

CROSSWORD: PER

August 15, 2023



CANADIAN THANKSGIVING

August 15, 2023

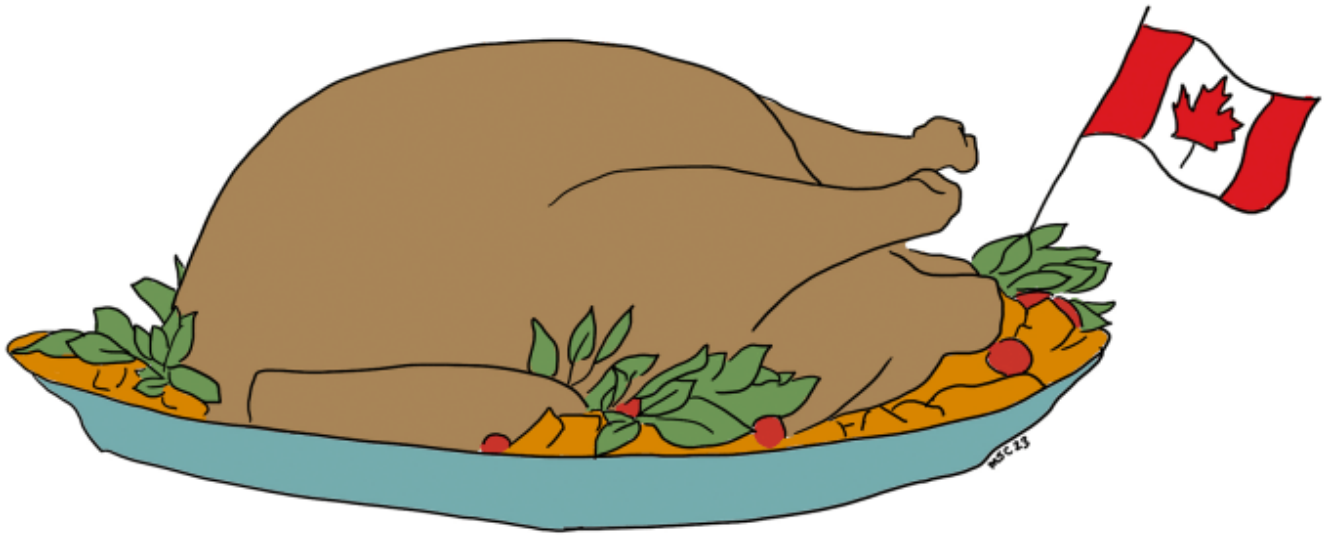


ILLUSTRATION BY MAGGIE CARSON

The Coop is considering getting turkeys for Canadian Thanksgiving this year (October 9), but first we need to gauge interest from our members. If you would like to buy a turkey for Canadian Thanksgiving, please reach out to the Coop's meat buyer, Masha, and let her know. Her email address is masha_bezlepkina@psfc.coop.

