

Summer 2015

The Chronicle

**FREE-RANGE COOKING
JOIN THE PARIS CLIMATE SUMMIT
FERMENTED CASHEW CHEESE**

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The Chronicle is published by members of Karma Co-op

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The Chronicle is a link between members of this and other co-operative communities. The only viewpoints endorsed by Karma Co-op Inc. are those published as reports of the board of directors and its committees. This newsletter is printed on Enviro100 stock, which contains FSC-certified 100 per cent post-consumer fibre. The paper is certified EcoLogo, processed chlorine free, and manufactured using biogas energy. It is union-made in Canada by Cascades Fine Papers.

SUBMISSIONS

We welcome submissions from any Karma member, staff, or board member!

Submissions may be sent by email to chronicle@karmacoop.org. *The Chronicle* will publish material related to Karma Co-op, subject to our editorial policy. 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. Published articles are eligible for work credits (letters to the editor, announcements, and pieces that have already been published elsewhere are not).

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Cover photo by Joanna Wojewoda

Report from the acting GM

by Rachel Yanchyshyn



As you read this, summer is most likely in full swing, and I hope everyone is enjoying the warm weather! I'd like to remind members to continue to shop at Karma over the summer, as it is traditionally a low sales period. Remember to stock up before heading out on your camping trips and cottage weekends!

Things have been busy these past few months at the co-op. Sales continue to improve, with most months showing a slight gain from the same month in 2014, though we can always strive to do better. In member labour news, the new work-team coordinators are busy encouraging working members to join cash or clean-up teams and reminding them to sign up for their shifts. Communicating through the co-op is its own intricate web, and the more lines of communication among members, the better.

We've seen lots of transitions in our staff over the past few months. There is a natural cycle of things, and this season seems to be one of departures and new beginnings. This past spring, we bid adieu to Leah, our health and beauty buyer, and Cara, our bulk and grocery buyer. Every staff member who left this year has added such value to our co-op,

and we will always be grateful for their contributions.

Change can also bring good things, and the new energy we have infused into the co-op is carrying us forward. Nat is maintaining our excellent produce section, clearly taking pride in his work and putting his personal stamp on this department. A warm welcome as well to Garry and Willow, both former working members who have joined our staff team.

Speaking of transitions, this will also be my last report as acting

general manager. As

I pondered in my first

report, the year has

indeed gone by very

quickly, although it

has been a full one. I

have gained experience in so many ways,

from human resources

to bookkeeping, managing

inventory and staff, and

helping to keep sales growing.

Though at times the work was stressful, I'm very grateful for the experience and challenges this year has awarded, and I will miss many aspects of the job. On the other hand, I'm looking forward to resuming my position as part-time retail clerk and spending more time with my family, as well as not having the weight of the co-op resting on my shoulders! Thanks to everyone for a great year.

“ Sales continue to improve, with most months showing a slight gain from the same month in 2014. ”



Report from the board of directors



by Paul Danyluk

The warm season is here and has brought all the delicious local vegetables for which Karma is famous. I know this is personally my favourite time to shop, as you keep seeing new and highly anticipated produce arriving in the store.

Recently, the board has been looking at proposals for raising both the \$40 annual membership fee and the \$12.50-per-hour flat fee paid by members who want to pay the sticker price on all items but would rather not do member labour hours. If you have any thoughts or concerns about either of these ideas, please let us know at board@karmacoop.org.

The Sales Task Force is working on ideas for improving Karma's sales. It's hoping to put together

a door-to-door promotion team to make sure all our neighbours know about our awesome little co-op, but it needs canvassers! Canvassing is a fun way to get to know people in the Karma neighbourhood, and it's a great way to do your member labour hours. If you're interested in helping out with the canvassing, please let board member Kate Rusnak know at katerusnak@yahoo.ca.

Our general manager Talia will be returning to her regular job in July. Be sure to give her a warm welcome when you see her back at work, and give warm thanks to Rachel for all her amazing work as acting general manager over the past year. 🍷

Report from the Building Committee

by Cathy Tafler

In May, the Building Committee replaced the old fascia board along the west edge of the lower building roof and reinstalled the eavestrough.

Starting in June, a number of projects will be done on select Mondays (when Karma is closed). One of the main projects will be the renovation of the kitchen, which will include removing the ceiling, removing some of the drywall, replacing the shelving and lighting, and repainting. Ceramic tile might also be added to a portion of the walls above the counters.

If you are available on Mondays in June, July, or August and would like to pitch in and earn member labour hours, please contact the Building Committee at building@karmacoop.org. A more detailed description of the work is also available. Everyone is welcome to help out with or coordinate any of the projects. 🌸

Report from the Orientation Committee

by Sondra vanderVaart

To help us understand whether new members would benefit from additional outreach after joining Karma, the Orientation Committee undertook an analysis of our new-member retention rates. Our goal was to determine whether (a) newly joined members were staying with Karma, or (b) if they were becoming inactive, and if so, how long after joining Karma this occurred.

We examined the retention rate for all members who joined Karma in 2014. Of the 172 new members, we found that 70 per cent (119 people) were still active members in February 2015; 26 per cent (45 people) had been designated “inactive” (that is, they were no longer shopping at Karma); and 3 per cent (six people) had resigned.

Of the 26 per cent of new members who were inactive, one-third became inactive in the same month that they joined, and another third became inactive in the month after they joined. The final third stopped shopping at Karma over the course of the next four to six months.

