

# Selene Whole Foods Co-op

Newsletter



June 2009

Supporting a Local, Sustainable Economy

## From the Storefront

By Carol Sciarra, GM/CEO

### July 4<sup>th</sup>

We'll be open 10:00 am to 3:00 pm on the 4th, then 12:00 pm to 5:00 pm on the 5<sup>th</sup>! See you then!

### Membership

First of all, a huge thank you to all of you who have become new members or have recently renewed your membership. **Membership is now at 216! That's a 95% increase since January, 2009.** We will continue to accept memberships at the prorated rate of \$25.00 after July 1<sup>st</sup>.

### New Staff

If you shop on weekends, you may have noticed a new face at the check-out counter. **Greg Powell** has signed on as a weekend cashier/Manager. Not only has Greg made it possible to staff regularly for weekends, but you can see his artistic touch with signage in the Co-op & chalk board outside. Member **Debbie Hughes** also now works in the storefront; you can meet her on Monday and Tuesday mornings (and some weekends) as she busily hums around the Co-op checking-out customers, answering questions and enthusiastically signing on new members. We are pleased to have both Greg and Debbie on board.

Our expanded weekday and Sunday hours serve to make shopping at Selene Whole Foods more convenient. We hope this convenience will also increase revenues, and we will be watching to see if this, in fact, is the case.

### Working Member Opportunities

- In order for Selene Whole Foods Co-op to be a really clean place to shop, we need members to sign up for evening store cleaning. The hours are 5:30-7:30pm, and it involves tasks such as mopping the floor, cleaning the refrigerators, wiping down shelves, and various other tasks that keep the co-op clean. Taking on two 2-hour shifts a month will give you your working hours (and hence a greater discount on your purchases), as well as doing a much needed job for the Co-op.

We currently have 2 members signed up to do this task; but **we need 5 more.**

- The Co-op has been offered a used refrigerator and we need a few members to get together and pick it up.

Please stop by the Co-op and fill in the schedule for evening cleaning, and if you are interested in the refrigerator pick up, call the Co-op so we can create a list and synchronize the pickup and delivery.

### New Products

*Natural by Nature* is a local dairy distributor (West Grove, PA) that provides us with dairy that is local, organic and grass fed. We are now carrying *Natural by Nature* whole milk and 2% in ½ gallons, half & half, heavy cream and sweet cream whipped butter.

**Thank you for shopping at Selene Whole Foods.**

### Shopping w/ Cash or Check if Possible

At **Selene**, we are helping out if we pay with check or cash. Credit and debit cards incur a five-day delay and cannot be counted in daily proceeds. **Thank you!!** But Carol says that if you need to shop with credit/debit for some reason, Selene is still happier to have you shopping with us than elsewhere!

### TransFair USA

TransFair USA ([here](#) is their homepage) is **the group that helped Media become America's First Fair Trade Town.** We thought you might want to know a bit more about the them, and we want to pay tribute to them for their assistance.



They're a non-profit organization, dedicated to parity for small producers of goods worldwide, and one of 20+ international groups who deal with fair-trade labeling and certification (the only one in the US; for the others, see [here](#), **Fair Trade Labelling Organizations International** [FLO]).

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### Selene Whole Foods Co-op

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610-566-1137; General Manager/CEO: Carol Sciarra;

Newsletter: Melinda B. Parsons ([m.boydp@gmail.com](mailto:m.boydp@gmail.com))

Hours: Monday-Saturday, 10:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.; Sundays, 12:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

<http://selenecoop.org>; email: [selenecoop@verizon.net](mailto:selenecoop@verizon.net)



*Selene Whole Foods offers as many fair-trade items as we can get.* Fair-trade coffee alone is the fastest-growing specialty coffee niche in the country, but there are many other fair-trade products, edible and otherwise. As TransFair notes, fair-trade principles include fair prices, fair labor conditions, direct trade (eliminating the middleman), economic democracy, community development, & environmental sustainability. See [here](#). (Photo credits, [here](#) and [here](#))

