

willy street co•op

READER

A PUBLICATION OF WILLY STREET CO-OP, MADISON, WI

VOLUME 52 • ISSUE 9 • September 2026

TIPI PRODUCE:
A LEGACY OF COOPERATION



EAT 
LOCAL
MONTH
SEPTEMBER 2026

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READER

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The Willy Street Co-op *Reader* is the monthly communications link among the Co-op Board, staff, and Owners. It provides information about the Co-op's services and business as well as about cooking, nutrition, health, sustainable agriculture, and more. Views and opinions expressed in the *Reader* do not necessarily represent those of the Co-op's Directors, staff, or Ownership. Willy Street Co-op has not evaluated the claims made by advertisers. Acceptance of advertising does not indicate endorsement of the product or service offered. Articles are presented for informational purposes only. Before taking action, you should always consult a professional for advice. Articles may be reprinted with permission from the editor.

Submissions: Ad space reservations due by the 10th of the month before publication; artwork due the 15th of the month before publication.

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3 WILLY NORTH
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The Board meets 8–10 times a year, meetings are held at the Central Office, 6:30–8:30pm. Owners are invited to attend during the open session of the BoD meeting. See www.willystreet.coop/events and select the Board category for details.

September 23
Oct. 6, Annual Meeting

October 28
December 9

EMAIL: BOARD@WILLYSTREET.COOP
ALL-BOARD@WILLYSTREET.COOP
(includes the GM, Executive Assistant, and Board Administrator)

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3 LOCAL FOODS TEND TO BE FRESHER AND MORE NUTRITIOUS

EAT LOCAL MONTH



SEARCHING FOR PRODUCTS

I was looking for a way to search your products to see if you carry Barbara’s Cheese Puffs. I could not find a search engine on the site did I miss it?

Willy Street currently does not have a customer utility to search in store stock levels. We do have an online shopping site that catalogs most of the products we offer from the North store's catalog. You can access that by navigating to shop.willystreet.coop. We appreciate your feedback and idea to add a product search feature to our website. -Forrest Herschelman, IT Director

EMPANADAS

I just had a vegan samosa empanada (my first ever) from the hot bar and it was incredible. So flavorful, so pillowy, yum. Thanks!

So glad you liked it! These are one of my favorites too! -Nicholas Oconnor, Director of Prepared Foods

LOCAL PRODUCE

I notice when I buy produce it says product of another country etc. I realize to have variety, that’s necessary. How do I ensure that when foods are in season I can buy from local farmers? There seems to be a lot not from local farmers. Also, are those products from ethical farms in other countries? How do I know if they are?

When local products are in season and available to the Willy Street Co-op, you can identify those items by the local icon on the product sign. Availability of local items is seasonal, and we are currently offering over 100 local items in the Produce department. We expect, as the season progresses, to have upwards of 150 local items. The certified organic products we offer from "other" countries meet all USDA organic rules, and they are often "fair trade" certified. I don't see the likelihood of these farms not being ethical any greater than a large scale certified organic domestic farm or a small local farm. If you have any questions as to whether or not a product is available locally, or how to identify which products are currently from local growers, don't hesitate to ask. -Andy Johnston, Produce Category Manager

COCA-COLA

I am disappointed to learn that the Co-op sells Coca-Cola products. The fact that Coke is sugar, water and caffeine is the least of my concerns. Murders in Central America of pro-union activists, and the extraction of saccharin from coal tar should be enough reason to boycott Coca-Cola products. To learn more about the many contributions to society by Coca-Cola, read Citizen Coke by Burt Elmore. Then ask yourself if the Co-op should sell Coke.

I appreciate you sharing your concerns about us carrying Coca-Cola products. We have been selling Coca-Cola and Pepsi products at our stores since just after we opened Willy North in August of 2016. We changed

our product policy at that time to better serve our growing community and to reflect a more inclusive perspective as to what we would be willing to carry. We are both a natural foods store and a neighborhood store, so excluding products that our Owners want us to provide felt inconsiderate. I appreciate you voicing your opinion. Many might not know about Coca-Cola's operations and practices. -Dean Kallas, Grocery Category Manager

PROTEIN

Hi! Been getting older, and doc recommended more protein. I'd like to buy some protein powder to up my numbers, but with such a wide variety of powders and flavors and textures, it can be hard to decide; to boot, pretty much EVERYTHING comes in a huge plastic tub. Is there any chance you could start offering an option in the bulk foods? That means I could at least try a variety without devoting myself to a large tub/flavor/brand that I wouldn't like.

We currently carry our private label 'Show Me The Whey Vanilla Protein Powder' in our bulk departments. Other than that, I have not seen bulk offerings from the other brands we carry. Some of the brands offer single serve packets, which is a nice way to try it before buying a canister with 20-30 servings. If you like whey protein, I highly recommend the Ancient Nutrition Vanilla (also available in chocolate) Whey Protein Powder (available at all three Willy Street Co-op stores). I've tried many protein powders over the years and this one is by far my favorite. A lot of protein powders can have a gritty and/or thick texture, but not this one. It's smooth and the flavor is delicious. I put it in my smoothie every morning! -Sara Berg, General Merchandise Category Manager

PRIMAL KITCHEN MAYONNAISE

Primal kitchen chipotle lime mayonaise: Please stock larger size. Squeeze bottle is terrible!

Thanks for reaching out, unfortunately this product only comes in squeeze bottles now. There is a larger squeeze bottle but it was twice the price and given the shelf height available and pricing we decided that the smaller size would be the best fit for the area. -Nate Groth, Willy North Grocery Manager

TO GO CONTAINERS

I think you need to provide some way of identifying your soup, hot bar and salad bar purchases - markers perhaps - packages alone does not help the cashier. She /He would have to open, for example: I put turkey and some potatoes in a soup container. Plus I purchased some soup. So cashier had no idea that turkey was hot bar.

Generally customers put soup in the round containers and hot bar in the boxes. But over the years we've found that occasionally customers like to put their hot bar in the rounds too, so we have an option to use the rounds as hot bar or soup. It could be tough if we were to add another option of packaging solely for the soup, so usually our cashiers will just ask which one you have. Hope this helps! -Nicholas Oconnor, Director of Prepared Foods

POWDERED LAUNDRY

Hi! I found Country Save powdered laundry soap at Willy west — it’s great. Economical, it works, and it is truly fragrance free. Country Save makes more stuff, like a liquid laundry soap, dish soap, and a non-chlorine powdered bleach. Any chance Willy Street could carry more Country Save products?

Especially the liquid laundry soap? The fragrance free liquid laundry soaps you carry don’t work for us. And we’d like ot try this one. Thanks for considering!

Their powdered laundry detergent is the only product of theirs that is currently available to us through our suppliers. Thank you for letting us know what you are looking for in our stores! -Dean Kallas, Grocery Category Manager

ORGANIC SEEDLESS FRUIT

Just wondering how seedless watermelon or any seedless fruit can be organic???? What is done to the plant to make it seedless? Thank you.

Great question, with a simple answer. There are two main methods for producing seedless fruits and vegetables. The first is just by using cuttings to propagate clones, which is primarily used for grapes, citrus, and bananas. The other method is crossbreeding, where two entirely different varieties are crossed to produce a hybrid with the desired "seedless" characteristic. They are not "genetically modified," no chemicals are applied, and seeds aren't exposed to radiation. Essentially, it's a natural process that breeders use to produce varieties with 'desirable' characteristics, whether that be seedless, specific color, taste, plant hardiness, etc. I hope that answers your question. Have a great day! -Andy Johnston, Produce Category Manager

PARKING SIGNS

Surely there was another way to post parking rules along the west side of the coop. Affixing a row of signs that don't even match to the mural itself seems like a bad choice. It totally destroys the mural. Can you please remove the signs and plug and repaint the holes. Post using another method. Call in the tow truck a few times and I think the problem of non-coop parkrs will stop.

