

Menomonie Market Food Co-op is Menomonie's only community-owned grocery store and full service deli. Our focus is on providing local, organic, and sustainable products.

THE MORSEL

MENOMONIE MARKET FOOD CO-OP'S SOURCE FOR THE LATEST NEWS

To read even more store, community, and industry news from our co-op, visit [MMFC.COOP/MORSEL](https://www.mmfc.coop/morsel).

MAR/APR 2021 ISSUE

STORE NEWS

TEXT ALERTS

You can now get deals and more texted directly to you by texting [MMFC](https://www.mmfc.coop/privacy) to 900-900. Terms and privacy policy can be found at [MMFC.COOP/PRIVACY](https://www.mmfc.coop/privacy). You may receive up to 8 messages per month. Message and data rates may apply. Reply **STOP** to end.

COMMUNITY NEWS

FARM GRANT UPDATE

The 2021 Fund Our Foodshed comprised of Menomonie Market Food Co-op owners, board members, and staff has officially been formed. Applications will open in March, and winners will be selected by the committee this spring.

INDUSTRY NEWS

GARDENING TOOLS

New this year, our Center Store Team will be transforming our currently unused seating area into a Spring Gardening Shop filled with tools, seeds, and other products you'll need to start planting. Cont'd on [INDUSTRY](#), p. 5.

GIVING BACK TO OUR COMMUNITY

Menomonie Market Food Co-op's General Manager, Crystal Halvorson, shares an update on how your Round Up dollars were used to give back to healthcare workers

Gratitude is contagious.

The show of support coming from our customers over the last year has been tremendous—it is the single thing that keeps us going, always has been. The way you show up for us—making masks, shopping big, using curbside, sending treats and notes, being engaged, asking after staff—all of this means that we have the love and energy in our bodies to bounce it back into the world.

This year, we commissioned Co-op Hero mugs from local potter John Thomas for staff at both Menomonie Market Food Co-op and Just Local Food Co-op—a special show of gratitude for their heroic work in 2020. Wonderful John decided to have us design a few that said “Healthcare Hero” too. He made forty-eight mugs and offered them free of charge to us to deploy. That gratitude grew even bigger when we asked our customers to round up at the register to add to the mugs.

On Tuesday, March 1st, we delivered huge boxes of healthy snacks to each of the twenty break rooms at Mayo Health Systems in Menomonie, and we deployed forty-eight beautiful gift baskets featuring the mugs, healthy snacks, and self-care items around the community. The connection warmed us right up!

Something as small as rounding up to the next even dollar at the register can have really big effects—and not just this week for our friends in health care.

Our Round Up for Good program is used to fund three programs:

- **DOUBLE DOLLARS PROGRAM:** Any Wisconsin Foodshare participant can purchase fruits and vegetables at Menomonie Market Food Co-op with their EBT card, and receive up to \$10 in credit toward free fruits and vegetables on their next visit. Through this program, we are stretching food dollars for folks that need it, and we're getting more local and organic fresh food into bellies in our area.

- **FUND OUR FOODSHED GRANT PROGRAM:** Every year we award grants to local farmers and producers for on-farm projects that increase efficiency or sustainability, bring new products to market, or make their work safer. This year we are about to kick off our fourth grant cycle, and we will likely award \$10,000 in grant monies.

- **MENOMONIE MARKET COOPERATIVE COMMUNITY FUND:** Menomonie Market Food Co-op participates in an investment fund that is used by cooperatives across the country for growth and expansion. The interest we earn from this fund is donated to local nonprofits in our area, helping to build co-ops nationally while giving locally.

Keep doing the little things when you can—curbside from your favorite restaurant, smile hard through the mask—those gestures add up to something pretty special and really mean a lot!

Article by Crystal Halvorson, General Manager



PICTURED: THE GIFT BASKETS OUR STAFF DROPPED OFF FOR HEALTHCARE WORKERS

CO-OP TRIVIA

TAKE A GUESS

Each month, we post a new trivia question on social media, and the first person to guess correctly wins a \$10 gift card! Watch for this month's question on our Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter profiles.

