

# Seward Co-op Grand Opening Celebration

Seward Co-op will celebrate the grand opening of its new store on Sunday, April 26, from noon until 5 p.m. The event will take place in the co-op's parking lot at 2823 E. Franklin Ave. The grand opening will be in conjunction with Seward Co-op's Eighth Annual Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) Fair, which will be held Saturday, April 25, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Several local musicians, including the Brass Messengers (below), Chastity Brown, the Godevils, Beau Kinstler and Andrea Stern will perform. Seward Co-op is also partnering with fellow Franklin Avenue business Articulture to offer creative activities for children involving art and food. An array of Seward-brand giveaways, food samples, cooking demonstrations and product information from many local producers will be featured. Many other Seward-area businesses will be offering special events and specials during the celebration (see ad at the bottom of this page for a list of participants).

During the event, we'll also launch the Seward Co-op credit card in partnership with SPIRE Credit Union. The co-op will not directly profit from this credit card, but our endowment fund — the Seward Cooperative Community Fund (SCCF) — will receive a portion of the income that Spire collects. Read more about the new Seward Co-op Credit Card on page six.

Throughout the day, drawings will be held for attendees to receive garden rain barrels at a significantly reduced rate. This is made possible by a Mississippi Watershed Management Organization grant to Seward Redesign.

For co-op history buffs, tours of an exhibit of the history of co-ops, authored by local co-op enthusiast Marty Brown, will be offered, as well.

The Grand Opening event is free and open to everyone.



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1. Scott Anderson, of the Brass Messengers, will be one of the many local musicians performing at the Grand Opening. Photo courtesy The Brass Messengers.

2. The Grand Opening is a celebration of our new building, which would not be possible without our member-owners of all ages. Photo by Kari Goodnough

3. The co-op will be introducing several branded items, such as these mugs, in recognition of the Grand Opening. Check the store for a new line of caps, bags, T-shirts and bumper stickers, all with the Seward Co-op logo.

On the Co-op's Grand Opening Day, **Sunday April 26th**, say

“I  my Seward Co-op”

for great discounts at these Seward businesses:



1 \$5 off with any \$25 purchase



2 Come in for seafood cooked in a masonry oven!



3 Rent 1 DVD, Get 1 free! 1 free tanning session for new customers



4 Free \$10 gift card with any shoe purchase



5 30% off all products



6 10% off all pottery in the sales



7 25% off rakes, garden tools & biodegradable bags



Support Seward businesses! Check out SCCA online at [www.sewardbusiness.org](http://www.sewardbusiness.org)





## From the GM



Sean Doyle,  
General Manager

*Sometimes when I consider what tremendous consequences come from little things... I am tempted to think... there are no little things.* — Bruce Barton

It is time to celebrate. We have now been in our new home for a few months. The transition has gone very well. We have welcomed more than 600 new members to our co-op since opening. We have created 50 new jobs. Sales are exceeding our expectations, and we are on way to attaining Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold Certification for our new store. We have cause to sing, to dance and to eat some good food. Later this month, on Saturday, April 25, and Sunday, April 26, we will raise a tent in our parking lot so we can come together for the Eighth Annual Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) Fair and Seward Co-op Grand Opening.

At this event, we will be launching the Seward Co-op credit card in partnership with SPIRE Credit Union. The co-op will not directly profit from this credit card, but our endowment fund — the Seward Cooperative Community Fund (SCCF) — will receive a portion of the income that Spire collects. We hope that enough members choose to open a Seward Co-op credit card that we can build our endowment fund, which currently has about \$20,000 in principle. Our goal is to make this fund \$100,000 by 2015.

In early January, we received word from the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization that Seward Redesign received a grant for \$50,000 to help improve stormwater management in the Seward community. The largest portion of this grant will be used to fully plant up our rain garden on the south side of the co-op. We originally had a three-year plan to do this. One additional benefit to this grant will be the opportunity for community members to purchase rain barrels from Seward Redesign. There will be 100 rain barrels available for \$25 each at our Grand Opening. As part of this grant fulfillment, Seward Co-op will be offering classes to area residents on how to better manage stormwater runoff.

Soon, the last vestiges of winter will melt away, and the bounty of our northern land will return to our tables. We made the choice to postpone our Grand Opening in order to coincide with this essential annual event, the CSA Fair. A decade ago, there were around 50 CSAs in the Upper Midwest. Today, there are close to 1,000. As we join to celebrate the success of our new home in uncertain times, it is more important than ever that we continue to strengthen the bonds of sustainability in our community. Please consider purchasing a CSA share this year. While we have cause to commemorate our new home, our greatest success will be to continue to build the links between Farmer and Franklin.

**On the Cover:** A worker cultivates the fields of family-run Featherstone Farm in Rushford Village, Minn. Featherstone has long supplied Seward Co-op with fresh, organic produce. They will be an attendee at this year's Community-Supported Agriculture Fair.

**Correction:** In our previous issue, Featherstone's contact information was listed incorrectly in their ad. It should be: 43090 City Park Rd., Rushford Village, MN, 55971. Phone: 507-864-2400.

