

OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2003



**IN THIS ISSUE OF
THE CHRONICLE**

Editorial 1
AGM Agenda 2
Letter to the Editor 3
Manager's Report 4
Member Labour Report . . . 6
Waking Up at Everdale . . . 7
Non-GMO Foods 9
Board of Directors Report . 11
Food Policy into Practice . 12
Upcoming Events 13

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The Chronicle is a link between members of this and other co-operative communities; the only viewpoints herein endorsed by Karma Co-op Inc. are those published as reports of the board of directors and its committees.

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Submissions

Submissions are collected from the red box. Upcoming editorial deadlines are posted on the bulletin board and the box. All envelopes, articles and disks must be clearly marked with the author's name.

Submissions may also be sent by e-mail, to chronicle@karmacoop.org. Send your submission within the main body of the message. Please do not send attachments.

The Chronicle will publish any Karma-related material, subject to editorial policy guidelines. (See Karma's Web site, under *The Chronicle*.) Letters to the editor must contain the writer's full name and telephone number, although names will be withheld at time of publication upon request. All published articles are eligible for work credits (letters to the editor and announcements are not).

www.karmacoop.org

EDITORIAL

The Chronicle

October/November 2003

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Caitlin Smith
Rebecca Weigand
Food Issues Committee

The bounty of fresh, locally grown organic fruits and vegetables is overwhelming at this time of year. We live in a climate that makes this time short and therefore exceptionally bittersweet.

As if to underline this quality, Alvin Filsinger's Harrow Delight pears arrived a couple of weeks ago at Karma. These small, dusky fruit have a thick skin, and those of us accustomed to super-market-pretty pears tend to pass them by. They are, in fact, wonderfully delicious and sweet – in my opinion, the best pears we get all year. Once picked, however, they go bad quickly. Like the season, they must be enjoyed here and now. Then, like the season, they're gone.

Celebrations such as Thanksgiving are invitations to participate in relishing the tastes of the harvest. The Food Issues Committee has extended that invitation to be more thoughtful about what and how we prepare for the event, in their recent bulletin *Harvest Thyme*. There is an intimate side to these celebrations, for we are taking these luscious squashes and pears into our mouths, savouring their flavour, and then making them a part of our own bodies. We are participating in the Earth's abundance just as the Earth, so to speak, is participating in us.

Participation is talked about a great deal, but there is less and less of it. Turnout in elections continues to drop – I myself am tempted at times not to encourage a process so saturated with drivel. For the most part, we turn to others for our entertainment, our health care, and our education. Most North Americans not only don't grow their own food, they don't even know how. Fewer and fewer of us prepare it, either. Our industrial food system invites us not to participate in knowing where our food comes from or

how to cook it properly.

Karma, of course, is a kind of exception to all this. I say kind of, because our members are also participating less and less in the store's operations. As the years go by, we accumulate paid staff and it seems we shop less often at Karma. Less than half of us are working members anymore. I suggest we celebrate participation in the food chain by getting more involved in Karma – in particular by becoming conscientious working members. This co-op is an opportunity to have a say in food production and distribution in Ontario, and let me tell you such opportunities don't come easily in these times. (See Sara Pulins' report.)

Examples of the energy that our members give to taking responsibility for their food fill this issue of *The Chronicle*. Rebecca Weigand describes her rich experience of working on an organic farm for a week last summer, seeing exactly where it all comes from. Sarah Fairley reports on the sustained work of a few dedicated members trying to save Karma's food during the blackout. The Food Issues Committee is plowing ahead with the challenge of implementing the Food Policy we adopted last year.

Nevertheless, as the exchange between John Viktorin and the board shows, surely we have to take an inventory of ourselves, not just of what's on the store's shelves. This might include re-imagining what we really want, and in fact what it means to have real fun. If participating in Karma means a chore you "ought" to do, forget it. Looked at in the right way, though, it can be as delicious as biting into a Filsinger pear. And, because it has no shelf life, it needs to be done now.

HAVE YOUR SAY. MINGLE WITH MEMBERS.
EAT KARMA SNACKS. WIN FABULOUS PRIZES.

YES, IT'S THE

Annual General Meeting!

MONDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2003
ST. ALBAN'S BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB
843 PALMERSTON

AGENDA

Call to order and approval of agenda	7:00 pm
Auditor's report, discussion, and appointment of auditors for the '03-'04 year	7:05 pm
Treasurer's report and discussion	7:20 pm
Approval of 2002 AGM minutes	7:35 pm
Presentation and discussion of President's report	7:45 pm
Presentation and discussion of Manager's report	7:55 pm
Board member election	8:05 pm
Member labour discussion	8:20 pm
Committee reports	8:40 pm
Other business	8:55 pm

Childcare available on request.

Call Michelle Webb (416-516-8280) by October 10.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The board has responded to John Viktorin's letter, printed in the last issue. When a letter such as John's appears, we have decided that The Chronicle will give the target of the criticism a chance to reply in the same issue, since the newsletter only appears every two months.

This is the board's response to John Viktorin's letter in the August/September 2003 issue of *The Chronicle*. On behalf of the board I will address some of John's concerns.

1. When we need practical solutions, we get absurdist demand-sided dreams – please just spend \$15 more per month at Karma. Yeah, I'll just buy things I don't need or want and stockpile them in my basement.

The board has never suggested such an unworkable solution. At a recent board meeting we discussed ways to improve Karma's economic situation. We suggested that if members each spent \$15 more per month, then our sales would reach the monthly forecasts, but we never proposed that members buy products they don't want. We discussed how to encourage Karma members to make the co-op their "one-stop shopping destination." We also recognized that there are products that members buy elsewhere. A suggestion box was put at the cash register with one simple question: "If you could buy it at Karma what would you buy?"

2. Instead, the board's actions to date amount to requesting a survey to plumb the depths of member dissatisfaction – an excellent step – only to diminish its value by allowing its initiation to be put off until after

the summer, six months after thinking up this idea. Who knows when we will see an actual survey or see actual survey results?

We don't have a great deal of useful information about the membership. We need to inform our decision making with up-to-date data. As to the timing, we decided to implement the survey in September for two solid reasons: the summer is not a good time to do a survey with so many members out of town, and it takes time to create a proper survey that will provide useable information. Thanks to Jen McDonald, Aysa September, and Sarah Fairley, the survey is now available in the store and on our Web site. We'll be analyzing the results as soon as the data is collected.

3. Then, the board's finance team claims surprise at the continued low sales, and suddenly has to "rewrite" the budget.

The Finance Committee members have been monitoring the declining sales over the last 12 months. The procedure for creating a budget always calls for adjusting the projections as new information becomes available.

4. Finance should have in place a mechanism to warn of impending trouble in income or sales before we actually start losing money by using statistics and charting trends.

We do chart trends – we examine sales in previous years to determine the budget. We'd love to hear any practical suggestions about how to better anticipate economic shortfalls.

5. At a time when Karma needs leadership, we get divisive action such as the apparently pre-decided and outwardly punitive increase in the non-working surcharge from 8 to 12 per cent ... What's the cost-benefit analysis for alienating half of Karma's membership?

We proposed the increase in the surcharge to reflect the true cost of the labour that must be purchased when a co-op has non-working members. An 8 per cent surcharge simply doesn't cover the costs. This increase is just one measure of many that we're introducing to address the situation. The board does not operate in a vacuum – we work closely with the general manager to ensure that Karma remains a thriving co-op.

6. I hope that members vote no at the next AGM to this surcharge increase.

The non-working surcharge rate is not something that the members vote on at AGMs. It's a policy change, not a by-law change. The board has the authority to change it.

The board is elected by the membership and we rely on the assistance of all the members, especially when times are tough. Current board members believe that Karma's economic setback is temporary and that with the collective will of all co-op members we can make a complete financial recovery.

**Caitlin Smith, President
Karma Co-op Board of Directors**

MANAGER'S REPORT

by Sarah Fairley/manager@karmacoop.org

On September 15 at 9:30 am Karma lost power. Sheila and I had been discussing the morning's bread delivery when the store suddenly became eerily quiet. One does not realize how much noise our 13 freezers and fridges generate until a power outage turns them all off for us. It was quiet – really quiet. Sheila and I stood there staring at each other. Brief power outages are not uncommon at Karma and the staff take them in stride. Or at least we used to.

Like everyone else Karma lost power on August 14. It was not until members with battery-powered radios started dropping in on the store that we understood that this was not one of our usual power outages. Karma ended up being without power for a full 41 hours. Within 18 hours all of our fridges had reached 15 degrees Celsius or higher. Many of our freezers held out longer, but by the time the power came back on the freezers were all at least 1 degree Celsius. Karma had to dispose of 90 per cent of our frozen and refrigerated stock. While much of this food was still safe to consume, it was no longer fit for sale.