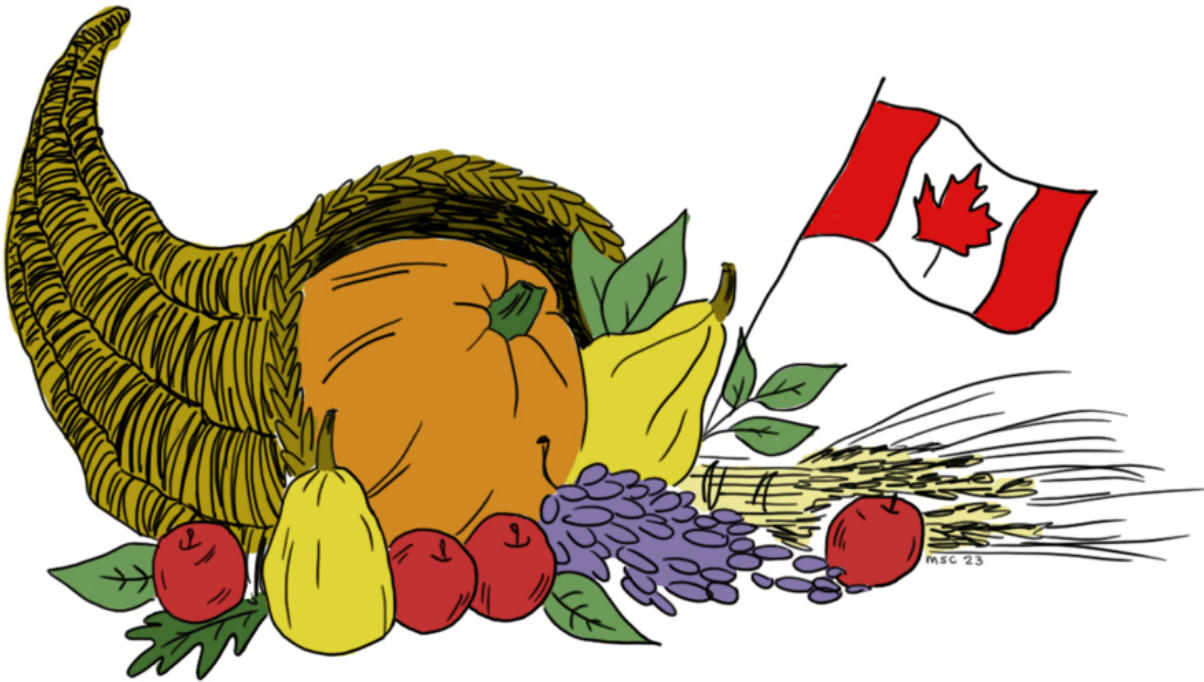


ILLUSTRATION BY MAGGIE CARSON

REPORT FROM THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE EDUCATION SQUAD (ITES)

August 15, 2023



Remove Cuba from the U.S. List of State Supporters of Terrorism

By Susan Metz, for ITES

Terrorism provokes dread and horror by bullying and coercion—from threats to murder. No proof has been presented that could convince even one member of the New York City council who voted unanimously on June 22 to pass Resolution 0285-A. That resolution urges President Biden to sign one document that would remove Cuba from the U.S. list of State Supporters of Terrorism (SSOT).

During his last days in office, President Trump returned Cuba to the SSOT as another aspect among the numerous economic aggressions against our island neighbor supported by national administrations of both corporate political parties. President Biden would do well to follow in the footsteps of President Obama, who removed Cuba from SSOT and opened diplomatic relations. President Obama honestly won two terms. During his campaign Biden promised to remove Cuba from the list. He hasn't. People throughout the country are reminding him of the dire suffering sanctions and the blockade are causing the people and environment in Cuba.

Being on the list of SSOT imposes U.S. economic penalties on third countries and private enterprises who maintain commercial relations with the island. Sanctions foreclose financial and trade relations as well as development opportunities. Third countries and private enterprises are penalized for mutually beneficial relations with Cuba. As a result, Cubans experience widespread lack of medicines, food and gas/oil for transportation and electricity. As the economy is destroyed, many are forced to leave. This contributes to the immigration crisis here.

U.S. tax money is explicitly dedicated to causing suffering with the goal of provoking Cubans into rising up for regime change. Building respectful relations with our neighbors is the cause that has mobilized 57 peace, faith, labor, advocacy and youth groups and innumerable individuals. Ninety-three resolutions were passed by representative bodies in cities and unions, indicating the will of 54 million Americans. And the list is growing.

As well, calls to “Let Cuba Live” are international. All but three members of the UN General Assembly vote yearly, urging the U.S. to respect the international law prohibiting interference in the internal affairs of another sovereign nation.

Organized through the #OffTheList campaign of the National Network on Cuba (N-NOC), on June 25 buses travelled to Washington DC to celebrate Cuban culture, science, independence, autonomy and self-government. Local actions happened too. The International Trade Education Squad of the Coop, Brooklyn For Peace, Cuba Si NY & NJ, Democratic Socialists of America and the Green Party of NJ co-sponsored an action in front of the central Brooklyn Public Library at Grand Army Plaza. We were there during a Festival of Caribbean Cultural. We spoke with many who know Cubans’ geniality and generosity well. Communications with all elected representatives can call also for an end to the economic blockade/embargo and for closing the military base/prison/torture site on occupied land in the eastern province of Guantanamo.