## Seward Co-op Staff Picks

*On Saturday, April 25, Seward Co-op will host its Eighth Annual Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) Fair. More than 20 growers and producers from around the area will be on hand to discuss their shares. Several members of the co-op staff have experience with CSAs, and here they talk about what they like most about this unique experience.*

"I like handing people a CSA share and seeing their faces when melon season hits. The weight of their CSA share doubles, and they have to use a cart to carry it." — Travis

"One Sun Farm, in La Farge, Wis., is the epitome of Community-Supported Agriculture. Erin Varney, proprietor of One Sun, is very in tune with CSA concepts. When the company from which she sourced her cheese got too big and national, she switched to a different, very local company. One Sun now gets cheese from Next Generation Organic Dairy in Mondovi, Wis., and all of the vegetables that adorn their delicious pizzas are grown locally by One Sun Farm or various nearby small family farms. Their pies are amazing, their principles are down to earth and community oriented, and their company's practices are a shining example of how tenets of cooperation and sustainable local farming can make a business that is good for everyone involved." — Paul

"The CSA Fair is one of the most exhilarating Saturdays of the year at Seward Co-op! The store is extra busy, but not necessarily with shoppers seeking an average refill of their pantries and refrigerators. Rather, the intensity the CSA Fair brings is people seeking people, people seeking common values and an understanding of their food source. Local farmers impress me with their unflappable positive attitudes and comforting Midwestern tranquility while they spend the day in our parking lot. These are our neighbors: folks who are much closer to the natural world than an

urban dweller like me. Their physical presence at the co-op en masse, even for one short Saturday afternoon, reminds me how blessed I am to eat locally and ethically." — Allison

"Although I do not belong to a CSA, I look forward to the CSA Fair for a few reasons. First, it allows me to attach faces of hard-working farmers to some of our many wonderful, beautiful, local produce items. Second, it gives me a sense of pride in those local farmers and in myself for choosing to help support their endeavors. Finally, it reminds me that spring is here and the bounty of glorious summertime and fall produce is about to begin." — Molly

"One of my favorite things about CSA season is seeing how understanding and supportive CSA members are. When they sign up, they know that they're in it through thick and thin. Some weeks may bring boxes bursting at the seams, while others may be light, due to bad weather conditions. Of course, whatever is in the boxes is fabulous and freshly picked. I also like the newsletters from farmers. Creekside CSA sends handwritten letters to each member, and many farms send recipes." — Snow



### Grilled-Vegetable CSA Sandwich

By Claudia Rhodes, Events Coordinator

First, take a pile of vegetables from your CSA box and cut them into uniform sandwich-sized slices or pieces. Then, toss them in a bowl with enough olive oil to coat, and add salt and pepper to taste. Include a few sliced onions in the mix, even if you didn't get any in your weekly CSA box. Grill the vegetables until they're slightly crispy on the outside and caramelized on the inside.

Spread garlic basil aioli or roasted red pepper mayo on grilled **Solomon Bakery** potato rosemary rolls or **New French Bakery** sliced and grilled Pugliese bread. A bit of garlic and some chopped basil, freshly roasted sweet peppers (skinned and seeded) or even pureed jarred roasted peppers will turn ordinary commercial mayonnaise into something truly splendid. To make your sandwich really amazing, sprinkle it with shredded Asiago cheese just before closing it up and putting it into your appreciative mouth.

Oh, yum! This is local eating at its finest!



# LOCAL! PROFILE!



**Turnip Rock Farm**  
Family-run farm is located in  
New Auburn, Wis.



Joshua Bryceson, of Turnip Rock Farm, cleans off a recent harvest. This is Turnip Rock's first year offering a CSA. Photo courtesy Turnip Rock Farm

## Buying the Farm

By Kari Binning, Marketing / Membership Assistant

**After four years of managing the Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) program for the Minnesota Food Association, Joshua Bryceson qualified for a Farm Service Agency loan for beginning farmers. In 2008, he and his wife and co-farmer, Rama Hoffpaur, decided to buy land and start their own CSA, Turnip Rock Farm.**

### What got you into farming?

**Joshua Bryceson:** I wouldn't be happy doing anything else. Farming is a daily challenge, and everyday, every month is even more different than the last. I truly love it. The slow processes of life are endlessly fascinating.

**Rama Hoffpaur:** For me it starts with the food. Spending time in the kitchen and at the table with friends and family has proven to be the greatest bonding time. To think that as a vegetable grower I can contribute to this bonding time pleases me endlessly.

### Why did you decide to buy your own land?

**JB:** Farming is hard work, and owning the land instead of renting allows us to be more stable and be able to think long term and independently. We bought the land in 2008 and spent what free time we had putting things in place for this year. We're diving headlong into the business with great confidence that we can make it with the CSA model.

### Why do you believe the CSA model is right for you and your farm?

**JB:** Over the past five years, I have seen some big changes in the way people are thinking about farming because of Community-Supported Agriculture. Those farms that are doing well are doing CSA. If CSA demand continues to grow as it is, we will see more farmers. The proof is in the numbers. This year's CSA directory with Land Stewardship Project is the biggest it has ever been. Community-Supported Agriculture has great business potential.

### Can you elaborate on the business potential that Community-Supported Agriculture can give farmers?

**JB:** CSA helps farmers avoid taking out loans at the beginning of every season. When members pay for a share at the start of the season, farmers are able to budget more confidently for the year. Seventy percent of our operation budget will be spent by June. This is why it helps a lot when members sign up early.

### What can a member expect in return for buying a share in Turnip Rock Farm?

**JB:** We try to put at least six different items in the box, but a member may see up to 15 depending on the season. We also offer a newsletter. Some members keep the newsletters to refer back to the recipes we include.

### Why do you attend Seward Co-op's CSA Fair?

**JB:** It is a great feeling to actually come face-to-face with customers. It doesn't happen often, and I like hearing what people like and dislike about their CSAs. I also just like to spread the word because not many people know about CSA.