Thanks for taking the time to write in and share your concerns about the parking lot signage along the mural wall. We understand you feel like it detracts from the artwork. We are working to get the wall repaired from some prior damage and as we do so, we will take your feedback into consideration. -Katherine Kornely, Willy East Assistant Store Director

CHICKPEA WRAPS

There are never any chickpea wraps when I arrive, which is late morning or early afternoon during the week. The other vegan wraps are always well stocked. Can you please look into this?

Thank you for letting us know that this particular wrap has been out of stock. We will work with our team to ensure this product is available at the times you shop with us. If you would like to call ahead, or request this sandwich to be made fresh when you arrive, we are happy to make it to order for you. -Pete Silver, West Prepared Foods Manager

SPICE LABELS IN THE DELI

I just want to thank you for printing the letter about spice levels in deli- made products. We too have noticed salads and sandwiches getting hotter and spicier over the years, and some inconsistency from week to week in the same products. I think the suggestion to label them is a good one. However, the person tasting and labeling should be a spice-sensitive person. Everyone’s tolerances vary so much, and not every dish needs a peppery spice for it to taste good. Hot pepper condiments can also be easily added by the consumer. Thanks for adding your voice to the conversation. The method you've suggested was going to be my approach as well. Having a spice-sensitive person tasting will be the best way to get a read on this. -Nicholas Oconnor, Director of Prepared Foods

Have a comment or request you would like to share?

WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!



www.willystreet.coop/contact-us

SEPTEMBER 2!

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JUST ENOUGH!

Feel free to purchase just one stalk of celery or broccoli, one bunch of grapes, or one banana.

Produce Staff can cut a cabbage or cauliflower in half for you.

Some restrictions apply.
Feel free to inquire if you have a question!

willy street co-op



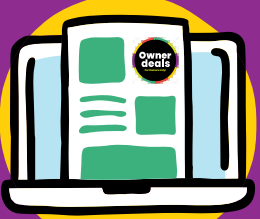
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By: Anya Firszt,
General Manager

On Wednesday, July 22, Corey Ruiz was shot and killed by a Madison Police Officer at Baldwin and Williamson Streets. Our newsletter had already gone to press, but we shared a statement on social media and our website that read, in part:

“We recognize that his death carries profound pain for his family, friends, witnesses, and members of our community. It also comes within a long and painful history of Black people losing their lives in encounters with law enforcement—a history that has created understandable grief, anger, and distrust here in Madison and across the country.

For over 50 years, this neighborhood has been our home. This tragedy occurred in a place that is at the heart of our story. This should be a safe place for everyone.”

In the days that followed, your Co-op provided supplies and opened Aubergine, our community space across from Willy East, for events to support people in the grieving and healing process. We also contributed to the Williamson Marquette Business Alliance’s Willy Street Business Relief Fund to help businesses and employees affected by the temporary closure of the intersection. We arranged counseling and time off for Willy East staff, and staff from our other stores stepped in to help at East. Now, we are talking with our managers to understand what went well, what we learned, and how we can improve.

There have been inquiries from some Owners and staff as to the financial impact of the events. Although we are currently under our sales budget, I’m confident we can recoup those sales by the end of our fiscal year in June 2027. I am hopeful that our neighboring businesses will be able to recover from the temporary closure

and reduced traffic. You can help those businesses by buying a gift card, having dinner in the neighborhood, and shopping at their stores, many of which were significantly impacted by recent events.

This moment cannot just pass us by. So many people in our community are dealing with homelessness, hunger, mental illness, and systemic racial disparities. We all deserve a place to call home, food in the pantry, access to healthcare, and systems around us that treat us equitably.

These are difficult, complex issues that require sustained work. It requires a willingness to see them, to lean into the conversation, to talk honestly about them, and to resist the temptation to look away when they are not directly affecting us. It’s easy to become accustomed to problems we do not know how to solve. Complexity can be an excuse for indifference. Each of us has both a circle of influence and a circle of concern. What can we do to be the change? History doesn’t have to repeat itself.

On a personal note, I join our community in grieving and hope we can turn the pain and difficult conversations into meaningful action towards a safer, kinder, and more equitable future.

EAT LOCAL MONTH

September is here, and with it comes another school year; cooler, crisper nights, and “Eat Local Month”. This month, we enthusiastically celebrate LOCAL food and the people who make it possible. Our stores usually have the biggest selection of local fruits and vegetables this time of year, including many types of apples, plums, pears, tomatoes, squashes, root vegetables, and pumpkins. Watch for the purple signs to spot LOCAL food options. When you buy local products, you help keep money in our community, which benefits everyone.

Check out the ad on pages 10 and 11 for more information.

FARM TO TABLE DINNER

The Co-op is hosting the third annual Farm to Table Dinner in partnership with FairShare CSA Coalition on Friday, September 11 from 5:30 - 8:00 pm. This event sells out every year, so make your reservation today! See details on page 7.

DON'T FORGET TO MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

In recognition of Labor Day, stores will close at 7 pm on Monday, September 7.

-Anya



By: Deb Shapiro, Board
Member

VOTE FOR YOUR CO-OP BOARD MEMBERS

Willy Street Co-op governance is based on 8 cooperative principles developed by the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) The second of these principles is “Democratic owner control,” or one Owner, one vote. Co-op Owners use their one vote to elect members of the Board of Directors, and the election is coming right up from October 1–21.

The Board functions by what is called policy governance. The way this works is that the Board creates and monitors policies and hires the General Manager. The General Manager is in charge of implementing the policies and hiring additional staff and managers who carry out the day-to-day operations of the Co-op. Policy governance means you can think of the Board as the body that really creates the foundation for the Co-op, and ensures the Co-op adheres to the values of our local community and the 8 cooperative principles.

The Board represents Co-op Owners because not only do Owners elect Board members, candidates for the Board must themselves be Co-op Owners in good standing. “In good standing” means that the Owner is up to date on equity payments and has made a purchase at the Co-op in the last year. The Board also works to ensure that a slate of well-qualified candidates is provided for Owners to choose from. Last month’s Board report outlined the process for applying to become a candidate for the Board. Applications are now closed but you can still check willystreet.coop/run-for-board on the website to see this process. In addition to being an Owner in good standing, Board candidates need to attend a Board meeting or information session that outlines how the Board works. They also answer application questions designed to help you, the Owner voters, get to know them.

In 2025, 5.7% of the Co-op’s more than 34,000 Owners, a little over 1,900 Owners, elected the new members of the Board. While this number might seem low, it’s actually not unusual for a large and well-established co-op like ours. However, last year’s numbers are a little down from previous elections. For example in 2022, just over 8% of Owners voted.

Voting for your Co-op Board members is easy. You can review candidate statements in next month’s issue, in the stores, or at the link in the letter (and email, if we have your email address) sent to you. You can vote by mail, online, by phone, or in the stores.

So use your voice! Let’s see if this year we can get out more Owner votes than 2025. Maybe we can even beat 2022!



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willy street co-op



Hear about what's new, what's done for the season, and what tastes best in our Produce department—sign up for our weekly Word on the Beet email!



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PRODUCE NEWS

Labor Day Hours

Monday, September 7th

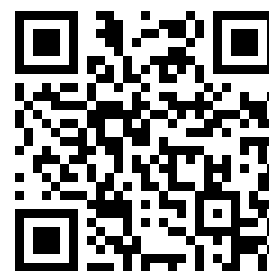
STORES CLOSING EARLY

@7pm



To register for classes and check out our refund policy, scan the QR code or go to:

www.wilzystreet.coop/events



EATING WITH OUR EYES: PRESENTATION, PLATING, AND GARNISHES



Location: Willy West Community Room
Tuesday, September 1, 5:30pm–7:30pm
Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson St.
Wednesday, September 23, 5:30pm–7:30pm
Ages: 12+; adult supervision required
Your Co-op's Own: Mike Tomaloff
Fee: \$30 for Owners; \$40 for non-owners
Capacity: 10

It may sound cliché, but we really do eat with our eyes. Do you ever wonder how the foods in cookbooks and fancy restaurants look so good? Chef Mike is spilling the fancy lookin' food tea and will demonstrate some simple techniques that will elevate the eye appeal of every course of your meal from appetizer to dessert. It's Eat Local month, too, so we'll focus on foods-less-traveled as well. On the menu: simple but elegant fruit mousse with a crispy tuile cookie, roasted chicken with tournéed vegetables, a cream soup garnished with fluted mushrooms, and a platter of hummus and crudite that will still look pretty good even after your guests tear into it. Mostly demonstration with limited hands-on opportunities. Recipes contain: milk, eggs, wheat.