Many members came out to support their co-op during the blackout. Karma remained open during daylight hours. Members were able to shop using Karma's "shopping list" system. More

than a couple of members came to shop and ended up staying to help take an inventory of the losses or clean up the mess left behind.

As we boxed up the partially thawed salmon fillets and the wheels of organic brie there were a few positives to consider. All the food that we had to remove was taken to shelters and food banks. Staff at these facilities would sort through all our donations to determine what was salvageable and what was not. At Karma, members were pulling together in a time of need. Some stayed for half an hour, some stayed for the entire day. Some even returned the next day and the day after that. Members contributed their time and their money to help their co-op through this challenging time and the co-op is better for it.

Stock levels at Karma are now back to normal, although \$18,000 worth of stock was lost as a result of the blackout. Cash flow problems following the power outage made it impossible to replenish all the lost stock immediately. Purchasing managers took on the task of keeping adequate levels of stock in the store while keeping our overall purchasing costs down. Finally, however, the cash crunch has passed. Karma is now entering its best time of year. Members have returned from their summer vacations and the summer sales slump is over. Increased member purchases have provided Karma with a much-needed injection of dollars. This

money has gone right back into further increasing our stocks. Members can now enjoy a full selection of products once again. And I will be able to enjoy the comfort of knowing how important Karma is to so many of its members.

The power outage on September 15 lasted only five minutes. Long enough for me to stop breathing and for me to remember to start breathing again. In those five minutes I willed the power to come back on. I still had not recovered from the last blackout; Karma had not yet recovered from the blackout. But however much I feared another lengthy blackout, I also had the comfort of knowing that the Karma community would pull together to get us through. The offers of work, money and emotional support would all come. Thankfully they were not needed.

WORKING AT KARMA

Report from Member Labour Coordinator Sara Pulins

GREETINGS!

First of all, thank you to everyone who helped during the blackout. We were very appreciative of the extra help. That said, we never run out of member labour work, so to keep everyone up to date on Karma's most pressing needs, here is the first of what will be regular member labour reports to *The Chronicle*.

CHANGES IN CASH SCHEDULING

Our longtime weeknight cash coordinator, Cynthia French, is on maternity leave. Filling in for now we have Sandra Gregson.

Following is the new cash coordinator schedule, amended due to the change in store hours and to Cynthia's leave:

Weekdays: Mon.-Thurs. 11 am-3 pm and Fri. 10 am-5 pm: Ellen Eyeman 416-766-4767

Weeknights: Mon.-Thurs. 3 pm-9 pm (7 pm on Mondays): Sandra Gregson 416-597-1265

Weekends: Friday 5 pm-9 pm, Saturday and Sunday: Eleanor Ward 416-972-1399

Karma could really use cashiers during the week, during the day, especially from 3-5 pm!

SET UP

Due to the change in our store hours, we are asking that members doing set up come at 9:15 am if we open at 11 am, give or take 15 minutes. If you are used to coming in at 10 am and cannot make it any earlier, do not worry. We welcome your help nonetheless.

CLEAN UP

We can always use more willing and able bodies for clean up, especially on the weekend. We are also looking for anyone able to do garbage and recycling on Wednesday nights, anytime after 6 pm.

THE COMMITTEES

The Promotions Committee is in need of assistance. Anyone with public relations, advertising, or event planning experience is welcomed. Also, anyone with child care experience, your expertise is needed at the AGM this October 20. Lastly, anyone interested in staffing tables at various events but not necessarily interested in being on the committee should feel free to contact the Promotions Committee.

The Maintenance Committee needs handy people. If you know something about fixing things, happen to be a plumber, electrician, carpenter, or contractor the committee would gladly find work for you.

Also available are positions with the Health and Safety Committee, the Web Committee and the Chronicle Committee. *The Chronicle* is in particular need of writers – members who have something to say about food issues, about managing the co-op, or about our members or suppliers. Please contact the Chronicle Committee at chronicle@karmacoop.org.

Look for a more detailed description of committees and their needs in the next report.

New board members are needed for the upcoming year. The Annual General Meeting is on October 20, and we hope to see you there! If you happen to have experience volunteering or working with not-for-profit organizations, small businesses, or co-operatives, think about running for a position on the board.