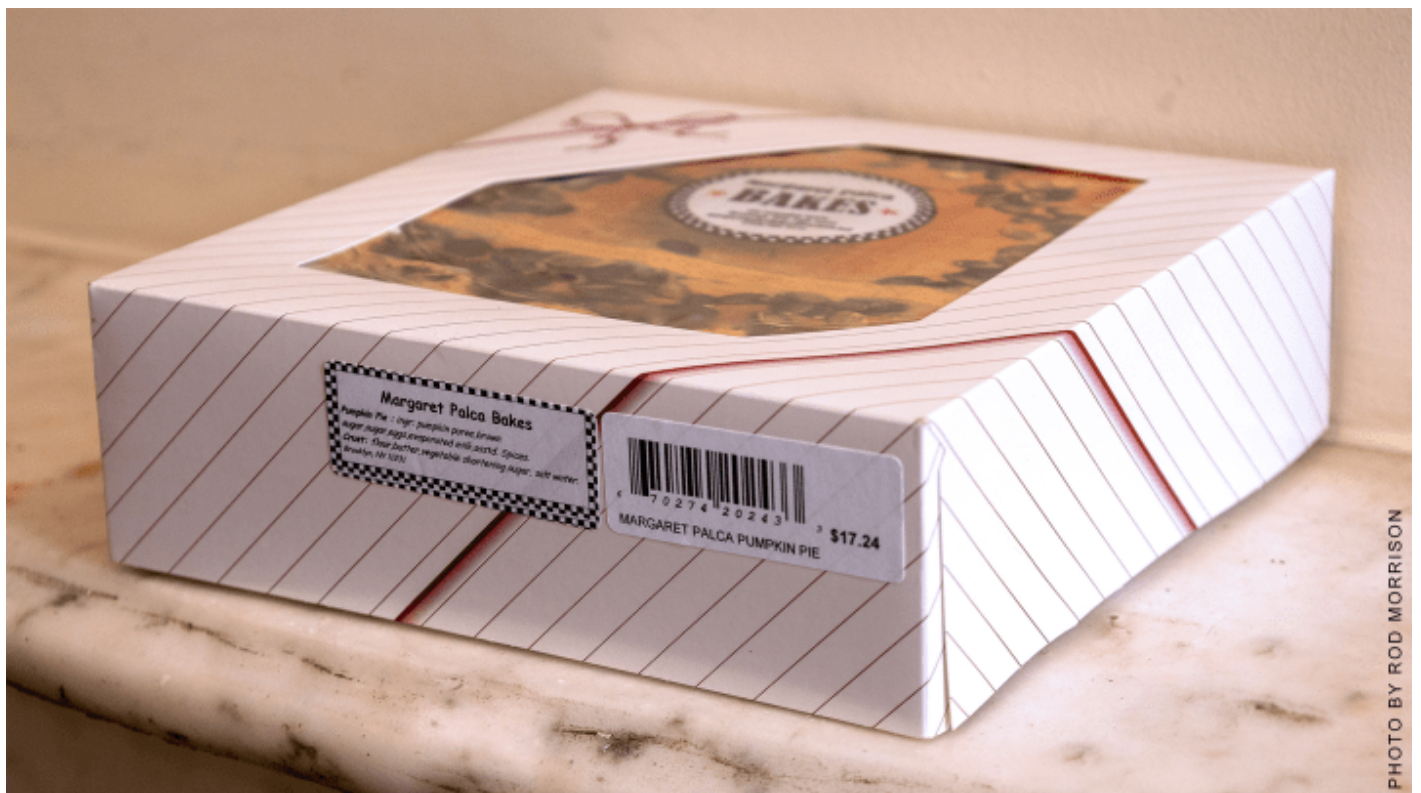
For documentation, information and news check National Network on Cuba, CODE-PINK, ACERE & #OffTheList.

Ninety-three resolutions from cities (large and medium) and unions (locals and national) representing 54 million.

Reject changing the SSOT list from administrative directive to law by communicating with congressional members to support a resounding NO vote on H314 and S583. - Don't change an administrative directive into a law! President Biden can and should take Cuba off the list!

BIDDING FAREWELL TO A BELOVED SUPPLIER: MARGARET PALCA RETIRES

August 15, 2023



By Juliet Kleber

Pastry-loving Coop members might have noticed a profound absence in recent weeks: the brownies, loaf cakes, tarts and vegan muffins from Margaret Palca Bakes are no longer on our shelves. After 40 years as a baker Margaret Palca retired in July, closing

her long-standing bakery by the Columbia Street waterfront and ending a three-decade long relationship selling her baked goods to the Coop. The *Gazette* spoke to Palca about her career, her time supplying to the Coop and her future plans.



PHOTO BY MICHAEL HARLAN TURKELL

Popular Coop baked goods supplier Margaret Palca Bakes has closed.

“WE’D BEEN WORKING ALMOST SEVEN DAYS A WEEK FOR AT LEAST 35 YEARS.
AND THAT TAKES ITS TOLL ON YOU.”

