and exams done for the end of the semester, and then heading home to rush around to find the perfect gifts for loved ones. I have often wondered who came up with this confusing paradigm of chaos before celebration. And the stress doesn't even need to be self-induced. Upon entrance to any mall in the month before Christmas, the blinking lights and schmaltzy music makes my head spin; makes me forget what I even came in for. I feel the need to turn around, go home, and hibernate under my plush duvet.

When I stayed with some good friends in Halifax a few Decembers ago, they were conserving heat to save money. The thermostat in their apartment was set at 12 degrees C. If the temperature dropped below 12, the heat would come on, but only to bring it back up to 12. We spent a lot of time in bed, and mostly in one bed to really maximize heat potential. We played cards in bed. Read in bed. Listened to music in bed. They did their homework in bed. We planned meals in bed and only got out of bed to cook. Food was consumed, of course, in bed. It was wonderfully cozy. This was our modern form of hibernation.

It'd be nice if, during the colder months in this climate, we could show more respect for the nature of the season. Winter is the time to slow down and keep warm. Of course my little call to action, or less action in this case, may not be practical for everyone. We do what can and participate in the things that interest us. I have a few friends who are getting up with the sun these days and getting to bed at a reasonable hour. That may not be your cup of tea, though. There are lots of little things to be done that are seasonally appropriate.

Make a large pot of tea and put a cozy on it so you can enjoy it for the rest of the day. Hold the mug of warm liquid between your hands and take in the signs of the season you can see through your window. My favourite witch (and author of *Witch in the Kitchen*), Cait Johnson, suggests taking some time to sit at twilight:

*Be quietly with the dark.
Think of the fertile, nurturing darkness of the womb.*

What are you gestating now? What dreams do you have for the future? What hope do you bring forth? Think of the Earth Mother, in labour during this dark season to birth the Sunchild. Lighting candles is nice when you really appreciate the warm glow. Reminders of the sun, like strings of dried orange rounds and cranberries, look really nice hanging in the kitchen. Cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, and cloves are wonderful warming spices that can be incorporated into lots of baking — or throw some into a pot of apple cider and heat it up on the stove. Some of this stuff might sound a little flaky to you, but I assure you that they all have value. We all deal with or appreciate winter in different ways, but taking a moment to be peaceful and warm is not wasted on the world.

Events listings

24th Annual Organic Agriculture Conference

Jan. 20-23, 2005

Guelph University Centre, Guelph, ON

Conference highlights: tasting fair, trade show, workshops, panels, trade meetings; keynote speaker Dr. John Ikerd, University of Missouri (“Local Organic Saves Farmland and Communities”)

To register, call 519-824-4120, x56205 or go to www.guelphorganicconf.ca

7th Annual Conference:

**“Growing the Organic Landscaping Industry”,
sponsored by the Organic Landscape Alliance**

Jan. 21, 2005

Arboretum, University of Guelph, Guelph, ON

Conference highlights: workshops on organic golf courses, lawn care 101 and conversion, and edible landscaping

To register, call 1-866-824-7685 or go to www.organiclandscape.org

News briefs

EPA will use poor kids as guinea pigs in a new study on pesticides

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), led by Bush appointees, plans to launch a new study in which participating low-income families will have their children exposed to toxic pesticides over the course of two years. For taking part in these studies, each family will receive US \$970, a free video camera, a T-shirt, and a framed certificate of appreciation. In October, the EPA received \$2 million to do the study from the American Chemistry Council, a chemical industry front group that includes members such as Dow, Exxon, and Monsanto. The EPA's Linda Sheldon says the study is vital, because so little is known about how small children's bodies absorb harmful chemicals. As of press time, none of the EPA's employees are offering to have their own children take part in this research project. The Organic Consumers Association is calling on citizens to demand the EPA forego this project before its scheduled launch in early 2005.

Full story: Organic Consumers Association

Seed Sector Review could reshape fundamentals in the food chain

“Biodiversity for Food Security” was the theme chosen by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) for World Food Day, October 16. The theme highlighted the importance of genetic diversity for a healthy and stable food supply.