These numbers provide some interesting insights for Karma. First, 70 per cent of new members remain active! This means that the majority of new members continue to shop at and support Karma beyond the initial months of adjusting to a new shopping routine and choosing a labour role. In part, this retention may be due to the high degree of self-selection that occurs before potential new members come to Karma. Most people who attend an orientation already know about the co-op and express an interest in joining right at the start of the session.

Two years ago, the Orientation Committee conducted a nine-month survey of potential new members who attended an orientation session. We asked potential members what brought them to Karma. Many people told us they lived in the neighbourhood and walked by our sign on a regular basis. Seeing the sign prompted them to come into the store to learn more. This means that shopping at Karma was convenient for them. We also found that a significant number of potential new members knew a family member or friend who shopped at Karma. Most of them were already aware of Karma’s values and retail offerings, and they were eager to support the store’s vision.

In our current analysis, of those newly joined members who became inactive, the fact that 66 per cent did so within the first two months has noteworthy implications. While determining what causes members to become inactive so quickly is beyond the scope of our research, we do have some thoughts on how this could be addressed. One suggestion would be to conduct a small outreach pilot study whereby existing Karma members would reach out to new members who become inactive within their first month to ask them why they have stopped shopping. Alternatively, a buddy-system pilot could see all new members receive outreach in their first month to ensure they feel connected to Karma and to help them figure out what type of labour position they might like.

If you have other thoughts about retaining new members, please contact the Karma board with your suggestions.



Report from the Social Events Committee

by Tom Smarda



Stefani Brown at the Plant Exchange in May.

It's summertime and the livin' is easy ... as long as one doesn't listen to the news. The trees and flowers seem to be oblivious, so why shouldn't we be? By the time this article hits the Karma counter, the Social Events Committee's Plant and Seed Exchange will be history. Seeds will have happily germinated and be well on their way to becoming full-fledged plants ready to take their rightful place in gardens everywhere. Seedlings, likewise, having been transplanted to their new homes, will be ecstatically stretching forth their foliage to better absorb the sun's rays.

Could you imagine people being buried head first in the ground with their genitals exposed for others to walk around and admire and sniff? I didn't think so. But plants' roots are anchored in the earth, and their multitudes of genitalia (flowers) are all on display, exuding delightful fragrances to passersby, insect and human alike. I mean, why do people consider a bouquet of flowers to be so romantic anyways?

On Saturday, June 13, from 11 am until 3 pm, our Everything Else Exchange will happen at Karma. Knick-knacks, paddy-whacks, give a dog a bone, and anything else you want to pass on to a new home. If you missed the book exchange or still have a houseplant that you think might cheer somebody up, bring it down. Even if you don't bring anything, please feel free to help yourself to the offerings. I've heard rumours that there might even be some live music. Indeed, you might consider bringing an instrument to play.

The Social Events Committee will be taking the summer off from hosting events at Karma. Many people will be travelling away on holidays, hopefully embracing nature. Summer is a time of growth, healing, and expansion of possibilities before fruition and ripening in the fall. The seeds of inspiration can be acted upon. In the city, people are out and about, meeting and greeting, tumbling over one another.

Continued on next page



Zohar Jaeger-Segal and Anisha Neron with plants and seedlings.

Report from the Finance Committee

by Tom Rylett

I want to update the membership regarding the current status of Karma's line of credit. Currently, Karma has a \$230,000 line of credit that is being used for two purposes: long-term debt and day-to-day operations.

The long-term debt is primarily from the major work on the store done a number of years ago, as well as the time when Karma was running at a loss. A significant component has been paid down, and what remains is held on the line of credit.

The usage for day-to-day store operations makes up the gap between when suppliers need to be paid and when sales happen in-store. It also covers sudden repairs to refrigerators and other equipment.

The board has been negotiating with our lenders to restructure this debt. The final papers have not been signed, so I will not share all of the small details here, but instead give an overview of how

it will be structured going forward. I expect to be able to provide more details in one of the monthly email newsletters in future.

Half of the line of credit is being converted into a term loan with an amortization of 15 years — a 15-year mortgage — to allow us to better address paying it down. The other half is remaining as a line of credit to allow for the operating needs, as mentioned above, as well as a safety cushion in case something serious happens, such as a power outage over numerous days during the summer, which would likely mean the loss of much of the frozen food.

Karma, though by no means massively profitable, has a much-improved financial picture from where it once was. Splitting our debt into two streams will give us continued access to the credit capacity needed for day-to-day operations while allowing us to begin aggressively paying down some structural debt.

Continued from previous page

And then there is the nurturing and comforting sound of crickets chirping, hidden away in some dew-kissed portfolio of grasses and moon shadow. A reminder that it is okay to be still. Yes, traffic is moving, near and far. The commerce of a planet beckons unceasingly, but we have a lot to be grateful for. Be well! 🍵



Lev Jaeger, Mike Nevin, and Susan Green

Photos by Tom Smarda

Clean-up Q&A with George and Sheila Goodwin

by Paul Danyluk



Karma has survived and thrived on the strength of the commitment of members who contribute in a variety of ways. One important way members contribute is through in-store labour. In an effort to better understand this work, I recently had a chat with George and Sheila Goodwin.

George and Sheila joined Karma in 2007 when looking for a store that sold organic food. Former members of a food co-op in Montreal in the 1980s, they were ready to recommit to the co-operative principles — and commit they have! Since their first month as members, they have consistently worked the evening clean-up shift on weekends.

What do you like about the work? What are some of the benefits of doing clean-up?

George: I enjoy the physical nature of the work and also having the chance to see where everything is in the store as we clean — something we can't necessarily do during a weekly shop.