Palca, a native New Yorker, never planned on becoming a professional baker—she graduated from Barnard with a degree in art history—but the craft has always been a part of her life. She began learning from her grandmother as a small child, shadowed a pastry chef for a brief internship during her senior year of high school, and spent two months cooking in Paris during the summer before college. And while at Barnard, she was still baking: “Even while I was in school, I would start making a lot of something and then see if I could sell it to somebody.”



PHOTO BY MICHAEL HARLAN TURKELL

Margaret decorating one of her famous red velvet cakes.

Her professional life as a baker started with madeleines and expanded quickly. “I’d bring my madeleines to a store and they’d say, ‘This is delicious, but could you make brownies?’ So the next day you’re making madeleines and brownies.” Her first “real, serious job in the food business” was at Fraser Morris, a purveyor of gift baskets and fine foods on Madison Avenue. Palca started at a counter selling pre-made cookies, but the store runners liked the home-baked goods she made so much that they built her a kitchen and promoted her to being the store’s full-time, in-house baker.



PHOTO BY MICHAEL HARLAN TURKELL

Chocolate-chip brownies were a big seller.

Palca spent five years at Fraser Morris before striking out on her own again: “I decided that if I was getting to work at five o’clock in the morning and killing myself for 12 hours a day, I might as well do it for myself.” She started by baking rugelach (one her

most popular items throughout her career) in her home, to supply to Dean and Deluca and Balducci's. Fraser Morris had no need for a bakery without her, so they allowed her to keep all of the kitchen equipment for her own business, and in 1989, Margaret Palca Bakes was founded in Brooklyn. At the time, the Columbia Street Waterfront District was not the bustling neighborhood it is today: damage from large-scale infrastructure projects meant many buildings in the area were knocked down and vacant lots abounded. But construction also ended up being the bakery's saving grace: "All the workers came to buy stuff from us every day, so we had a steady clientele. They loved having a place to come for breakfast and lunch, to get a snack and coffee. That's what kept us going on a side street in the middle of nowhere in Brooklyn."



Margaret Palca with the tools of her trade now in storage at her home.

But the neighborhood and the business both grew, and in the early 1990s, a visitor to the bakery let her know that the Park Slope Food Coop was looking for a muffin vendor. And so began a long and successful partnership. Over the years, Margaret Palca Bakes adapted their offerings to the needs of the Coop and shifting attitudes about food—supplying full-fat and low-fat baked goods, conventional and vegan muffins. According to Lisa Hidem, the Coop’s bread buyer, the vegan muffins became so popular

during the pandemic that the Coop asked Palca if she could expand her selection, which went from one vegan carrot muffin to cranberry and banana as well.

In addition to muffins, loaf cakes and brownies, Palca supplied the Coop with about 200 Thanksgiving pies (apple, pumpkin, mixed berry, and cherry) every year. Reflecting on her experience, Palca noted, “There’s a lot of pressure around the holidays, but it’s also exhilarating. I do feel I’m letting people down for Thanksgiving this year, and I hope they’ll find a pie they like.”

“I’M SO GRATEFUL FOR ALL THE PATRONAGE AND THE LOYALTY THE SHOPPERS AT THE COOP HAVE GIVEN ME.”

While Colson Patisserie will be providing vegan, gluten-free muffins as well as loaf cakes (one of which is gluten-free, though still baked in a facility that processes gluten), the Coop is still searching for vendors to replace Palca’s pies and the rest of her product line. And that can be a complex task considering the Coop’s logistical needs.

Packaging presents a particular challenge, Hidem explained. In an independent bakery or conventional store, permanent staff are able to recognize and price unlabeled baked goods, but the Coop’s member-labor model makes that much more difficult. Products need to be clearly identifiable for members who are unfamiliar with them to stock and ring up correctly. Thus, a prospective vendor would need to be equipped to provide appropriate packaging, labeling and UPC codes. Volume also presents an issue—if an order is too small, it will often incur a delivery fee, raising the price of the items. And many bakeries have large minimum orders, which can create waste and lose money if their products don’t sell well. “We need to make sure it’s worth our time and the vendor’s time,” Hidem said. “It’s a tricky balance.”

While those logistical considerations were challenging at times, the relationship was

well worth it to Palca. She expressed particular gratitude for the Coop’s thoughtfulness regarding packaging and environmental concerns: “I appreciate the Coop because they think about everything—packaging, food waste.... We talked about selling pies in window boxes rather than plastic clamshells because it’s better for the environment, and they agreed, even though it’s more expensive. It’s hard to find another business that cares that much.” And overall, she said, “I’m so grateful for all the patronage and the loyalty the shoppers at the Coop have given me.”