### What sets Turnip Rock apart from other CSAs?

**JB:** The main thing that sets us apart is that we have teamed up with a couple of our farmer friends who offer their own CSAs, which members can have delivered to them along with our produce. Also, we aren't growing some of the more unusual items you might find in a CSA box. You won't find loads of beets or a whole lot of arugula. We'll grow a little more broccoli, lettuce, carrots and tomatoes. We're kind of plain-Jane that way, but I want people to see us as a way to get great quality groceries, not designer vegetables.

### What are some of the challenges as a CSA?

**RH:** Tractors break down. Sometimes it just won't rain. The wind wants to blow away row cover and green houses. Weeds grow all over the place. Bugs and deer want to eat the vegetables. There's always something that needs to be done right away. There are a lot of challenges. But at least we know that the challenges are endless and anything can happen at any time and we can't control anything. At least we can accept that. We are up to the challenge.

### What is the best part about being a CSA?

**JB:** Those members who love you. The postcards, the thank-you notes and the stories about how you have positively affected someone's life. And seeing the kids grow up eating your food. That's what makes me happy.

Learn more about Turnip Rock Farm and how to become a CSA member with them at [www.turniprock.com](http://www.turniprock.com).

### Caramelized Leek Salad with Pear, Cheese and Toasted Walnuts

- ½ cup walnut halves
- 1 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 5 tbsp. olive oil
- 2 large white leeks (sweet onions can be substituted for leeks)
- 4 cups salad greens
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 1½ tbsp. balsamic vinegar
- 2 pears, cored, sliced and sprinkled with lemon juice
- 4 oz. cheese, crumbled or thinly sliced (Chevre, Parmesan, smoked Gouda or any other cheese you can think of)

Toast the walnuts in a cast-iron pan, being careful not to burn them. Heat the butter and 1 tbsp. of oil in a large skillet over medium-low heat, and add leeks. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the leeks are deep golden-brown (about 45 minutes). Drain and cool.

In a large bowl, toss the greens with salt and pepper to taste. Add the balsamic vinegar and toss. Add remaining olive oil and toss again. Divide the greens among four plates, sprinkle with caramelized leeks and toasted walnuts. Arrange the pear slices on the leeks. Sprinkle with cheese.



# CSA FAQ

## What is Community-Supported Agriculture, or CSA?

CSA provides individuals the opportunity to form partnerships with local producers. A consumer becomes a member of a CSA by purchasing a share in a farm's harvest, which helps cover yearly operating costs. In return for that investment, he or she receives fresh product — delivered to a specific drop site in the Twin Cities — throughout the growing season.

## How much does one get for a share?

A typical share provides a wide variety of produce for four people weekly through Minnesota's growing season (June through September). Each producer offers a different membership package depending on the farm's length of season, goods offered, cost, labor and drop-off locations.

## How much does it cost?

CSA shares cost \$700 on average for a full share. Half shares are often available.

## When is the CSA Fair?

Seward Co-op's eighth annual CSA Fair will be held Saturday, April 25, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Seward Co-op's parking lot. More information, and an up-to-date list of all attendees, is available at [www.seward.coop](http://www.seward.coop).

## What will each farm offer?

Selection varies by farm. Farmers will provide details about their offerings at the fair.

## When do I pay my share?

Each farm sets its own price and timeline for payment

## When can I sign up for a CSA share?

You can sign up at the CSA Fair, or you can contact the farm following the fair to sign up.

## Where are the drop-off/pick-up locations?

Each farm has designated drop-off points. Seward Co-op is a drop-off point for several farms.

## Does it cost anything to attend the fair?

The fair is free.

## 2009 Seward Co-op Community-Supported Agriculture Fair Attendees and Contact Information

These farms will be attending Seward's 8th Annual CSA Fair. Many of them still have shares available, and they are happy to talk to you about becoming a CSA member with them.

### Batalden Farms

Ryan Batalden  
39474 County Rd 11  
Lamberton, MN 56152  
Batalden77@yahoo.com  
[Localharvest.org/farms/m13365](http://Localharvest.org/farms/m13365)

### Blackberry Community Farm

Tim Herman  
E7339 County Rd S  
Wheeler, WI 54772  
bhfrtrust@localnet.com  
[members.localnet.com/~bhfrtrust/](http://members.localnet.com/~bhfrtrust/)

### Culinary Delights Farm

Nancy Welty  
21621 County Rd 83  
Big Lake, MN 55309  
cdfarms@izoom.net  
[localharvest.org/farms/m14760](http://localharvest.org/farms/m14760)

### Driftless Organics

Noah, Mike, & Josh Engel  
50561 County Rd B  
Soldier's Grove, WI 54655  
csainfo@driftlessorganics.com  
driftlessorganics.com

### Emergency Food Shelf

Pat Kerrigan  
8501 54th Ave N  
Minneapolis, MN 55428  
pkerrigan@emergencyfoodshelf.org

### Featherstone Fruits & Vegetables

Mary Benson  
43090 City Park Rd  
Rushford Village, MN 55971  
info@featherstonefarm.com  
featherstonefarm.com

### Fresh Earth Farms

Chris James  
6455 Oak Green Ave  
Denmark Township, MN 55033  
FreshEarthFarms@earthlink.net  
freshearthfarms.com

### Goats & Gardens

Yvonne Massey  
130 50th Ave  
Clayton, WI 54004  
[localharvest.org/farms/m25563](http://localharvest.org/farms/m25563)

### Grass Run Farm

Ryan and Kristine Jepsen  
2712 Hoover Dr  
Dorchester, IA 52140  
ryan@grassrunfarm.com  
grassrunfarm.com

### Harmony Valley

Terri Kromenaker  
S3442 Wire Hollow Rd  
Viroqua, WI 54665  
csa@harmonyvalleyfarm.com  
harmonyvalley.com