Sheila: I am particular about the cleanliness of my own kitchen and my home. I make an effort to bring the kitchen and bathroom, in particular, up to my standard of cleanliness every time we clean.

What do you dislike about the work? What are some of the challenges of doing clean-up?

Sheila: Trying to clean a very full, old, and somewhat dilapidated kitchen and trying to ensure that all the food that's been dropped under tables and counters around the store is swept up. Trying to clean the stains in the floor from the cooking oil and detergent bulk area can be a challenge.

.....

**“ There’s a real sense of satisfaction
knowing that the place is cleaner
when we leave than when we arrived.”**

George: When it’s dark and cold outside in February, it’s no fun making the run to the bins with garbage, cardboard, and recycling. A good shift is when there’s almost no cardboard to break down and bundle. A bad shift is when we come in to find a mountain of boxes on top [of the shelf in the entrance], with another mountain of flat cardboard below — processing that can add 30 minutes of work to our two-hour shift.

What would you say to encourage other members to work the clean-up shift?

Sheila: There’s a real sense of satisfaction knowing that the place is cleaner when we leave than when we arrived. The staff are super nice about telling us when we’ve done a really good clean-up. And the staff also have faith in us to do a good job — they just let us get on with it. The work isn’t arduous, and it’s perfect for couples. We worked out a division of labour early on, and we have each become pretty good at our assigned tasks over the last seven years.

I heard that you bring in your own music during your shift. Any music in particular?

Sheila: When we began, we were told that if we wanted to listen to music as we cleaned, we should bring in our own. George has a substantial music collection, so he started burning iTunes playlists onto CDs.

George: Later on, the playlists arrived on iPods, iPads, and iPhones. The music ranges from stuff we remember from the ’60s and ’70s — everything from Beatles and Stones to Hendrix — to contemporary stuff like Whitehorse, Foster the People, Decem-berists, Jill Barber, Rufus Wainwright, and Frazier Ford. The playlists are set up to have some variety, lots of rhythm, and to include stuff we know and can (quietly) hum along with.

Rachel, the acting GM, says you also recently sourced a new vacuum cleaner for Karma (thank you!).

Sheila: We got very frustrated with the old Shop-Vac, parts of which were being held together with masking tape. Almost useless. We happened to be going to Home Depot anyway, and Rachel gave us the okay to buy the vacuum, some new mops, plus new mats for the cashiers.

What do you think other members will want to hear about doing clean-up?

George: This can be really rewarding, physical work. It’s worth recalling that this is a real co-op, where we as members are not only expected to work but should also want to in order to keep it humming along as effectively as possible. And of course, our labour helps keep the cost of our food down, not a small thing in this era of ever-increasing grocery prices.

Photo by Cara Gold

Staff pick

by Paul Dixon



So according to our inventory system, I've bought 43 bags of Beanitos Chipotle BBQ Black Bean Chips. At some point, Beanitos Chipotle passed from being a favoured snack to being an essential accessory without which I appeared strangely naked.

"Something's different," co-workers will puzzle, as though clocking a lack of glasses or a new haircut, before realizing it's just that for once I don't have chipotle dust around my mouth. I *really* like these chips!

According to my 44th bag, the chips were created by two brothers who didn't like any of the world's snacks — but loved snacking! — and so had to make up a snack they liked. So Doug and Dave made these round chips out of black beans and rice and frying and spicy dust. The flavouring hits first and it's good — it tastes like mild chipotle and salt. The chip is crispy and crunches delicately under tooth. At some point in chewing, you'll register that it's bean you're eating, but far from being unpleasant, it is *very* pleasant. If you like the crusty dried bean left in the pan after heating refried beans, then this is most definitely the chip for you. Combined with sour cream, the experience is so far off the hook you may find yourself wondering, "What hook?" I think for a lot of people these Beanitos (plus sour cream) could become the only meal they'll ever want to eat ever again forever. See for yourself!



Got milk bottles?

Milk drinkers, take note: Harmony Organic will only reuse clean, washed milk bottles (without the plastic cap). If you return a glass bottle with milk residue, whether wet or caked on, there's a good chance it will be discarded instead of refilled. Their sterilizing equipment does not replace basic washing. ***So please remember to rinse and scrub your milk bottles before returning them to Karma.***



Photos by Joanna Wojewoda

Karma staff profile: Nathaniel Williams

by Georgia Ydreos

On a bright and cool afternoon, I caught up with Karma's new produce manager and assistant general manager, Nathaniel Williams. "Nat," as he calls himself, is literally in charge of the freshness of Karma's wares. When we first met in the store several weeks before this interview, he introduced me and my daughter to a new apple: the orin, a Japanese variety that has since become a fast favourite of my family's.

How did you learn about Karma Co-op?

I grew up in the neighbourhood. I was one of those teenagers you'd see riding around on his bike, hanging around Palmerston school with friends. I knew of [Karma] but not exactly what it was.

Later I moved back into the neighbourhood with my girlfriend, and she had a friend who was on the board. I started shopping here because I wanted to shorten my supply chains, to be close to where food came from.

How does working at a food co-operative connect with other parts of your life?

I worked in produce for about 10 years, and so many random shorter-term jobs. The universe throws you back into what you are supposed to be doing: I needed a job and something steady.

Tell us about one of your favourite Karma products.

The RISE Ginger Kombucha. I found it first at the café I worked at. Karma carried the kombucha in other flavours like lemongrass. Since I started working here, I could request the ginger. I started



ordering a case a week, and given how fast people are buying it, it seems others really like it too.