## Feeding Selene: A Plea for Contributions and Loans, Big or Small

*By Sophie Quinn-Judge, for the Board*

On June 7, four of us Board members spent the day at Morris Arboretum for a Board training session organized by Weavers Way. We learned a lot of essentials about Board responsibilities and how to divide up policy and operations in a Co-op. But the most memorable thing we learned came at the start: ***co-ops that do not have enough capital and that do not make a profit do not survive.*** The graphs that went with this message were convincing: most co-ops started in the '60s and '70s have disappeared, while *Whole Foods* has been on a steep upward growth-path.

Under the management of Carol Sciarra, Selene has started on its own upward path. An expanded job chart for working members has been created. Membership has bounced back to over two hundred and continues to grow. The store has brightened up with new window decorations and displays, and an expanded choice of local, organic produce is now being delivered twice weekly. In addition to our local organic cheeses and yoghurt, we now have organic 2% milk, in addition to our raw milk.

The Board has applied for a USDA grant to renew aging equipment and create a small café for breakfast and lunch service. We will hear whether our application has been successful in September. Meantime we are looking out for other grant opportunities and small-business loans. Until one of these loans comes through, however, cash is tight and we sometimes can't pay to resupply items that run out.

***What we are asking now of our members is this: help us keep Selene well-stocked, so that when potential members come into the store they will be able to find what they need. You can do this by shopping regularly and bringing in your friends. We would also be grateful to receive contributions to our capital fund, or loans, if that suits your pocketbook better. Our goal is to be able to use membership fees to create equity and make our members real share-holders. But we are not there yet.***

Help Selene continue to play its vital role in Media as a supplier of local, organic and fairly traded foods!

*With thanks to all Selene's loyal members!*

## Lowering Your Food Bills

*Mother Earth News* published a shocking statistic: the average U.S. family of 2 or 3 people spends over \$8500 yearly on food, and the prices keep rising. In their essay, the magazine details a number of common-sense ways to keep your bills down. I'll sum them up, but you can [see the whole article here](#).



***How to lower those bills:*** 1) grow some of your food or get it from a CSA or co-op; 2) stop buying processed foods; 3) eat at home; 4) "shop your fridge or freezer" for food before buying at a store; 5) ***buy in bulk (at Selene!)***; 6) eat a food-efficient diet, based on veggies, fruit, grains, beans (dried), & nuts, using animal products in much smaller amounts (a diet that's great for your health, as Mark Bittman notes in *Food Matters* [see [here](#)]); 7) cook from scratch; and 8), don't waste food—once a week, check the fridge and use what's there to make soup or (if greens) pesto sauce! Learning to preserve foods also helps—freezing, canning, drying, etc. See [here](#) for the *National Center for Home Food Preservation's* guide.

## More Reasons to Buy Organic (As If You Needed Them!)

The pesticides in and on conventionally grown food have been a topic of many articles in both print and e-media. For instance, the *Environmental Working Group* ([here](#)) publishes an annual *Shoppers Guide to Pesticides* (ie, in conventionally grown produce); there's a short pocket version [here](#), and the full list [here](#). Also [check out their articles](#) on the non-food products you use on your body.

Another similar resource is the *Environmental Defense Fund's list of best and worst seafood choices*, both in terms of toxins and sustainability. For a chart, see [here](#).

Finally, the blogger *Bix, aka the Fanatic Cook*, a nutritionist (see [here](#)), has posted recently on pesticide residues on our foods as well as a commentary on an essay about organics by Marion Nestle, from the *San Francisco Chronicle*. For Bix's post "*Pesticide-Laced Food*," see [here](#). It discusses information from a group called "*What's On My Food?*" (see [here](#)), which includes a searchable database of toxic chemicals & how conventional and organic foods contrast. For Bix on Marion Nestle, see [here](#).