Ironically, while the World Food Day theme celebrates farmers' traditional function as stewards of seeds, governments in many parts of the world are introducing gene patent legislation, commercial seed contracts, and other forms of intellectual property rights to undermine farmers' ability to freely save, exchange, and re-use seed collected from their harvests. Currently, farmers who retain “common seed” from their harvest can freely re-use, exchange, or sell that seed without payment of royalties. But a recent Canadian initiative known as the Seed Sector Review aims to force farmers to pay royalties to corporations on farm-saved seed.

Full story: Stirling Community Press

New scientific paper says GM safety tests “flawed”

A peer-reviewed scientific paper published in *Biotechnology and Genetic Engineering Reviews* debunks the myth that biotech or genetically modified (GM) crops are thoroughly tested, regulated, and proven safe. The paper, entitled “Safety Testing and Regulation of Genetically Engineered Foods,” reveals fundamental flaws in how biotech companies test and the U.S. government regulates GM crops. The paper thus raises serious questions about whether GM foods, which have been on the market since 1994, are in fact safe, as claimed by the biotech industry and U.S. regulators.

Full story: Earthboundfarm.com

Organic farmers seek class-action status

Saskatchewan certified organic farmers suing Monsanto and Bayer Crop Science are hoping to convince a Court of Queen’s Bench justice that their case qualifies as a class action. The farmers are asking the court to rule on whether the companies are liable for their genetically modified plants contaminating organic crops, said Terry Zakreski, lawyer for the Saskatchewan Organic Directorate. The lawsuit likely will not proceed if it cannot go ahead as a class-action because none of the individual plaintiffs can afford to fight alone against the giant companies, he said.

The farmers claim they have suffered losses because their canola crops have been contaminated by genetically modified canola.

Source: Saskatoon StarPhoenix

U.S. government suppresses GM crop warnings

A leaked report, written by the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) of the North American Free Trade Agreement (U.S., Canada, and Mexico) recommends that all genetically engineered (GE) maize imports be labelled as such and that all U.S. maize entering Mexico should be milled upon entry, to prevent living seeds from being planted intentionally or accidentally.

The Bush Administration has intervened several times to delay the publication of the report — completed months ago — and there is still no official date for its publication. Monsanto and the U.S. government have been telling the world that genetically engineered crops pose no contamination threat to natural indigenous species.

Full story: Greenpeace

Related report: Maize & Biodiversity — The Effects of Transgenic Maize in Mexico (North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation)

Briefs courtesy of Canadian Organic Growers Magazine. To subscribe, go to www.cog.ca.

Homemade cosmetics Submitted by Jae Steele

Who has tons of money this time of year? Not me. Cosmetics are expensive! And on top of that, why support mega-corporations by purchasing something impersonal for the ones you love when you could make them something lovely?

Start collecting old lip balm and cream containers, baby food jars, or whatever else you'd want to put "personal products" in. They all need to be washed thoroughly in warm soapy water and rinsed well. Plastic must be left to air dry. Glass should be sterilized in an oven at 250 degrees F for 15 minutes. Cool them for a couple of hours before filling.

Ingredient info:

Almond oil: Carrier oil. High in A and B vitamins. Good for dry, sensitive skin. Easily absorbed.

Coconut oil: Improves dry skin's absorption of moisture. Good for dry and sunburned skin.

Do not use mineral oil as it is a petroleum by-product and will clog your pores.

Emulsifying wax: When making salves and creams you need an emulsifying wax to make it solid. Beeswax smells nice and can be found at most health food stores (organic and local when possible). That being said, bees are undoubtedly harmed in the harvesting process. Vegans may prefer carnauba wax, which comes from carnauba trees. It's harder to find, and I personally don't love the smell. It's better in salves than in creams.

Essential oils: These are concentrated extracts of the herbs themselves. They are very potent and not to be used directly on the skin. Used for their healing properties and their particular scent. When making herbal products, essential oils should not exceed 4 per cent of the oil content in the product.

Now let's get cooking!

Bath salts

Epsom salts help draw toxins out of the body. The particular essential oils you choose dictate the effect that the bath should have on the bather. You can make as little or as much of this as you need at one time — just double, triple, or quadruple the recipe. The following is the minimum amount I'd give one person as a gift.