### Jackson Hollow Farm

Laura Jackson  
S 1291 Hayes Valley Rd  
Mondovi, WI 54755  
info@jacksonhollow.net  
jacksonhollow.net

### La Finca

Charlie Kersey  
PO Box 93  
Bruno, MN 55712  
lafinca@earthlink.net  
lafincacsa.com

### LTD Farm

Khaiti Kahleck  
862 218th St  
Osceola, WI 54020  
goatmilkwi@yahoo.com

### Mhonpaj's Garden Big River Farm CSA

In connection with  
Minnesota Food Association  
Mhonpaj Lee  
14220-B Ostlund Trail North  
Marine on St. Croix, MN 55047  
mhonpaj@gmail.com

### Philadelphia Community Farm

Dan Fillius  
Box 668  
Osceola, WI 54020  
dfillius@alumni.hamilton.edu  
philadelphiacommunityfarm.org

### Piney Hill Farm

Erin Altemus  
E623 N County Rd X  
Glenwood City, WI 54013  
[localharvest.org/farms/m20976](http://localharvest.org/farms/m20976)

### Ploughshare Farm

Greg Brever  
6653 Harvest Place NW  
Parkers Prairie, MN 56361  
GJBREVER@midwestinfo.com  
ploughsharefarm.com

### Rock Spring Farm

Chris Blanchard  
3765 Highlandville Rd  
Decorah, IA 52101  
realfood@rsfarm.com  
rsfarm.com

### Shining Hills Farm & Garden

Ryan Evans  
E9569 Smart Hollow Rd  
La Farge, WI 54639  
flowerman1111@yahoo.com  
shininghills.com

### Sylvan Hills

Larry & Jackie Diehlmann  
E2161 500 30th Ave  
Menomonie, WI 54751  
lad@iglide.net  
sylvanhills.com

### Sunshine Harvest Farm

Mike Baucher  
2230 35th St W  
Webster, MN 55088  
sunshineharvestfarm@hotmail.com  
sunshineharvestfarm.com

### Turnip Rock Farm

Joshua Bryceson  
8628 County Rd AA  
New Auburn, WI 54757  
csa@turniprock.com  
turniprock.com

### Whole Farm Co-op

33 2nd St South, Lower Level  
Long Prairie, MN 56347  
info@wholefarmcoop.com  
wholefarmcoop.com

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# Seward Co-op's 2009 CSA Fair

Jack Hedin, of Featherstone Farm, gives a tour of his farm, located in Rushford Village, Minn. Several CSA farms offer "work shares," which allow members to spend time on the farm, helping with the harvest.

Photo courtesy Featherstone Farm

Some people look to blooming crocuses, budding trees and hopping robins for reassurance that spring will indeed return. At Seward Co-op, signs of spring come in the form of photos of last year's green fields, radish recipes and tent rental — we know that spring is around the corner once the planning for the annual Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) Fair is underway.

The fair is a meeting point between rural and urban folks committed to the local food economy. This is the eighth year that Seward Co-op has invited area farmers to the store to meet shoppers and discuss their farming philosophies. The fair offers a venue where shoppers can learn about CSA options and select a participating farm that is best for themselves and their families. Each grower offers a different package depending on the farm's length of season, goods offered, cost, and drop-off locations.

As an increasing number of people nationwide discover the better taste and nutritional benefits of local food, CSAs are fast becoming a popular way to directly connect with local farmers. In 1990, the number of CSAs in the United States was estimated at 50; today, it is estimated at more than 1,000.

This year, the CSA fair will host more than 20 farmers who will be available to sell shares for a variety of goods — fruit, vegetables, flowers, baked goods, honey or meat. Purchasing a share helps cover a farm's yearly operating expenses. CSA members share the crop's bounty and/or assume the risk of crop failure along with the farmer, and they support local food production that is healthful, fresh and produced in an environmentally friendly way.



## Eat Better

with the

## Rock Spring Farm CSA

**"Your box is a simple pleasure I look forward to every week."**  
With so many choices for organic food, it's hard to stand out from the crowd. But we think Rock Spring Farm does. And so do our customers.

We call it Community Supported Agriculture, or CSA for short, but others refer to it as a produce subscription, a garden share, or a vegetable-of-the-week program. No matter what you call it, each week throughout the growing season we select the best of Rock Spring Farm's certified organic produce, quickly and carefully wash, chill, and pack it, and deliver it to a neighborhood near you. Healthy and delicious food that's easy to build a meal - and a relationship - around.

**"I particularly enjoyed the cleanliness of the food. It was great to open the box and just use the vegetables."**

- \* **Certified Organic**
- \* Early Spring Shares start in April.
- \* Summer Shares.
- \* Winter Shares through December.
- \* Specialty Certified Organic Fruit add-ons.
- \* **Our weekly Eat Better Newsletter includes original recipes from our own farm kitchen, designed to fit your busy life as well as ours!**
- \* 9 - 14 vegetable varieties each week, in quantities you can use.
- \* **We keep our dirt on our farm, and out of your kitchen!**

"We want to thank you for the summer boxes and let you know we really have enjoyed them....the food, the newsletters and the recipes. All of it!"

Get the whole story at [www.rsfarm.com](http://www.rsfarm.com)  
Or call us at 563-735-5613.  
But don't wait too long - spring is here and availability is limited.

**Seward Co-op Pickup Available!**

**1% of sales to organic farming organizations.**



## From the Board



**Miriam Holsinger**  
Board Vice President

### Celebration and Planning

A month and a half after opening the doors to our beautiful new store, the Board of Directors gathered for its annual full-day retreat. The retreat allows us to focus on long-term goals and how to achieve them. We celebrated the new store and then asked “now what?” Now that the new store is open and functioning beyond expectations, how do we ensure growth, education and the involvement of the co-op community?

