

Spring/Summer Issue

THE WHEATSVILLE BREEZE

A PUBLICATION OF WHEATSVILLE FOOD CO-OP • 3101 GUADALUPE, AUSTIN, TEXAS 78705



Happy Birthday Wheatville

MARK JACOB | GENERAL MANAGER

45 years of Wheatville Food Co-op means something special to us all. The culture and spirit of Wheatville is alive in the hearts and memories of our owners and staff. People have laughed together, cried together, fallen in love, and grown up here at Wheatville. I encourage all of us to take a moment and reflect on what Wheatville means to us.

For many, Wheatville Co-op means a positive impact on the local economy, or a community based business that donates money and volunteer time to local non-profits. For others, Wheatville means great staff treatment and best-in-class wages and benefits for entry level staff, or keeping Austin weird, or supporting local farmers and other local companies. For many shoppers, Wheatville means the warm welcoming feeling you get when you walk in and are

greeted by your favorite staff like an old friend. The list just goes on and on. Wheatville has had great years that lead to opening a second store at South Lamar. We have had times of great challenge, and yet we continue to rise up and serve our community. The last several years have been hard for us to find our footing financially as competition continues to move in and several other head winds have come our way. We are excited to say we are starting to see brighter days again. We have been able to reduce our loss from quarter one by almost 40% in Quarter 2.

Now, we've ended Quarter 3 and saw again a reduction in our loss by another almost 50%. As of this writing we are in the our 4th fiscal year quarter, and feel we will begin to produce consistently profitable quarters. Profits at Wheatville are what

empowers us to live our values. Profits allow us to improve the shopping experience by refreshing of our stores and equipment replacements, to continue to be a "Best in Class" place to work by focusing on staff pay and benefits, to give more to our local non-profits, and to buy more from our local farmers and vendors. We are proud of our Co-op and hope all of you continue to buy local and support all our local businesses that make Austin special.

We ask that you continue to shop with us, bring a friend, and share Wheatville with others so we can have another 45 years and more of all the special moments that make up Wheatville. So thank you to all our owners, shoppers, and staff that have given us the last 45 years! Happy Birthday Wheatville!

The Case For Southern Fried Tofu

LISA WEEMS | BAKEHOUSE MANAGER & DELI COORDINATOR

What is Wheatsville's most iconic deli dish? Most people would answer popcorn tofu, of course! However, I'd argue that our Southern fried tofu is equally famous and a dish that is much more easily accomplished in the home kitchen.

In fact, popcorn tofu is only a riff on Southern fried tofu, which was made in our kitchens well before the debut of those craveable crispy nuggets. Over 15 years ago, one of our cooks decided to combine the marinade and spice mix that are crucial to the flavors of both dishes, then used that batter to coat chunks of tofu and deep fry them. They were an instant hit, and the popcorn tofu craze began.

To make Southern fried tofu, we marinate the tofu in a flavorful mixture of tamari, vegan chicken broth, and white wine, then bread them with a savory mix of flour, cornmeal, nutritional yeast, and spices. This dry breading creates a shatteringly crisp crust that I honestly prefer to the softer battered nuggets. Even better, Southern fried tofu can easily be fried in a small amount of oil, unlike popcorn, which requires deep frying. This makes this recipe much easier to accomplish at home.

The process for preparing the tofu is a bit time-consuming, but it is largely hands-off and creates the perfect texture for the breading to cling to the tofu. The breading recipe is also infinitely adaptable. We use gluten-free flour in our mix, but all-purpose flour will work equally well if gluten is not a concern. Add a little cayenne for a spicy version, or take it in a different direction with the addition of smoked paprika, curry powder, or Cajun spice. Just make sure to adjust the salt in the breading if you add a seasoning blend that contains salt!

I hope that you give this recipe a try and enjoy it as much as I do!



Our Co-op Classic
Sandwich with
Southern Fried Tofu

SOUTHERN FRIED TOFU *Yield: 12 patties*

- 4 14 oz. packages firm tofu
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup strong vegan chicken or vegetable broth (we combine $\frac{3}{4}$ cup Frontier no-chicken broth powder with $\frac{3}{4}$ cup hot water)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup tamari
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup white wine

SPICE MIX:

- 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup flour (we use Bob's Red Mill gluten-free flour)
- 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup nutritional yeast
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cornmeal
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp sea salt
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp black pepper
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp onion powder
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp dried oregano
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp dried thyme

Neutral oil for frying, such as canola, sunflower, or peanut

At least a couple of days before you would like to make this recipe, freeze the blocks of tofu until completely solid (at least overnight). A day before cooking, remove tofu from freezer and allow to thaw in refrigerator overnight. If you are in a hurry, you can thaw the tofu by submerging in cold water, which will take a few hours. This process creates air pockets in the tofu that give it a rougher texture, which helps the tofu absorb flavor and which allows the breading to cling to the tofu nicely.

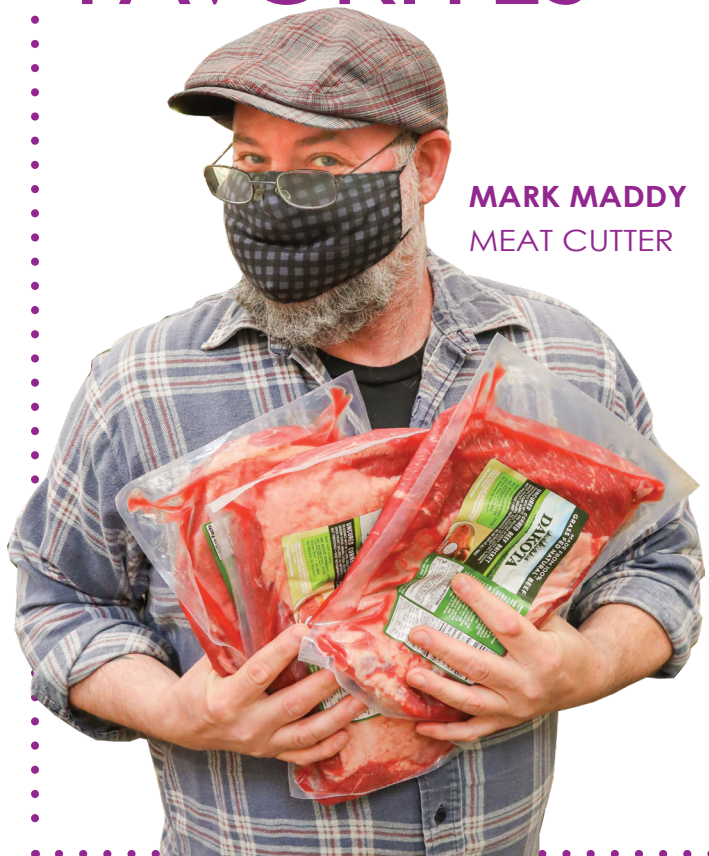
Slice each block of thawed tofu into three patties lengthwise. Line a sheet pan with paper towels or lint-free kitchen towels and lay the tofu slices onto the pan in a single layer. Cover with another layer of paper or kitchen towels, cover with another sheet pan, and place a heavy pot or several canned goods on top of the second sheet pan. Allow tofu to press for about an hour to remove excess water.

Meanwhile, combine broth, tamari, and white wine in a medium bowl. Combine all ingredients for spice mix in another medium bowl.

Working one or two at a time, add tofu slices to liquid mixture and saturate with marinade, then transfer to bowl with dry mix and coat patties with breading, pressing with your hands to make sure that the breading sticks. Repeat with remaining tofu patties.