MEET THE LOCALS

SEED SAVERS EXCHANGE

Read an article about Seed Savers Exchange, a producer and distributor of heirloom seeds in Norway, Iowa, to learn more about their business's history. Cont'd on [INDUSTRY](#), pg 5.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

CSA FARMS

Meet the local farms that offer a variety of Community Supported Agriculture shares, many of which can be picked up at our co-op throughout the year. Cont'd on [COMMUNITY](#), pg 4.



YOUR IMPACT ON DEUTSCH FAMILY FARM

In February, we partnered with Just Local Food Co-op in Eau Claire to host a huge Deutsch Family Farm pork sale in hopes of helping them prevent further losses caused by the pandemic. Thanks to our community's support, 3,000 lbs of pork were sold in just over a day.

3K LBS OF PORK PURCHASED IN 31 HOURS

OUTSTANDING INDEPENDENT AWARD

We're excited to announce that Menomonie Market Food Co-op was named a winner in the 2021 Outstanding Independent Contest hosted by the Progressive Grocer, the largest media organization in the grocery industry. We were recognized for our pandemic response, community outreach, and focus on supporting local vendors.

MORE NEWS ONLINE

Did you know you can now find all of the stories included in our newsletter on our website? Our blog has been redesigned, and all new articles are added monthly!

View it now by pointing your smartphone's camera at this QR code!





PICTURED: A GARDENER PLANTING A PLANT START

TIPS FROM A MASTER GARDENER

Gardening takes study, a plan, and toil, but you can't beat the rewards when you're eating your bounty! Every year brings lessons learned. Here are some tips from my experience to get you started:

1. FIND GOOD GARDENING RESOURCES. The book I have used and gifted most often is *The Vegetable Gardener's Bible* by Edward C. Smith because the author believes in the W-O-R-D method: Wide Rows, Organic Methods, Raised Beds (Border or Not), and Deep Soil. Any other gardening method will take even more due diligence from you, but they are all worth the adventure! This book is also easy to read and is great for looking up topics. The techniques and tips are also very easy to follow. If you pick up a copy, the page numbers listed in this article are from this source.

Other great resources include your local extension office, your local community garden and its volunteers (including Master Gardeners like myself), and Wisconsin Public Radio's *Garden Talk with Larry Meiller* as well as other archived shows.

2. PLAN YOUR GARDEN. Once you've found good resources and have decided on a gardening method, the next step is planning out how you will garden and what you will plant. I recommend keeping these tips in mind while you're doing so, no matter what method you use:

A. PLAN YOUR GARDEN TO SCALE IN WIDE ROWS WITH TALLER PLANTS ON THE NORTH SIDE. Planning to scale gives you more information each year and keeps you focused so you don't overbuy. You can find several examples of these plans (like the kitchen garden on pgs. 47, 49) to see how they change during the season. I also recommend planting in wide rows instead of growing in skinny rows with additional pathways so you can grow more, and placing taller plants on the north side of your garden to prevent them from shadowing other plants.

B. PLAN TO PLANT WHAT YOU EAT. When deciding what to plant, this is what's most important because it will reduce waste. But you should also consider:

- **CROP ROTATION AND PLANT FAMILIES:** Crop rotation (pg. 45) prevents pest problems and disease, and researching plant families (pg. 40) will help you learn how they grow.
- **COMPANION PLANTING:** Some plants do better in the presence of others, and some pairings should be avoided (pgs. 40-41).
- **SUCCESSION PLANTING:** Information about this can be found on pg. 43 on. For example, after early lettuce and spinach crops, plant carrots and beets for fall and early winter harvests. Many spring crops can also be planted in mid July.

If you're planning to use the W-O-R-D Method (similar to the Lasagna Method), here are specific tips for that:

A. IF YOU'RE PLANTING VEGETABLES, TRENCH BOTH SIDES.

B. MARK OUT YOUR GARDEN AREA. I recommend 3-4 ft wide beds and 1.5 ft walkway trenches. I also made mine 25 ft long in our community garden.