TUSCAN FLAVORS: A FEAST OF FENNEL

Location: Willy West Community Room
Wednesday, September 9, 5:30pm–7:30pm
Ages: 16+; adult supervision not required
Instructor: Sharon Long
Fee: \$40 for Owners; \$50 for non-owners
Capacity: 8

Sharon learned to make these dishes while taking cooking classes at the International Academy of Italian Cuisine in Lucca, Italy. You may watch or help prep all the ingredients. Munch on some bruschetta while Sharon puts the dishes together. Tartufo con finocchietti gratinate—fennel gratin with a truffle cream sauce. Chicken, fennel, and sundried tomato packets. Buon appetito. Mostly demonstration with limited hands-on opportunities. Recipes contain: milk.

A TRADITIONAL JORDANIAN MEAL

Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson St.
Tuesday, September 15, 6:00pm–8:00pm
Ages: 16+; adult supervision not required
Instructor: Sharon Long

Fee: \$40 for Owners; \$50 for non-owners
Capacity: 8

Help Sharon prepare the ingredients for two iconic Jordanian dishes she learned to prepare at Beit Sitti (meaning Grandmother's house), a cooking school in Amman, Jordan. You will help prepare the ingredients for the traditional Levantine dish, Maqluba, which contains eggplant, vegetables, and rice. We will also prepare baklava for dessert. Mostly demonstration with hands-on opportunities. Recipes contain: milk, tree nuts, wheat.

COOKING WITH CHEF PAUL: FISHERMAN'S SOUP

Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson St.
Thursday, September 24, 5:30pm–7:30pm
Ages: 12+; adult supervision required
Your Co-op's Own: Paul Tseng
Fee: \$30 for Owners; \$40 for non-owners
Capacity: 10

A trip to Norway inspired Paul to develop this class to compare recipes through different cultural lenses—the cream-based Norwegian Fisherman's Soup versus clear Taiwanese Dayboat Fish Soup. Join Chef Paul to taste the drastic differences in texture and flavor. Demonstration. Recipes contain: wheat and seafood.

MUSHROOMS IN THE KITCHEN AND APOTHECARY

Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson St.
Tuesday, September 29, 5:30pm–8:00pm
Ages: 12+; adult supervision required
Instructor: Linda Conroy
Fee: \$45 for Owners; \$55 for non-owners
Capacity: 20

Mushrooms are a fantastic ingredient for delicious dishes and medicinal uses, packed with health benefits and endless possibilities. In this hands-on class, we'll explore cooking techniques like sautéing, grilling, and roasting mushrooms, plus how to whip up a tasty mushroom pâté. We'll also dive into making infused products, such as vinegars, broths, beverages, and tinctures. Recipes provided. Vegetarian. Recipes contain: milk.

FUSION FLAVOR TACOS WITH A BIOMEDICAL PERSPECTIVE

Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson St.
Sunday, October 4, 12:00pm–2:00pm
Ages: 14+; adult supervision not required
Instructor: Anupama Bhattacharya
Fee: \$30 for Owners; \$40 for non-owners
Capacity: 20

In this class, we will cook delicious gluten-free, plant-based tacos influenced by Southeast Asian and Latin flavors. We will make cassava root tortillas by hand and a rich protein filling. While putting together this mouth-watering dish, we will examine the biomedical

compounds in the key ingredients and their interaction with the human body. Together, we will learn the flavor of healing! Demonstration with limited hands-on opportunities. Recipes contain: tree nuts, sesame. Vegan.

FOCUS ON FAIR: COCONUT MILK

Location: Willy West Community Room
Wednesday, October 14, 5:30pm–7:30pm
Ages: 12+; adult supervision required
Your Co-op's Own: Mike Tomaloff
Fee: \$30 for Owners; \$40 for non-owners
Capacity: 10

October is Fair Trade Month, and Chef Mike is zooming in on some of his favorite Fair Trade items. In this class, we'll put some coconut products from Native Forest to good use. We'll begin with a coconut curry soup, rich and spicy with tofu and mushrooms, then we'll make some peanut sauce to serve with crispy chicken over cilantro lime rice, and finally we'll satisfy our sweet tooth with a rich and silky smooth coconut crème caramel. Demonstration with limited hands-on opportunities. Recipes contain: soy, peanuts, sesame, eggs.



BAKING WITH CHEF PAUL: CAST IRON 201

Location: Willy West Community Room
Thursday, September 17, 5:30pm–7:30pm
Ages: 12+; adult supervision required
Your Co-op's Own: Paul Tseng
Fee: \$30 for Owners; \$40 for non-owners
Capacity: 10

If the only baking pan we have is cast iron, we still can bake pies, cakes, cobblers, pizzas, and many other things. Join Chef Paul to learn how to properly season your cast iron pan, followed by a lesson in baking both sweet and savory dishes in this versatile cookware. Demonstration. Recipes contain: wheat.



MAKING ELDERBERRY SYRUP & HONEY FERMENTED GARLIC

Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson St.
Tuesday, November 10, 6:00pm–7:30pm
Location: Willy West Community Room
Monday, November 16, 6:00pm–7:30pm
Ages: 10+; adult supervision required
Instructor: Wendy Porterfield
Fee: \$40 for Owners; \$50 for non-owners
Capacity: 12

Prepare for winter by making two traditional seasonal remedies: elderberry syrup and honey fermented garlic. Learn how to prepare, store, and use these delicious additions to your kitchen, and explore how they can help you weather cold and flu season well. Each participant will take home jars of both recipes, along with the skills to make them yourself. Demonstration and hands-on.



SPROUTS: COOKING BREAKFAST CONNECTION

Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson St.
Thursday, September 17, 4:00pm–5:00pm
Ages: 5+
Your Co-op's Own: Mike Tomaloff
Fee: \$15 for Owners (\$12.50 for each additional child); \$25 for each child of non-owner
Capacity: 10

Just like sitting down to a meal, cooking that meal is even better when you do it with people that you care about. In this class, the Sprouts will team up with an adult to make some great breakfast foods! Kids should bring a mom, dad, grandma, grandpa, uncle, aunt, adult sibling, or anyone, really, that is an important adult in their life, and together we'll make some pancakes, cook up a veggie and eggs scramble, and how about a big fruit salad, too! Hands-on. Recipes contain: eggs, dairy, wheat.

SPROUTS: SAVORY PIES TIMES TWO

Location: Willy West Community Room
Wednesday, September 30, 4:00pm–5:00pm
Ages: 5–12 years old; adult supervision not required
Your Co-op's Own: Mike Tomaloff
Fee: \$15 for first child of Owner (\$12.50 for each additional child); \$25 for each child of non-owner
Capacity: 10
In this class, we'll celebrate "Great American Pot Pie Day" with Mike T.

and the Sprouts to make two kinds of savory pies. We'll start with a big chicken and veggie pot pie that we'll make, bake, and eat together. While that's cooking, we'll make individual spinach and feta hand pies just like the ones from the Co-op Kitchen! Hands-on. Recipes contain: milk, eggs, wheat.