Ingredients:

2 c. epsom salts

3/4 c. sea salt

up to 15 drops essential oils (For a relaxing bath, use chamomile, jasmine, lavender, rosemary and/or ylang ylang. For an invigorating bath, use grapefruit, lemon, lemongrass, orange and/or peppermint. For a cold and flu bath, use eucalyptus and fennel.)

Combine ingredients in a large bowl, and mix well to ensure the even distribution of essential oils. Pour into clean containers with tight-fitting lids and label with name, ingredients, and date. Dissolve 1/2–3/4 c. in each bath.

Lip balm

Lots of commercial lip balms contain artificial colours, fragrances, and flavours — not sumptin you wanna be lickin off yer lips! The following recipe makes about 20 15-mL jars.

Ingredients:

1 c. oil (I use 1/2 c. almond, 1/2 c. coconut, but you could glug in a bit of olive oil if desired.)
 3-4 tbsp. grated beeswax (recipe should be about 5 parts oil to 1 part wax)
 1 tsp. honey (optional)
 up to 1/4 tsp. essential oils (suggestions: almond, star anise, cinnamon, fennel, grapefruit, lemon, orange, peppermint, vanilla; eucalyptus for cold sores)

1. In a double boiler, warm oil, wax, and honey (if used) over low heat until wax has melted.
2. Test for desired consistency by taking out a teaspoon of the mixture and putting it in the freezer for a few minutes. If it's too hard, add a little more oil. If it's too soft, add a little more wax.
3. Turn off heat and add essential oils, smelling for desired strength. Add 5-10 drops of benzoin essential oil or 1/2–1 tsp. liquid vitamin E as a preservative.
4. Pour into containers and allow to cool before putting on lids. Label with name, ingredients, and date.



View (from page 1)

Other popular proposals included:

- #19 Karma should increase education on co-operatives, the co-operative movement, and the co-operative movement, and the co-operative sector.
- #16 Karma should sell condoms.
- #18 To increase membership, Karma should set up a table at neighbourhood craft and community fairs.
- #17 Karma should sell biodegradable dog-poo bags.
- #8 Karma should advertise in order to expand awareness of its philosophy, and to increase membership.
- #13 Karma can help the community benefit financially and socially by producing a directory to advertise members' businesses and/or skills.

The complete dot-mocracy results will be posted in the AGM section of the in-store bulletin board.

Complete reports, approved bylaws, and dot-mocracy results are also available online at www.karmacoop.org/agm. Print versions are available in the AGM box in the members' room.

Thanks again to all the members and staff who helped ensure this year's AGM was a success. We rock!



Our aim is to:

- create a community of actively participating members;
- foster a healthy connection to the food we eat, the people who grow it, and the other organizations who share our beliefs;
- co-operatively educate ourselves on environmental issues; and
- exercise political and economic control over our food;

by operating a viable co-operative food store.

Contact your co-op — and get involved!

Food Issues Committee: foodissues@karmacoop.org

Board of Directors: board@karmacoop.org

Events and Promotions Committee: promotions@karmacoop.org

Member Labour Committee: lstory@yorku.ca

Web Committee: web@karmacoop.org

Chronicle Committee: chronicle@karmacoop.org

Member Labour Coordinator: Sara Pulins 416-534-1240

Staff list

General Manager: Sarah Fairley

Grocery Manager: James van Bolhuis

Produce Manager: Michael Armstrong

Health & Beauty Manager: Sara Pulins

Shift Managers: Paul Dixon, Lisa McLean

Bookkeeper: Victoria Bale

Membership Secretary: Marilou Lawrence

Member Labour Co-ordinator: Sara Pulins

Clerks: Mike Haliechuk, Lisa McLean, Kevin Wyse,

Greg Miller, Christine Delay

Hours of operation

Monday 11 am – 7 pm

Tuesday 11 am – 9 pm

Wednesday 11 am – 9 pm

Thursday 11 am – 9 pm

Friday 10 am – 9 pm

Saturday 10 am – 6 pm

Sunday 11 am – 5 pm

Holiday hours

Friday, December 24, 10 am – 6 pm

Saturday, December 25, closed

Sunday, December 26, closed

Friday, December 31, 10 am – 6 pm

Saturday, January 1, closed