C. CUT THE SOD. Flip it over, or take a garden fork or broad fork and loosen the subsoil before replacing the cut sod upside down.

D. LAYER WITH ORGANIC MATTER. You can use soil from the trenches or bring in mowed leaves, com-

post, peat, manure (broken down for 2 years), wood ash, dried pine needles, grass clippings. Repeat up to 18 inches high if possible, and flatten with a garden rake.

E. PLANT RIGHT AWAY. You don't need to wait.

F. PUT DOWN SEVERAL SHEETS OF NEWSPAPER IN THE PATHWAY AND TOP WITH STRAW. When these materials break down, they can be added to your garden and replaced with fresh newspaper and straw.

3. KNOW YOUR PLANTS. Once you've selected your garden and decided what you're planting, it's important to learn more about your plants. You need to know:

A. WHAT THEIR PLANTING AND MATURITY DATES ARE. You can use the dates listed on the seed packets as guidelines.

B. HOW MUCH SUN THEY NEED. Most plants need 6-8 hours minimum of sunlight.

C. WHERE THEY SHOULD BE PLANTED. Many herbs can grow almost anywhere, for example. And some plants like a little shade; that's why lettuce planted near trellised cucumbers or pole beans grow so well.

D. WHEN THEY SHOULD BE PLANTED. Cool-season plants are planted in spring and fall because they don't thrive in July heat; examples include lettuces, radishes, spinach, peas, and beets. Sow these as soon as the soil can be worked. Some will bolt (flower and be bitter) if you don't harvest in a timely manner or if conditions aren't right (i.e. temperature or water). Most plants also need warm soil to germinate and grow; traditionally, Memorial Day Weekend fits the bill for us in Zone 4.

E. HOW THEY SHOULD BE PLANTED. For first-time gardeners, I recommend direct seeding (for many plants) and planting from starts. Planting your own seedlings takes special equipment and considerations for success. Our co-op will get plant starts in late April or early May—cold-weather crops and then warm-weather crops, all hardened off (i.e. used to outside temperatures) and ready to plant. Plant the wrong plant too early, though, without protection, and you could kill it.

If you're planting transplants, buy ones without flowers or fruit because you want energy for root growth. Plant them on a cloudy day if possible, and make sure to loosen the roots if they're root-bound.

F. HOW TO WATER, WEED, & THIN THEM. Educating yourself on how to water, thin, and weed your garden is crucial! In general, 1 inch of water per week is a good rule of thumb—more if hot and/or windy. Wilting plants are stressed plants, and they can become stunted, diseased, or even die. Thinning will produce stronger, larger, and tastier crops. And weeds will leach nutrients that your plants need; they can also harbor pests and disease.

4. PREPARE THE SOIL. Once you've learned everything you need to know about your plants, the next step is prepping your soil for planting. Here's what I recommend:

A. LOOK FOR LOAM. When finding the right soil, this is what you need, not clay or sand. It should be dark and hold together a little in your fist.

B. TEST YOUR SOIL. This will give you useful information in the long run. Check your local extension of-

STORE

THE GARDENING ISSUE



Place an order from our deli's

EASTER MENU

ORDERS ARE DUE BY MAR. 31ST

New this Easter, our Deli is offering a special menu for carryout now through March 31st! Orders are due by midnight that Wednesday, and they will be available for in-store or curbside pickup Friday, April 2nd or Saturday, April 3rd.

EASTER MENU

Dinner

Ham Dinner \$74.99
Glazed Ham from Deutsch Family Farm served with Scalloped Potatoes, Thyme Roasted Carrots, and Creamed Corn

Lamb Dinner \$79.99
Lamb from Lambalot Acres roasted in Mint Sauce and served with Scalloped Potatoes, Thyme Roasted Carrots, and Creamed Corn

Vegetarian Greek Dinner \$64.99
Spinach Pie served with Greek Vegetables, Falafel, and Tzatziki Sauce

Add-Ons

Garden Side Salad \$9.99

Deviled Eggs \$9.99

Croissants \$9.99

Blueberry Lemon Crisps \$11.99

Cinnamon Rolls \$9.99

ORDER ONLINE AT MMFC.COOP/DELI/EASTER

fice for tools, bags, etc. They usually cost about \$15.