SPROUTS: CANDY STORE AT HOME

Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson Street
Thursday, October 8, 4:00pm–5:00pm
Location: Willy West Community Room
Tuesday, October 20, 4:00pm–5:00pm
Ages: 5–12 years old; adult supervision not required
Your Co-op's Own: Mike Tomaloff
Fee: \$15 for first child of Owner (\$12.50 for each additional child); \$25 for each child of non-owner
Capacity: 10

Sure, you can buy peanut butter cups and chocolate coconut bars, but we can make them at home without the artificial colors and flavors, too! In this Sprouts class we will keep busy making our own homemade peanut butter cups and chocolate and coconut candy bars, all from wholesome Co-op ingredients, of course. Hands-on. Recipes contain: peanuts, dairy.



AGE-REVERSING HABITS

Location: Zoom
Wednesday, September 9, 12:00pm–1:00pm
Instructor: Katy Wallace, ND
Fee: Free; registration required
Capacity: 50
A recent review of research shows that aging doesn't just happen. Scientists show it is driven by predictable changes inside cells. Katy Wallace, ND, will cover the aging pathways identified by scientists and how to affect them with lifestyle changes.

MYCOTOXINS ON THE MENU

Location: Zoom
Wednesday, October 7, 12:00pm–1:00pm
Instructor: Katy Wallace, ND
Fee: Free; registration required
Capacity: 50
For most people, mold is just a nuisance. However, scientists estimate that for about a quarter of the population, molds and their chemical mycotoxins have the potential to trigger a variety of symptoms in various body systems and cause inflammation. Join Katy Wallace, ND of Human Nature, LLC, to learn ways to identify if you are sensitive and how to keep mycotoxins off the menu. Katy has 20 years of clinical practice helping people with mold illness and sensitivity.



BURDOCK ROOT FOR HEALTH AND NOURISHMENT
Location: Willy West Community Room
Thursday, September 3, 5:30pm–8:00pm
Ages: 8+; adult supervision required
Instructor: Linda Conroy
Fee: \$45 for Owners; \$55 for non-owners
Capacity: 20
Burdock root is a nutrient-dense root vegetable and traditional medicinal herb. It supports the liver as well as overall digestion and is healing to the skin. In this fun class, we will prepare fresh burdock in a myriad of ways as a beverage, for food, and as medicine. Everyone will take home recipes and concoctions that we make in class. Vegetarian. Mostly demonstration with limited hands-on opportunities.

FROM THE GARDEN: HERBS FOR TOPICAL APPLICATIONS
Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson Street
Saturday, October 3, 12:00pm–2:00pm
Ages: 8+; adult supervision required
Instructor: Linda Conroy
Fee: \$60 for Owners; \$70 for non-owners
Capacity: 20
Join herbalist Linda Conroy for this fun and inspiring class to learn about topical applications of herbs. We will cover skin healing, pain relief, moisturizing, and much more! In the hands-on portion, we will tmake infused oils, lotions, and salves that everyone will take home. Lecture and hands-on.



PRACTICE SERENITY: MEDITATION FOR BEGINNERS
Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson St.
Sunday, September 6 and 20, 9:30am–10:30am
Ages: 14+; adult supervision not required
Instructor: Anupama Bhattacharya
Fee: \$10 for Owners; \$20 for non-owners
Capacity: 30
In this beginner-friendly meditation class, we will explore breathing exercises, mindfulness practices, and grounding techniques that support nervous system regulation and cultivate presence. Learn simple tools to reduce stress, reconnect with yourself, and bring more peace, joy, and compassion into daily life. Join me for conscious peace, one breath at a time.

45-MINUTE INDIVIDUAL NUTRITION CONSULTATIONS
Location: Aubergine, 1226 Williamson St.
Wednesday, September 16, 2:00pm–4:45pm
Wednesday, October 14, 1:30pm–4:45pm
Location: Willy West Community Room
Wednesday, September 23, 1:30pm–4:45pm
Friday, October 23, 1:30pm–4:45pm
Fee: \$58 for Owners; \$93 for non-owners
An individual nutrition consultation is your opportunity to learn how the correct food choices for your body can enhance your well-being. A one-on-one session with Katy Wallace of Human Nature includes a 45-minute consultation regarding your health goals, as well

as lifestyle and food choice suggestions geared toward addressing health goals and developing sustainable change. Appointments are confirmed upon payment. Payment is due at the time of scheduling; otherwise, the appointment will be released to other interested parties. Payment is non-refundable and non-transferable unless notice of cancellation or rescheduling is provided seven (7) or more days prior. To register for the next available opening, email info@humannaturellc.com or call 608-301-9961.
Classes provided by Willy Street Co-op are not

designed to and do not provide medical advice, professional diagnosis, opinion, treatment, or services. Classes are for informational and educational purposes only and are not meant to replace medical consultation with your physician.

An anonymous donor will cover the cost of a limited number of sessions for those with a financial need who are 18 years and under. Please reach out to Katy for more details at info@human-naturellc.com or call 608-301-9961.

**Meet Your Instructor:
Anupama Bhattacharya**



Anupama delights in creating learning experiences where science, creativity, and mind-body wellness coalesce into expansive multidisciplinary joy! With dual degrees in Biomedical Engineering and Computer Science, a U.S. patent in wearable biofeedback for meditation, and an active life as a dancer, poet, and painter, she has spent over a decade guiding learners of all ages across a constellation of disciplines.



willy street co-op
Farm-to-Table Dinner
Friday, September 11, 2026
5:30-8:00pm
Aubergine
1226 Williamson St., Madison

Join Willy Street Co-op and FairShare CSA Coalition for a five-course vegetarian harvest dinner featuring local ingredients from some of our many farmers and producers. There are only 50 seats available and tickets are \$50 for Owners, \$60 for non-Owners. For menu details and to register, see: willystreet.coop/event/farm-to-table-dinner

 **FAIRSHARE**
CSA COALITION



*Courses and ingredients are subject to change based on seasonal availability. Please note the cancellation and waitlist policy on our registration form, which will be strictly followed.



LOCAL FAVORITES AT WILLY STREET CO-OP

By: Brendon Smith, Director of Communications

Y'all are a pretty steady bunch when it comes to your favorite Co-op-made products—the only change this year compared to last year was the Banana Bread Slice at #4 instead of the Vegan Chocolate Sheba Bar. Were you looking for a healthier treat? Did you make a New Year's resolution to eat less chocolate?

There are a few changes here from last year! Yuppie Hill Eggs are #1, and we often hear that they have some of the deepest yellow yolks of any egg. (New Century Eggs ended as a company, or they likely still would've been in the top five.) Local orange sweet potatoes vaulted into second place, perhaps because of the increased interest in fiber and being such a nutrient-dense source of complex carbohydrates. Wisconsin Growers Co-op in Black River Falls has been supplying Willy Street Co-op with their local sweet potatoes for over a decade, and was the first local sweet potato supplier we worked with. The FEED Chocolate Chip Cookies 3 pack edged out last year's #5 (Bunky's Hummus), maybe because shoppers' snacking interests have shifted from savory to sweet?

Lists based on sales of products 5/1/25-4/30/26. Does not include any products that have since been discontinued.



TOP 5 BEST-SELLING LOCAL ITEMS

1. YUPPIE HILL EGGS
2. LOCAL ORANGE SWEET POTATOES
3. SCENIC RIDGE BAGGED LOCAL SPINACH
4. CRIMINI MUSHROOMS
5. FEED CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES 3 PACK

THESE ARE OUR MOST POPULAR SELLING ITEMS MADE BY LOCAL VENDORS.



TOP 5 BEST-SELLING CO-OP-MADE ITEMS

1. WILLY STREET CO-OP HOT BAR
2. WILLY STREET CO-OP HOT COFFEE
3. WILLY STREET CO-OP HOT SOUP
4. WILLY STREET CO-OP BANANA BREAD SLICE
5. WILLY STREET CO-OP TURKEY & SWISS SANDWICH

THESE ARE OUR MOST POPULAR SELLING ITEMS MADE BY YOUR CO-OP.