Economics came to the forefront. We believe our co-op, as a community property owned and beloved by more than 6,500 members, is an economic model not often talked about on the news and in other media. We thought about how the co-op fits into the larger economic scheme of things, as well as about issues such as sustainable agriculture, local economies, food safety and green economics. Overall, what does the co-op envision and want to create and nurture as the economic landscape rapidly changes?

In the coming months, the board will invite local experts to educate us on emerging trends and issues. We will start with a local economist and move on to other topics such as the Farm Bill, food deserts, declining public health, fair trade... the list goes on. Our feeling is that if the board and membership has greater understanding of current and emerging areas of interest, we will be better equipped to look ahead at where we want to be in five or 10 years.

We started compiling a list of topics at our annual meetings gathered from store tabling in the co-op — where we learned that, you, our members, are concerned about these issues. Please keep an eye on the website, [www.seward.coop](http://www.seward.coop), and in the store for future events and learning opportunities. Our strength comes through our education, and now that the store — the biggest project this co-op has embarked on — is finished, we are moving towards new ways to fortify our community.

We will continue to ask what concerns you, and we will continue to look ahead, which includes celebrating our achievements. Please look for us at our Grand Opening celebration Sunday, April 26, in the co-op parking lot, so we can continue the dialogue about what Seward Co-op means to you and how you think it can help sustain a healthy community that has equitable economic relationships, positive environmental impacts, and inclusive socially responsible practices.

# Introducing the Seward Co-op/SPIRE Credit Card

At Seward Co-op's Grand Opening celebration on Sunday, April 26, we will be launching the Seward Co-op credit card in partnership with SPIRE Credit Union. And here's the great part: Every time a member uses the Seward Co-op Visa card (at Seward Co-op or anywhere else), a percentage of the transaction monies will be delivered to the Seward Co-op Community Fund (SCCF) in the form of a quarterly contribution.



The SCCF is an endowment fund created to support nonprofits and/or cooperatives in the community. In the past, the program has provided funds to projects that protect the environment, support organic and/or local food cultivation, promote co-ops or promote community development and capacity building.

Currently, the SCCF has about \$20,000 in principle. As Sean Doyle says in this issue's letter from the General Manager, “We hope that enough members choose to open a Seward Co-op credit card that we can build our endowment fund. Our goal is to make this fund \$100,000 by 2015.” The Seward Co-op Visa credit card has a low interest rate, good terms and offers members the benefits of a credit card while also giving them an opportunity to support their co-op.

The Seward Co-op credit card also features many benefits. SPIRE Federal Credit Union, a nonprofit co-operative, established its Visa program to be consistent with its values. Here is how SPIRE's credit card program is different from other credit card programs:

- The interest rate on The Seward Co-op credit card is 8.90 percent, versus the national average of 10.77 percent\* for platinum cards. There is no annual fee for the Seward Co-op card. Because smaller minimum payments often lead to larger debt accumulation, SPIRE requires a minimum of 3 percent of the amount owed versus the minimum of 1–2 percent.
- Many credit card companies will substantially adjust the interest rate on outstanding balances if a payment is late. SPIRE does not adjust a member's interest based on late payments, but instead offers a five-day grace period for late payments.
- Members have a 25-day grace period with the card. A member can use the card as much or as little as he/she chooses and, as long as the balance is paid off each month, it does not cost the member anything as far as interest or other fees.

\*National average based on weekly credit card comparison rates at [bankrate.com](http://bankrate.com).

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# Electrolyzed Technology: Partnering with Innovation

By Leo Sanders, Operations Manager

Over the years, co-ops have been vehicles for launching brave, new ideas, which have included bulk foods, organic standards, fair-trade and local agriculture. Even the cooperative business model might be considered dynamically innovative. The trend continues at Seward Co-op with the in-house production of Extra-cellular Water (ECW) for cleaning and sanitizing our building and equipment.

About two years ago, Dave Schneider, owner of Zapwater Technology in Richfield, Minn., approached the co-op with an idea. Zapwater works by converting reverse-osmosis saltwater, sending an electric charge through titanium anode and cathode tubes. This charge rearranges the sodium and chloride electrons to produce hypochlorous acid, a powerful sanitizer (called "anolyte"), and a high-alkaline cleaner (called "catholyte"). The end result is an effective product that shines while having a benign impact on humans, animals and the environment. It also completely eliminates the consequences of packaging and transportation.

Seward Co-op agreed to a trial period, which included before-and-after bacterial swabs by Joellen Fiertag, associate professor of food science and nutrition at the University of Minnesota. After seeing the Zapwater in action, we were sold on the process, and we have routinely used this amazing technology since, incorporating it into our new building, which is a Gold candidate for certification in Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). Our use of ECW is currently under consideration by the LEED Certification Review Board for points in environmental innovation.

Although most large U.S. industries have not yet embraced this technology, research is expanding. Originally developed in Russia to clean oil-drilling equipment, ECW now is widely used in the Russian medical industry to sanitize surfaces and equipment. Simultaneously, Japan is exploring ECW's benefit as it relates to human health.

As green opportunities grow, cottage industries are popping up around the country utilizing ECW technology. Examples include floor scrubbers and carpet cleaners that produce electrolyzed water as they operate. Entrepreneurs such as Schneider are striving to gain mainstream attention with this product. Seward Co-op's partnership with Schneider expands innovative technology that is consistent with our green consciousness.

Catholyte is now available for purchase in Seward Co-op's Grocery Department. For more information on ECW, visit [zapwatertechnology.com](http://zapwatertechnology.com).