C. DON'T TILL YOUR BEDS. I do not advocate for doing this because it breaks down the soil structure (all the networking underground that you don't see), which will take time to rebuild. It also chops up your worms.

D. WORK IN SOIL AMENDMENTS. Do so in the spring, fall, and/or after a crop, and don't use pesticides. Fall is the best time; you can get a lot for free then.

E. USE GREEN MANURE OR COVER CROPS. These prevent weeds and can enrich the soil between plantings or over the winter. I use annual rye in late fall.

5. MAINTAIN YOUR GARDEN, HARVEST, & REPEAT! Once your crops are planted, make sure to water, weed, and thin them as needed. Once they're harvested, containers, tools, and cages should be cleaned and sterilized with 70-100% isopropyl alcohol at the end of each year.

And as you find success with gardening, look into topics such as extending the season (tunnels, hoop houses, cold frames, etc), growing your own plant starts, and others to continue developing your skills.

Article by Karen Schleis, Front End Team Member & Barron County Master Gardener Volunteer



BULK SALE COMING IN APRIL

We're celebrating Earth Day with a Bulk Sale! From Wednesday, April 21st through Sunday, April 25th, all products in our Bulk Department will be 20% off for everyone in-store and online while supplies last. The discount will automatically apply at checkout and will stack on Co+op and Owner Deals.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Products that will be eligible for the 20% discount include:

- Bulk Coffees, Cocoas, & Teas
- Bulk Snacks
- Bulk Rice, Whole Grains, Beans, & Seeds
- Bulk Baking Ingredients
- Bulk Herbs & Spices
- Bulk Sweeteners & Spreads
- Bulk Storage & Supplies

HOW TO SHOP

There are two ways to shop this sale:

- In-store
- Online for Curbside Pickup

However you choose to take advantage of this discount, we recommend shopping or ordering as early as possible to ensure all of the products you want are in stock. Some may sell out.

OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS



RICK REMINGTON

President
rick@board.mmfc.coop



MARIANN HOLM

Vice President
mariann@board.mmfc.coop



SUSAN KRAHN

Secretary & Treasurer
susan@board.mmfc.coop



GARY JOHNSON

Board Member
gary@board.mmfc.coop



STEVE HANSON

Board Member
steve@board.mmfc.coop



BARB BUTTON

Board Member
barb@board.mmfc.coop



SARAH PAQUETTE

Board Member
sarah@board.mmfc.coop

INTERESTED IN ATTENDING A BOARD MEETING?

UPCOMING MEETINGS: 3/24, 4/28

Board meetings are scheduled from 5:00pm-7:00pm on the fourth Wednesday of every month.

All board meetings, except for closed sessions, are open to owners. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, all meetings are held virtually via Zoom. If you'd like an invitation to a Zoom meeting, please email crystal@mmfc.coop.

Meeting dates subject to change due to holidays and other events.



PICTURED: RACING HEART FARM EXPLAINING CSA SHARES AT OUR 2020 CSA FAIR

HOW WE'RE GROWING OUR ENDS THIS SPRING

Board President Rick Remington shares insight into how our co-op will be meeting our Ends this season

I saw a woolly bear cross the road during a warm day in late February. Will it be an early Spring? Is it climate change? Whatever the reason, I take it as a sign of good fortune and a harbinger of things to come. With the sun getting higher, the days getting longer, and the temps getting warmer, Spring is a time for optimism (and gardening).

Our cooperative shines year-round, and Spring is no exception. This Spring, we bring our Ends to life through support for our local farmers and food system, providing local access to food, social interaction and environment, and by giving our owners a sense of belonging and voice in how they eat, shop, and live.

With COVID-19 safety measures still in place, our indoor dining area has been seasonally transformed to serve a number of needs. This Spring, the Menomonie Market garden center will occupy the space, giving our owners and patrons access to the seeds, soil, and support they need to grow the perfect garden. Ask around, and there's no shortage of expertise and opinions on how to do it.