And lastly, don't forget it's soon time for INVENTORY – Sunday, November 30, 2003! We need volunteers to help out!

Thanks for all your hard work.

WAKING UP AT EVERDALE

by Rebecca Weigand

The Everdale Environmental Learning Centre is an organic farm and community devoted to learning and teaching about sustainable living. It is located about 40 kilometres northeast of Guelph. I had the opportunity to spend a week there in mid-August as a "wwoofer" – a willing worker on organic farms.

Everdale is run by Gavin, Karen and Lynn, who are responsible, respectively, for the farm itself, the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programme, and the Learning Centre. Gavin and Karen and their three young daughters, and Lynn, her partner and their son, have lived on the farm since 1998. In addition, from April to October, there are several apprentices who live and work on the farm through the Future Farmers Programme, which is sponsored in part by Agriculture Canada. There are also many workers, the Centre's board members, and general contributors who commute or visit from Guelph, Toronto and surrounding towns. Then there is the couple who are building Home Alive, a straw bale home that is designed to be ecologically sensitive and energy efficient.

Finally, there are the wwoofers. There were five of us for most of my time there, but varying numbers of wwoofers rotate in and out throughout the spring, summer and fall. Wwoofing is a worldwide programme through which people provide much needed labour on organic farms while travelling or enjoying a change of pace. Wwoofers are often students, tourists, or people needing a break from urban life.

On Monday morning, one of the Future Farmers apprentices picked me up at the bus station in Georgetown, and we arrived at Everdale in time for a communal lunch. Immediately, I was welcomed and made to

feel at home. It didn't matter that I was only staying for a few days or that this was my first experience on a farm. The atmosphere of Everdale seems to encourage a kind of openness, welcoming a diversity of experiences and backgrounds and weaving us all in. After lunch and dish washing, everyone got back to work. Wwoofers at Everdale work about seven hours a day, although the Future Farmers work much longer hours, and the permanent workers probably never really stop. Throughout the week I weeded beds of carrots, squash, melons, lettuce, and celery; harvested potatoes, zucchini, lettuce, carrots, dill, green beans, and garlic; and planted new lettuce. I was bitten by mosquitoes, crawled upon by ants and daddy long legs, and covered in dirt, and my urban self didn't even care. (Well, I cared a little, but I mellowed out as the week went on.)

Although I bike and run in Toronto, farming uses different muscles, and my arms and thighs ached. The wwoofers slept in tents, spread out at a distance throughout the farm, so that when we went to bed at night we were each very much alone. This again was an adjustment, and I had to make myself see the open space and wildlife around me with new eyes. I was reminded that nature is natural much more than scary (even daddy long legs in my tent, and the coyotes that were rumoured to be wandering nearby). The first night was hard, especially because there was a thunderstorm and my old tent was not as waterproof as I would have hoped. But I slept more soundly as the week went on, waking up to the sound of the rooster crowing, and to the sunlight shining through the mist. The out-houses were nice and clean, and the solar showers were warm and very inviting after a

continued on next page

long day's work. Lunch was a communal affair, but we were on our own for breakfast and dinner – although people often collaborated on mini-potlucks. Food was provided, with much of the produce coming from Everdale and other nearby farms, and from the Ontario Natural Food Co-op.

There is a big focus on education at Everdale. From summer camp to school groups and programs for urban youth, children are an important part of the Centre. There are also public tours, and workshops on straw bale building techniques, solar technologies, and aspects of organic farming.

As we worked, Gavin made sure that we understood the reasons behind the things we did. It became clear that a lot more thought needs to go into organic farming than into conventional farming. I learned many things about organic farming, which involves being much more sensitive to the connections between the land and the food. For example, it is important to avoid damaging the leaves of lettuce in order to prevent rot. Some weeds are good and help maintain soil structure. Clover planted alongside a crop can help fix nitrogen in the soil. I learned that crop rotation is probably the most important element of organic farming, and that a field of rye can help stamp out twitch grass. Finally, I learned that a lot of organic farming is creative and experimental. It involves testing, collaboration with nature, and learning as you go.