Heat about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat until shimmering. Working in batches, add tofu in a single layer without crowding the pan and fry about 4 to 5 minutes per side until golden brown. Serve immediately.

TOP FIVE FAVORITES



MARK MADDY
MEAT CUTTER



NIMAN RANCH UNCURED APPLE SMOKED BACON

Niman Ranch does an exceptional job at pork and this bacon is no exception. It might be a little too thick to wrap around a jalapeno popper, but is perfect for tacos, burgers, or pâté.



MONTUCKY COLD SNACKS

On the other end of the spectrum, the Cold Snacks are light and easy on the ABV as well as the wallet, while packing more flavor than the other beers of it's ilk. It also has some of the best merchandising on a beer can.



NORTHCOAST BREWERY OLD RASPUTIN IMPERIAL STOUT

Every beverage I have tried from North Coast Brewery has been the top of its class. This Imperial Stout goes even further with it's depth of flavor and a beast of an ABV.



NADA MOO MARSHMALLOW STARDUST

My daughters are continually shocked that Nada Moo is dairy free.



FIELD DAY ARRABBIATA SAUCE

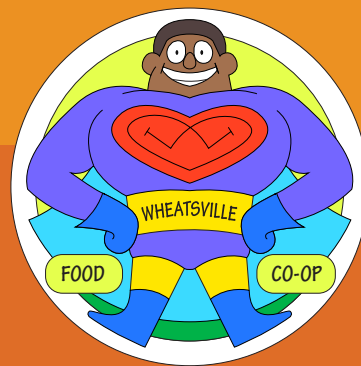
I think this is one of the best bottled sauces I have met, certainly in its price range. Solid all on its own and even better when you add more ingredients and simmer.

Kids Rule At Wheatsville!

NICK CONN | MARKETING DIRECTOR

Some Wheatsville shoppers have shopped here since they were knee high to a grasshopper. Seriously! We are 45 years old this year and we have watched so many of our littlest shoppers grow up, become owners, or bring in their own kids. Some even work here now!

Co-op kids have always been a big part of Wheatsville. We have given out free fruit for kids through our Co-op Explorer program (coming back soon!), had cool events like our Trick or Treatsville Halloween event and offered kid sized shopping carts.



This year we decided to start offering Wheatsville stickers. We included favorites like our heart logo, Popcorn Tofu Guy and Mangiasaurus. We knew there were more Wheatsville stories that could become really awesome kid stickers so we took to Instagram and hosted a contest to design the coolest sticker. After a few weeks the marketing team decided to award cartoonist **Layet Johnson** 1st prize for his super cute "Wheatsvilleman" design and 2nd place to our very own staff member **Katie Browne** for her delightful donut bunnies design. The newest additions will be landing in stores soon.

Camping Favorites

MATT OTTO | FACILITIES MANAGER

As the weather warms, it's a great opportunity to visit the many beautiful state, national, and private parklands throughout Texas. Here is my list of items that can keep you fueled while out at your favorite campsite. This is a list for those staying in drive in campsites. Many sites will provide a charcoal grill or fire ring but ideally you'll want to bring along a portable propane grill to eat big while minimizing the effort.



BULK UNSWEETENED DRIED MANGO



WHEATVILLE'S SOURDOUGH SANDWICH BREAD

A good loaf of bread goes a long way while camping and Wheatville has the best. Bring along your favorite cheese, lunch meat or almond butter for sandwiches. I highly recommend fueling for big hikes with a French toast breakfast. To keep things easy, prepare the egg wash (use Vital Farms eggs and Mill King whole milk) in advance and bring it in a sealed Tupperware container. In fact, whenever possible, prep items at home from the comfort of your kitchen.



RAMBLER SPARKLING WATER

Even when out in nature, I WANT bubbles. Cans are better than bottles when camping, so this is a great choice. Even better, Rambler is committed to conservation and partner with Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation to help preserve natural areas.

S'MORES!

If you're camping and sitting around a fire, you must treat yourself to the joy of roasting marshmallows. Everyone has their own method, balancing the fine line between perfect and burnt. My go-to s'more ingredients are: Dandie's Vegan Marshmallows, Annie's Honey Grahams and any Chocolove bar... I go with Almond and Sea Salt for extra crunch.



WHEATVILLE SPICY GUACAMOLE
EL MILAGRO TORTILLA CHIPS



GOMACRO MACROBAR PROTEIN PARADISE



GUAYAKI ORGANIC YERBA MATE SPARKLING CLASS GOLD

MAYA KAIMAL

ORGANIC EVERYDAY DAL

This recent discovery was quickly added to my camp food arsenal. These are packaged in shelf stable packaging and take up a small amount of room while delivering huge flavor. After just a few minutes of heating you can enjoy an amazing meal with little work. Don't forget the rice!

Honoring Our Namesake

NICK CONN | MARKETING DIRECTOR

This National Freedom Day (February 1) we kicked off Black History Month by honoring our namesake, the historic neighborhood of Wheatville with an addition to our timeline at our South Lamar Location. In 1976 our coop founders decide to pay homage to Wheatville, the first post-civil war Black community in Austin. Founded by James Wheat, a formally enslaved man from Arkansas, Wheatville had over 300 residents at its peak. To find out more about this important community visit our website.



FOUNDED BY JAMES WHEAT IN 1867
WHEATVILLE WAS THE FIRST BLACK COMMUNITY IN AUSTIN AND AT ONE POINT HAD OVER 300 RESIDENTS. OUR FOUNDERS NAMED WHEATVILLE FOOD COOP TO HONOR THEM.

COVID-19 Update

MARK JACOB | GENERAL MANAGER

Well, what a last 12 months it has been. This time has been so challenging for everyone and Wheatsville has had several impacts from COVID-19. Our staff face challenges of staying safe at work, keeping our shoppers safe, new cleaning protocols, face covering protocols, door metering, product changes, distribution challenges, deli changes, bulk changes, and on and on. After the initial shopping surge, we saw our sales drop by close to 20%, sales have since leveled off to around 15% negative. We have had so many owners and shoppers say they just are not going into the city much anymore. Many UT students and faculty are working remote. Surely, some shoppers have had to make the hard economic driven choice to buy food from somewhere other than their beloved Co-op.

SO WHERE ARE WE NOW?

• Due to our strong safety protocols of social distancing, face coverings, cleaning, and our HR teams' focus on staff safety, we have not had a single case of internal COVID-19 spread in our stores within our staff. Even when we did have some folks who contracted the virus outside of Wheatsville and worked before they knew they were sick, our protocols worked as planned and prevented any spread. We are very proud of this.

- We have completely reworked our bulk sets at both stores now and will continue to evaluate this section for how we can improve.
- We again allow reusable containers to be brought in for bulk items.
- We will be adding bulk body care back in April 2021.
- We are maintaining our face covering standards and will evaluate these regularly to ensure we are keeping up with the CDC and government recommendations.
- Our staff is rapidly choosing to be vaccinated where we expect to be at over 80% of our staff having at least one shot by end of April.

We are all excited to get back to face to face connection, and welcoming back all our owners and shoppers with our smiling faces. So stay safe out there, mask up, wash your hands, and let's finish strong to get our communities back in full swing!

TOP FIVE FAVORITES

ELSA ROBERTS | FRONT END CLERK - GUAD

ALTER ECO
DARK CHOCOLATE MINT CREME TRUFFLES
I tell everybody about these scrumptious treats every chance I get. I tried them on a whim and instantly fell in love. They're the perfect pick me up.