Margaret Palca’s bakery and cafe on Columbia Street sadly now stands empty.

On June 23, Palca threw a retirement party in her shop to celebrate and say farewell to the bakery. It was packed with customers, long-time employees, and friends sharing their stories about the special place the bakery held in the neighborhood and their lives.

Since retiring, Palca has been focusing on projects she didn't have time for, including repainting her house and fixing up her basement. And she's been thoroughly enjoying newfound free time: "We're a little topsy-turvy, but very happy," she said. "I love what I did, but we'd been working almost seven days a week for at least 35 years. And that takes its toll on you." Baking, she acknowledged, has been a tough business: "It's really labor intensive, long hours, hands on all the time. And the profit margin is so small."

She is still baking, of course, though on a much smaller scale: "I make myself cookies all the time because I like to eat cookies for dessert, and I made muffins one morning." She and her husband, Paul, also plan to keep a yearly gig making gingerbread houses for a longtime customer at Christmas time. And with her less hectic schedule, Palca is now considering Coop membership herself.



PHOTO BY ROD MORRISON

Margaret relaxing at home with her husband, Paul Kalin. Paul is Vice President at Margaret Palca Bakes.

At the Coop, customers have been missing her offerings. Palca's goods were beloved not only for their quality, but also their reasonable pricing, especially for a local, artisanal bakery, Hidem told the *Gazette*. "We tried warning people—we shared her retirement announcement on Twitter." But the news hasn't made its way to everyone, and plenty of shoppers have asked where their favorite brownies or vegan muffins have gone. "They're always sad, but everyone agrees that Margaret's earned her retirement after so many years."



The
Margaret Palca
BAKES
Cookbook

**Cakes, Cookies,
Muffins, and Memories
from a famous
Brooklyn Baker**

“Margaret Palca has
all the qualities I look for in a baker:
the soul of an artist,
the heart of a nurturer, and
an obsessive perfectionist streak.”

—**Ed Levine**, founder of
SeriousEats.com

Margaret Palca

Photography by Michael Harlan Turkell

Margaret's cookbook is available at Barnes & Noble and Amazon for around \$20. And Coop members who really miss those brownies can always try baking them with the help of the 2018 Margaret Palca Bakes Cookbook.

Juliet Kleber is a writer and editor based in Bed-Stuy. She serves as a member of the Editorial Board of n+1 magazine.

THE COOP'S PET FOOD SECTION: SMALL PAW PRINT, LARGE IMPACT

August 15, 2023



By Rahima Nasa

The Coop is the one-stop-shop for everything we need to nourish our family and, I re-

cently discovered, our pup too. Nestled in the back of the aisle at the center of the Coop are shelves of food for dogs and cats, litter and plenty of treats. I've overlooked this aisle until recently, when my husband and I welcomed Cardamom (we call her Cardi) into our home. She is still a puppy so we pay a lot of attention to what she eats and the ingredients in her food. When I stumbled upon the pet food section I was delighted by the options. I wanted to know more about what was on the shelves so I called up the buyer for the pet food section, Tomo Mizoguchi.



Mizoguchi has been the Coop's pet supplies buyer for about half a year and hasn't quite been able to put his mark on the pet aisle yet. He's tried his best to maintain the usual selection of items, because members have been consistently buying items from the Raw Dynamics and Honest Kitchen brands. Mizoguchi faces a challenge when certain items go out of stock for long periods of time. In those cases, he tries to switch the item out with something else from the same brand. For example, if a chicken flavor treat is out of stock, he'll look for beef flavor, always checking the ingredient

lists and avoiding anything with artificial coloring. “I go with looking for similar products within the same brand because it looks like the ones that we do have seem to be working,” Mizoguchi explained.




PREMIUM  CAT FOOD
**CHICKEN, BROWN RICE
& EGG RECIPE**

SIMPLE WHOLESOME INGREDIENTS

Real Chicken is the #1 Ingredient

No Artificial Colors or Flavors 

No Corn, Wheat or Soy 

No By-Product Meal 



FOR CATS OF ALL AGES
NET WT 48 OZ (3 LB) 1.36kg

MANUFACTURED IN THE USA WITH
FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC INGREDIENTS

Unit Price \$2.80 LB	RETAIL PRICE
	\$8.41
1 Rows	3 LB

Wild Harvest Cat Food - Chicken, Rice & Egg

PHOTO BY CHRISTIAN DIAZ

Mizoguchi has noticed that the cost of canned pet food, for both dogs and cats, has declined over the years. “We used to sell canned food that [was] around \$1.50, but that has gone down so right now we sell the most of canned food that’s around \$1,” he noted. Wild Harvest is the most popular brand among shoppers, according to Mizoguchi. The Coop is selling twice as much Wild Harvest cat and dog food compared to other brands.