For those whose thumbs are not quite so green, our cooperative carries the best produce in town, right next door to our outstanding Menomonie Farmers Market. Both offer an abundance

of locally produced goods. You can't just stop at one without visiting the other!

Finally, get to know your farmer a little closer by purchasing a share or membership from a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm. At Menomonie Market Food Co-op, selling good food is only part of the equation. To achieve our Ends in a bigger way, we use our voice to make connections between the local farmers who grow and raise food and the people who want it. This Spring, we'll make an extra effort to get the word out about the CSAs serving the Chippewa Valley and how to connect with them.

From the perspective of the board of directors, we couldn't be more pleased with the impact we're having in our community. As we've grown, we've never forgotten our roots. For Menomonie Market Food Co-op, our growth is a means to better achieve our Ends. Enjoy our gateway to gardening. Our celebration of Spring begins now.

What's my favorite thing to grow? Cowpeas, garlic, buttery wax beans, and ever-changing varieties of winter squash.

Article by Rick Remington, Board President



STAFF SPOTLIGHT

NAME: Crystal H.

POSITION: General Manager

LENGTH OF TIME EMPLOYED: 17 Years

ABOUT CRYSTAL: When Crystal began in 2004, Menomonie Market Food Co-op was a tiny store where people were literally rubbing elbows when they shopped. Flash forward 17 years, we have settled into our current location and are projecting \$5 million in sales this year. Under her leadership, the co-op has become bigger than the store, strengthening our local foodshed by increasing sales of local products, fighting food inse-

curity, creating a farm grant program, and collaborating with Just Local Food Co-op in Eau Claire. Crystal is not just a great leader—she's innovated store operations, from implementing open book management to helping the Board of Directors adopt the Policy Governance model they use today.

It's been a tough year, but instead of merely surviving, we are thriving. The co-op has worked to keep sales strong and keep our community safe. But that is the story of Crystal's tenure here, overcoming challenge after challenge to build something great that serves our triple bottom line: People, Planet, Profit. Thanks, Crystal, for 17 years of hard work paired with care for your community!

DON'T MISS THIS DEAL

CHEESE SALE

March 24th-28th

20% OFF ALL CHEESE FOR EVERYONE
IN-STORE & ONLINE

From March 24th-28th, everyone can save 20% on every product in our Cheese Department both in-store and online while supplies last. Discount will automatically apply at checkout.

ELIGIBLE PRODUCTS INCLUDE:

Sliced Cheeses

Eligible brands and types of slices cheeses include Rochdale Farms Cooperative Cheddar, Vern's Cheese Swiss, Follow Your Heart Dairy-Free Pepper Jack, and 20+ others.

Cheese Blocks

Eligible brands and types of cheese blocks include Eau Galle Cheese Italian, Sartori Cheese BellaVitano Merlot, and 90+ others.

Shredded & Crumbled Cheeses

Eligible brands and types of shredded and crumbled cheeses include Organic Valley Mozzarella, and 25+ others.

Cheese Curds & Sticks

Eligible brands and types of cheese curds and sticks include Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery Cheddar Cheese Curds and 5+ others.

Cheese Dips & Spreads

Eligible brands and types of cheese dips and spreads include La Reyna Queso Dip, Carr Valley Cheese Spreads, and others.

Dairy-Free Cheeses

Eligible dairy-free cheese brands include Violife, Daiya, Follow Your Heart, and others.

START YOUR SHOPPING LIST AT SHOP.MMFC.COOP

BUY A CSA SHARE FROM THESE LOCAL FARMS

These are the area farms that offer CSA shares for purchase each year



PICTURED: RACING HEART FARM'S PACKING A CSA SHARE DELIVERY

If you're interested in signing up for a share from a local CSA farm, there are several in Western Wisconsin! These are a few. Several of them even deliver their shares to our store for pickup throughout the season.



BLUE OX FARM
Lamb Shares • Wheeler, WI
Pick Up at our Store: No

Caleb and Lauren raise a herd of grass-fed lambs using rotational grazing practices on their land in Wheeler, Wisconsin. They offer lamb shares for purchase on their website year-round, with multiple pickup locations available in Wisconsin and Minnesota.