What is something unique about Karma?

The closeness to the food. We can ask how something is grown and not just where it is grown. We can ask if it is getting sprayed with pesticides and get an answer right from the supplier.

What do you find energizing about your work at Karma?

The early mornings — you have to be more energetic. It's a change for me. I'm usually a night owl or up late.

In your first months working here, have you found some connections with Karma staff and members who share the same interests?

There's food, of course, and working toward a wider ability to get good-quality food and know what's in it. Also getting off the grid and getting out of the city. Certain opportunities have become more apparent; I've met people who have similar goals and ideas.



Free-range cooking

by Amy Stein

I spent years assembling a selection of cookbooks with simple seasonal recipes, looking for a healthy repertoire of main course dishes for daily family meals. And then, three years ago, I moved away with my family, leaving every one of those recipes behind.

I decided that during our two-year stay abroad, when I had more time for experimenting, I would try to broaden my range and ultimately break free from recipes altogether. The process was challenging. Before I started on this path, I would follow a recipe even to make chicken stock. I never thought of myself as a good cook, just good at following directions.

In the early days of life without cookbooks, I would often draw a blank on ideas for dinner, so I made a practice of buying a wide variety of fresh local foods. Then I searched the Internet by googling two or three of the ingredients in my kitchen. I might type in, for example, “fennel feta” or “leek butternut apple.” Google always turned up an astonishing array of recipe choices.

But my goal was to cook without following any recipe, and slowly I got there. I started by cooking some things from memory, others by veering wildly off course from a recipe into shortcuts and liberal substitutions of ingredients. No red pepper?

Mushrooms work. In fact, most vegetables can be swapped. Fats and oils can be swapped with each other, and so can cheeses and other dairy products. Practically any ingredient, or several, can be left out and a dish will still be tasty.

I stopped measuring things. In fact, I had no measuring cups or spoons. I did have, well, normal cups and spoons. So I eyeballed quantities and if precision seemed prudent, I would use either a cup or spoon to estimate. The key was practice, letting go of the idea that each meal had to be a success. I had captive taste testers in my children (luckily not picky eaters), who would try everything I served and honestly say which things they liked or did not.

“ My goal was to cook without following any recipe, and slowly I got there. ”

I made muffins at least 50 times in two years, discovering through trial and error that I could reduce the sugar to one-quarter cup (per dozen muffins) and still get rave reviews, but if less than that, the muffins were not popular. (Many muffin recipes call for a cup or more of sugar.) I learned that precise quantities of baking soda and powder were unnecessary; muffins turn out fine with “some” baking powder. I now make muffins whenever I have sour milk in the fridge, or old yogurt or sour cream, or when I find overripe bananas at Karma. The dry ingredients are fairly constant (flour, oats, sugar, baking powder, cinnamon), but the rest varies according to what needs to be used up. Flavouring is a handful or two of nuts, seeds, berries, and/or fruit.

For the most part, I have simplified my cooking. Other people can embellish dishes and blog about their cooking adventures. I just try not to get in the way of good fresh ingredients.

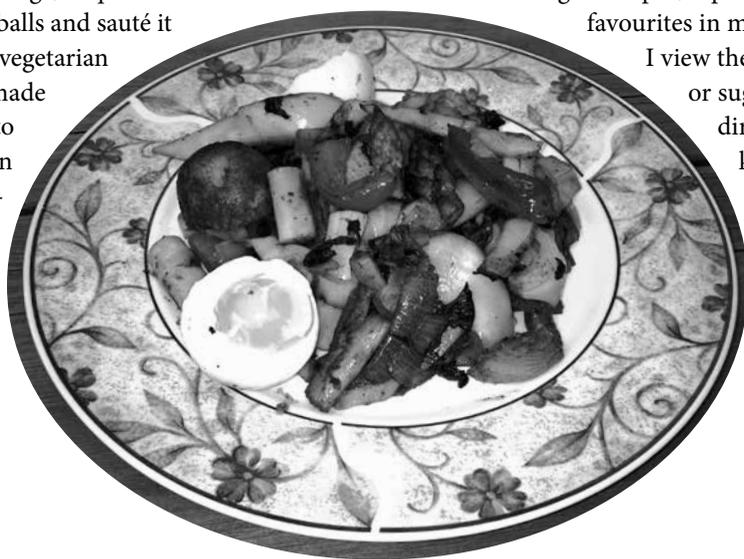
I sometimes make what I call a fry-up, in which the only constants are potatoes and onions. I get a few potatoes boiling while I thickly slice up onions. (I could fry the raw potatoes, but I like bigger pieces.) If I am using sausage, I squeeze it out of its casing into little balls and sauté it first. But often it's a vegetarian meal. Last night, I made a fry-up by adding to the potato and onion some leftover chickpeas, cheese, and a generous quantity of the largest leaves from garlic mustard plants I'd been weeding out, all seasoned with paprika, oregano, thyme, salt, and pepper. I meant to make enough to have leftovers, but it was devoured in one sitting.

Another standby is frittata. I use one or two eggs per person, whisked with a little water, salt, and pepper. The rest varies. I might add to the eggs fresh or dried herbs, green onions, usually some cheese. I might sauté mushrooms, leeks, peppers,

greens, broccoli, or sausage in an ovenproof skillet. The egg mixture pours on top of whatever is in the skillet, and bakes about 25 minutes. (Alternatives are stovetop or under a broiler, but I've found baking easiest.) My daughter likes to make potato or sweet potato wedges to go with this, which we start roasting as I assemble the frittata.