But the pet food section has a lot more to offer than just kibble and canned food. Shoppers can pick up essentials like cat litter, poop bags, supplements and treats. Though technically not in the pet food section, raw options in the freezer section also feed Coop pets.

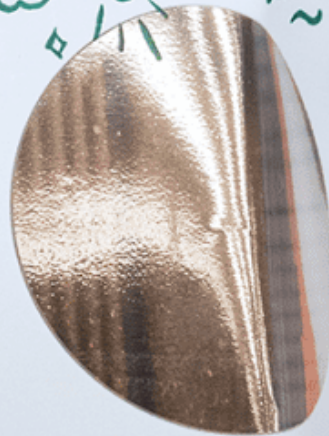
100%
REAL FOOD

BOCCE'S BAKERY DAILIES

brushy sticks

a daily bar to support dental
health and fresh breath

✕ made in the usa
✕ all natural ✕ wheat free



MEDIUM DOGS
25-50 lbs

coconut + mint recipe
16 dental bars
dog treats · net wt 13 oz (368.5g)

At a glance it would seem like dog treats dominate the pet section. There are several options of treats from local New York state brands like Raw Dynamics and Bocce's Bakery. I've had my eye on some treats from Portland Pet Food Company, which was also started by a pet parent who wanted to give her dog healthier, more natural options to eat. But to my surprise, cat owners are the biggest consumers for the pet section. "Dollar amount wise, we sell three times more cat food than dog food," Mizoguchi said.



While the pet section may have a relatively small footprint in the store, it's clear that members rely on the section to feed their furry companions. Mizoguchi doesn't have any plans to shake up the pet food section any time soon, so shoppers can rest assured that tried and true favorites like Wild Harvest will remain on the shelves. But the Coop is planning to add dried catnip in the coming months. "It's interesting because I do get a lot of product suggestions for the other categories that I order for but I haven't gotten any product suggestions for pet food," Mizoguchi added. Until he

does, he's not expecting to make any major buying changes.



PHOTO BY CHRISTIAN DIAZ

Shoppers who wish to see new products on the pet supply shelves are encouraged to send suggestions to Mizoguchi through their Member Services account (log in, click “contact us” and then the “product suggestion” tab).

Rahima Nasa, a public radio producer, has been a member of the Park Slope Food Coop since 2022.



PHOTO BY CHRISTIAN DIAZ

BUILDING COMMUNITY BY COOKING TOGETHER: COOP COOKING CLASSES MAKE A COMEBACK

August 15, 2023



ILLUSTRATION BY DEBORAH TINT

By Frank Haberle

Brooklyn is undoubtedly one of the world's great culinary capitals. According to the New York City Department of Health, there are 6,646 restaurants lining the avenues of our borough, representing almost every cuisine and culture in the world; with food trucks, markets and other venues, every conceivable dish is at our fingertips. Among the Park Slope Food Coop membership, we are blessed with a multitude of professional chefs as well as talented home cooks who have remarkable knowledge of the many ingredients we hold on our shelves, and of how to prepare delicious meals for our families. The Coop's cooking classes—a series of events organized and presented by a committed working group of our members—offer a remarkable opportunity to learn how to prepare a fantastic range of dishes, using the products available at the Coop.

As the Coop continues its steady progress toward pre-Covid normalcy, one of the most important aspects of this effort is bringing back the programs and activities that helped to strengthen the sense of community that defines our membership. In this effort, the return and rising popularity of Coop cooking classes has been a key ingredient.

“THERE WAS A COMMUNAL SENSE TO THE IN-PERSON WORKSHOPS WITH A GREAT DEAL OF INTERACTION AND HANDS-ON LEARNING BETWEEN THE MEMBERS AND PRESENTERS...”

MANDIRA GHAI, COOKING CLASS CO-CHAIR

The cooking classes that were hosted on-site in the upstairs meeting room for years before Covid-19 were a popular mainstay of the community. The classes brought chefs and home cooks from the widest possible range of cultures and cuisines to share their knowledge and love of great food with members. The classes were always popular events, drawing a core group of “regulars,” both new and long-standing members. With Covid restrictions during the spring of 2020, the cooking classes, like all workshops hosted by the Coop, had to be paused.

