

Prairie Newsletter

Planning for the Future

Barnaby Urich-Rintz



The landscape for the natural foods industry changed dramatically with the announced acquisition of Whole Foods by the online supergiant Amazon. Certainly, the fact that grocery

online sales have lagged far behind retail sales accounts for a key reason why Amazon is purchasing a major brick and mortar natural foods grocer. Nevertheless, this merger could threaten many players in the natural foods industry, particularly grocery cooperatives. Amazon has tens of billions of dollars for R&D and personnel. This gives them a significant leg up against the much smaller, independent coops. Even the largest grocery cooperative, PCC, will not be able to take on Amazon head-to-head. In contrast, Amazon will be able to squeeze PCC's market share more than just a bit. I sense that within six months that Amazon will introduce new operational methods that will directly impact many brick and mortar operations due to their new presence in grocery and retail. This is just another example of how crowded the natural foods industry market has become. It also could completely derail smaller stores like Yelm Food Cooperative.

In light of this, the service and selection that we can provide to our customers will take on a whole new meaning. It would certainly favor the entire grocery cooperative institution if some type of operational network among grocery cooperatives were established. If all of the co-ops could create an online presence and delivery system that would provide more service options to our customers – and increase the number of customers that we could reach – then cooperative businesses would better secure having a prosperous future against goliaths like Walmart and

Wild 'bout Mushrooms

Christine Jarlik-Bell

Mushrooms are my favorite food. If I can't collect them in the wild, I'll buy them in the store. My first choice is Shiitake mushrooms.

Shiitake mushrooms are high in B vitamins as well as copper, and they serve as a food source of vitamin D. Some shiitake health benefits include its ability to support cardiovascular health, fight cancer cells, improve energy levels and brain



Yelm's Only Natural & Organic Market
Monday - Saturday 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Sunday 10 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
308 Yelm Ave E, Yelm, WA 98597
Phone: 360-400-2210 - Fax: 360-400-4021
E-mail: yelmfoodcoop@gmail.com

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function, and reduce inflammation. They also support the immune system and aid with weight loss.

How to handle and prepare Shiitake mushrooms for exquisite taste:

When purchasing Shiitakes they should be firm, not moist or wrinkled. Keep them refrigerated in a paper bag for up to a week. Just before use, wipe them with a clean, damp cloth. In order to keep the good stuff good - both taste-wise and nutritionally - gently sauté the mushrooms in butter or oil with or without garlic and onions. Compared to white button mushrooms, Shiitakes have 10 times more flavor and their smoky essence is quite unique.

To use raw shiitakes, you need to clean the mushrooms with a damp cloth. The stems of the shiitake mushroom are stringier and harder than the cap, and you can cut off the bottom half of the stem — or the entire stem — to make the mushrooms easier to eat. Slice the mushrooms into thin strips and scatter them over a salad or a plate of fresh nachos for extra nutrition and a boost in flavor.

AND here is the best part: now you can buy fresh Shiitake mushrooms in your Yelm Food Cooperative!!

This coming week July 1st—7th we will have Shiitake mushrooms in the produce case for sale. Enjoy!

Amazon. However, if the requirement to remain independent overrides the ability to operate jointly, then Amazon may thrust the final dagger into many neighborhood stores like ours.

The good news is that despite some pitfalls, the cooperative grocery industry remains in a pretty strong position right now. Yelm Food Cooperative also appears to have relatively good financial and operational strength right now, despite a drop in sales compared to last year. We have raised nearly \$10,000 in equity funds since the start of 2017, our profitability appears to be solid, and our inventory is larger in dollars than the equity that we have received via membership. Although Yelm Food Cooperative does not have the resources currently in order to propose a major expansion/renovation, we continue to push the envelope of what we can accomplish. With the appropriate combination of drive and consumer support, we can make our store bigger and better over time!

Board meetings!

Board meetings are open to all members. Ten minutes is set aside at the beginning of each meeting for comments and suggestions.

The Board meets at 6 p.m. on the third Thursday of every month at Olympia Federal Savings, 907 W Yelm Ave SE, Yelm, Wa 98597.



Join Anne
every Friday 2p-7p
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— Anne Marsh
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