Back in Toronto nearly a year now, I still enjoy looking at recipes, especially the old favourites in my cookbooks, but

I view them more as ideas or suggestions than as directions. I don't know if I have become a better cook, but I am a more confident and relaxed cook. These days, to make stock, I freeze vegetable (and apple) cores, ends, and peels from each day's cooking, leaving out only the very strongest flavoured such



Another spring fry-up: fresh-picked asparagus and mustard garlic greens with onion, leftover cabbage, and red pepper, seasoned with chili powder and topped with an egg that was soft-boiled with the potatoes.

as turnip. When the freezer bag is full, I empty it into a pot and cover it with water. I add salt, peppercorns, a couple bay leaves, and a chicken carcass or beef bones. After simmering several hours or overnight, it is always delicious — and I measured nothing.

Photo by Amy Stein



The field workers' strike in Mexico

by Suzanne Methot

Under industrial agriculture, food is no longer a necessity — it is a commodity. In this system, food production is controlled by fewer and fewer corporations, and workers are exploited in the name of profit.

On March 17, 50,000 field workers on 230 farms in San Quintín Valley in northern Mexico challenged this system when they went on strike to demand better pay and improved working conditions. The field workers shut down over 100 kilometres of the Trans-Peninsular Highway, a key route for moving goods north from Mexico. About 200 workers were arrested.

Field workers in the San Quintín Valley — including thousands of children under the age of 14 — work 10 to 12 hours per day, seven days a week, picking conventional and organic fruits and vegetables for the Canadian and U.S. markets. They earn an average of 88 pesos (CDN\$7) per day picking tomatoes, strawberries, raspberries, peppers, cucumbers, squash, melons, and other crops for the export market. Most farm workers are Indigenous peoples, recruited from southern Mexico.

Los Angeles Times reporter Richard Marosi has investigated the farms (see graphics.latimes.com/product-of-mexico-camps), documenting rat-infested camps that lack working toilets and adequate water supplies. He saw camp bosses withhold wages during the harvest to prevent workers from leaving. Price gouging at company

stores forces workers into debt, and many return home empty-handed at the end of a harvest. Labour camps are surrounded by barbed wire, and those who try to escape the squalid living conditions may be beaten by camp bosses.

Striking field workers demanded overtime pay, days off, access to water, regularly scheduled breaks, and freedom from abuse. They also demanded the right to create their own union and negotiate directly with farm owners. Current farm unions are affiliated with Mexico's federal government, which has colluded with employers to keep wages low. Many Mexican government officials are owners and investors in the 12 largest farms in San Quintín.

After eight weeks of negotiations, strikers took over a government building, and police responded with tear gas and rubber bullets, leaving dozens of people injured. On May 14, a settlement was reached: wages will rise to 200 pesos (CDN\$16) per day, workers will be added to the social security system and allowed to unionize, and companies must be certified to prove they are not using child labour. The agreement also states that companies must improve workers' housing, food, and health and safety conditions. In addition,

authorities promised to release workers arrested during the strike.

The Mexican government says it will subsidize the raise, and Mexico's National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) says it will monitor the situation to prevent workers from returning to the exploitation and poverty it calls "modern slavery." Consumers will also need to be vigilant, as both the

Mexican government and the NHRC are colonial structures that have not historically been supportive of Indigenous rights.

Suzanne Methot is a Cree woman and an educator who has been a member of Karma Co-op for over 15 years. To learn more about Indigenous perspectives, visit Suzanne's website at dragonflycanada.ca.

Fair trade solidarity

Karma members can support Indigenous peoples by buying products that are certified fair trade. Here are some examples:



Nuts to You Organic Fair Trade Sesame Tahini

The sesame seeds are grown and processed by a farmers' co-operative in Nicaragua, providing 3,000 members and their families with sustainable work and a healthy environment. Farmers do not cut down forests to create open fields, and they rotate their crops.

jhc-cdca.org/projects/sustainable-organic-agriculture/



Camino

Camino products use chocolate, sugar, and coffee grown by family farm co-operatives in Central and South America and Southeast Asia.

www.lasiembra.com/camino/en/family-farmers



Bananas

Karma sources bananas from small farmer organizations or plantations that meet high social and environmental standards. Farmers receive a guaranteed minimum price and a premium that is invested in community projects.

www.fairtrade.net/bananas.html

Product spotlight: Anarres Detox Cream Deodorant ●●●●●●●●

by Amanda Lewis



Ah, summer, when the sweet smell of flowers, grasses and other, riper odours fill the air.

I'd been looking for a natural deodorant for years, one that would effectively conceal smells but not clog pores. I tried Tom's of Maine but was turned off by its excess packaging, heavily scented "unscented" stick, and semi-corporate ownership (Tom's is a partial subsidiary of Colgate-Palmolive). Salt crystals were effective at neutralizing body odour once it occurred, but I found they were not preventative — applying the crystal to your underarms after bathing did not inhibit smells from developing. And my most recent solution, a paste of baking soda and water, was an inexpensive and long-lasting alternative but stung my pores and could sometimes be messy when applying or transporting.

My friend came to the rescue with a gift of Anarres Natural Health's Detox Cream Deodorant, and I absolutely love it. Made by Karma member Tracey TieF, this deodorant uses all-natural ingredients and comes in a glass jar with a metal lid that doesn't leak. The 45-gram jar is available at Karma for \$6.95.