Today, under the leadership of co-chairs Mandira Ghai and Jeff Bonar and squad members Sophia Li, Tritia Denaro, Nina Fattahi, Amanda McCleod, Jeffrey M. and Elana Siggall, cooking classes have returned to the Coop in a virtual format—a big change from the pre-Covid, in-person workshops, necessary due to the meeting room being repurposed. Ghai, a Coop member since 2016, remembers that “prior to the pandemic, classes were packed between first-time attendees and regulars who participated each and every month. The interactive, hands-on approach of the in-person sessions, especially the prepared meal everyone shared at the end of the class, really reinforced the communal nature of the Coop.”

When classes had to be canceled due to Covid, the core group of organizers voluntarily continued to meet and plan how to bring back the workshop series. “The team saw a unique opportunity at the beginning of lockdown to translate classes into an online social activity that offered ideas and inspiration, especially during a period when people were overwhelmed by how much more cooking they were doing at home,” Ghai said. “It was a nice feeling of camaraderie for us to keep going in the midst of chaos, and a reminder of how much I enjoy collaborating with the talented, affable people in our squad.” Another initiative by the Food Class Squad was cooking for the Coop’s hard-working staff during the pandemic, preparing meals for nearly 60 essential workers.

“WE WANT THE CLASSES TO FEEL WELCOMING FOR EVERYONE—FROM GATHERING INGREDIENTS TO ENCOUNTERING MOMENTS OF UNCERTAINTY AND HAVING A PERSON THERE TO GUIDE YOU.”

SOPHIA LI, MEMBER

Open to members and non-members, Coop cooking classes offer wide-ranging options for member cooks. This summer, classes have included recipes for summer squash, presented by Jeffrey Mason, and a workshop on blueberry pie hosted by Elana Segall. In all cases, there is a great deal of flexibility in the structure of the workshops, which allows the leaders to be creative. Cooking classes are designed to be accessible to people at all levels as cooks, with presenters walking the group through preparation of dishes, step by step, with plenty of time for Q&A.

Sophia Li, a new Coop member who worked in stocking and checkout before joining the Cooking Class Squad very recently, spoke of how impressive it is to see how the classes contribute to a strong sense of community. “I know a lot of people who have joined the Coop since the pandemic, ranging from professional chefs to people who only eat Ritz crackers. Regardless of your cooking level—from gathering ingredients

to encountering moments of uncertainty and having a person there who can guide you, to hearing other people's questions during the class and discussing together—we are seeking to facilitate a space for learning together," Li said.



D. Tint

ILLUSTRATION BY DEBORAH TINT

“It is a priority that our classes reflect the diversity of the products, producers, and people found at the Coop,” Ghai added. “Anyone with a perspective on food and cooking is encouraged to propose a virtual session. We also want to ensure that what we are sharing is useful, especially given the level of fatigue sustained by online meetings, so community requests and general feedback is extremely valuable as we continue redefining the class.”

“When we shop at the Coop we are surrounded by members representing every food tradition on the planet,” said squad co-chair and professional chef Jeff Bonar. “I am honored to be on the squad that celebrates that bounty! If you have some special food or cooking expertise and want to share it with other members, let us know.”

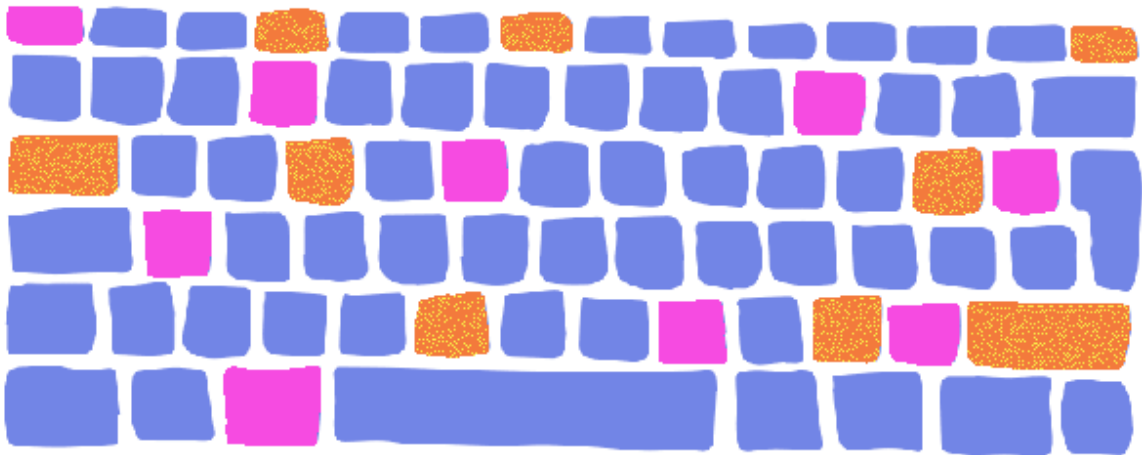
To learn more about upcoming Coop cooking classes and how to get involved—including doing a presentation—please visit the cooking class website. You can also check Instagram for updates and previous class photos. If you are looking for recipes and past presentations, please visit the YouTube channel or contact the squad directly at info@foodcoopcooks.org.

