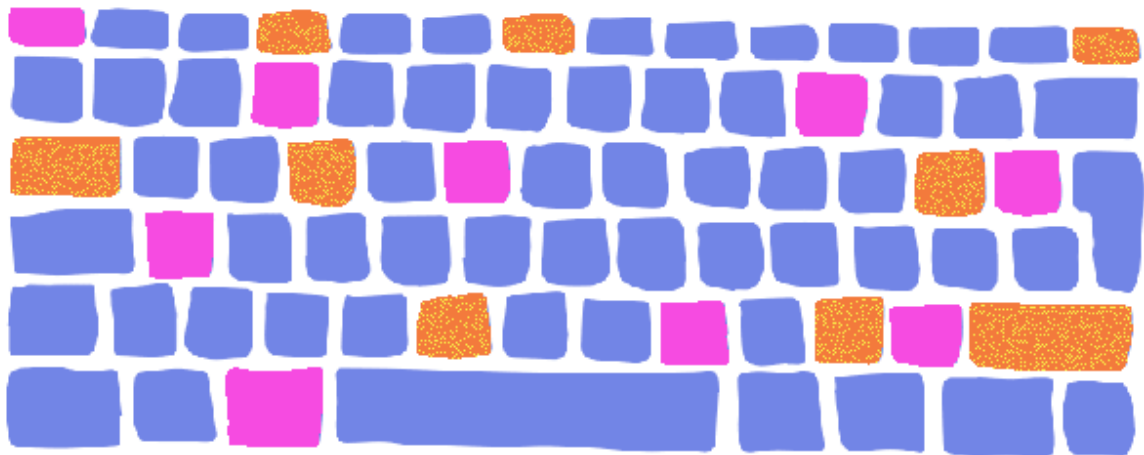


LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

February 28, 2023

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AN UNFORTUNATE DEVELOPMENT

To the Editor:

The first sentence of Dan Bergsagel's wonderful article on the architectural history of the Coop links a 2011 issue of the *Gazette*, from when it was still a print publication. I am a relatively new member, so it came as an enormous surprise how vibrant, storied, and alive the physical publication was. Not only is holding something tangible much more rewarding and communicable than yet-another-website, but the old version also contained a world of activities (classifieds, adverts, sudoku, film nights, non-Coop-related opinion pieces), which did not continue under the inherent austerity of digitalization. Primary example: The last issue had four articles—including a reminder about carrot shifts and letters to the editor—whereas the above-mentioned 2011 issue had sixteen robust pages.

I'm sure the decision to move online was a product of economy, environmental concern, and Covid, but these are the same excuses—tired, at this point—which have so devastated public life in this country. Ramifications stretch from the universally hated elimination of physical menus to the general air of exhausted “boulder pushing” which now covers everything. I am, of course, under no illusion that returning to a physical *Linewaiters' Gazette* will resuscitate a stuck social world. But I don't think it's romantic to voice the sense of loss such eliminations fester.

Efficiency is a zero-sum game whose world no one seems very interested to live in.

Brock Riggins

DARK CHOCOLATE AND MORE

Dear Coop,

It is with sadness that I urge the Coop to stop carrying a number of brands of chocolate, including one that has long been my favorite, Alter Eco. (For those interested, I have shared a copy of the ConsumerLab report.) Other problematic brands include

Green & Black, Trader Joe's, and Evolved Midnight. This is due to excessive and potentially dangerous amounts of cadmium. Cadmium toxicity increases the risk of developing several cancers and osteoporosis. The good news is that Endangered Species and Lily's are OK (also in terms of lead, another contaminant they tested).

Also, I recently opened a tub of Organic Valley cottage cheese only to find it was already slightly moldy and became completely moldy within a day. Not the first time this has happened, although that seemed to occur more in the summer.

Finally, I still hope checkout can include EBT cards when any balance is paid with a debit card. This should not be that hard to do in 2023!

Thanks and sorry to bring these bad bits of news.

George Carter

EXCESSIVE CADMIUM IN BOB'S RED MILL FLAXSEED

To the *Gazette*:

I have just read a report on flaxseed from "ConsumerLab," a nonprofit organization that provides accurate information on supplements and tests them for potency, accuracy in labelling and safety. To my surprise Bob's Red Mill flaxseed, both whole and ground varieties, contains excessive amounts of cadmium, a heavy metal that is likely a carcinogen, softens the bones and may affect fetal development. It was one of only two branded flaxseeds that got a failing grade. Bob's Red Mill responded to the article and what they wrote implies that they do not test for heavy metals, and that it is up to the consumer to decide if their product is safe. They did indicate they were "engaging" with their suppliers to address the issues raised in the report.