On Wednesday, the wwoofers joined in on a visit to another organic farm, Orchard Hill near London, in a monthly meeting of Future Farmers apprentices from farms across south-western Ontario. The owners of Orchard Hill have made a commitment to minimizing their use of fossil fuels. Here we were amazed as we watched the efficiency with which the work horses plowed and cultivated the fields. It was also a wonderful experience to gather together with so many other people who are excited about and committed to sustainable food production. Thursday was the day we did

most of our harvesting, in preparation for the CSA pick ups. This is a programme through which local people can buy a share in farms like Everdale, and receive in return about 22 weeks worth of fresh organic food. On Thursday afternoon at about three o'clock, CSA members started to arrive. Many parents brought their children with them. For them this was a relaxing time to collect their food, explore the farm, check out the buildings, look at the laying hens and the chicks, and pick their own beans and herbs.

Then, all too soon, it was time to go. On Saturday morning around 11:30, after an hour and a half of prolonged and repeated good-byes, hugs, and picture taking, I got a ride back to Toronto with another wwoofer. During that drive, and the ride on the crowded TTC bus on the way home, I suddenly began to find it difficult to breathe the air. I am thankful for what I learned during that short week, but for me this was much more than an introduction to the logistics of organic farming and renewable energy. My time at Everdale was an awakening of my body and mind to the wonder of the land. I feel a renewed and powerful commitment to doing everything I can to help realize environmental and social justice. Everyone should have access to opportunities like those at Everdale, and to healthy food, clean air, land and water every day.

At the same time, everyone has the responsibility to help maintain these necessities, not just for ourselves, or for our children or grandchildren, but for the sake of the planet itself. So many of us are walking around (or driving around) missing out on the joys of nature and at the same time engaging in practices that further degrade this planet. Let us wake up and do something about it!

Environmental Learning Centre
www.everdale.org
info@everdale.org
P.O. Box 29, Hillsburgh, ON NoB 1Z0
Tel. 519-855-4859
Wwoof Canada - www.wwoof.ca

SHOPPING LIST FOR NON-GMO FOODS – THE FINAL WORD

by Bill Sanda,

Director, Public Affairs, Weston A Price Foundation, westonaprice_contact@msn.com

"Let's go eat some genetically modified food for lunch."

– President Bush, in private remarks at the White House to visiting European leaders, as relayed by White House Press Secretary Ari Fleischer.

The following information was compiled over a three-year period by Mothers for Natural Law, <http://mailhost.groundspring.org/cgi-bin/t.pl?id=24885:650094>. It is not complete, but intended as a starting place for shoppers. If you don't see some of your favourite products on this list, please contact the manufacturers and ask them if the product contains GM ingredients.

There are about 40 varieties of genetically engineered crops approved for marketing in the U.S. As a result, 60-70 per cent of the foods on your grocery shelves contain genetically engineered components.

If you really want to avoid the influence of genetic engineering, buy fresh organic produce. If you want to buy processed foods and avoid genetically engineered ingredients, you will have to read product labels. If the label mentions any of the ingredients listed below without explicitly qualifying it as organic, then the product probably contains genetically engineered ingredients.

PRIMARY GMO SUSPECTS: INGREDIENTS AND PRODUCTS TO CHECK

• **Soybeans:** Soy flour, soy oil, lecithin, soy protein isolates and concentrates. Products that may contain genetically engineered soy-

derivatives: vitamin E, tofu dogs, cereals, veggie burgers and sausages, tamari, soy sauce, chips, ice cream, frozen yogurt, infant formula, sauces, protein powder, margarine, soy cheeses, crackers, breads, cookies, chocolates, candies, fried foods, shampoo, bubble bath, cosmetics, enriched flours and pastas.

• **Corn:** Corn flour, corn starch, corn oil, corn sweeteners, syrups. Products that may contain genetically engineered corn derivatives: vitamin C, tofu dogs, chips, candies, ice cream, infant formula, salad dressings, tomato sauces, breads, cookies, cereals, baking powder, alcohol, vanilla, margarine, soy sauce, tamari, pop, fried foods, powdered sugar, enriched flours and pastas.

• **Canola:** Oil. Products that may contain genetically engineered canola derivatives: chips, salad dressings, cookies, margarine, soaps, detergents, soy cheeses, fried foods.

• **Cotton:** Oil, fabric. Products that may contain genetically engineered cotton or its derivatives: clothes, linens, chips, peanut butter, crackers, cookies.