EB RANCH
Multiple Shares • Ridgeland, WI
Pick Up at our Store: No

Erin and Bob raise a small herd of endangered San Clemente goats, as well as chickens, ducks, and guineas. They offer goat milk soap shares, as well as multiple meat shares that are available for purchase online and can be picked up at their farm in Ridgeland.



MARY DIRTY FACE FARM
Fruit Shares • Menomonie, WI
Pick Up at our Store: Yes

Rachel, Anton, and their two children grow certified organic fruits, including apples, berries, and more. They offer full fruit shares and apple shares for purchase on their website in early spring. Both are available for pickup from Menomonie Market Food Co-op.



RACING HEART FARM
Vegetable Shares • Colfax, WI
Pick Up at our Store: Yes

Les and Els are first-generation farmers who grow a variety of vegetables using the no-till method. They offer vegetable shares for purchase online in early spring, which can be picked up from our co-op.



WAGON WHEEL GARDENS
Multiple Shares • Woodville, WI
Pick Up at our Store: Yes

Wagon Wheel Gardens is a family farm located in Woodville, Wisconsin. They offer vegetable, fruit, egg, and honey shares available for purchase by calling 715-441-4808. All can be picked up at our co-op.



WINNOWBURROW FARM
Flower Shares • Colfax, WI
Pick Up at our Store: Yes

Bonnie runs this small, sustainable family farm and full-serve floral design business. She offers multiple flower shares that are available for purchase online and can be picked up from our co-op.

NOT AN OWNER OF OUR CO-OP YET?

Become one today to get access to all of these awesome perks and be part of our co-op community!



Monthly Owner Deals



Exclusive Sales & Coupons



Bulk & Case Discounts



Online Shopping List Builder



Online Order History



Online Virtual Wallet



Declining Balance Spending Tool



One Vote for our Board



Admission to Board Meetings



Admission to Annual Meeting



Mailed Co+op Deals Flyers



Ownership of a Thriving Business

VISIT MMFC.COOP/OWNERSHIP FOR MORE DETAILS OR ASK A CASHIER ABOUT OWNERSHIP ON YOUR NEXT VISIT

GIVE THE GIFT OF OWNERSHIP

Did you know that you can gift an ownership share of Menomonie Market Food Co-op to a friend or family member? It's true! Stop by our front desk in-store or visit MMFC.COOP/OWNERSHIP to learn how.





PICTURED: AN EXAMPLE OF OUR LOCAL SIGNS ON SHELVES IN-STORE

WAYS TO SUPPORT LOCAL FARMS YEAR-ROUND

In February, we hosted a huge pork bundle sale with Just Local Food Co-op to help Deutsch Family Farm prevent potential losses caused by the pandemic. We had a week to meet our goal, and to our surprise, we sold 3,000 pounds of pork in just 31 hours. You—our incredible community—really stepped up and helped us support this local farm in a time of need, and we are all so grateful.

Since the bundles were so popular and they're such a great opportunity for everyone to support local meat vendors on a bigger scale, we're exploring ways to make them a permanent offering at both stores. Until then, even just making small changes in your buying habits can really impact not just our meat suppliers but all of our local farmers and producers year-round. Here are a few ways to do so:

- **PURCHASE A CSA SHARE:** Buying a share from a local CSA farm is one of the best ways to support them because it ensures 100% of the dollar goes directly to the farmers. You can find a list of several CSA farms in our area on PG. 4.
- **SHOP AT LOCAL FARMERS MARKETS:** Both the Menomonie and Eau Claire farmers markets are great places to meet local farmers and producers in person and buy produce, meat, flowers, and other goods directly from them.
- **BUY LOCAL BRANDS:** One in four products we carry is from a local producer. By choosing to buy a locally sourced product instead of a national brand, you keep your food dollars in our community. Just look for the teal Local tags on shelves in-store or use the Local filter online to find them.
- **ROUND UP AT THE REGISTER:** Typically in March and April, all of the money raised through Round Up for Good goes directly to the Fund Our Foodshed Farm Grant Program. Even donating just a few pennies makes a big difference.