Frank Haberle is a 30-year Coop member, a professional grant writer, and the author of two novels about 1980s drifters—Shufflers, and the upcoming Downlanders—both published by Flexible Press in Minneapolis.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

August 15, 2023

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



BYO CONTAINER

Hello,

Whenever someone asks me about why I'm a member of the Coop, I rave about the selection in the produce and bulk aisles. However, I wish the Coop would be a leader

in rejecting single-use plastic bags. I am a volunteer in a grassroots environmental organization called 350Brooklyn. The overarching issue of concern for our environment is society's reliance on fossil fuels. Plastic is a product of the fossil fuel industry. Additionally, single-use plastic takes a lot of energy (more fossil fuels) to recycle and only about 17% of it actually gets recycled. This leads to plastic getting sent to landfills—which in turn emit greenhouse gases—and more plastic reaching our oceans. I am happy to see that the Coop now offers compostable bags in the produce aisle even though plastic bags are also available. I think it would be huge if the Coop were a leader in removing these plastic bags from the produce aisle. They are unnecessary now that we have compostable bags. Members can also bring their own reusable bags for produce. Additionally, many items in the bulk aisle are now packaged in plastic bags. I believe that previously these items were not packaged in plastic bags but were available to be scooped or in one of the containers with a release lever. I would like the opportunity to bring my own container to fill with bulk items. Ideally the Coop would stop using single-use plastic bags to package items, but I think at least we should have the option to bring our own containers.

Sincerely,

Zoë Kaplan-Lewis

PSFC FEATURED IN THE VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM IN DUNDEE

Dear Coop,

Hi, my name is Peter Kim. I'm a member of the Coop. There's an exhibition on Tartan at the V&A Dundee in Scotland, and for the "People's Tartan" section, I submitted a plastic bag I bought from the Food Coop in 2018. I thought this would be a nice piece of international press for the Coop to share on its social media and *Linewaiters' Gazette*.

P.S.: Members can go see the exhibition in Scotland! Here's two recent links. The *Dezeen* piece includes particular mention of the Coop bag:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/04/travel/scotland-restaurants-hotels-distilleries.html>

<https://www.dezeen.com/2023/07/05/tartan-exhibition-v-and-a-dundee/>

Peter Kim

A THREE-DIMENSIONAL EPIPHANY

Dear Coop,

In the 10 years that I've been a member of the Park Slope Food Coop, I've only worked one or two shifts where I wasn't in the baling room cutting up cardboard and crushing it into beautiful bales. Some people call me Taylor the Baler because I love the job so much. However, there is one type of box that I hate to crush. It's not banana boxes, apple boxes, wooden crates or even the dreaded watermelon cartons; it's any box that comes from Hepworth Farms, a 200-plus-year-old family farm located on the Hudson approximately 75 miles north of the city. Whether it's mushrooms, tomatoes or peppers, the boxes from Hepworth are always ingeniously designed. Some have double- or even triple-reinforced handles and subtle interlocking stacking tabs. Some have "corner triangles" to further protect the produce they carry. And all of them stay together without any staples or glue. To unfold the marvel of a Hepworth Farms cardboard box is to reverse-engineer a three-dimensional epiphany. And to have to crush one is pure torture. So I wrote to Gail Hepworth, who along with her twin sister, Amy, represents the seventh generation to run the farm, and I asked who designs their boxes. She sent me to Rich Croce, who works for a packaging company in New Paltz called Viking Industries. Rich said that he had never before received fan

mail for his boxes, but that seems surprising to me since Gail says Rich's boxes are responsible for growing their business tenfold! That's all. Come watch me crush boxes someday.

Metaphorically yours,

Taylor Mali