I do not know if we carry Bob's Red Mill Flaxseed, but I know we carry a number of their other products. If we do carry it, it should probably be taken off the shelf. Reading the article also raised another question in my mind: Since we carry flaxseed in the bulk section (which I purchase regularly), I am wondering what our source is and if there is some way of determining cadmium content. According to the article, excessive cadmium can be a particular issue with flaxseed, which absorbs the heavy metal from the ground.

Michael Esterowitz

GRATEFUL TO THE COOP

Dear Fellow Members:

My family's Covid policy is to honor the needs of the most at-risk person, and I am glad to see the Coop doing the same. We forget that many among us are still immunocompromised; lifting the mask mandate would be essentially barring those folks from the Coop. It's an easy act of kindness to wear a mask while you shop so that others are less likely to get sick and/or die, even if you feel that you personally are not at risk. I'm grateful to the Coop for upholding the mask policy.

Max Stein

THE LABOR COMMITTEE PRESENTED THESE DISCUSSION ITEMS AT THE 01/31/23 GM

Dear Coop:

The PSFC should send a letter to Amy's requesting that Amy's commit to neutrality in regard to any union-organizing activities at their home factory in Santa Rosa, California, and in all other current and future facilities, including their planned expansion into New York. Absent that commitment, the Coop will oppose Amy's expansion into New York.

Amy's is under investigation by California and others due to the firm's fight against a unionization drive at Amy's Santa Rosa plant. Amy's closed this brand-new plant to stop the drive. As a B Certified corporation, there is pressure on the B certifier to see if Amy's still qualifies.

While I support the request for the Coop to send a letter to Amy's, having the Coop oppose the expansion into New York is counterproductive.

Amy's intended to place this manufacturing plant in the Southeast. Due to climate change and supply-side concerns, Amy's instead selected Goshen, New York, as the site. It plans to employ over 600 workers.

Standard economic theory predicts that for each manufacturing job, four additional jobs are created to support the operation. Amy's will also be buying some amount of produce from area farmers. New York has long been losing manufacturing jobs to the South and overseas. This size factory rarely sites around here, and we lag in economic recovery versus most other states. It is unclear what the current status of the Goshen factory is.

We should welcome the plant and support efforts to unionize it once opened. We have a Democratic State government and no "right to work" laws, and can apply pressure that way and against the B certifier.

In cooperation,

Stewart Pravda

THE PROBLEM WITH VACCINES

Dear Coop:

Vaccines have had a very checkered history. For example, a 1976 outbreak of swine flu generated an aborted drive to vaccinate the entire nation, after 25 people died subsequent to being vaccinated (eventually rising to 52), and hundreds were stricken with Guillain-Barré syndrome. In 1955, one lot of the polio vaccine sickened 40,000 children, with 56 paralyzed and five deaths. Past vaccine disasters were associated with smallpox, diphtheria, measles, and others. The current Covid-19 vaccines have generated unprecedented numbers of reports in the CDC's Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System (VAERS).

Vaccines, contrary to their laudatory propaganda, are "unavoidably unsafe." The quoted words were a 1905 Supreme Court acknowledgement (*Jacobson v. Massachusetts*) that nonetheless justified vaccine mandates. Vaccines by their very nature carry major risks, as we've seen, their "safe and effective" propaganda notwithstanding. Consider that the ingredients in vaccines are injected directly into the bloodstream, bypassing the internal human body's two primary defense systems: the skin, and the digestive system, which would almost certainly cause your body to react with either vomiting or rapid diarrhea, rather than send them on to the internal bodily environment.

I would again cite, from my previous 12/27/2022 *Gazette* letter, the real hero in the battle against the great infectious diseases of the past: the public health measures, i.e. the modern lifestyles which took hold during the twentieth century, and that we now take for granted. Healthy lifestyles will always prove superior to the types of preventions the pharmaceutically dominated modern medical profession have championed. Modern Medicine has certainly earned its keep in its treatment of emergencies, but seems to be completely ignorant of the most common-sense preventions. What

few acknowledgements it has granted to healthy lifestyle have been learned from the alternative health movement, of which the Coop is a part.

David Barouh

See our letter submission policy [here](#).