Selamawit cleans the co-op's Bulk shelves using Zapwater: an effective product that shines while having a benign impact on humans, animals and the environment. Photo by Tom Vogel

## Seward Co-op Is Making Dirt, Not Waste!

By Lynn Hoffman, Eureka Recycling

Seward Co-op goes to great lengths to understand where our food comes from and what the impacts of its production. But what about where leftover food waste goes? Thanks to a partnership with local waste-reduction nonprofit Eureka Recycling, the co-op now composts its food waste — from unused Deli ingredients to produce that's past its prime!

Many people believe that food scraps and paper products in a landfill are harmless because they biodegrade. However, when these materials break down in a landfill, they release powerful greenhouse gases. When food waste and paper products decompose without oxygen in a landfill, they produce methane, which has 23–71 times greater heat-trapping capabilities than carbon dioxide. Landfills are the single largest direct human source of methane. Likewise, when these waste products are burned in incinerators, they contribute to emissions and pollution.

There is an alternative to wasting our food scraps. When composted, food scraps and nonrecyclable papers (such as napkins and paper cups) create nutrient-rich soil that is in high demand for growing more healthful food. Composting reduces the need for chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and it greatly improves soil quality. By composting, methane gases are avoided, since backyard composting and well-run industrial compost operations produce negligible greenhouse gas emissions (and those are mostly from the operation of equipment).

### Not Just For Gardeners Anymore

For years, local nonprofit Eureka Recycling has helped people compost at home in their backyards or in a worm bin. With support from a WedgeShare grant, the city of Minneapolis, leading local restaurants, and individual donors, Eureka recently turned its attention to restaurants and natural food co-ops, where the waste can be predominately full of food and paper-based food packaging. The goal is to provide individuals with more opportunities to compost, both at home and on the go. Since launching the program last fall, more than a dozen Twin-Cities restaurants now participate. Seward Co-op and the Eastside Food Co-op have stepped forward as leaders to help Eureka Recycling expand the program to grocers.

### Start Composting Today!

An updated (and growing) list of composting restaurants is available on Eureka Recycling's new composting website, [makedirtnotwaste.org](http://makedirtnotwaste.org), along with a detailed report on the benefits of composting for climate change. Sign up for a composting workshop and start making dirt, not waste, at home! Restaurants, co-ops and individuals who are interested in composting can also call Eureka Recycling at 651-222-7678.



**COMPOST**  
Make dirt, not waste.

### Sunrise Flour Mill Fresh Milled Whole Wheat Flour

35624 Grand Avenue  
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USA

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Look for our free workshop April 18<sup>th</sup> at the Seward Co-op.





# Coming Full Circle: A 30-year Retrospective

By Tom Vogel, Marketing/Member Services Manager

For nearly 30 of its 37 years of existence, Leo Sanders, Seward's current Operations Manager, has been a part of the co-op. As Seward Co-op looks forward to its Grand Opening, celebrating another milestone in its existence, the only co-op employee to work for all four General Managers offers up a few memories of his co-op experiences over the years.

In 1977, Seward Co-op was still in its relative infancy, having opened only five years earlier at the corner of 22nd Street and Franklin Avenue. Leo Sanders had just moved into the Seward neighborhood, having chosen the location (as he had in all five of his moves over the last two years) based on its proximity to a natural foods co-op. Little did he suspect that his shopping at the little co-op would lead to three decades of involvement in it, as he would play an integral part in Seward's expansions, moves and organization.

Leo first started working at Seward Co-op in August 1981 as a volunteer. He quickly became an on-call staff member, one of the first to work in that capacity. His responsibilities were varied. "It was a small enough store that I did a little of everything," he says. "I stocked groceries, worked in dairy and cashiered a bit."

As soon as Leo began working at Seward, the co-op was nearly forced to close due to financial issues. "We hired Scott Beers to help with our bookkeeping, and we seriously reorganized our collective and our accounting practices," he recalls. Disaster was averted, and from 1982-83, Seward reorganized as a consumer co-op, with the guidance of new collective member Annie Young.

During that time, Produce Manager Stuart Reid secured a grant from the city of Minneapolis to do the co-op's first remodel, which included moving the storefront to face 22nd Avenue. The co-op also reexamined collective management and embarked on hiring its first General Manager, P.J. Hoffman, who started in the fall of 1983.

"There was a lot of staff change during the restructure," Leo says. "Most of the old collective members moved on."

It was a time of change for Leo, as well. In 1984, he left Seward for six months to work at Mississippi Market in St. Paul. He returned to Seward for another year before going back to school in 1985 to become a drug counselor. After three years at Abbott Northwestern Hospital, he moved to the University of Minnesota Hospital's Department of Psychiatry outpatient mental health program.

"Working in a structure of collective management stimulated an interest in family dynamics, and how they played out in the workplace," says Leo. "So I went back to school at St. Mary's College [now College of St. Catherine] to find out more about that."

As he launched his career in human services, the co-op continued to evolve.

After PJ Hoffman's departure in 1986, Seward hired Gail Graham as its new GM. Over the next 16 years, under Gail's leadership, Seward absorbed the space between the co-op and Tracy's Saloon, and expanded another 40 percent.

Along with the management restructure in the early 1980s, Seward Co-op also strove to ensure that it had a functional and active Board of Directors.

Leo served on the board several times, including in 1997, when, after leaving the University of Minnesota, he was vice president. As the VP, Leo closed on the sale of 2201 E. Franklin to Welna Hardware, as well as closing on a loan for 2111 E. Franklin. Seward was moving to a new, bigger home. Three months later Gail hired him to help develop 2111.