FULL QUIVER
CHIVE CHEESE SPREAD
OOOOOOh! This stuff is so amazing. Pair it with a good sourdough baguette and my heart is yours. My go to picnic basket spread consists of this, bread, jam, kombucha, of course, and a couple of crunchy Gala apples.

THE GRANDPA SOAP CO.
WITCH HAZEL SHAMPOO AND CONDITIONER
These products have changed my life. I never knew that my hair could feel so soft and healthy. It has nursed my over processed hair back to health many a time and smells so good!

MAMMA CHIA
CHIA SQUEEZE
Specifically the Blackberry Bliss flavor. Some gals and I started eating these back in high school and if you leave it in the fridge to pop out on a warm summer day, you'll be amazed at how delicious they are.

JBG
BULK & BUNCHED CARROTS
I've been eating these carrots since I was a tiny baby and they are my favorite snack to this day. Plus they're local and so amazing in stir fry.



Group shot at Guadalupe in 2011



South Lamar location was opened in 2013



Cesar Chavez makes historic stop at Wheatsville

Food To Watch For

CODY ATKINS | CATEGORY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR

In the grocery and natural foods world, co-ops are known as a place where trends begin. Long before every big-box retailer was proudly touting their organic products and connections to their communities, co-ops were not just talking the talk but walking the walk. Even these days where big multi-conglomerate brands are spending millions on product research, you will find that your local co-op will be on the cutting edge. So what are the trends that we are seeing explode or emerge right now? Here's just a couple:



PLANT-BASED PROTEINS

OK this one isn't that new, just about everyone has heard of **Beyond Meat** at this point and even national fast-food chains have added plant-based burgers to their menus recently (so props to Austin's local favorite, P-Terry's, for being way ahead on this one).

However, we are still seeing a lot of innovation from brands such as **Nuggs**, **Gardein**, **Sweet Earth**, and aforementioned **Beyond Meat**. Did you know: The number one response by consumers on why they purchase plant-based products is health and taste followed by environment and animal welfare.

WATER

How is the most abundant chemical compound and requirement for all of life on Earth a trend? Well the original thirst satisfier is trending up for a few reasons. First, as folks reduce the amount of sugar they consume (related: Paleo and Keto trends), water is an alternative to sodas and sweetened beverages. Second, there's a lot to choose from these days besides just what comes out of your tap. You have still (non-carbonated) or sparkling. Flavored or not. Water in glass to avoid plastic waste. Water in cans so you can take it places where glass is not allowed. You have water that is PH balanced and water that is sourced sustainably from natural springs and even rainfall.



At Wheatsville we have an embarrassment of riches as far as local water brands such as **Richards Rainwater**, **Cielo**, **Big Swig**, **Waterloo**, and **Rambler**. All are making a splash on the national stage as water sees resurgence in popularity!

Co-op Staff Shows Up For Community

MARK JACOB | GENERAL MANAGER

Winter Storm Uri was one of the hardest things our Co-op and community has lived through. There were so many people without electricity, heat, water, or food. Our staff were in the same challenging situation as everyone else during the storm. Even so, our staff came together as a team and served our community.

I have seen many natural disasters and major events in my career. Yet, watching our staff support one another physically and emotionally while welcoming in our owners and shoppers to ensure they had water and food, was truly a special sight. There was a pure sense of humanity and love for our neighbors emanating from the hearts of our staff. It did not matter what their job title or department they normally worked in, we all worked side by side to serve our community in one of its greatest times of need. We had leaders calling to check on staff, driving around to help pick people up so they could come help the community and get the critical supplies staff also needed. They brought gas to each other, pushed cars

out that needed help, and ensured we all did our best to brighten the days of everyone we interacted with during this challenging time. We had some staff who just wanted to come in to stay warm since they did not have heat at home.

We did lose power for 3 days at the South Lamar store and 1 day at the Guadalupe store. This resulted in over \$150k in damaged product due to not having electricity coupled with not being able to get any refrigerated trucks or move the product before it was out of safe temperature.

A huge thank you to our local suppliers who really came through to get their products to our stores to serve the community. We got hundreds of thank you notes from shoppers for being there when they needed us. I am so proud of how our staff poured their hearts into helping our community and each other. With humility and admiration, I am so grateful to get to work alongside such a great group of people.



WE'RE HIRING!

We're always looking for **friendly, cooperative, positive, high achievers** to join our team!

We offer competitive **wages & benefits including medical, dental, store discount, 401k, paid vacation, a friendly, open, and welcoming workplace & much more!**

\$14

Hourly entry wage upon successful completion of trial period.

APPLY TODAY!

Wheatsville.com

A Few Notes From Our Amazing Owners

"When I go to Wheatsville, I know I'm going to have an experience of community - there could be a good conversation with someone at the register (about 80s movies or jokes or fashion or gender or gardening or the novel I'm working on), even in the middle of a pandemic - and no matter how rough a day it's been, I know that whoever's working will offer generous and caring energy, which I do my best to give back. Knowing I am going to a welcoming place that knows my face and cares about me is such a gift. Wheatsville is the place I try to shop every time I shop, because it nourishes my body and soul and affirms that I'm part of a human family even in a time of isolation." -**Name withheld**

"For the last half of 2020 I was seriously ill, in constant pain & having great difficulty getting around, and the InstaCart and subsequently WV Curbside Service (once it began) were absolutely a life saver. WV Curbside Staff always paid attention to my notes and requests and as time went on the same person (Magda) usually did my shopping and she learned what I like and want and took some initiatives to improve my shopping service so I rarely, if ever, got poor substitutions or anything I wasn't very happy with." - **Jo Reichler**

"I am a proud card-carrying member of four coops and it is my intention to send as much of my business through these coops as I possibly can. I am getting ALL of my groceries from Wheatsville. If I pay a little more for good healthy food compared to junk, I think that is a long term total cost savings if I am healthier and avoid diseases which are lots more expensive in the long run. My intention is that we all should be supporting our favorite local businesses and help keep them afloat. I really want WV to survive and thrive." -**Bob Morgan**



**WHEATSVILLE
CURBSIDE**

Let us SHOP for you!

**Order ONLINE
Pick up CURBSIDE**



BENEFITS INCLUDE:	OWNERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sales prices honored • Order fulfillment by Wheatsville Staff • Beer and wine available 	BENEFITS INCLUDE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner Deals and Perks • Transaction history • All shops go to your patronage refund



Ric Sternberg clowns around in 1976



Wheatsville's 10 year anniversary 1986

Staff Spotlight: Anne Claire Brewer

BETH BEUTEL | HR GENERALIST & BOARD ADMINISTRATOR

WHAT'S YOUR HISTORY WITH WHEATSVILLE?

Long time shopper, recent employee! Wheatsville has been my favorite grocery store since I was a college student at UT.

WHERE ARE YOU FROM AND WHEN DID YOU COME TO AUSTIN?

I was born and raised in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. I grew up visiting Texas every year but made it my home in 2013 when I started college and lived in one of the ICC Co-ops!

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PRODUCT AT WHEATSVILLE?

My favorite products at Wheatsville are anything by Lost Pines Yaupon. Lost Pines Yaupon harvests the only native caffeinated tea in North America and it grows right here in central Texas!



WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PLACE TO GO IN AUSTIN?