I am prone to cysts and for a long time had a swelling in my underarm lymph nodes. This cream is designed to unclog lymph nodes and treat cysts, and with daily use (combined with clean eating and regular exercise), the swelling in my armpit has gone down. The cream's essential oils, including lemon, pink grapefruit, geranium, cypress, clove, oregano, and Bulgarian lavender, have antibiotic, antiviral, and antifungal properties. They also create a wonderful aroma, and I don't feel the need to wear additional essential oils.

And the cream definitely neutralizes body odour — important for someone who bikes and walks everywhere, teaches and practises yoga, and works in an office.

Note that you should use only a little bit each time — apply too much and the mixture will temporarily stain your clothes (the stains easily wash out). The ingredients settle easily, so stirring the mixture daily helps keep it smooth. Do not use this deodorant if you are sensitive or allergic to citrus fruits.

The plastic-free packaging drew me in, and the positive effects of the deodorant kept me coming back. Two thumbs up!

Photo by Joanna Wojewoda



In the aisle

by Karen Fliess

VITAL STATISTICS

Name: Jenny Isaacs (left) and Tamar Miller (right)

Occupation: Jenny just finished her master's at OISE in teaching; Tamar is a master's student at the Toronto Art Therapy Institute

Length of Membership: Two years as part of a household with then staff member Cara Gold; both are now becoming members themselves

Status: Will be working members



Photo by Karen Fliess

How did you discover Karma?

Tamar and Jenny answered this and many subsequent questions in tandem, finishing each other's sentences as only very close lifelong friends can do: We discovered Karma five years ago. We grew up in a Jewish youth movement that started a communal living group. We had a weekend workshop, and the facilitators introduced us to different co-operative structures in the city and suggested we should be shopping at Karma. We were at university then and didn't have enough time to check it out. When we moved in with Cara, she introduced us to Karma.

Why do you shop at Karma?

Tamar: The quality is really good, and I'm getting more intentional in my food choices, noticing how different foods affect my body and becoming more interested in supporting local choices.

Jenny: It's the same for me. I'm trying to become more conscious of the ethics of what I'm eating. This was hard to do on my own — when you see the prices in a conventional store, it's hard to make that choice. Being at Karma makes it easy to make good choices. Through Cara, we have gained more insight into the farmers who bring their products here, so it does feel really connected.

What is in your shopping cart today?

Tamar and Jenny rhymed off a list together: We have lots of veggies: fiddleheads, wild leeks, beets, salad greens, celery, and tomatoes. We have some dairy products: Black River aged cheddar, sour cream, and Mapleton's chai-flavoured ice cream.

Also perogies, paper towels, I Deal Coffee that we grind here, Gingerich eggs, Nature's Path cereal, Sobaya noodles, Kiju juice. We have many items on little money!

What is one product you discovered at Karma?

Tamar: Mahem chocolate bars and the Simply Natural facial cleansing milk.

Jenny: Green Beaver toothpaste. We both switched over to natural body products. There was a lot of fear about doing this because some natural toothpastes are gross, but Cara has been very helpful, actually all the staff have, with introducing us to different products.

Is there a product you would recommend to Karma members?

Jenny: All of the above as well as the bulk options here. Buying in bulk is great. It's cheaper because you can get the actual amount you need or want, and you waste less. The bulk honey is such a great deal.

Tamar: The spinach tofu samosas are awesome.

Is there a memorable experience that you have had at Karma?

Jenny: When I first moved into the house, Cara encouraged me to get to know the store. I started to see a nutritionist who was also a Karma member and started cooking new things with what's in the store.

Tamar: I saw the same nutritionist, and that actually propelled me to start coming more. Cara was doing all the shopping before. I've enjoyed myself here. It's really nice to walk in here, very warm compared to the cold, tiled grocery stores with fluorescent lights.

Are there any next steps that you see for Karma?

Jenny: It would be useful if Karma had a special membership structure for communal houses. Also, having partnerships with organizations that have shared values, such as the Centre for Social Innovation. They have cafés that use products Karma carries; it would be good for Karma to reach out and connect with social innovation businesses.

Tamar: The Almond Butterfly café where I work uses a lot of bulk items that are sold here. (Your interview from the last issue of *The Chronicle* is hanging on the wall there; Keara mentioned Almond Butterfly in the interview.)

What book are you reading right now?

Tamar: *The Marriages Between Zones Three, Four and Five*, a sci-fi book by Doris Lessing.

Jenny: *How to Be a Woman* by Caitlin Moran.

Other than Karma, what else do you think is one of Toronto's little-known gems?

Jenny: Bloomers is a vegan café on Bloor near Ossington. It has super nice people and delicious food and coffee.

Tamar: A Different Booklist on Bathurst.

Is there anything else you would like to add about your experience at Karma?

Tamar: It's great! It's a warm, nice place to shop; you don't feel like you are in the city because of the community aspect.

Jenny: I like running into the same people here. It's a community proud of getting and having food in a really nice way, and the staff are really helpful.



Eat local and save water

by Nattha Wannissorn and the Food Issues Committee

California is facing one of the most severe droughts on record, and it's time for us to start paying attention. Experts say California's reservoirs could run out of water in the next year, and with each winter's snowpack smaller than the last, the situation is only expected to get worse.

With summer upon us, buying locally grown produce is an easy and welcome choice. But as winter rolls around in Ontario, many of us start relying heavily on a variety of fruits and vegetables imported from California. Fresh lettuce, broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, turnips, oranges, and almonds are among the most popular but also among the most water intensive to grow. In fact, agriculture as a whole consumes 80 per cent of California's total water supply. So, in a way, exporting water-intensive crops (including rice and alfalfa) is akin to shipping away 34 million acre-feet of water every year, according to figures from the state's Department of Water Resources.