Leo recalls carrying out a number of responsibilities in the new store. "For the first six months, I was without a clear title," he says. "I was responsible for HR and hiring, and I was the default Front End Manager. I guess I probably hired the first 50 employees at 2111 and continued to hire the bulk of the staff over the next several years."

Because there was not a well-defined Grocery Department, Leo purchased bulk groceries, stocked shelves, opened and closed the store. He also developed many of the co-op's early training materials.

"It was a challenge maintaining employees in that environment," he says. "At that time, there were jobs everywhere, and I realized we needed to have well-trained employees."

In 1999, the Twin Cities Natural Food Co-ops tapped Gail Graham to help Mississippi Market out of financial troubles. Gail ended up staying at Mississippi Market, and then-Deli Manager Stuart Reid became General Manager of Seward.

"In the spring of 2004, Stuart announced he was leaving for Just Foods in Northfield, Minn., and the board appointed Sean Doyle as interim GM," Leo says. Sean hired Leo as Operations Manager, and they launched the Operations Department with the Manager on Duty program, an integral part of the co-op today.

"By the fall of 2004, it became clear we were going to have to move," Leo recalls. "We started looking for administrative space outside the store, which led to establishing offices at 2003 23rd Ave. S. It was a clear signal we had completely outgrown our store."

Accordingly, Dan Nordley, board president at the time, instructed Sean to start a site search to find real estate for a green store for the 21st century. The former Riverside Market site became available, and the rest, as they say, is history.

"The overriding arch since 1981 is that the co-op has been in a constant state of dynamic growth," Leo summarizes, noting a sentimental element to the growth. "During the last 11 years, the natural food industry has exploded. There's a renaissance of returning to small family farms; the farms my father fought to preserve in the 1950s and '60s while he was with the Farmers Union in North Dakota."

For Leo, it's always been about farmers and food. And now, with the co-op's new home, "it's all come full circle."

## A Seward Co-op Timeline

**PHOTO 1.** Seward Co-op opened in February 1972 at the corner of 22nd Street and Franklin Avenue (where Welna II Hardware is today).

**PHOTO 2.** The original store had a small selection of products and was run by a core group of volunteers. Faced with a dwindling number of volunteers and a lack of clear business leadership, Seward Co-op decided to transform into a worker-owned cooperative with a collective management in 1976.

In November 1983, the co-op hired its first General Manager, P.J. Hoffman. In 1984, Seward Co-op restructured to

become a consumer cooperative, which meant that people were no longer required to volunteer for their membership and could purchase stock instead.

Over the next five years, Seward Co-op did two expansions, developing into a retail space of 1,450 square feet with 1,000 members and a new General Manager, Gail Graham.

**PHOTO 3.** In 1998, the co-op broke ground on a new, custom-built building on the corner of Franklin and 21st Avenue. This new store offered more services and expanded retail space.

In 2004, Seward Co-op expanded again to make room for a seating area, front-end office, more dairy/deli space and offices. The co-op hired its fourth General Manager, Sean Doyle. At that time, there were 100 employees and 7,000 retail square feet.

**PHOTO 4.** In January 2009, the co-op's new building opened on Franklin and 29th Avenue. Today, the co-op has more than 6,500 members, 170 employees and 13,000 square feet of retail space.



Leo Sanders, Seward Operations Manager, has spent the better part of three decades with the co-op. Having witnessed numerous co-op milestones, he considers the new store the culmination of "From Farmer to Franklin." Photo by Kari Goodnaugh



# COOP NEWS!

## Grand Opening and CSA Fair

Don't forget! On the weekend of April 25–26, we'll celebrate our 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) Fair and our Grand Opening. The CSA Fair is Saturday, April 25, 11 a.m.–3 p.m., and the Grand Opening is Sunday, April 26, noon–5 p.m. Both will be in the co-op parking lot. Come enjoy local food, meet farmers, listen to live music and celebrate our Farmer to Franklin connection.

## Living Green Expo

The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Living Green Expo features more than 250 exhibitors who offer practical advice on how to make effective sustainable choices. And once again, the Twin Cities food co-ops will be one of the event's major sponsors. Admission is free! Visit [www.livinggreen.org](http://www.livinggreen.org) for more information on exhibitors, workshops and activities. Saturday, May 2, 10 a.m.–6 p.m., and Sunday, May 3, 10 a.m.–5 p.m., at the State Fair Grounds in St. Paul.

## Seward Co-op Tours Now Offered

The co-op now is offering tours of its new store. Tours are held Tuesdays at 10 a.m. and Wednesdays at 7 p.m. Tours at other dates and times are also available by appointment (please contact us at least two weeks in advance to schedule a tour at a different time).

The tours focus on the new building's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) features, as well as the co-op's new and expanded product selection and services.

Tour groups gather at the Customer Service desk. There is a limit of 10 people per tour group. Please contact Tami Bauers at [tbauers@seward.coop](mailto:tbauers@seward.coop) for more information or to schedule a tour.

## My Co-op Rocks!

National Cooperative Grocers Association (NCGA) is sponsoring an online video contest intended to help people share what they love about their co-op! The contest runs until April 17. Co-op staff, members and shoppers ages 18 and older are invited to create and enter a video that reflects the great things about their co-op. Visit [MyCoopRocks.coop](http://MyCoopRocks.coop) to read contest information and view a promo video.

## Go-To Card

Seward Co-op now offers Metro Transit's "Go-To" cards. This durable plastic card tracks value on a microchip so fares are deducted in a fraction of a second on bus, light-rail and suburban transit systems. The card can hold up to two 31-day passes and up to \$200 in stored value, and it can be recharged over and over again. Check them out at the Customer Service desk.