Jester King Brewery; a farmhouse brewery that makes beers inspired by the land using all local grains and ingredients inspired by particular seasons. They also have a farm to table restaurant with amazing breads, pizzas, and shared plates. The vibe out there is unmatched.

TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT YOURSELF THAT PEOPLE MAY NOT KNOW?

I collect cookbooks! Cuisine specific and vintage ones are my favorite but I love them all.

FILL IN THE BLANKS: I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO __, AND IF I HAD IT MY WAY, __ WOULD NOT BE __.

I've always wanted to visit as many of the world's wine regions as I can, and if I had it my way, this endeavor would not be so cost prohibitive!



CO-OP PRINCIPLES & VALUES



1. Voluntary and open membership
2. Democratic member control
3. Member economic participation
4. Autonomy and independence
5. Education, training, and information
6. Cooperation among cooperatives
7. Concern for community

VALUES

Cooperatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and solidarity.

In the tradition of their founders, cooperative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility, and caring for others.

DEFINITION

A cooperative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise.



This is the 1977 Turnup Crew. Were you one of them?



What Wheatsville looked like in 1981

April Vendor Spotlight - Alter Eco

NIKI NASH | GROCERY & WELLNESS DIRECTOR

You may be all too familiar with the Alter Eco chocolate truffles featured at the Wheatville checkout stands. These truffles are small but mighty, just like the company they originate from: Alter Eco.

With a history going back to 1998, Alter Eco's focus on Fair-Trade and Organic certified products has more recently expanded to additional environmental responsibility. As a certified B Corporation (businesses that meet the highest standards of verified social and environmental performance) Alter Eco's company mission is to pioneer a full circle approach to eating, farming, and doing business – and to inspire others to do the same. Their plan for Full Circle Sustainability is laid out in transparent detail in the Alter Eco 2019 Sustainability report; available online at alterecofoods.com. Here are some of the highlights:



RESTORING FORESTS

transitioning cacao farmers away from monoculture farming to regenerative agriculture, known as "agroforestry". Agroforestry adds double the amount of trees and up to 15 different species of trees per acre, such as timber trees next to banana trees next to cacao trees. Other crops planted with cacao trees include nitrogen fixing plants (fava beans tamarind), roots (cassava, yucca), fruit trees (mango, plantain) and grains (maize). The outcome of agroforestry is increased biodiversity of insects & animals, restored soil, increased carbon absorption, land that is more drought resistant and absorbs more carbon.



In the fall of 2020, the Alter Eco Foundation was launched to further agroforestry with a \$1.5 million investment in transitioning 800 cacao farmers in Ecuador and 100 farmers in the Dominican Republic to dynamic agroforestry.

INVESTING IN FARMERS

Directly working with fair trade certified, small-scale farmers. Alter Eco works with 7 cooperatives worldwide from Ecuador to India to source the ingredients for their chocolates. That's a total of 24,300 farmers being paid a Fair Trade premium, and Organic premium and an additional Alter Eco premium for their work. Partnered since 2011, Unocace Co-op in Guayaquil, Ecuador provides 41% of the cacao purchased by Alter Eco.

NET ZERO CARBON

3 Steps to Carbon Neutral Footprint

Measure: Alter Eco rigorously measures its carbon footprint each year. 2019: 3,964 tCO₂e

REDUCE

Alter Eco can reduce 33% emissions through implementing new cacao agricultural practices i.e. pod composting, agroforestry. Offset: In 2019 Alter Eco's yearly offset led to 3,289 planted, 2.6 million trees protected, 16,860 acres protected

ELIMINATE WASTE

Committed to 100% compostable or recyclable non-plastic packaging. 14.7 million compostable truffle wrappers were diverted from landfills in 2019!

Wheatville proudly carries Alter Eco Fair Trade and Organic certified chocolate truffles, original chocolate bars and new grass-fed milk chocolate bars. Look for new Keto friendly choices from Alter Eco in the near future!

May Vendor Spotlight - Alaffia

CODY ATKINS | CATEGORY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR

ROBIN MICHAEL | ALAFFIA WESTERN REGIONAL SALES MANAGER

WHAT IS YOUR ORIGIN STORY?

WHO STARTED THE BUSINESS AND WHY?

Alaffia is a fair trade body care organization that began in 2003 by founders Olowo-n'djo Tchala and Prairie Rose Hyde. The two met when during Rose's service in the Peace Corps, she was stationed in Olowo-n'djo's village of Kabole. Headquartered in Olympia, Washington, Alaffia's clean, safe, and efficacious products incorporate indigenous, nutrient-rich ingredients handcrafted at our six women's cooperatives in Togo and Ghana.

DO YOU HAVE A SPECIAL TAGLINE OR SLOGAN?

Beauty – Equality - Empowerment

FAIR TRADE DEFINED

Fair trade is a movement of individuals and organizations working to ensure producers in economically disadvantaged countries receive a greater percentage of the price paid by consumers. While there are several definitions of fair trade, they all include:

FAIR TRADE PRICE

base price for raw ingredients or goods is adjusted higher than open market price.

PRICE PREMIUM

a percentage above the base fair trade price is paid into a separate account for development projects in producer communities.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Fair trade operators must adhere to basic human & labor rights, including the right to organize, no child labor, access to health care, and so on.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Fair trade organizations must minimize environmental impact. To Alaffia, fair trade means paying a fair price or wage in the local context, providing equal employment opportunities, engaging in environmental sustainable practices, providing healthy and safe working conditions, being open to public accountability, and reducing the number of middlemen between producers & consumers. We believe fair trade should be environmentally, economically, and culturally sustainable and give local communities the opportunity to self-empower.

EMPOWERMENT PROJECTS

Alaffia's success is not simply measured by profit. Our success is measured by empowerment. Empowerment Projects are Alaffia's mission in action, funded by the sales of Alaffia products. Alaffia invests in our communities because it is our moral responsibility and to ensure African resources empower African communities. The goal is to alleviate poverty and encourage gender equality. Our Empowerment Projects include several Education-Based Projects, Maternal Care, Eyeglasses and Environmental Sustainability. All of Alaffia's projects empower Togolese communities to provide their skills and knowledge to the rest of the world and rise out of poverty.

WHAT WOULD AN EMPLOYEE SAY IS THE BEST PART ABOUT WORKING AT ALAFFIA?

"The fact that we empower and employ people across the globe, here and in Africa, to make the world a better place. It's all about making the world a better place...through kindness, empowerment, empathy, listening, and sustainable practices." -Dane Halter, Alaffia Broker

ANYTHING ELSE WE SHOULD KNOW?

Our empowerment projects have affected more than 50,000 lives for the better!

SHEA BUTTER

Shea butter is the oil from the nuts of wild Shea trees scattered throughout the wooded savanna of West and Central Africa. It's protective and emollient properties are most valued for skin care. Most shea butter available to the general public outside West Africa is white and odorless; in other words, it has been refined to remove the natural scent and color of natural shea butter.

UNREFINED COCONUT OIL

Virgin coconut oil is traditionally extracted oil from fresh fruit of the coconut palm. We extract our virgin coconut oil by hand using traditional fermentation methods in Togo, West Africa from fresh coconuts grown organically on small farms. We use our virgin coconut oil in its natural, unrefined state for maximum effectiveness.