SIMPLE SOYMAN

By: Maya Ticku, Purchasing Assistant

Simple Soyman is back! Their beloved plant-based products are finally returning to shelves, but this time with a new face. After the retirement of long-time owners, Barb and RJ Gruenwald, Jim Neumeyer purchased the company with his wife, Olive Crane, early in 2026 to bring back fresh, local tofu and tempeh.

Jim started his career in food service as a 19 year old working as a dishwasher at a local Milwaukee restaurant called Beans & Barley. As he transitioned between roles, from dishwasher, to kitchen staff, to co-owner, Beans & Barley served Simple Soyman tofu throughout. In 2026, Beans & Barley was facing closure, around the same time that the former Simple Soyman owners were looking to scale back production and transition into retirement. After 26 years of Simple Soyman tofu, Jim wasn't ready to say goodbye to such a beloved local product.

To Jim, food itself should be truly simple: nutritious and protein-dense food that comes directly from the earth. Although making tofu is a strenuous process, he describes it as being relatively simple. Pallets of organic soybeans arrive fresh from local farmers. Then, they are washed and ground down. Once salt is added, the soybean mixture is pressed into tofu. He explained that tofu-making is not for the faint of heart—it can be hot, sweaty work. But knowing that the result is a food that is good for people and keeps communities healthy makes it worth the effort, Jim says. Simple Soyman prioritizes specializing and perfecting a clean and simple product. Jim says tofu and tempeh that is local to Wisconsin is truly special because soybeans love growing in Wisconsin's fertile soils.

Jim categorizes Simple Soyman tofu as being firm or extra firm tofu; but to those who have never tried tofu, he describes the texture profile as being light and fluffy. If you are wary of plain tofu, Jim assures that Simple Soyman tofu works great with any marinade or sauce of your choosing to completely elevate your tofu experience. Although Jim himself is a long-time vegetarian, he has discovered that the enjoyment of tofu has gone beyond vegetarians and vegans, with those who eat meat frequently indulging in this plant-based, protein-packed food. For tofu-lovers, or anyone curious to try,

Neumeyer says that the three best ways to enjoy Simple Soyman protein are baked, stir-fried, and scrambled. Baked tofu starts with a good marinade—Jim recommends a Cajun-style or balsamic marinade. Stir-fried tofu has just as many options to enjoy, whether you choose aromatic flavors like ginger and garlic, or prefer your tofu lathered in a bold red curry.

Tofu scrambles for breakfast (or any meal of the day), work great for anyone wanting to substitute their egg scramble—just combine scrambled tofu with your choice of veggies—bell peppers and spinach work great—and season to your liking.

It has been a long journey for Jim, who says that each person he's had the opportunity to work with has left an impact on him. He names Barb and RJ Gruenwald as two of his biggest influences, as he says that their incredible legacy is something he will always look up to. Jim especially names the Milwaukee community as the driving force behind what he does. Along with his career working in the Milwaukee restaurant scene and being exposed to the city's large community of artists, musicians, and working-class folks, Jim says that Milwaukee influences him in all things. As Simple Soyman enters their new chapter, Jim says he's looking forward to learning and perfecting the tofu-making process. Like any new endeavor, there is bound to be some trial and error, but Jim says that he's driven by the feeling of excitement when things succeed.



Know Your Maker
Simple Soyman
Milwaukee, WI
Supplying
willy street co-op
since 2026



IN THE DELI:

- Vegan Breakfast Scramble Empanada
- Tofu Breakfast Scramble
- Nashville Hot Tofu Sandwich
- Vegan Reuben
- Ginger Tempeh Wrap
- Avocado Tempeh Lettuce Tomato Wrap
- Sesame Tofu
- Southern Fried Tofu
- Eggless Egg Salad
- Tofu Cabbage with Spicy Peanut Sauce
- Grab & Go Red Chili Tofu Salad
- Red Curry Tofu
- Red Curry Tofu Wrap



IN GROCERY:

- Plain Firm Tofu
- Herb Tofu
- Soy Tempeh



Serving Suggestion

SEPTEMBER 14-20

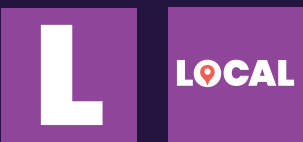
fresh deals
Are sales for Everyone!

WE CARRY
MORE THAN
4,993
PRODUCTS FROM
517
LOCAL FARMERS,
ARTISANS,
AND MAKERS.

Support local
farmers and
producers
while enjoying
sales, samples,
and giveaways!



We define "Local"
as within 150
miles of the State
Capitol building,
or anywhere
in Wisconsin.



Look for our
local symbols

EAT 
LOCAL
MONTH



Bagels Forever
**Whipped
Cream
Cheese**
8 oz • Save 50¢
\$2.49 



Olden Organics
**All Organic
Cut Fruit**  
8-16 oz
25% off



Driftless Provisions
**Breakfast
Sausage
Links**  
16 oz • save \$2.00
\$5.99



Bagels Forever
Bagels 
4 pk • save 50¢
\$1.79



ORIGIN Breads
Granola 
12 oz • save \$2.00
\$10.00

Cedar Road Meats
Bacon 
Old World & Pepper
Save \$2.00/lb
\$8.99/lb



Wonderstate Coffee
**Organic
Coffee** 
8.8-10.5 oz • save \$5.00
\$11.99



 = Inclusive Trade
 = Local

Sales on this page valid September 14-September 20, 2026.
All sales and coupons subject to availability. Sales quantities limited.

fresh deals

Are sales for Everyone!

SEPTEMBER 21-27



Sartori
**Sarvecchio
Parmesan** L
5.3 oz • save \$1.00
\$4.99



Wollersheim Winery
**Prairie
Fumé** L
25.36 fl oz
save \$2.00
\$11.99



RP's Pasta Company
Fresh Pasta L
9 oz • save \$1.00
**\$2.79-
\$4.29**



RP's Pasta Company
**Pasta
Sauce** L
12-16 oz • save \$1.00
\$4.49

Vitruvian Farms
**Organic
Salads** L
4-5 oz
25% off



Salvatore's Tomato Pies
Pizzas L
12-17.5 oz • save \$4.00
\$7.99-\$13.99

GIVEAWAYS

Each week in September, we'll give away SIX tote bags filled with \$100 worth of local goodies: 30 bags in total.

Enter to win in-store, on Instagram, Facebook, or online at: willystreet.coop/eat-local-month.

Limit one online and one paper entry per person per week. No purchase necessary.



WHY EAT LOCAL?

Local foods tend to be fresher than those shipped from across the country or farther away, and fresh food has more nutrients. You're also supporting your local farmers and keeping the agricultural viability of their communities alive.

EAT 
**LOCAL
MONTH**

Fire ^{UP!} THE Grill



**AUGUST 31 -
SEPTEMBER 7**
While Supplies Last

**30%
OFF!**



Serving Suggestion



New



**30%
OFF!**

Driftless Provisions
Bratwurst
16 oz
\$4.99 **i** **L**
SAVE \$2.50

S. Rosen's
**Brat & Sausage
Rolls**
18 oz
\$3.99 **L**
SAVE \$1.50

Bubbies
**Snacking Pickles
Dill Flavored**
3.5 oz
\$2.29 **L**
SAVE \$1.00



**40%
OFF!**

Garden of Eatin'
**Organic
Tortilla Chips**
14 oz
\$4.49
SAVE \$3.30



House Wine
Canned Wine
12 fl oz
\$3.99
SAVE \$1.00



Carr Valley Cheese
**Cheese
Spreads**
8 oz
\$5.99-6.99 **L**
SAVE \$1.00



**MADE
BY YOUR
CO-OP**

Willy Street Co-op
**Traditional
Potato Salad**
\$6.99/lb **L**
SAVE \$2.00/lb

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH



TORTILLERIA
ZEPEDA
AUTHENTIC MEXICAN
TORTILLAS **i** **L**



TUCSON
TAMALE
HAND ROLLED
TAMALES **i**



FILLO'S
LATIN FOODS **i**



ARTISAN
TROPIC
CASSAVA &
PLANTAIN CHIPS **i**



¡YA OAXACA!
SALSA &
MOLE SAUCE **i**

We're highlighting our Hispanic-owned Inclusive Trade vendors for Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15-October 15).

