

the Coop

all the news that's fit to eat

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DIXON CO-OPERATIVE MARKET

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The Turkey Man & Embudo Valley Organics – Gobble It Up

by Susan P. Lewis

They say where your car breaks down is where you're meant to be. This is no more true than for David Rigsby who found his home here in New Mexico back in 1967. He was on his way to a job in New Hampshire when his car broke down in Santa Fe. Being the resourceful soul that he is, he worked on his car for a week. When he called the folks back on the East coast to let them know he was on his way, they said "Don't bother." His job had already, in a short

week's time, been filled by someone else's shoes. That set him on a path to explore his options here in the Land of Enchantment, and eventually find the land that he has called home for almost 45 years.

Most know the turnoff on 68 where the marker is a rusty tractor part clearly marking the road that leads down and across the river to Embudo Valley Organics. It was those 200 acres that called to David and his wife back in 1967 to begin their dream.

But David and his wife started in other than the turkey business. That came later. Their first food enterprise

was actually beans and corn. They were fondly known, for those in the Valley at that time, as Supreme Bean. With 255 varieties of beans and 60 varieties of corn, how did they switch to turkeys and feed? In the late 1980's, there were some bad years in terms of crops. The grasshoppers started eating their bean flowers. And when someone suggested that turkeys were an excellent source for eating grasshoppers, the rest became history.

David's turkey operation began in the early 1990's when they not only introduced the only organic turkeys in

New Mexico, they became the exclusive source for organic feed in the state, of which they still hold that title. The health of the soil is so important for the health of the crops that David Rigsby took it upon himself to encourage other large-scale grain farmers in nearby states to also go organic thereby spreading the movement of healthy farms in the region. This included such states as Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas. As David puts it "We don't grow crops. We grow soil." That's the basis for organic and creates the goodness in the land. Which then goes into our bodies as nourishment.

David Rigsby gets about a couple of thousand turkeys a year and not only are they fed delicious organic feed, they roam the land. To a certain extent. Not all 200 acres! Embudo Valley irrigates about 24 acres for grain crops, for their feed. The rest of the grain ingredients come from other organic sources in the neighboring states. As most of you know, David also supplies the Coop with eggs from his chickens. Those lovely birds also wander outside of cages, of course, and are as wholesome as the day is long. With currently about 45 chickens, Mr. Rigsby is adding to that lot by getting another 100 before the end of the year. He should have his hands full but there's always room for more, it seems.

Just so you know the operation here at Embudo Valley Organics, the turkeys are treated with care in all respects. From the time that they are brought to the Farm as babies – "poults", I learned, is the term in the



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Winter Squash

by Susan P. Lewis

There's something about the coolness of the morning that welcomes the change in the air. It beckons us to move on to a different season within as we celebrate the changes that surround us here in the valley. The change of the colors of the leaves, the evening light dimming a bit sooner than expected from our summer days. The clothing changes that fit the season. A bit more wrapped around our neck or longer pants or sweaters making their way out of our closets at this time. Socks on our feet. Different shoes, perhaps. This all reminds us that we are moving from one season to another. And this reflects in our food, as well. Warming choices that imbue our kitchen with aromas we haven't smelled in a while. In that respect, in honor of the season, we are welcoming our stoves back from a summer rest.

Got questions about the newsletter, or suggestions for articles? Contact the Newsletter Maven, Susan Lewis at susanp@dixonmarket.com

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Saturday and Sunday
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With baking in mind, heating up our kitchen, we celebrate winter squashes that are available right here in the Dixon Market. We are lucky to have some delicious varieties from our local farmers right here. Some of the choices gracing the store these days include Acorn, Butternut and Kabocha. To give an idea of the nutritional value (of course I have to include this in each article for any that are interested in knowing how a particular food helps our body feel great), below is some information on what winter squash offers us:

Nutritional Profile

The amazing phytonutrient content of winter squash makes us realize that this food is not just a starchy vegetable. Carotenoids found in winter squash include alpha-carotene, beta-carotene, beta-cryptoxanthin, lutein, and zeaxanthin. Pectin-containing cell wall polysaccharides found in winter squash are important anti-inflammatory nutrients provided by this food, as are its cucurbitacins (triterpene molecules). Winter squash is an excellent source of immune-supportive vitamin A (in its "provitamin" carotenoid forms). It is also a very good source of free radical-scavenging vitamin C and manganese and heart-healthy potassium and dietary fiber. In addition, winter squash is a good source of heart-healthy folate, omega-3 fatty acids, niacin, and vitamin B6; energy-producing thiamin and vitamin B5; and bone-building copper.