WORLD FAIR
TRADE DAY IS
MAY 8



Wheatsville Meat Department: Choosing Sustainability

REILLY CAMPBELL | OWNERSHIP AND OUTREACH COORDINATOR

As a community-owned food Co-op, we are values-driven, and our focus is on nourishing our community in every way. This is why we prioritize providing meat to our owners and customers from sustainable and humane farms located here in Texas. Sustainability to us, means mindful actions that show care for our whole natural world, including the people, animals, and the land that provides us with our resources.

When collaborating with farms in the meat industry, there are a few practices that we look for that demonstrate shared values. This means that the farms that we work with have consideration for an individual's health by cultivating safe and fair labor practices for those who work to provide the meat. For example, a fellow co-op, **Organic Prairie**, owned by over 2000 small farms, began in the interest of protecting people during a time when family farms were being discarded by a bankrupt agricultural system, and continues to put individual's health, safety, and interests first. Farms that we work with also greatly consider the health of those who consume the meat, by having practices like sanitary, stringent and proactive food safety USDA-inspected processing facilities, Safe Quality Food (SQF) 2000 Level 3 certifications, grass-fed/finished meat and avoiding the use of GMOs, steroid implants, animal by-products, growth stimulants, artificial ingredients, added nitrites or nitrates, synthetic hormones, antibiotics, pesticides, and preservatives in their meat. Todd Churchill, founder of **Thousand Hills Farm**, a beef, chicken, and pork farm that we work with, has a passion for the health benefits of grass-fed beef, and describes raising 100% grass fed beef as both a "science and an art." Todd is passionate for a reason, grass fed beef is substantially lower in calories, cholesterol, and saturated fats and has 3 times more healthy Omega-3's, 4 times more vitamin E, 7 times more beta-carotene, and is higher in a variety of other vitamins than grain-fed beef. Grass fed beef is not only great for the health of humans, but it is great for the health of the animals and the environment.

The farms that we work with raise their animals compassionately and with a deep appreciation of the gift that they give us. We see this in the meat industry through practices of free-range agriculture, grass fed and finished beef, pasture raised chickens, and even in creating mud wallows for pigs to cool down and play in, like they do at Richardson Farms. **Richardson Farms**, a local farm, is co-owned by Jim Richardson, who worked in veterinary practice for over 35 years, giving him a valued perspective in animal care and welfare.



The meat industry can have a detrimental effect on the environment, so, something that is important to us when we look for farms to work with is that they have environmentally friendly practices such as regenerative farming, grass fed meat, and working with instead of against the environment in every way. **Force of Nature** meats, located in Georgetown, Texas, takes sustainability and conservation to a new level by going outside the box and harvesting wild boar from invasive free range animals that currently cause environmental degradation in Texas and cause over \$2.5 billion dollars in annual damage. With numbers at around 5 million, these feral pigs represent the last species of truly wild land animals that can be wild caught and harvested to feed a growing human population.



From people to the planet, we prioritize sustainability in the meat partners that we work with. For seafood, we currently follow the Monterey Bay Seafood Watch to monitor the sustainable seafood that we bring in, but we have dreams of working with other co-ops to create our own co-op-specific seafood rating program that accounts for more sustainable factors than the Monterey Bay Seafood Watch does. While we do a lot already to focus on local and sustainable meat and seafood that we sell, we are always looking for ways to improve, which is why we have a goal to have at least 80% of our pork, chicken, and beef from local Texas farms. We are proud to work with such great farms that share similar values to us, so that we can share their great products with you!



Earth Day 2021

REILLY CAMPBELL | OWNERSHIP AND OUTREACH COORDINATOR

Happy Earth Day 2021! For us here at Wheatsville Cooperative Principles such as Principle #7, Concern for the Community, guide us as environmental stewards every day. We make decisions in our Co-op based on the fact that we want to conserve and respect the planet that nourishes us. We show appreciation for what we have been given by understanding and acknowledging the impact that grocery stores can have on the environment and we do everything we can to minimize this. This is present in all parts of our business, so that even in our offices we are reflecting these values.

What this looks like for our employees is access to free food that would have otherwise been thrown out, rechargeable batteries for our devices, and incentives for staff that bike-to-work. We also provide 15% off for our employees to encourage them to shop at our stores where we already do a lot of the work for conscious consumers. We carefully select the products that we sell in store based on a variety of sustainable factors. By already having a curated selection of local natural foods and products, we make shopping with consideration for the environment easy! Our shoppers have access to a variety of seasonal, fresh produce and animal products that are mostly from right in our backyard, cutting down on carbon emissions from transport, as well as keeping our money in the local economy. Many of the products we carry support sustainable farming practices (we are like a permanent Farmer's Market!). Due to the pandemic we had to cut back on our bulk offerings, but each week we bring more of it back! We pride ourselves on not just having bulk foods like grains, beans, and nuts but also by having bulk dog and cat food, soap, lotion, and peanut butter! It is important to us to make low-waste shopping easy for our customers, and this is why we also encourage bringing in your own containers and bags!



A variety of other practices in our stores include paper bags that are made with 100% recovered fiber, minimum of 85% post-consumer content, and are printed with water-based inks. We offer email receipts, double-sided receipts, and even a no receipt option to significantly cut down the amount of paper register tape (BPA free) we use. In our South Lamar location we have 57 Solatubes which use highly reflective fiber optic tubes to direct sunlight into our store, so depending on the amount of natural sunlight coming in, we can adjust the intensity of our ceiling lights so we don't have to use as much electricity.

Wheatsville employees are trained on proper waste disposal and work with local recyclers, Break it Down, in order to recycle metal, cardboard, plastic, paper, and glass. We even recycle cooking oil, collect our rainwater to use to water our plants, and put our food scraps into compost! Our waste-management system was used by City of Austin Resource Recovery as a model when they were developing their city-wide composting. Even food that is just unsellable, but still edible, we provide it free to our employees and then any leftovers from that are donated to our community through Save The Food.

We only buy energy efficient appliances, equipment, and water-conserving plumbing. Wheatsville is part of Austin Energy's Green Choice program which uses the money we pay for utilities to build wind farms and help Austin reach its goal of 55% renewable energy use by 2025!

Through all of these actions and many more we are doing our best to continually support our planet and are always trying to improve. We have plans to develop a sustainability team to focus on sustainability within our stores. This team would research projects ranging from solar panels to small things like compostable owner cards. We thank you all for playing a part in being thoughtful consumers and humans by bringing your containers to refill, remembering your reusable bags, sorting your trash, composting, planting gardens, collecting rainwater, spreading kindness, and for supporting your Co-op!



5 Cool Companies Doing Good For The Environment

REILLY CAMPBELL | OWNERSHIP AND OUTREACH COORDINATOR



ANNIE'S

Annie's has such a variety of delicious foods that all come from ingredients farmed with regenerative agriculture! They care about the planet and recognize the impact that the food industry can have on the climate, so they are a founding member of the Climate Collaborative and have made over 1700 commitments through them. Annie's only uses organic ingredients which support healthy ecosystems and people. On top of this they do all sorts of things to prioritize having a healthy environment, a few examples include developing better, recycled packaging, eco-friendly office spaces, and donating their profits through grants and scholarships that work for a better environment.

DR. BRONNER'S

Dr. Bronner's soaps is one of those brands you can find at almost every food co-op. Their soaps contain zero synthetic foaming agents, thickeners, preservatives, dyes or whiteners making them safe for the whole family, grey water systems and the environment. Having always used natural ingredients in their pure castile soap, Dr. Bronner's became officially certified organic under the USDA's National Organic Program in 2003. Their soaps are 100% biodegradable and they use 100% post consumer recycled cylinder bottles for their liquid soap and paper labels for their bar soap. You can also find them as a bulk option at most co-ops, making it easy for customers to get their all-use and natural soap with zero waste!