For our full list of Hispanic-owned Inclusive Trade vendors, visit: www.willystreet.coop/inclusive-trade

i = Inclusive Trade **L** = Local

Selection may vary



**BY: MELISSA REISS,
MERCHANDISING ASSISTANT**

BUBBIES SNACKING PICKLES

Enjoy the classic crunch and pure flavor of Bubbies Dill Snacking Pickles. Crafted with a clean, all-natural profile of cucumbers, vinegar, and spices, these pickles deliver a crisp, garlicky, deli-style dill taste with a signature tang.

Perfect for on-the-go enjoyment, they feature a low-brine recipe for minimal mess and require no refrigeration. For all your pickle cravings on the hiking trail, at the ballpark, or even the office! Available at all stores.

For more information, see www.bubbies.com.



VITRUVIAN FARMS BROCCOLI MICROGREENS

These broccoli microgreens packs are grown in nearby McFarland, Wisconsin and are packed full of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants—up to 40% more than their mature counterparts! The farm maintains MOSA Organic Certification, and focuses on microgreens, mushrooms, and leafy salad greens. Available at all stores.

For more information, see vitruvian-farms.com.



AMERICAN WINE PROJECT WINES: SWITCH THEORY AMBER, RED, WHITE, AND ROSÉ,

Switch Theory is an experimental series of wines from Mineral Point, Wisconsin-based American Wine Project. Each batch is a blend of multiple varietals, resulting in wines that are less about rules and more about personality.

White Blend: Bright, refreshing and versatile. Expect tropical, citrus, and herbaceous aromatics. Perfect for light dinners. Enjoy chilled.

Red Blend: A light-bodied, lively red blend. Notes of bright red fruit, earth, and fresh acidity. Enjoy chilled or at room temperature.

Amber: Aromatic, complex, and versatile. Expect juicy citrus, stone fruit, and enticing florals. Enjoy chilled.

Rosé: American Wine Project's dry inaugural rosé blends 90% direct-press Sabrevois and 10% whole-cluster St. Pepin. The non-vintage blend utilizes the slipskin Sabrevois variety, which releases color instantly. It offers a deep hue and complex profile of white strawberry, sweet sage, and bright acidity. Enjoy chilled.



BELLA GOOSE SYRUPS

Crafted with real, clean ingredients, the small-batch syrups from Wisconsin Dells-based Bella Goose Coffee are ideal for coffee, tea, desserts, baking, and cocktails—with or without alcohol!

Stir one tablespoon into coffee and top with milk of choice, or drizzle over ice cream.

I made a delicious vanilla matcha latte starting with two teaspoons of matcha green tea powder whisked into two ounces warm water, then a scant tablespoon of Vanilla Bean syrup, topped off with oat milk that I frothed with my handheld milk frother. Delicious!

Unleash your creativity with their variety of flavors: Caramel, Chocolate, Vanilla Bean, and Butter Pecan. Made with organic sugar. No artificial flavors, colors, preservatives, or corn syrup!

For more information, see www.bellagoosecoffee.com.



**Mango Man Cooks!
Monte Verde Salsa**

A locally made "everything sauce." Can be used for marinating meat, as a dipping sauce for shrimp, or even with quesadillas. It's got a bit of a kick, but the spice gives it an addictive quality.

-Isabel, Grocery

**Fizeology
Bad Axe Curtido**

It's crunchy, delicious, and teeming with probiotics! This fermented vegetable mélange is a wonderful addition to any meal. A scoop with breakfast and your gut will thank you all day. It goes great with tacos, on a kielbasa, or a Reuben.

-Dylan, Produce

**Local Organic
Heirloom Tomatoes**

So many incredible heirloom tomatoes to choose from, each with its own unique characteristics! The kaleidoscope of colors brightens up any summer salad. I love using them for BLTs, caprese salad, and grilled chicken tomato pesto sandwiches. They're so yummy!

-Andy, Purchasing

**Banzo
Frozen Falafel - Original**

The Banzo Falafel is always a nice treat and a blend of flavors that melt in your mouth at each bite. Either consume them by themselves, or make a wrap or sandwich out of them—they never disappoint the palate!

-Christopher, Grocery

**FEED Bakery
Chocolate Chip Cookies**

These chocolate chip cookies are made by a local bakery and are very delicious. They come in a three pack and a ten pack, and the ten pack is perfect for treating your co-workers or sharing at parties with your friends and family.

-Collin, Bakery

**Willy Street Co-op
Turkey Sausage Breakfast Gravy**

As someone that doesn't eat pork, I love that I can finally have breakfast gravy with my biscuits! Just a little bit spicy and made with Ferndale ground turkey, this is a welcomed addition to the breakfast hot bar!

-Nicholas, Offsite Kitchen

**Madison Sourdough
Seed and Grain Sandwich Bread**

Hearty and a touch sour but not dry. This is not a fluffy, mostly air type of modern "bread." It's the real deal, a sustaining bread you read about in history books. Toast two slices, add a slice or two of cheese (I like a nutty cheddar), slather on some whole grain mustard, slices of avocado, and a fried egg. And you'll have the breakfast sandwich that I eat most days before my Willy Street Co-op shifts.

-Lauren, Facilities

**Rishi Tea
Organic Jasmine Green Tea**

This tea is fragrant and refreshing. The tea leaves are high quality, and I find that they can be steeped multiple times. Green tea has various health benefits as well, like natural antioxidants and l-theanine.

-Zoe, Front End

**Four Elements
Look, No X Ma! Cream**

A fantastic, locally made product that soothes dry itchy skin and full-on eczema. Spectacularly effective without any harsh ingredients. Effective all year round, but especially good during our skin-drying Wisconsin winters.

-Thayer, Front End

**Organic
Beauty Heart & Daikon Radishes**

Local Beauty Heart and Daikon radishes from Harmony Valley Farm in Viroqua are crisp and fresh, enlivening salads and great as crudité. Even better, they're organic and gorgeous in vivid pink and purple—beautiful on the plate. I love that they're available in winter when there is little other vibrant local produce. They're also great cooked briefly in soup!

-Juliet, General Merchandise





Mamachit Sushi
America's Favorite,
Nigiri Tuna, or Salmon Rolls

Locally made in-store fresh everyday. You eat with your eyes, and these will not disappoint. Melt-in-your-mouth tuna or salmon that is savory, sweet, and supreme.

-Ellen, Logistics

Wildbrine
Korean Kimchi

The best kimchi we carry, by miles. Do I eat this straight out of the container because it is so delicious? YES. Also mouthwatering when accompanying so many other foods! Though my favorite is a simple meal of rice, kimchi, and whatever.

-Kjerstin, Front End

Tortilleria Zepeda
Tortillas

These are the most amazing tortillas you'll ever have. That may sound like a stretch but I used to buy the stacks of cheap corn tortillas and, after trying these, I've never gone back. Made with local non-GMO corn and using the traditional way of making them, known as nixtamalization, these soft and pliable tortillas are excellent. No more wrapping your taco in two cheap corn tortillas. just one of these suffices.

-Nate, Grocery

Driftless Provisions
Grass-Fed Beef Snack Sticks

You haven't had a real beef stick until you've had one of these. These things are delicious, and local!

-Jake, Communications

Renard's
Terrific Trio

Creamy, delicious entourage made in Door County. A must for charcuterie boards. Price point makes this a quality purchase.

-Stephen, Logistics

Hook's
Sheep Milk Gouda

This sheep milk gouda is aged to perfection with calcium lactate crystals that provide wonderful crunch in each bite. The flavor is wonderful and I know of no one who doesn't like it.

