

Terre Foods Update

Oct. 21, 2007

Hello again!

I am casting around for a useful email template to use for these updates, to make them easier to read and generally more interesting. If anyone has suggestions, please let me know!

We have lots to update you on! I'm not even sure where to begin, so I will start with some "in the family" news:

- **Congratulations** to Core Group member Glenn Cockerham on the birth of his new grandbaby! Baby and mom are both doing well. Yay!
- **Welcome** to our newest Core Group member Candace Hack! Candace is the environmental education and volunteer coordinator (and Earth Day Planner) for the White Violet Center, and brings with her a passion for sustainable and local food systems. We look forward to beginning our work together!
- **Thank you!!** to our volunteers who manned the table at the Farmer's Market on Saturdays—it was definitely a success. A big round of applause for: Kim Hoppes, Richard & Barb Van Hoosen, Jim & Karla Speer, Lin Dunigan, Fern Cawley, Colleen Magnuson, Denise Hampton, Tammy Tintjer, Susan Dillon, Amy Jarvis, and Mark Minster!

And now, to our co-op planning news:

- **On Thursday, Oct. 18th**, the Core Group had an incredibly good and productive meeting with Chad Martin from the Indiana Cooperative Development Center. The ICDC is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to helping co-ops of all forms (e.g., food, agricultural, housing, etc.) get off the ground and run smoothly. They have been intimately involved in the planning and opening of the new Paoli, IN store, Lost River Market and Deli. During the meeting we discussed many things, such as when and how to incorporate under the 501(c) regulations, procuring bank accounts, how to commission a "feasibility study" and what they're good for, finding funding sources, and the like. Really, all of the Big Stuff that we'll be up to for the next couple of years. It was emphasized to us, and I want to reiterate it here, that this will be a long process—probably about 2 years until our doors open. I'm sure many of you are impatient for that day, believe me when I say so are we, but more than anything we want to do this carefully, and as much as possible we want to do it *right*. While a food co-op is a not-for-profit business, it is still a *business*, and that means it has a real risk of failure. Going slowly, doing the recommended feasibility studies, working closely with the community, and investigating all forms of funding available to us will help ensure that we open the right store, carrying the right things, in the right location, charging the right prices, all for the benefit of our members. The ICDC will be working with us every step of the way that we need them to help make sure we're as iron-clad as we can be once our doors open!
 - I have to tell you all, Chad Martin was quite impressed by our start here in Terre Haute. I'd love to say that he was really impressed by "us"—your Core Group—but really he was impressed by YOU, our general list of interested folks. He was floored that we'd already got 50 (yes, that's FIFTY; and incidentally, now it's up to 70!) people on

the list, and more signing up regularly. That is incredible, and a great sign for the chances of our success. So, GO YOU!!!!

- **The BIG MEETING is coming! Save the date!** Thursday, January 24th, 7:pm, at the Vigo County Main Library, we will be having an all-comers meeting to discuss the opening of a cooperative market. At this meeting, we will be presenting and discussing the planning group's goals and plans for the store, our Mission and Vision statements, and other related information. It is crucial to have as many people as possible attend this meeting—a strong showing of support will make everything we'll have to do, from locating the business to securing funding, much easier. We will need as much publicity as we can get our hands on. If you have any connections with radio stations, newspapers, or any other media venue, we could definitely use your help on this. Passing out flyers, posting flyers in every location that seems vaguely plausible, you name it, we will need to do it. All help will be appreciated!
- **We're heading to Paoli!** Your Core Group, and anyone else who would like to attend, is going to a Co-op Startup Seminar in Paoli, IN, on Nov. 10th. This is an all-day event, which will cover issues such as funding, marketing, feasibility studies, as well as offering an excellent opportunity to network with other co-op folks throughout Indiana and Kentucky to share stories, experience, and advice. This is a wonderful opportunity for us! Registration for the event is \$35, and covers entry, food and materials. If you are interested in attending with us, please send me an email ASAP at robyn@terrefoods.org to work out the details.

Finally, for some light reading:

Tom Philpott, essayist and journalist for Grist, has an excellent piece called "Two Counties" at <http://www.grist.org/feature/2007/10/10/counties/>. This is an overview of two counties in Iowa, one drowning quickly under the weight of agribusiness, and the other with a thriving local food system despite the prevalence of agribusiness interests in the county. While all situations will vary, I think this article is very informative for us, and has many great ideas we could incorporate into our own community (with a bit of work, of course).

That's it for now!

In Cooperation,

Robyn