NUMI ORGANIC TEA

Designed to reduce reliance on fossil fuels for petroleum-based plastic packaging, Numi Organic Tea's compostable tea bag wrappers are made from renewable resources. Using sustainably grown, FSC® certified paper lined with sugarcane-based Non-GMO PLA and metalized eucalyptus, these plant-based materials ensure complete disintegration and no eco-toxicity when they break down. On top of this, they measure, offset, and reduce their annual emissions footprint to become Climate Neutral! Numi Organic Tea is Fair-Trade certified, certified organic, and a B-corporation that also gives back to communities through their Numi Foundation.

SUNBEAM CANDLES

Sunbeam Candles really live up to their name. They use solar power to power their candle-making and when they aren't using solar power, they only get energy from wind and biomass generation. Their packaging is made out of 100% recycled newsprint paper, their shipping is carbon neutral, they reuse and recycle candle wax, they have a carpool system for employees, and they even compost! Sunbeam truly makes Earth-friendly candles.



RAMBLER SPARKLING WATER

Closer to home is Rambler Sparkling Water, made right here in Austin! Their process utilizes a limestone filtration system on local water systems so that sensitive water areas aren't compromised. Rambler doesn't just have a cool, unique process for how they source and make their water, they're committed to conserving natural areas and waterways which is why they partner with programs like American Rivers and Texas Parks & Wildlife Foundation at the local level and across the country. They also use aluminium cans over glass bottles for infinite recycle-ability and maximum compatibility with ice chests, campsites, swimming holes, and beaches.

Wheatsville Cares About Community

REILLY CAMPBELL | OWNERSHIP AND OUTREACH COORDINATOR

Each year during our annual election Wheatsville Owners vote for 11 local non-profit organizations to support in the coming year. Throughout the year, each non-profit has an assigned month where we accept donations for them at the register and through curbside by rounding up totals at the checkout. During the month of October we collect round-ups for the Co-op Community Fund, which helps us to support cooperative-valued causes throughout the year. In addition to the donations that we receive through round-ups from our community, Wheatsville adds a \$1,000 donation for the non-profit at the end of each group's assigned month.

Even with the challenges that the pandemic presented we still saw incredible support from our community and we ended up raising \$143,206 total for local causes in 2020! For 2021, we have already raised \$13,448 for People's Community Clinic in January and \$11,942 for SAFE Alliance in February. You can read more about our **2021 Community Action** Recipients below:



JANUARY | PEOPLE'S COMMUNITY CLINIC

People's Community Clinic's mission is to improve the health of medically underserved and uninsured Central Texans by providing high quality, affordable healthcare. The Clinic has been offering care with respect and dignity since 1970.



JULY | SUSTAINABLE FOOD CENTER

Sustainable Food Center (SFC)'s mission is to cultivate a healthy community by strengthening the local food system and improving access to nutritious, affordable food. SFC envisions a food secure community where all children and adults grow, share and prepare healthy, local food.



FEBRUARY | SAFE ALLIANCE

The SAFE Alliance utilizes the Safe Place campus to provide housing, healing, and support for individuals and families affected by domestic violence, and sexual assault and exploitation through prevention.



AUGUST | MEALS ON WHEELS CENTRAL TX

Meals on Wheels Central TX (MOWCT) seeks to nourish and enrich the lives of the homebound and other people in need through programs that promote dignity and independent living.



MARCH | AUSTIN PARKS FOUNDATION

Austin Parks Foundation partners with our community to enhance people's lives by making our public parks, trails and green spaces better through volunteerism, innovative programming, advocacy and financial support.



SEPTEMBER | CASA OF TRAVIS COUNTY

CASA of Travis County exists to promote and protect the best interest of children who have been abused or neglected, by training volunteers to advocate for them in courts, in schools, and in our community to help them find safe, permanent, and loving homes.



APRIL | AUSTIN PETS ALIVE

Austin Pets Alive! has saved the lives of over 50,000 dogs and cats. Prior to their founding, 50% of the homeless dogs and cats entering our city's shelter were euthanized annually. Their Mission is to promote and provide the resources, programs and education needed to eliminate the killing of companion animals.



OCTOBER | CO-OP COMMUNITY FUND

Sponsored by the Twin Pines Cooperative Foundation, each fund will serve as a means for co-op members and shoppers to make donations to an endowment that donates to local non-profit organizations. This fund gives annually to local groups working on issues relating to sustainable agriculture and organic food, hunger and social issues, environmental protection and cooperatives.



MAY | CASA MARIANELLA

Casa Marianella welcomes displaced immigrants and promotes self-sufficiency by providing shelter and support services. Casa Marianella is the only homeless shelter in Austin dedicated solely to immigrants. 65% of their shelter residents, including children, are asylum seekers, many coming to us from immigration detention.



NOVEMBER | CENTRAL TEXAS FOOD BANK

CTFB is a leader in the fight against hunger for nearly 35 years, their mission is to nourish hungry people and lead the community in ending hunger. They assist in a variety of efforts from free food, nutritional education and assistance for families who qualify for federal assistance programs.



JUNE | HOSPICE AUSTIN

Hospice Austin is a non-profit organization that serves terminally ill and bereaved persons in our community with integrity, compassion and respect. They provide their services in the home, in the hospital, in a nursing home or assisted living facility, or at Hospice Austin's Christopher House.



DECEMBER | CARITAS OF AUSTIN

Caritas provides a service continuum for those experiencing poverty that begins with a safety net and links them to resources to achieve self-sufficiency. Their clients include households of all sizes; many of whom are veterans, refugees, women and children.



The total number of Fully Invested Owners

25,630

as of April 9th

Summer Is Here Then Summer's Around The Corner...What To Do?

SAL MENDIVIL | STORE DIRECTOR - SOLA

Well, it's that time of the year again. Where we have amazing spring weather. For a week if we're lucky. Then it's hot, hot, hot! Let's take advantage of the spring weather with a delectable refreshing beverage and snack.



Nothing cools you off better on a hot summer day than a Texas cider and one of our favorites is **Texas Keeper's Graftier Blanc**. This small batch cider is produced by Texas Keeper here in Austin. This cider is vibrant with notes of orange blossom, pear, and nectarine. The finish is light and slightly tart giving it a refreshing feel on your palate. We recommend pairing it with **Barbers 1833 English Cheddar**. Slice up or cube this traditional artisanal cheddar. This cheese is made only with local milk on the farm using traditional methods of stacking the curds by hand to ensure that the right "cheddaring" is achieved. This method results in a robust, creamy texture with naturally occurring crystals that give it a distractive and unique crunch. Its refined sweet notes balance out its tangy sharpness. It's a win win with this pairing!



To start, chill a bottle of tempranillo, **Torremoron Tempranillo** to be exact. This fresh black, blue, and red fruit aromatic wine is sharpened by a peppery finish. Vibrant and focused on the palate offering an intense cassis flavor. It has structure and substance like no other Tempranillo. This magnificent wine is produced in the tiny village of Quintanamanvirgo, Spain (say that three times!) where 28 families combine their harvest to create this true handcrafted artisanal wine. Talk about cooperative! Now, pair this tempranillo with another Spanish staple, Manchego cheese! Not just any manchego, **Torero Matador Manchego Cheese 12 Months!** This sheep's milk cheese from the La Mancha region in Spain is carefully crafted to produce an aromatic and complex nutty profile with a hint of caramel. A truly amazing cheese to enjoy this springtime. Don't forget the cracker! Place this awesomeness of Spanish cheese on a **Simple Mills Cracked Black Pepper Cracker** (made with almond flour). The crispy, peppery cracker compliments the creamy, nutty cheese. Provecho!