• **Potatoes:** Right now the only potato that has been genetically engineered is the Burbank Russet, but you still have to look out for potato starch and flour. Products that may contain genetically engineered potatoes or derivatives: unspecified processed or restaurant potato products (fries, mashed, baked, mixes, etc.), chips, Passover products, vegetable pies, soups. Fast-food chains appear to have responded to consumer con-

Hello Karma membership!

If you have not been to a Karma event recently you may not have met your Promotions Committee.

Check out some photos of our most recent events on the Web site.

We want to hear from you, so drop us a line (some of you already have) either at promotions@karma.org or at the store on our bulletin board.

DO NOT MISS THIS YEAR'S
Annual General Meeting
TO BE HELD ON
MONDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2003
FROM 7 TO 9 PM
AT ST. ALBAN'S BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB,
843 PALMERSTON.

Childcare will be provided on a first come, first served basis. Please pick up forms at Karma's cash desk beginning October 1.

Those interested in doing their member labour hours as child care providers should contact promotions@karmacoop.org.

Watch for our Winter Baking Bonanza at the end of November!

cerns and requested genetically natural potatoes.

• **Dairy Products:** Milk, cheese, butter, buttermilk, sour cream, yogurt, whey. You have to ask several questions when you are looking at dairy products. Have the cows been treated with rBGH? [This is only of concern within the U.S. The milk promoter rBGH is not licensed for use in Canada.] What kind of feed have they been given? If they are not being fed organic grains, chances are quite likely that they will be eating genetically engineered animal feed. What does this do to their milk products? No one knows.

• **Animal Products:** Because animal feed often contains genetically engineered organisms, all animal products or by-products may be affected.

• **Papaya.**

Please note that a food may contain some of these items and yet be free from genetically engineered organisms. There is no way of knowing without tracking down every brand, every product and every ingredient.

Even reading labels is no guarantee that you will be able to avoid genetically engineered ingredients, because manufacturers are not required to list every ingredient, enzyme or organism used in the manufacturing process.

The following products may also be genetically altered, contain or originate from genetically engineered organisms: candies, cookies, breads, cereals, corn syrups, oils, juices, detergents, dough conditioners, yeast, sugar, animal feed, vitamins and enzymes used in the processing of cheese.

BOARD REPORT

by Caitlin Smith, President

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM Committee reported that there are six positions available on the 2003-2004 board of directors. Two existing directors whose terms are ending and two other Karma members have agreed to be nominated. All board members were asked to approach at least three Karma members and encourage them to consider running for the board. Interested in standing for nomination? Send an e-mail to jointheboard@karmacoop.org outlining your background and expertise.

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THE ROLE OF COMMITTEES

General Manager Sarah Fairley reported that the Operations Manager position has been eliminated to save money. Sarah believes that the committees must now assume greater responsibility for tasks previously performed by the General Manager and the Operations Manager. The board agreed that the committee liaisons will meet regularly with Member Labour Coordinator Sara Pulins to discuss what skills each committee needs. Sara Pulins will attempt to find members with the appropriate skills to fill the available positions.

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NON-WORKING MEMBER SURCHARGE

Karma suffered financial losses due to the August 14 power blackout and declining sales over the past year. In light of this situation, the board has decided that the timing was not good for increasing the non-working member surcharge. While the board still supports the increase from 8 per cent to 12 per cent in order to reflect the true cost of paid labour, there has been a great deal of negative feedback from many Karma members. The board will explain the rationale behind the decision at the AGM.

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WORK SHIFT CASH EQUIVALENT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The member labour committee has created an implementation plan for a change in the work shift cash equivalency. The board approved the plan and will present it to the membership at the AGM.

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KARMA'S WEB SITE

The new and improved Karma web site was launched August 31. Check it out at www.karmacoop.org. Please submit your suggestions and comments to the Web Committee.

PUTTING FOOD POLICY INTO PRACTICE

By the Food Issues Committee

In a values-based organization, it is important to understand the economic, environmental and social impacts of the products we purchase and how they compare to our common goals. It is important for us as a co-operative to have decision-making processes that are fair to all, that work for the benefit of the whole, and that enable us to remain a financially viable entity. The Food Issues Committee hopes that the implementation of a guide for Karma's product policy (ratified at the 2002 AGM) will establish such a process.