But apart from its direct relation to the drought, consuming produce from California perpetuates a host of other issues. First, transporting food thousands of kilometres requires the use of fossil fuels. Second, the shipping process leads to increased food waste. Third, many nutrients are lost during transportation. And lastly, it results in the need for additives or chemicals like wax, ethylene gas, antifungals, and pesticides.

Overcoming the challenge of limited fresh food choices in the winter means planning ahead. Here are a few tips on how to consume more local produce all year long.



1. Grow produce, herbs, and sprouts at home. Herbs and sprouts are perhaps the most nutrient dense of all vegetables.
2. Buy bulk produce and meat when they are in season and freeze them for off-season use. Canning and fermentation are also great options to preserve food and enhance its nutritional quality.
3. Try local produce that is unfamiliar to you.
4. Crops such as potatoes, rutabaga, carrots, cabbage, beets, mushrooms, and onions can be stored in a dark, cool place all winter. Make sure to trim the green tops — if left untrimmed, the top will decay and encourage deterioration of the root. You can pack your veggies in leaves, hay, or sawdust to prevent them from drying out.

If you have to consume food from California, be mindful of the water used to produce it. To check the water footprint of individual food items, visit <http://waterfootprint.org/en/resources/interactive-tools/product-gallery/>.



Make your own cultured cashew cheese

by Reece Steinberg

Cashew cheese is dairy-free, delicious, and simple to make at home with natural ingredients and basic kitchen equipment. Unlike many non-dairy cheeses, this cashew cheese is fermented; by culturing this food, you increase the nutritional value of the raw ingredients, adding probiotics to your diet.

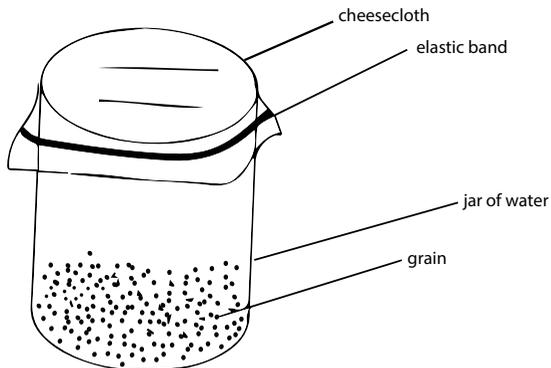
This article provides the basics for making a spreadable cashew cheese, but it's just a beginning: by adjusting the recipe and adding ingredients, you can make a wide variety of cashew cheeses. You can also air-dry cashew cheese to make a sharp, hard, salty block.

Materials required

- Large wide-mouth jar
- Cheesecloth
- Elastic band that will fit around jar mouth (a wide elastic holds the cheesecloth best)
- Food processor or powerful blender
- Container(s) with lid(s)

Ingredients

- 2 cups raw cashews, soaked in water for 4 to 8 hours
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup nutritional yeast (optional, but recommended)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup rejuvelac (see instructions on making rejuvelac below; requires $\frac{1}{4}$ cup dry whole raw grain or pseudograin)
- 1 tbsp. miso
- 1 tsp. salt

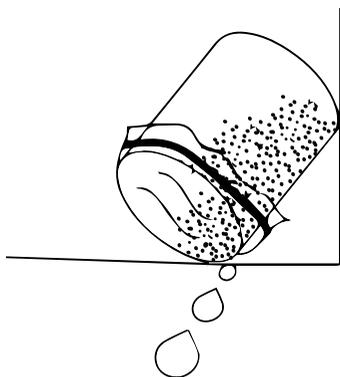


Step 1: Make rejuvelac (days 1–6)

Rejuvelac is a cultured sprouted grain beverage that is used to provide beneficial bacteria to the cheese (the miso does as well). If you have ever sprouted grains, seeds, or legumes before, you may already have a process for sprouting; feel free to use that method for the first part of the rejuvelac-making process. My method is below. This makes enough rejuvelac for several batches of cheese, and it can be stored in a covered container in the refrigerator for months at a time.

- a) Put $\frac{1}{4}$ cup dry whole raw grain (e.g., brown rice, spelt groats, millet) or pseudograin (e.g., quinoa) in your wide-mouth jar and fill the jar up to the top with water. Cut a two-layer piece of cheesecloth big enough to cover the mouth of your jar, and use the elastic band to secure it in place. Let the grain soak overnight.
- b) In the morning, pour the water out of the jar through the cheesecloth. Then, still with the cheesecloth on, rinse the grain by filling the jar up with fresh water and dumping it out a couple of times. This prevents the grain from going mouldy. Set the jar upside down but on an angle so that excess water can drain out. A dish

Continued on next page



rack works well for this. Let drain for at least 15 minutes or several hours.

- c) Repeat the rinsing process two to three times per day until the grain begins to sprout (about three days). For some grains, you must look closely to see the tiny white tails begin to emerge. Grains will sprout more quickly when it's warm and need to be rinsed more regularly in very hot weather.
- d) After the grain has sprouted, add 1½ cups of water to your jar through the cheesecloth. Set the jar aside for three days, keeping it out of direct sunlight and away from sources of high heat. After three days, the water should be somewhat cloudy and smell a little earthy. It may taste tart as well. Now you have rejuvelac! Remove the cheesecloth, drain and save the liquid, and compost the grain (its nutrients have leached into the water).