-Matt, Cheese

Organic
Sweet Italian Frying Peppers

Perfect for grilling! You can use them as you would a bell pepper. No heat, versatile and brings color to your plate.

-Demeter, Produce

Donkey Chips
Tortilla Chips

The best tortilla chips that are also local, handmade, and seasoned. Anytime I am eating another tortilla chip, I am wishing it was a Donkey tortilla chip.

-Caitlyn, Communications

Bagels Forever
Onion Bagels

I have consumed Bagels Forever for over 20 years, and I have always stuck with the onion flavor for as long as I can remember.

-Dwayne, Grocery

Jones Dairy Farm
Breakfast Sausage Patties

Just a really good breakfast sausage at an "everyday" price.

-Joe, Logistics





By: Community Shares of Wisconsin

COMMUNITY CHANGE-MAKER AWARDS

On September 17 at The East Side Club, Community Shares of Wisconsin will honor local leaders and organizations who are advancing social and environmental justice in our community. The public is invited to attend the awards ceremony. Tickets purchased in support of this event help Community Shares award \$6,000 in donations to local nonprofits. To purchase tickets, visit communityshares.com.

CHANGE-MAKER AWARD WINNERS

Monique Minkens, nominated by End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin

Winner of the Liesl Blockstein Community Leadership Award

Monique embodies the essence of exceptional leadership and working at the grassroots level for social change. She is also the first Black Executive Director of End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin. Her work centering anti-oppression and structural change to combat domestic violence has added terrific value to the organization's work. Monique has also demonstrated her strong leadership by steering End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin through the recent changes in federal grant funding requirements and leading the organization to participate in a national lawsuit that has enabled End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin and coalition members to continue to serve immigrant and LGBTQ+ individuals.

Mikayla Sandin, nominated by RCC Sexual Violence Resource Center

Winner of the Linda Sundberg Civil Rights Defender Award

Mikayla Sandin has an unwavering commitment to advancing equity and justice for Indigenous communities and survivors of violence. As a Sexual Assault Advocate at The RCC, she leads and mentors a team of advocates serving UW–Madison, ensures survivors receive compassionate, survivor-centered support, and has been instrumental in expanding access to culturally responsive services for Indig-

enous survivors. Recently, she organized a Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) workshop, creating space for connection, support, and dialogue around violence impacting Indigenous communities. Mikayla also collaborates with sexual and domestic violence service providers statewide to advance advocacy efforts.

Sandra Rivera, nominated by Nuestro Mundo, Inc.

Winner of the Sally Sunde Family Advocate Award

Sandra Rivera has been an essential member of the Nuestro Mundo Community School for over 15 years, serving as the school's only social worker and supporting over 300 students and their families every day. Her deep compassion, tireless advocacy, and boundless generosity make her a cornerstone of the school. She goes above and beyond to ensure that every student has what they need to be successful—including arranging for food to be sent home, finding transportation to medical appointments, and making home visits to build trust with families. She always listens closely to parents and offers creative and compassionate solutions.

CSW Collaboration Award Winners

Midwest Environmental Advocates, River Alliance of Wisconsin, and Wisconsin Conservation Voices

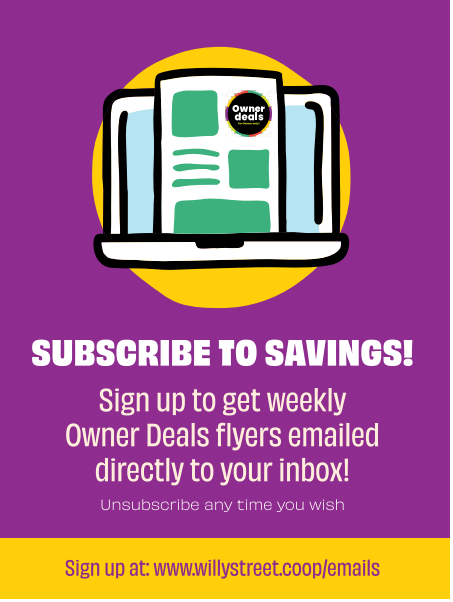
Even at extremely low levels, exposure to PFAS has been linked to an increased risk of cancer and other serious health problems. To take action on PFAS pollution, these three nonprofits collaborated on multiple public education and legislative advocacy campaigns since 2021.

CSW Lifetime Achievement Award Winner

Steve Starkey, nominated by OutReach LGBTQ+ Community Center

Steve Starkey has been working in social justice organizations in Wisconsin for more than 45 years. Steve helped found OUT! newspaper (the first statewide LGBTQ+ publication), was Executive Director of Wisconsin Community Fund for 12 years, and co-founded the Social Justice Center. He also served on the board of Citizen Action of Wisconsin, the GALVANize pride parade committee, and the board of the New Harvest Foundation. Steve has been in his current role as Executive Director of OutReach LGBTQ+ Community Center since 2006.

The Presenting Sponsor of the 2026 Community Change-Maker Awards is UW Credit Union. Special thanks to our friends at Willy Street Co-op for their support of Community Shares of Wisconsin through the Community CHIP® program.



Owner deals
For Owners only!

Mrs. Beaster's Biskits
Dog Treats

6 oz
Save \$1.00

Owner deals
For Owners only!

Four Elements
Herbal Tinctures

1 fl oz • select varieties
Save \$2.50

Aug. 31 - Sep. 27

Owner deals
For Owners only!

Bunky's
Hummus

10 oz
Save \$1.00

Owner deals
For Owners only!

Potter's Crackers
Crackers & Crisps

5-8 oz
Save \$1.20

Aug. 31 - Sep. 27

WAYS TO SAVE

EAT LOCAL MONTH 2026

Owner deals
For Owners only!

Gentle Breeze Honey
White Clover Honey

23 oz
Save \$2.50

Owner deals
For Owners only!

Four Elements
Organic Herbal Tea

16 ct
Save \$1.00

Owner deals
For Owners only!

Clasen's
Wonderful Bread

20 oz
Save \$1.00

Aug. 31 - Sep. 27

Owner deals
For Owners only!

The Deliciouser
Seasonings

1.8-3.25 oz • select varieties
Save up to \$1.20

Owner deals
For Owners only!

Banzo
Falafel

13.5 oz
Save \$1.50

Sep. 14 - Sep. 27



By: Megan Minnick

If you've purchased any amount of fresh produce from Willy Street Co-op in the past fifty years, chances are good that some of it was grown by Beth Kazmar and Steve Pincus of Tipi Produce.

From the first spring rhubarb to the last winter carrot—and many crops in between—Tipi's high quality, affordable produce has been a foundation of the Co-op's Produce departments for almost as long as the stores have existed.

You might even say we grew up together.

Season by season, pepper by pepper, melon by melon, the two businesses worked together to build both supply and demand for local organic produce in Dane County—and in the process helped build the unique, cooperative, and resilient community of farmers and eaters we have today.

2026 was the last year that Tipi

Produce delivered to Willy Street Co-op's stores. As Beth and Steve embark on a well deserved semi-retirement, this Eat Local Month we honor them and their legacy as we celebrate the thriving food community they were so instrumental in growing.

NOURISHING THE COMMUNITY

Tipi's story begins in the most unlikely of places: a row house in Philadelphia.

Growing up with parents who owned an elevator maintenance and repair business, Steve Pincus had almost no exposure to farming or even gardening as a child—though his early life did give him skills that proved invaluable later on. "My parents were always talking about business," he remembers, "and I learned the ins and outs of having employees."

He also became an excellent me-

chanic, a skill which he enjoys to this day.

It wasn't until the early 1970s when Steve, now in his 20s and living in Milwaukee, started thinking about growing food. He was part of the group that started Outpost Natural Foods Co-op in that city, and in the process of setting up the new co-op, he struggled to find enough organic produce to meet Outpost owners' needs. For while there were a few large conventional vegetable operations in the area, there were almost no small or mid-sized organic farms.