Squash Seeds

Save those seeds that you scooped out! Seeds from winter squash can make a great snack food, and can be prepared in the same way as pumpkin seeds. Once scooped out from inside the squash and separated from the pulp, you can place the seeds in a single layer on a cookie sheet and lightly roast them at 160-170°F (about 75°C) in the oven for 15-20 minutes. By roasting them for a relatively short time at a low

temperature you can help minimize damage to their healthy oils. Linoleic acid (the polyunsaturated omega-6 fatty acid) and oleic acid (the same monounsaturated fatty acid that is plentiful in olive oil) account for about 75% of the fat found in the seeds.

The Nutritional Profile and piece on Squash Seeds were taken from the following website where you can find a wonderful, longer article on winter squash's antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, blood sugar regulation, and other body benefits that this vegetable has to offer. There is so much found in our food. When we make those choices that help us to feel better throughout the season, our bodies thank us. In the writings from the website, it also mentions how to prepare squash, some great new recipes, and how to best store squash throughout the winter so you can still prepare some in your kitchen when February and March roll around on the calendar. Here's the link: <http://www.whfoods.com/genpage.php?ntname=foodspice&dbid=63>

So stop by the Dixon Coop and pick up some local, delicious winter squash. Your body will tell you how it appreciates you with each loving bite.

Pureed Squash Soup

From "Changing Seasons" Macrobiotic Cookbook
By Aveline Kushi and Wendy Esko

4 cups butternut squash, without skin or seeds, cubed

4-5 cups water

1 cup diced onions

Sliced scallions

Place squash cubes in a pot with water. Bring to a boil. Reduce flame to medium-low and cover. Simmer until soft, about 10-15 minutes. Puree squash and place it back into cooking pot. Add diced onions and bring to a boil. Reduce flame to medium-low and cover. Simmer about 15 minutes. Place in individual serving bowls and garnish each with a few scallion slices. Serve hot. Yummmmm.

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turkey business – to the time they are handed over for their last days, David Rigsby and crew all put their hearts into these animals. So they are brought to you with care, knowing in your heart of hearts that they lived a very good life, each and every day at Embudo Valley Organics. They were fed well and looked after. That is the heart of this place that resides right here in our precious Valley. And is brought to the store each Thanksgiving.

Here are some interesting facts about non-organic animal food:

1. According to the EPA, 90-95% of all pesticide residues are found in meat and dairy products.
2. Toxins, which include dioxins and drug residues, concentrate in animal fat.
3. Only meats labeled Certified Organic are pesticide, herbicide and drug free.
4. Conventional animal feed is among the most heavily sprayed crops.

Embudo Valley Turkeys are:

1. free of pesticides, herbicides, growth hormones and antibiotics.
2. lower in fat than conventional turkeys.
3. Field-grazed in small flocks on certified organic greens and grains.
4. Processed completely by hand in our certified organic processing facility.
5. Treated humanely – no debeaking or declawing
6. Not factory farmed

According to a brochure from Embudo Valley Organics, “Our family farmed animals are raised in humane and environmentally responsible models that provides you with the freshest, safest, and most flavorful meats available in New Mexico.” We can trust that when we get a turkey from Embudo Valley Organics, it is the best that we can possibly get. And we are fortunate to have such diligent and caring effort right in our own back

NOVEMBER CALENDAR:

Sunday, November 6th – Members 10% Off Day. Get anything/ everything in the store for 10% as thanks for being a Member.

Friday, November 11th – Soup Night: A Community Potluck. 6:00pm. Dixon Community Center. Come on out to warm your belly as we share warming soup and warm conversation. Bring a favorite soup to share, bring the recipe, and remember to bring a bowl and spoon along the way. This is an opportunity for us to come together as a community and share good, nourishing food that is offered by each other in this season. This event is sponsored by the Food Initiative of the Dixon Coop Market.

THE COOP WILL BE CLOSED ON THANKSGIVING DAY, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24TH. (See you on Friday...)

yard. We thank you, Mr. Rigsby, for all your years of hard work on our behalf. We are grateful to you and all the people involved in your operation.