Step 2: Combine ingredients (day 7)

- a) Add all ingredients to your food processor. Process until the mixture is smooth, stopping to scrape the sides a few times.
- b) Put your cheese into your container(s) and cover. Now the fermenting process continues!

Step 3: Fermentation (days 7–9/10)

Leave your covered container(s) of cheese in a warm area for two to three days. Sample the cheese as time goes by, if you like. After a maximum of three days, transfer to the fridge and let firm for six hours before eating. The cheese will continue to slowly sharpen in the fridge. It will last in the fridge for a few weeks or in the freezer for months.

Get creative

There is no reason to stick to this exact recipe — I'm offering it for guidance and to get you started. Get creative by replacing the cashews with hemp seeds, or add sun-dried tomatoes or fresh or dried herbs to the cheese. A small amount of additional cultured food will also enhance your cheese and make the flavour more complex — try sauerkraut, brine of kraut or pickles, kimchi, additional miso, or yogourt (dairy or vegan). Just make sure to check that what you are adding is unpasteurized and live cultured and contains no preservatives (which could prevent the cheese from fermenting).

More information

Wild Fermentation

This site is full of information on making and using all sorts of fermented foods, and on the benefits of fermented foods. www.wildfermentation.com

Fermented Vegan Cheese

This blog provides instructions on how to make firmer cheeses in moulds. There's also a cheesecake recipe. fermentedvegancheese.blogspot.ca

Post-Punk Kitchen

If you don't have time to make fermented cheese, the recipe section of this site offers several non-fermented nut and seed cheese dishes. www.theppk.com



Korean cold noodle salad with seaweed and kimchi ●●●●●●●●

by Laura Coramai

Makes 4 main servings, 8 as a side

This is a great dish for summer potlucks or entertaining friends. Serve it as a meal or as a side with grilled fish or veggies on a skewer. The one key ingredient? Kimchi! Gabi's vegan kimchi is great, and I say dump in the whole jar (or even two if you love this fermented goodness as much as I do). The recipe is flexible, so be creative. Toasted black or white sesame seeds would make tasty and nutritious additions, and why not hemp hearts or sunflower seeds?

4 to 5 pieces dried wakame seaweed
230 g soba noodles or Korean vermicelli-style potato-starch noodles
3 or 4 carrots, julienned
1 large cucumber, chopped
1/2 daikon radish, chopped
4 to 6 green onions, chopped
3 big leaves napa cabbage, sliced thin (optional)
1 jar (about 2 cups) kimchi
2 cloves garlic, minced (optional)
1 cup raw, skinless peanuts (optional)
large handful of cilantro, chopped fine
1/4 cup soy sauce, or more to taste
2 tbsp. sesame oil, or to taste
2 tbsp. sushi vinegar, or to taste
1 block silken firm tofu, chopped into bite-sized pieces (optional)

Bring two pots of water to a boil. In one, cook the seaweed at a boil for one minute. Drain the seaweed and immerse in cold water for five minutes, changing the water several times. Remove from water and cut into bite-sized squares.

In the second pot, boil the soba noodles for six to eight minutes or the starch noodles for two minutes, according to the instructions on the package. Drain and rinse the noodles under cold water to keep them from sticking together.

In a large bowl, combine the cooled seaweed and noodles with the remaining ingredients and toss to mix well. If using tofu, add it at the last toss as it tends to break up.

Serve right away. Leftovers will keep fresh in the fridge for up to a couple of days.



MISSION STATEMENT

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 GET INVOLVED!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: board@karmacoop.org

BUILDING COMMITTEE: building@karmacoop.org

CHRONICLE COMMITTEE: chronicle@karmacoop.org

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE: community@karmacoop.org

FINANCE COMMITTEE: finance@karmacoop.org

FOOD ISSUES COMMITTEE: foodissues@karmacoop.org

MEMBER LABOUR COORDINATOR: mlc@karmacoop.org

ORIENTATION COMMITTEE: orientation@karmacoop.org

SOCIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE: socialevents@karmacoop.org

STORE HOURS:

Monday:	CLOSED
Tuesday:	9 am – 9 pm
Wednesday:	9 am – 9 pm
Thursday:	9 am – 9 pm
Friday:	9 am – 9 pm
Saturday:	10 am – 6 pm
Sunday:	10 am – 6 pm

KARMA STAFF

GENERAL MANAGER: TALIA MCGUIRE (ON MATERNITY LEAVE UNTIL JULY)

ACTING GENERAL MANAGER: RACHEL YANCHYSHYN

ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER, PRODUCE MANAGER: NATHANIEL WILLIAMS

BREAD BUYER, GROCERY BUYER, RETAIL ASSOCIATE, MEMBER LABOUR COORDINATOR: PAUL DIXON

BULK BUYER, GROCERY BUYER, MEAT BUYER, RETAIL ASSOCIATE: JAMES BYRNE

HEALTH & BEAUTY BUYER, GROCERY BUYER, RETAIL ASSOCIATE: KAT CAMFIELD

RETAIL ASSOCIATE: SADIE GOLDSTEIN, GARRRY NORMAN, WILLOW JOHNSON

BOOKKEEPER: DENISE STAPLETON

MEMBER RECORDS SECRETARY: KIRSTEN HEYERDAHL

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PLANNING CO-SECRETARY, ENGAGEMENT CO-SECRETARY, ORIENTATION COMMITTEE LIAISON: SAMANTHA HICKS

ENGAGEMENT CO-SECRETARY, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE LIAISON: MELISSA BERNEY

SOCIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE LIAISON : RICK CONROY