Article by Kendall Williams, Marketing Manager

MEET THE LOCALS: SEED SAVERS EXCHANGE

Learn more about Seed Savers Exchange, one of our local seed suppliers in Norway, Iowa

Located at Heritage Farm on 890 beautiful acres north of Decorah, IA, Seed Savers Exchange has been preserving heirloom seeds since 1975. Their story began in Missouri with founders Diane Ott Whealy and Kent Whealy after Diane's grandfather passed on seeds of his that originally were brought from Bavaria in 1884, Grandpa Ott's Morning Glory and German Pink Tomatoes.



PICTURED: SEED SAVERS EXCHANGE'S FARM

These became the first two varieties in the Seed Savers collection.

Community members quickly learned about the organization and a small group of concerned gardeners began saving their own seeds to donate. Stories and seeds continued getting passed from generation to generation, likely saving many varieties of plants from extinction along the way.

Today, Seed Savers has over 13,000 members and preserves over 20,000 plant varieties. They specialize

in preserving rare, heirloom, and open-pollinated plants which are able to regenerate themselves each year and withstand disease and other harmful environmental issues more easily. Their focus is on preserving and sharing the large collection of seeds they've collected over the years to ensure a secure food system that can adapt to new climate conditions and diseases.

Saving seeds isn't just for gardening year-to-year, it is also an important part of maintaining a diverse agricultural system, which we are losing more of every year. According to Seed Savers' website, we've lost over 75% of the world's edible plant varieties just in the last century. We're used to having endless access to food, but we've learned throughout history that disease can easily and unexpectedly take out an entire food species. Take the Irish Potato Famine as an example; a new fungus was introduced and the primary source of food in Ireland was



PICTURED: OUR SEED SAVERS EXCHANGE DISPLAY

wiped out in 1845. Regenerating plants and species in different climates conditions and strengthens the seeds and allows them to more easily adapt to changes.

Whether it is your first year or 50th year gardening, Seed Savers Exchange is a great resource. Find tips & tricks about all aspects of growing plants, soil health, planning, and more on their website at SEEDSAVERS.ORG/LEARN.

Article by Becca Schoenborn, Outreach & Education Coordinator



PICTURED: SPECIAL ORDER CATALOGS

NEW! SPECIAL ORDER SEEDS AND GARDENING SUPPLIES IN-STORE

New this year, our Center Store Team has transformed our empty seating area into a spring gardening display—similar to our Holiday Gift Shop—in March. This area will now house the seeds we've stocked from local vendors Plum Creek Seeds and Seed Savers Exchange, as well as a selection of popular gardening tools and supplies from Down to Earth Home & Garden Supply in

Oregon. In addition to showcasing products, we've also set up a new special order station where you can flip through the Plum Creek Seeds, Seeds Savers Exchange, and Down to Earth Home & Garden Supply catalogs. Our hope is that by doing so, you'll be able to find new products we don't carry in-store but can bring in for you.

Orders can be placed in-store only by filling out the slips of paper at the special order station and returning them to our Customer Services Team at the front desk. Have questions about what's available or how to order? Contact our Merchandising Manager Joe at joe@mmfc.coop.

FIND THE NEW DISPLAY IN-STORE NOW



ASK THE RADISH

Menomonie Market Food Co-op answers a few of your CSA-related questions at our store

Throughout the year, we receive questions about community-supported agriculture. These are some of our most popular ones with answers directly from us.

Q: What is community-supported agriculture?

A: Community-Supported Agriculture, called CSAs for short and also known as crop-sharing,

more helpful to farms because it allows them to receive their income at the beginning of the season. It also guarantees their income instead of hoping a buyer purchases their products at some point. And it cuts out the middleman, ensuring that 100% of the dollar goes directly to the farm instead of part going to retailers or distributors.

Q: How much do shares cost?

A: The cost differs from farm to farm.

Q: What are the different types of CSA shares?