What about when it's hot and blustery, when we're in the 90's and not triple digits. We bring out 'bring out the big guns! that's right baby...its' Rose time! **The Long Little Dog** is a remarkable wine from France that is 60% Grenache, 30% Cinsault, and 10% Syrah. This refreshingly pale pink Rose has scents of fresh strawberries and raspberries with a creamy note at the end. It's soft on the palate and has a weighted berry taste towards the end with a slightly dry, tangy finish. Could it get any better? Yes! Add a ripe melon like **Cantaloupe** and cut into cubes and then you...wait for it...wrap that piece of melon with a thin slice of prosciutto. **Applegate Naturals Prosciutto** to be exact. This prosciutto has no nitrates no antibiotics and is gluten and casein free. This "menage a trios" of flavors is undoubtedly the most elegant way to survive the Texas heat while you stand in front of your AC in your underwear.

not all products are available in both stores

Keep cool and be safe! Muchas gracias!

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

BILL BICKFORD | HR DIRECTOR



In the last issue of the Breeze, we shared with our owners the steps we were taking to move the Co-op forward in the areas of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Now that we are further along in that work, we wanted to update you on our progress thus far.

As noted in that prior article, Wheatsville has partnered with Dr. Kazique Prince of Jelani Consulting, LLC, to help guide us on this journey. Dr. Prince's experience, expertise, and deep connections to our local Austin community make him uniquely qualified to lead us through this critical work.

Under Dr. Prince's guidance, each member of the Co-op's leadership team was able to take the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) to help assess our overall cultural competence and how we each make sense of cultural differences and commonalities in our lives. Following that assessment, we each met with him individually to review the results and to develop our own Intercultural Development Plan (IDP). Each IDP is intended to identify opportunities and outline goals that will help that leader better bridge cultural differences. With the assessments and development plans complete, the full leadership team also attended a workshop hosted by Dr. Prince to help align and kickstart our work in this important area.

Looking ahead, our next steps in our continued education as a leadership team will be to read the book *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo and to use that as a basis for further group discussions led by Dr. Prince. We are also committed to working with our internal staff-led Diversity & Inclusion Network to leverage their insights and ensure we are creating a positive impact for both staff and shoppers in these areas.

And finally, I want to take this opportunity to share some positive news we recently received in the area of diversity. Each year, your Co-op submits a variety of data to our friends at National Co-op Grocers (NCG) to help track the positive impacts we have on our community. These "impact metrics" include things such as livable wage, composting and recycling, number of local vendors, etc. Also included is a percentage of staff identifying as an ethnic minority. Out of 31 co-ops submitting data in NCG's Central Corridor, Wheatsville was ranked third in staff diversity in 2019 and fifth in 2020. The number of staff identifying as an ethnic minority actually went up during that span, but a couple co-ops managed to diversify even faster.

While it was gratifying to learn that we were one of the more diverse co-ops among our peers around the country, this by no means indicates we have achieved our goals. We will continue working to improve diversity and inclusion at Wheatsville to better position ourselves to serve our broad and vibrant community.

Wheatsville Board Dedication to DEI Work

BRANDON HINES | BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Wheatsville was named in honor of James Wheat, a formerly enslaved freedman who founded the community of Wheatville on the West side of Austin where West Campus currently sits. Wheatsville has a long history of supporting racial equality. In May of 2019, the Wheatsville Board of Directors established a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DE&I) working group to provide focus on all forms of inclusion and diversity. The problems of structural racism and bias are deeply embedded into many aspects of society. Addressing the issues at the root of the problem is certainly a much larger undertaking than a single cooperative or a volunteer board can take on, but the board is committed to identifying actions that are within our power that can affect change. As a part of these efforts the board has been pursuing a number of avenues including: building internal skills within the board, prioritizing DE&I efforts for the co-op, and looking to make positive contributions to the broader community.

In order to develop a better understanding of DE&I, the board has made a commitment to board training. The majority of board members have completed or are actively participating in structured DE&I programs. These programs help to

illuminate the history and underlying issues of racism and bias while also providing perspectives on rising above well-intentioned gestures to more long-term productive initiatives. Board members continue to bring new perspectives from these training sessions to help inform our on-going strategies.

The board of directors has raised DE&I as a priority at Wheatsville. Some of the board's work has included drafting a DE&I policy and incorporating a requirement of DE&I experience as a part of the General Manager hiring criteria; which resulted in hiring a General Manager with specific relevant experience and a passion for DE&I work. Wheatsville management, starting with the Interim General Management team and carried forward by the new General Manager, has embraced this priority and established a plan which includes, among many other activities, engaging an outside expert, Dr. Prince from Jelani Consulting, for on-going guidance, establishing listening sessions, providing staff training and the strengthening of anti-bias policies. One outcome of this work has been that staff

have established a diversity and inclusion network and is leading efforts as a part of the network.. Management provides the board regular updates on DE&I activities. To learn more about these activities, owners are welcome to attend a board meeting or join one of the General Manager's "Meet the GM" video conferences.

One of the cooperative principles is concern for the community. As a board we are always thinking about how the work we do extends to having a positive impact on the greater community. Certainly having a healthy co-op that works to create an inclusive environment and sets a positive example provides benefit to the community. However, there is so much more that we can do together as a community. We hope that as we evolve our DE&I activities that we can find more ways to engage and collaborate with the community. As a first step in these on-going efforts here are two books I personally found insightful.

My Grandmother's Hands, by Resmaa Menakem
Between the World and Me, by Ta-Nehisi Coates

Please stay tuned for future updates and let the board know if you are interested in participating or have something to contribute to making Austin a diverse, equitable and inclusive community.

From The Board Of Director's

ROSE MARIE | BOARD OF DIRECTORS



It is an honor to serve our community-owned food Co-op as we celebrate our 45th birthday this year! I grateful to all who have come before to create and serve our organization in all leadership roles. Their lasting legacy and vision in establishing our organization is codified in the preface to our bylaws:

The purpose of the Wheatsville Co-op is to create a self-reliant, self-empowering community of people that will grow and promote a transformation of society toward cooperation, justice, and non-exploitation.

The focus of this transformation has evolved over time – from initially creating a venue for foods that were not readily-available anywhere else; to a focus on local economy; to an increasing focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion – but the heart of our organization remains constant.

We invite you to share your stories about why Wheatsville matters to you along with your favorite memories and experiences of our history. Please contact our Owner Outreach Coordinator at reilly@wheatsville.com

HOW THE BOARD WORKS

The Wheatsville Board of Directors is a governance Board composed of nine members who are elected by the Owners to serve as trustees of our beloved organization. We are a group of volunteers, who serve because we are passionate about and committed to Wheatsville and to the values and principles of cooperation. We bring skills from a variety of personal and professional backgrounds and use them along with our relationship with Wheatsville to provide stewardship and oversight at the highest level. We are deliberate and systematic in how we approach our work, including ensuring that Directors receive ample training to understand (1) what our accountability and leadership responsibilities are, (2) how we fulfill these responsibilities and, (3) to exercise our duty of care, which includes developing the requisite level of knowledge in specific areas so that we can make wise and informed decisions. We are always striving to do the right best thing for our organization, with the underlying question “what would our Owners want us to do if they knew all that we know?” By this, we mean that leadership requires a significant amount of information and deliberation to understand circumstances, implications, best practices, legal requirements, and other factors. Given the level of diligence needed, the Board manages our work by focusing on the governance role, which includes oversight of operations (what actually happens on a daily basis to operate our stores). This allows Board/governance work to be done by a group of volunteers and ensures that operations are handled by specialized and qualified experts/ staff, led by our General Manager.