At the same time, new markets were emerging in Madison. The Dane County Farmers' Market started in 1972, and a few food co-ops popped up, all—like Outpost—in search of nourishing, organic food.

So, in 1976, armed with a desire to feed his community, a strong work ethic and the mechanical and business skills he'd learned as a child (but with no farming experience to speak of), Steve began growing vegetables on five acres in Crawford County.

"I had no idea what I was doing," he told me. "I just worked hard."

The farm, on a ridgetop in Wisconsin's Driftless region, was less than suitable for vegetable production. But Steve kept at it, focusing his efforts on supplying the growing food co-ops in southern Wisconsin, while also selling directly to customers at farmers' markets.

In the mid-1980s, Steve left the farm in Crawford County for rented land in Fitchburg. This move both put him closer to the markets he served,

and allowed him to pursue a degree in horticulture—not for the degree itself, but for the knowledge that came with it. "It really made a difference, being able to connect what was going on in the fields with what I was learning," he explained.

In 1988, when their daughter was born, Steve's wife Beth—a plant pathologist and research assistant at UW Madison—joined the farm full-time. An excellent organizer, Beth began a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) program on the farm, which would eventually grow to supply half of the farm's income.

With the demands of a family and the rapid growth of Madison-area CSA and wholesale markets in the early 1990s, Steve and Beth made the decision to stop going to farmers' markets and focus instead on refining their half wholesale/half CSA model, putting equal emphasis on efficiency, scale, good employment practices and certified organic farming.

With their combined skills and dedication to hard work, they built something truly special.

For many years, Tipi packed 500 CSA boxes and delivered tens of thousands of pounds of organic produce to local co-ops and grocers. They offered year round employment to their core staff, and set the standard for what a wholesale organic vegetable farm can be in southern Wisconsin.

They also dedicated themselves to supporting and teaching other farms—presenting at conferences, taking on mentees, and helping spread knowledge in whatever way they could.

"Tipi's legacy is huge," said Andy Johnston, Willy Street Co-op's Produce Category Manager, who has known Steve and Beth since he started at the Co-op in the early 1990s. "They were one of the first small organic vegetable farms to really show that 'hey, we can grow food here,' and they became a wholesale farm to grocers at a time when other farms just weren't doing that."

"Once they took local organics to the wholesale level, consumer demand increased, which opened up opportunities for other farms," he said. "They were the spark behind it all, at least in southern Wisconsin."

MORE THAN JUST FRUITS AND VEGGIES

I spoke with several of the myriad farmers who've known Steve and Beth over the years, and the more we talked, the more it became clear that fruit and vegetable production is only one part of Tipi's legacy—and perhaps not even the most important.

Cassie Wyss worked part-time for Steve and Beth in the early 2000s before teaming up with her then-husband, Michael Noltner to start Crossroads Community Farm, which has now grown to be a core supplier of the Willy Street Co-op Produce departments.

Though her time at Tipi was brief, Cassie still remembers how impressed she was with the work ethic that Steve



and Beth both exemplified, and the importance they put on scale and efficiency.

“They’re the OGs”, she told me, “They pioneered wholesale, and showed that local farmers can do this at scale. Even now, twenty-some years later, I’m the fastest kale harvester at our farm. That’s because I was on Tipi’s kale team.”

Cassie also credits her time as an employee at Tipi with insights that later helped her become a good farm manager herself.

“Steve’s kindness was incredible,” she told me. “When he got frustrated, he would throw his hat on the ground, not turn it toward humans. This made it enjoyable to work for him, and that stuck with me.”

As she grew into her new role as farmer at Crossroads, Cassie appreciated the example that Beth—now a colleague instead of an employer—set as a married woman who was co-equal owner and manager of her farm.

“Most people think the farmer is the guy who drives the tractor. The woman becomes invisible,” Cassie said. She struggled with this dynamic, and watching Beth deal with the same thing and talk about it openly within the farming community opened space for Cassie and other female farmers to talk about it too, and understand that they weren’t alone. In turn, Beth credited other women pioneers in the Wisconsin organic farming community. “Dynamic women led the early work to start the organic farming conference and FairShare CSA Coalition. Their early efforts truly shaped our farming community and encouraged a culture of sharing.”

When I asked what she saw as Tipi’s biggest legacy, Cassie didn’t hesitate.

“They’re so passionate about teaching and sharing information,” she said, “That’s their legacy. ‘Yes, we can do it, but we’re also going to create a community of sharing that can actually feed the people.’”

This sharing of knowledge and expertise is the thing that stuck with David Bachhuber of Lovefood Farm, who was matched with Steve through a mentorship program put on by MOSES (Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service).

“I felt like I won the lottery when I was matched with him,” David says. “Steve’s wealth of knowledge is wild. Everything from microbiotics and seed culture to where to sell and changes in weather patterns.”

But the best thing about the mentorship, David told me, was not the knowledge itself but the generosity with which it was shared.” He’s so busy, I was reluctant to bother him. But he kept urging me to call—like every day.”

To Beth and Steve, this generous sharing of knowledge, and supportive, cooperative mindset comes naturally. When I asked them about it, they seemed surprised that it could even be a question.

“I needed so much help at the beginning,” Steve offered. “There wasn’t any question about sharing information. It’s not as if we have any trade secrets, we’re just muddling through like everyone else.”

Of course, as simple as that sounds, it’s not the way of many other businesses.

“They could just as easily not shared what they were doing,” Cassie pointed out. “That’s how most businesses operate. But that’s not what they did. Instead, they said, ‘Let us show you how. Let us teach you,’ and created the cooperative culture within the farms that serve Madison today.”

It’s this cooperative landscape—the network of farmers and eaters working together to grow a supportive, collaborative food system intended to nourish the community—that is perhaps Tipi Produce’s biggest legacy.

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

In 2025, Beth and Steve’s youngest child graduated from college, a milestone that they’d planned as their time to step back from large scale farming and enter what they’re calling semi-retirement.

Perhaps it should come as no surprise that they approached the process of scaling back in the same cooperative, community-focused way they’ve approached all other facets of their farming career.

Given the huge amount of produce coming from Tipi—especially crops like carrots and watermelon that require a good amount of growing expertise, storage space, and harvesting infrastructure—it would have been nearly impossible for any other local farm to simply take up these crops for the Willy Street Co-op stores from one year to the next.

So, Steve and Beth pursued a three-year downsizing plan specifically meant to give Willy Street Co-op sufficient time to work with next-generation farmers and increase production gradually to fill the gaps.

“They started with cucumbers and zucchini, then greens and muskmelon,” Andy Johnston tells me. “It fell into place easily because of the gradual approach.”

Though they kept growing carrots—their most beloved crop—until the end, Tipi cut out summer carrots in 2023, which gave the Co-op a chance to ease a newer farm, Driftless Organics, into large-scale production

Though they’ve stopped selling wholesale and packing regular CSA boxes this year, Beth and Steve haven’t stopped farming completely, nor have they stopped serving the community.

“We have a devoted CSA community, and we didn’t want to see that end,” Beth explains. To continue serving these eaters, and others, Steve and Beth are growing and offering U-pick organic strawberries and plum tomatoes on their farm in Evansville.

For more information and to sign up for updates, visit www.tipiproduce.com.



CROPS TIPI GREW FOR THE CO-OP IN THE 2025 SEASON, AND THE FARMERS THAT ARE CONTRACTED TO GROW THEM IN 2026.

TIPI'S CROP:		NEW FARM:	
Carrots		Driftless Organics	
Bell Peppers (Red, green & orange)		Crossroads Community Farm	
Italian Frying Peppers & Hot Peppers		Harmony Valley Farm	
Bok Choy.....		Crossroads Community Farm	
Cabbage (Red, Green & Napa)		New Traditions Homestead	
Watermelon		Wisconsin Growers Cooperative	
Muskmelon / Cantaloupe		Wisconsin Growers Cooperative & Harmony Valley Farm	



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