A: There are many different types of CSA shares. Some available locally include fruits, vegetables, meats, soaps, eggs, and flowers.

Q: Can I join late or mid-season?

A: Not usually unless shares haven't sold out. Plus, it's best to sign up at the beginning of the season to take full advantage of your share.

Q: What if I don't pick up my share?

A: If your share is not picked up by you or a friend, it will likely be donated. Otherwise, you can contact the farmer, and they may be able to arrange farm pickup.

Q: What if there's a crop failure? Do I get my money back?

A: Not usually. When you buy a share, you are agreeing to "shared risk," meaning if there's a crop failure you won't receive a refund. Typically the farm will instead substitute other crops that did grow.

Have a question you'd like us to answer? Leave us a note on a comment card available in our front lobby or send an email to info@mmfc.coop. Our staff will reply as soon as they can, and you may even see your question here in a future issue of our newsletter.

Have a question related to Community Supported Agriculture that you'd like us to answer? Send us an email, or fill out a customer comment card in our lobby.

is a system that directly connects farms with customers by allowing them to subscribe to their harvest before the season begins.

Q: How do I sign up for a CSA share?

A: Each CSA farm offers a different process for signing up. We recommend reaching out to the farms directly or picking up a CSA brochure in-store for more information.

Q: Where and how can I pick up my CSA shares?

A: Our co-op is a drop-off location for several area CSA farms, so most can be picked up at our store each week by coming to the front desk or calling us from the parking lot.

Q: What makes a CSA share unique from just buying local produce?

A: While buying local produce from our store is important, purchasing a CSA share is even

PRODUCTS WE'RE CURRENTLY LOVING

8 STAFF PICKS YOU CAN'T MISS FOR SPRINGTIME

The snow is beginning to melt, and temperatures are starting to rise ever so slightly. That can only mean one thing... Spring is finally on its way to the Chippewa Valley! In this list, our staff has rounded up a few of our favorite products that will be available in-store and online this time of year. Get them while you can!



DOWN TO EARTH WATERING CANS: These new watering cans come in 1L, 5L, and 8L sizes and two colors—green and blue.

RENEE'S GARDEN COVER CROP SEEDS: This vigorous cover crop chokes out weeds, holds and protects soil structure, and builds soil fertility.

FARMSTEAD GREENHOUSE HANGING FLOWER BASKETS: These gorgeous locally sourced flowers arrive at our store in April or early May and are the perfect way to beautify your front porch for spring.

FRIENDS OF MENOMONIE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOOKS: Each week, the staff at Menomonie Public Library restocks a special selection of books curated with co-op customers in mind, some of which are gardening-related. Find them in-store by Meat.

JIFFY PLASTIC PLANT TRAYS: These new 11"x22" trays can be used as the base for your indoor seed starting.

PLUM CREED SEEDS & SEED SAVERS EXCHANGE PACKETS: These heirloom seeds are locally sourced. We carry a wide variety of packets, and others may be available for special order.

GOOD ROOT GROWERS PLANT STARTS: These locally sourced seedlings usually arrive in late April or early May. We stock a variety of popular herbs and other plants.

COWSMO COMPOST: This compost is locally sourced and organic, and it will improve the texture of your soil.

EXCLUSIVE OWNER COUPON

View our monthly Owner Deals in-store or online at SHOP.MMFC.COOP.

owner deal

5% OFF WINE, BEER, & SPIRITS

Exclusively for Owners In-Store Only
Valid Mar 17-20, 2021 or Apr 14-17, 2021

Owners get 5% off all products in our Beer, Wine, & Spirits department. Must show coupon at checkout in-store to redeem. May not be applied to special orders or previous orders. No cash value. Valid on all beer, wine, and spirits purchased in a single trip either Mar. 17-20, 2021 OR Apr. 14-17, 2021. Limit one coupon per owner account.

Not an owner yet? Get access to this exclusive deal and up to 100 others each month by becoming one today! Learn more about ownership, all of its awesome perks, and how to sign up at MMFC.COOP/OWNERSHIP.

View this newsletter's comic by picking up a print copy of The Morsel in-store on your next grocery run.