The Board primarily conducts our work at monthly meetings which are three hours in duration, and through committees such as the Audit and Review Committee, and the Nominations Committee. Our primary source documents are the Wheatsville Bylaws and our governance policies. We utilize a system called Policy Governance, which is designed to identify and codify expectations, allow us to delegate, and then to monitor for achievement. We have policies describing expectations of the Board as well as expectations of our General Manager, who serves as the sole employee of the Board and thus our single point of delegation. Our governance policies and bylaws are available on our website: wheatsville.com.

Within our governance policies is another primary source that bears calling out: our Director's Code of Conduct (policy “B6”), wherein “Directors commit to ethical, businesslike and lawful conduct.” This policy is related to bylaw 5.1.1 which prohibits Directors with a substantial conflict of interest based on being a competitor to the Co-op, as well as bylaw 5.13, which requires that the Board actively manage actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest. Every year all Board candidates sign our “Statement of Agreement” which includes agreeing to our Code of Conduct along with our Conflict of Interest policies. Every year, all Directors sign the Statement of Agreement before the new Board is seated, and every year we monitor our performance on this policy and report on it in our Annual Report.

WHAT THE BOARD IS WORKING ON

At our February Board meeting, we established the over-arching goal of strengthening the foundations of our governance practice. There has been a fair amount of turn-over on the Board over the past several years, with the result being that we are just getting a group of Directors entering their second three-year term. We often acknowledge that the first year on the Board is a time of great learning (and commonly feeling a bit overwhelmed by how much there is to learn). In the second-year, Directors feel like they are starting to understand, and in the third year Directors feel prepared to lead. The attention to foundational understanding is doubly important given that 2019 and 2020 were focused primarily on GM transition. This year, we are planning to work on improved process documents and our document repository, deepening our understanding of Policy Governance (our primary mechanism of oversight), participating in training (both self-led and that offered on the national level), re-engaging in our annual GM evaluation and compensation process, discussions around how we publish and share financial performance information, and training Directors in meeting facilitation.

The Board is constantly working on Board perpetuation, which is one of our primary duties. This includes all of the work described above, along with recruiting excellent candidates to run in our annual Co-op Vote. If you are interested in learning more about how to run for the Board, please contact us at nominations@wheatsville.com

We welcome all interested Owners to attend a Board meeting if you are interested in speaking with the Board or just observing how we do our work. You can find more information on our website.

Whether you participate in our annual Co-op Vote, choose to run for the Board, or visit with us at a monthly Board meeting, we want you to know that we sincerely appreciate you and that your continued participation as a shopper is one of the most valuable ways that you can contribute to Wheatsville!

Change Is In The Air!

Wheatsville board endorses bill to curb climate change

In November, the board of Wheatsville Co-op voted to endorse the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act, climate legislation that would curb greenhouse gas emissions and strengthen the economy. Board member Megan McDonald led the effort, working with owners and members of Citizens' Climate Lobby to understand the potential of the bill and its alignment with Wheatsville Co-op's mission and values. Over one thousand businesses, nonprofit organizations, faith groups, and tribes have endorsed the Energy Innovation Act, including five other food coops (in Madison WI, Bloomington IN, Moscow ID, Keene NH, and Santa Monica CA). To participate in this historic effort, join the Monthly Calling Campaign and let your representatives know that climate change legislation is important to you.

What Wheatsville Means To Me

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



"I trust my purchases at Wheatsville provide a return on investment within our community. Also, Wheatsville is an educational hub where I continue recognizing the value in promoting food literacy in the community, & I look forward to sharing my food-first experiences as I grow with Wheatsville." - **Jason Bourgeois**



"To me, Wheatsville has always been about the community. As a community owned grocery store Wheatsville is much more responsive to the needs of the community. I have seen this take the form of supporting local businesses, spotlighting local issues or leading on important causes. As an owner and Wheatsville board member I feel a responsibility to make sure that Wheatsville remains strong so that we, as owners and an organization, are in a position to help shape the future of our community for the better." - **Brandon Hines**



"Shopping at Wheatsville is always a pleasure! The stores are convenient sources of healthy food that supports our local economy. I love coming in and experiencing the welcoming staff and warm community feel." - **Stephanie Wong**



"Shopping at Wheatsville simply makes me 'feel good.' I think it's because I know that the products at the co-op were sourced by someone that cares about quality, the environment, making a positive impact in the community, and that person wasn't motivated solely to maximize profit, but in service to the shopper." - **Brian Mikulencak**



"Every time I shop at Wheatsville, I know that my dollars are working hard to make a positive impact on the world and community. I love that one shopping trip can support a livable wage, help other cooperative businesses protect the environment and workers, and boost the local economy. I appreciate the staff's positivity, friendliness and commitment to making Wheatsville thrive in these challenging times." - **MeriJays O'Connor**



"To me Wheatsville is the nexus of community, economy, and sustainability. It is about how we lead with our values in choosing to engage with and participate in the world. We all need to eat, and I am so grateful to have our community-owned grocery store to curate delicious food choices while constantly striving to increase the positive impact on and for our farmers, local economy, staff, shoppers, and beyond." - **Rose Marie Klee**



"I support Wheatsville because I am confident in the character of the business, from ethical sourcing to support for community, staff compensation to carbon footprint. I am not naive to the challenges we face. I am, however, assured that our priorities are straight and our values at the center. The money we spend at Wheatsville stays in Austin!" - **Rachel Fischer**



"Wheatsville Co-op is one of my favorite places in Austin. Its sunshine on a cloudy day, or in Wheatsville speak—the sprinkles on my vegan donut, the nutritional yeast on my popcorn. I feel so lucky to have grocery shopping experiences that are so full of friendliness and care for one another. Wheatsville is powered by cooperative ideals and run by everyday Austin people. When I shop at Wheatsville, I feel good knowing that the money I'm spending is staying within my community—supporting local farmers and suppliers, employees, and other important community organizations. I'm already looking forward to my next shopping trip!" - **Megan McDonald**

TOP FOUR FAVORITES
JASON BOURGEOIS | BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BANANA DREAM SMOOTHIE
Add Peanut Butter, Almond Butter, and splash of Garden of Life Organic MCT Oil—now it's a party!

CURBSIDE PICKUP
Groceries ordered online plus same-day - Amazing!

YELLOWBIRD SAUCES
Their Serrano sauce is fantastic, you heard it here!

GREEN GATE FARMS
Year-round certified organic goodness



PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 16
ZIP CODE 78660

Locations

GUADALUPE

3101 Guadalupe Street
Austin, Texas 78705
512-478-2667

SOUTH LAMAR

4001 South Lamar Boulevard
Austin, Texas 78704
512-814-2888



NEWS & UPDATES

Keep up with the latest
deals and store events

SIGN UP for our WEEKLY EMAIL at
wheatsville.com

FOLLOW US ON