## Mix Online

The March/April issue of *Mix*, the publication exclusively for members of the 11 Twin Cities area food co-ops, is now available online and ready to read! You can download *Mix* in its entirety and access all feature stories and sections at [twincitiesfood.coop/mix/](http://twincitiesfood.coop/mix/).

## Attention: Early Closing!

On Tuesday, April 14, Seward Co-op will close at 8 p.m. for our annual staff party. Thank you for your understanding.

## Plant Sale

Celebrate Mother's Day with fresh flowers and plants. The weekend of Saturday, May 9, and Sunday, May 10, 10 a.m.–6 p.m. both days, Seward Co-op will hold a sale featuring garden plants (perennials and annuals) from Shining Hills Farm & Gardens and Artemisia Flower Studio. Look for times and more information in the store and at [www.seward.coop](http://www.seward.coop).

## Featured Seward Products and Events

Be sure to check the co-op's homepage, [www.seward.coop](http://www.seward.coop), for updated specials and features. In April, we'll be featuring special recipes and product selections for Passover and Easter. And check back frequently as more events are posted.

## Upcoming Classroom Events

### April

#### Nanotechnology in Health Care: Possibilities, Risks and Benefits

Thursday, April 2, 6:30–7:30 p.m.

Free (pre-registration required)

Presented by the Science Museum of Minnesota

#### New Adventures in Home Bread Making

Saturday, April 4, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.

\$30 nonmembers/\$25 members

Jacqueline Alfonso, Seasoned, Whole Foods Cooking Instructor

#### La Vita Verde — Greens Cookery

Thursday, April 9, 6:30–8 p.m.

\$25 nonmembers/\$20 members

Nick Schneider, Seward Co-op Deli, Professional Cook

#### How to Bake Gluten-Free

Saturday, April 11, 10 a.m.–Noon

\$45 nonmembers/\$40 members

Michele Licata, Cooking Instructor, Olives and Pearls

#### Keep On Rollin'...

Thursday, April 16, 7–8 p.m.

The Hub Bicycle Co-op

\$5 nonmembers/\$3 members

#### Buy. Build. Be: Creating Your Urban Element Lecture

Saturday, April 18, 11 a.m.–Noon

Free (Pre-registration required)

Samantha J. Strong, Metamorphosis Realty

#### Whole Grains for Health

Thursday, April 23, 6:30–9 p.m.

\$30 nonmembers/\$25 members

Jacqueline Alfonso, Seasoned, Whole Foods Cooking Instructor

#### How to Make a Dollar Holler

Thursday, April 30, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

\$45 nonmembers/\$40 members

Michele Licata, Cooking Instructor, Olives and Pearls

### May

#### A Mediterranean Dinner

Saturday, May 2, 11 a.m.–2 p.m.

\$45 nonmembers/\$40 members

Said Abdelli, Cooking Instructor and Caterer

#### End Emotional or Mindless Eating

Saturdays, May 9 and 16, 1–3 p.m.

\$110 nonmembers/\$100 members

Rebecca Schauer Wellness Coach, Registered Dietitian.

#### Commuting by Bicycle: The Basics

Wednesday, May 20, 7–8 p.m.

\$5 nonmembers/\$3 members

The Hub Bike Co-op

Please pre-register at Customer Service, as space is limited. Prepayment of your class is required to reserve your spot. If you cancel prior to 48 hours before the class, a full refund will be given. No refunds will be given for cancellations received after the 48-hour deadline or for no-shows. If you have any questions, please contact Claudia Rhodes at [crhodes@seward.coop](mailto:crhodes@seward.coop).

Please visit [www.seward.coop](http://www.seward.coop) for updates to the class schedule.





# SPROUT!

From Farmer to Franklin

IN THIS ISSUE: Our Grand Opening Celebration • The 8th Annual CSA Fair • A Co-op Retrospective



Seward Co-op  
GROCERY & DELI

APRIL + MAY 2009

## Sprout! From Farmer to Franklin

Seward Co-op will sustain a healthy community that has:

- Equitable economic relationships
- Positive environmental impacts
- Inclusive, socially responsible practices

### Board of Directors

Becky Faust Goze	Allison Meyer
David Hoffman-Dachelet	Rebecca Monro
Miriam Holsinger	Dan Nordley
Leah Janus	Jill Randerson
Madeline Kastler	

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**Editor** Tom Vogel, [tvogel@seward.coop](mailto:tvogel@seward.coop)

**Original Design** Spunk Design Machine

**Production** Andrew Voss

**Proofreading** Sid Korpi, Proof Positive

*Sprout!* is published bimonthly for the member-owners of Seward Co-op.

Ads printed in this publication are not necessarily endorsed by Seward Co-op.

Readers are advised the food, nutrition and health information presented in these pages is for informational purposes only; consult your healthcare practitioner for medical advice.

### Board Meetings

Members-owners are welcome to attend board meetings, usually held the last Tuesday of the month, 6:30 p.m. at Seward Co-op's class room, 2823 E. Franklin Ave. Minneapolis. Email the board at [board@seward.coop](mailto:board@seward.coop) to let them know you will be attending or to share your thoughts about the co-op.

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## Welna II Hardware

Your Neighborhood Hardware Store

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We have the **tools** you need to clean up the yard and prepare the garden and



**flower, herb and vegetable seeds** to plant after you do!

You'll also find biodegradable **seed starters**, non-phosphorus **fertilizer**, and **gardening gloves**.



*For spring song birds, try wild bird seed, safflower seed and black oil sunflower seed.*

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GROCERY & DELI

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April + May 2009