After developing the product policy, many of the exhausted members of the food issues committee passed the task of developing an implementation guide on to what was primarily a new set of committee members. These members have been working to develop a comprehensive implementation guide that can be adjusted to changing interests of the co-op and, more important, used in a manner that supports the work of our buyers, the people who make daily decisions about the products that we buy. This is no easy task; the guide must allow buyers to decide whether the attributes of a product reflect our values, in a manner that requires minimal staff time and financial resources.

Currently, the food issues committee is involved in various tasks, which include defining and interpreting the product policy, implementing case studies to test different purchasing scenarios, and developing the actual guide.

One of these case studies concentrates on the needs of members seeking products associated with local harvest celebrations. One result of this research was the recently published *Harvest Thyme* bulletin, which looked at celebrating and promoting the harvest season.

The committee is also in the beginning stages of developing an analysis of the impact of the food policy guidelines on how buyers balance potentially contradictory criteria (i.e., "Do I buy local melons or organic melons, if we haven't got enough to buy both?"). When members approach staff to ask them to order a particular item for Karma, how can that request and the buyer's answer be shaped in part by the policy guidelines? Stay tuned to *The Chronicle* and the co-op Web site to see what the committee is involved in.

Karma Co-op members who are interested in becoming involved and contributing to the Food Issues Committee can do so in several ways. Members can get involved as adjunct or core member. Adjunct members work on specific assigned committee research tasks. Core members contribute to the committee on a routine basis through meeting attendance and participation, contributions to case studies, guide writing and specific tasks that arise. For further information on the committee, product policy and implementation guide, contact foodissues@karmacoop.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Organic Program at the Canadian Health Food Association's "Expo East"

Metro Convention Centre, Downtown Toronto

Thursday, October 16 - Sunday, October 19

CHFA Organic Pavilion

on the Expo Floor, Metro Toronto Convention Centre, 255 Front St. E.

Saturday & Sunday, October 18 & 19

Visit the organic display area, located at the top of the escalators at the west end of the CHFA Administration Booths.

A wide variety of events and educational sessions have been planned by the CHFA for these three days. For more information, see

<http://www.chfa.ca/expoeast.html>

<http://www.chfa.ca>

Ecological Farmers of Ontario (EFAO) Western Region Fall Symposium

Linwood Community Centre, Linwood (near Waterloo)

Saturday, November 8, 9:30 am - 3:30 pm

Morning speakers: Fran and Tony McQuail with slides of their organic agriculture tour in Cuba. Afternoon speakers: farmer's forum and business meeting.

Displays: Space will be available for displays. If you would like to put up a display contact Ann Slater at (519) 349-2448.

\$15 for EFAO members; \$20 for non-members incl. organic lunch.

Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario (EFAO)

<http://www.gks.com/efao/>

EFAO Events

<http://www.gks.com/efao/events.html>

Whole Life Expo 2003

Location: Metro Toronto Convention Centre, 255 Front St. E. (near Union Station)

Friday, November 28 - Sunday, November 30

Canada's largest showcase of natural health, alternative medicine and environmentally friendly lifestyles.

Featuring over 200 exhibits of the latest innovative products and services in the natural health and environmentally friendly arena including: an organic food market, superfoods, orthomolecular medicine, wellness-based dentistry, chemical-free skin and hair care, a green living showcase, healthy housewares, and educational courses, books and videos.

Admission: \$6 for weekend exhibit pass, \$14 for weekend lecture pass

Expo Hotline: 416-515-1330 or visit <http://www.wholelifecanada.com> for more information

MISSION STATEMENT

Our aim is to

1. create a community of actively participating members;
2. foster a healthy connection to the food we eat, the people who grow it, and the other organizations who share our beliefs;
3. co-operatively educate ourselves on environmental issues; and
4. exercise political and economic control over our food

by operating a viable co-operative food store.

KARMA CO-OP STAFF

General Manager

Sarah

Managers

Sheila

Michel

Clerk/Manager

Paul

Produce Manager

Michael

Bookkeeper

Victoria

On-Call Manager

Robin

Health & Beauty Manager

Michel

Membership Secretary

Marilou

Clerks

Naomi

Eric

Bulk/Grocery Manager

James

Member Labour

Coordinator

Sara

Jae

Ian

HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday	11 am – 7 pm
Tuesday	11 am – 9 pm
Wednesday	11 am – 9 pm
Thursday	11 am – 9 pm
Friday	10 am – 9 pm
Saturday	10 am – 6 pm
Sunday	11 am – 5 pm

WWW.KARMA COOP.ORG