Organic turkeys from Embudo Valley Organics will arrive at the Coop on Friday, November 18th. They will be offered on a first come, first serve basis – so come early for best pickings. This year there will be about 30 turkeys available. Approximately (20) in the 11-16 lb. range and about (10) in the 17-22 lb. range. So enjoy these delicious turkeys for your Thanksgiving table and remember to come to the Coop at your earliest convenience to get the best choice. Have a warm Thanksgiving everyone!

**Be Part of the Expansion:
Be Part of the New Co-Op
Board of Directors**

With the new year of 2012 approaching, the Coop Board will be seeking new Board members. Are you interested? Have you thought about ways that you can contribute to the Coop and community? There will be several positions opening on the Board, with members voting in late January for those positions. If you are interested in being part of this exciting new expansion by serving on the Board (which is a volunteer position), please drop off an expression of this interest by November 30th in the office at the Coop. Please submit in writing why you are interested, any related background you might have (not necessary but helpful) along with your name and phone number/ email. This information will be used to let Coop Members know about you when they vote. These terms of office will begin in February. There will also be information available in the office as to Board responsibilities to know what is involved. Be aware that all applicants must be a Co-Op member for at least a month in order to run.



Kahuna Korner by Nelson Rhodes

The change of seasons has come again, seems like it was winter just a few weeks ago. After a hectic summer, most of us look forward to winter as a time to enjoy some enforced rest. Things at the Co-op, however, promise to be anything but restful as the long-awaited expansion will commence in the early days of 2012.

On the eve of beginning this new phase of our existence, I'd like to take a minute to reflect on just who we are, why we are who we are, and what we would like to become.

I have learned that the Dixon Co-op is as unique as its community. There are scarcely any other retail food Co-ops in the country that were not only started by, but also basically serve a low-income community. Most other Co-ops can be found in areas that boast a higher income level and larger customer base, and the store can mark up their goods a little more (or a lot more!) to cover their overhead costs.

The Dixon Co-op was begun by Embudo Valley residents to provide healthy, nutritious foods to it's citizens at a reasonable price, and one of the main reasons we are still in existence is because of our fantastic volunteers.

At the risk of sounding like a broken record, I cannot thank our volunteers enough for cheerfully and enthusiastically, year after year, showing up at their scheduled times and pitching in with cashiering, stocking, unloading trucks, hauling recyclables, picking up orders in far-flung places, and generally pitching in wherever they're needed. The level of involvement of the volunteers in the day to day operation of the store is truly amazing, and it is one of the main reasons that the Dixon Co-op is still in operation.

New Co-ops tend to start out with a large number of volunteers, but it quickly drops off, forcing the business to hire more and more employees, thereby adding to its overhead, and forcing it to raise prices to cover the cost. If the store is located in a community that can afford the higher prices, then everything's jake. If it's in a community where most of the customers need to get the most for their shopping dollar, then it becomes a risky business. The fact that the Dixon Co-op is not only soldiering away through a record recession, but is preparing to expand, is a direct result of the unprecedented support of our many fantastic volunteers (which includes, of course, the people who volunteer to be on our board - it was their grant-writing talents, among other things, that helped make the expansion a reality).

There will be more need than ever for volunteer assistance when the expansion begins in earnest. Moving equipment, carpentry work, and many other tasks will be available for volunteers, and the more the community can pitch in the better off your store will be. If you think you might be interested in contributing some time, talent, and brute strength let us know about it, and we'll start compiling a list to draw from.

Of course, we are always looking

for new people who would like to volunteer to cashier, stock, recycle, or do other day-to-day tasks at the store.

Even if you have no time to physically spend at the store, your input is always invaluable to us. What would you like to see in the expanded store? How can the store better serve you and the community? With the costs of having a larger store, sales will need to increase. What do we need to do to have you spend more of your grocery dollars here at the Co-op? Talk to us about it! The best way for the store to thrive and grow, and yet retain its unique atmosphere, is to make sure that the market remains a true reflection of what the village wants and needs. So feel free to give us your input.

The Dixon Co-op has become a minor celebrity in the co-operative community, and I'm often asked what the secret is behind our being able to succeed in a rough economy, and how the store became such a unique, eclectic entity. I reply that it is a lot of hard work, but that hard work won't amount to anything if the store doesn't reflect the nature of the community that supports it. Our community is unique, and so our Co-op is unlike any other. With your continued help, support, and feedback, we will survive the jive and thrive!

My heartfelt thanks to you all,
Nelson

