



BLUFF COUNTRY CUIZINE

FOOD NEWS, EVENTS & SALES FOR BLUFF COUNTRY CO-OP OWNERS



Autumn
2026

Calendar

September

Saturday, Sep. 12

Japanese Salsa Cooking Class

11 AM - 1 PM

Cost: \$20 per person.

More details on our website & social media.



Saturday, Sep. 19

Rain Garden Meet & Greet

10 AM - 12 PM • BCC Parking Lot

More details on page 11.

Monday, Sep. 21

Co-op Board Meeting



6 - 8 PM

Community Room

Details on page 5.

Tuesday, Sep. 22

John A. Latsch Day

2 - 5 PM

Windom Park

Free kids' activities, everyone welcome!

More details on page 11.

Sep. 25 - 27

Oktoberfest at the Co-op

Hot Bar menu featuring brats from
Hidden Stream Farm,
plus specials in the Meat Dept.

October

all month



Learn more about
our Community
Fund and Round
Up at the Register
on page 8.

Saturday, Oct. 3

Traditional Japanese Miso Ramen Cooking Class

BCC Community Room

Saturday, Oct. 10

Garden Harvest and Plant Swap

BCC Community Room

Monday, Oct. 19

Co-op Board Meeting



6 - 8 PM

Community Room

Details on page 5.

Saturday, Oct. 24

Pumpkin Decorating Class

BCC Community Room



Details for events will be posted soon!
Watch our website and social media
for announcements.

Co-op Events Calendar

<https://www.bluff.coop/events/>



November

Nov. 1 - Nov. 7

Sunday - Saturday

Owner Appreciation Week

Details will be shared in our eCuiZine,
on our website and social media.

Saturday, Nov. 7

Beginner Kombucha Making Class

BCC Community Room

Details will be announced on our website,
social media and eCuiZine.

Monday, Nov. 16

Co-op Board Meeting



6 - 8 PM

Community Room

Details on page 5.

Nov. 4 - 17

Native Foodways Support

Donation made to NĀTIFS
for every Field Day product
purchased.



Saturday, Nov. 21

Arts & Crafts Supply Swap

BCC Community Room

Stay tuned to our website, email and social
media for details!

Thursday, Nov. 26

Thanksgiving Day

CO-OP CLOSED

Estimated arrival for Turkeys:

Frozen: week of Oct. 26 Fresh: week of Nov. 16

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

board@bluff.coop

PRESIDENT

Vanessa Perry
president@bluff.coop

VICE PRESIDENT

Chris Phan
vicepresident@bluff.coop

TREASURER

Jennifer Monsos
treasurer@bluff.coop

SECRETARY

Sarah Burros
secretary@bluff.coop

BOARD MEMBERS

Violet Yoon
Adam Muschler
Krishna Roka
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Sarah Burros

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STORE CONTACTS

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PRODUCE & MEAT

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WELLBODY

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FRONT END

Jenny Kohnen
femanager@bluff.coop



Live Music by H30 Jazz Trio
Giveaways Kids Activities
Food Trivia + Raffle

*Win
Prizes!*

*Family-friendly event with complimentary dinner.
Owners are invited to take part in discussions that
will shape the work of the Board. Live music fundraiser
after the meeting to benefit the co-op's Double Up Food
Bucks program. Plan to join us!*

Bluff Country Co-op
2026 ANNUAL
OWNER MEETING

Tuesday, October 27
5 - 7 PM

Two Fathoms Brewing Co.
65 E. Front St, Winona, MN



GM Report

BY HEATHER KITCHING, GENERAL MANAGER

Bringing in the harvest.

Like the seasonal harvest of food we celebrate at this time of year, Bluff Country Co-op is reaping the rewards of a spring and summer devoted to some important behind-the-scenes work. Our team has been hard at work upgrading the foundational systems that keep the co-op running smoothly—from bookkeeping to point-of-sale, inventory management, and more.

These upgrades aren't just about improving our own systems; they help us live into the cooperative principle of cooperation among cooperatives, positioning us to be more engaged and contributing members of the "Co-op of Co-ops" we belong to—NCG. By aligning our bookkeeping and inventory management systems with those of our peers, we're better able to compare apples to apples, so to speak, making it easier to share insights, learn from one another, and benefit from each other's experience.

These changes may not be as visible as a full produce bin or a stocked shelf, but they are essential to the health and future of our co-op. I'm grateful for everyone's patience and support as we've planted the seeds for stronger, more efficient systems—and look forward to the harvest ahead.

Fall is always a busy season at the co-op, and this year is no exception. We're filling the calendar with community-driven events, from our Rain Garden Meet & Greet and Garden Harvest & Houseplant

Swap to the return of Akebono's much-loved cooking classes and a free kombucha-making class for owners, and more!

October brings our Annual Owner Meeting which will once again be held just down the street at Two Fathoms. Your Board is busy planning it to be a fun, engaging and family friendly gathering. Please join us on Tuesday, October 27 to review the fruits of fiscal year 2026!

Whether you're swapping plants, lending a hand in the rain garden, or just stopping in for your weekly groceries, thank you for being part of the co-op. Like any thriving garden, our community grows stronger when we nurture it together.

Yours in Cooperation,

Heather Kitching
BCC General Manager
gm@bluff.coop

Mark your Calendar!

Owner Appreciation Week

Sunday **Saturday**
Nov. 1 **Nov. 7**

*Giveaways, Local Vendors, Free Samples,
and more!*



Board Report

BY CHRISTOPHER PHAN, BOARD VICE PRESIDENT

Greetings, fellow co-operators!

As you read this, fall has come to Winona. College students are back in town, bringing a fresh injection of youthful energy to our community. Children are back in school (often to the relief of their parents). The colors of the leaves have started changing from green to yellow and orange. Gardeners are harvesting the last of their summer bounties before the first frost comes in. The texture and flavor of our community changes with the seasons once again.

It is a very warm and humid August day as I write this. Your board of directors, who represent the thousands of people that collectively own our store, have been busy. We had a board retreat this summer, in which Molly from Columinate (itself a co-op) came down to help us better understand our store, the long and storied history of co-ops, and best practices for working together.

Board committees have also been hard at work. To ensure that our board meetings are efficient, most of the work happens at the committee level. The Board Development Committee has been recruiting candidates for the board and set up the retreat as well. The Owner Outreach Committee has been very busy planning the Annual Owners' Meeting which will take place on October 27, 5-7 p.m., at Two Fathoms. (Mark your calendars!) The Finance Committee reviews the financial position of the co-op and thinks critically about issues such as C-share redemption policies.

The Food Access Committee has been hard at work soliciting donations and sponsorships for our Double-up Food Bucks (DUFb) program. DUFb allows shoppers to double their money when they buy fresh fruits and vegetables using the USDA's Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), reflecting our Co-op's belief that everyone should have

access to quality, nutritious food. We are pleased to announce that Tansy's Travelling Kitchen is our first sponsor.

Fun fact: you don't need to be a member of the board to join a board committee. Any owner can participate in our committees, which is a great way to dip your toes into the board's work without the obligations of a board position.

I hope you all have a great fall, and that joy finds you in whatever work you do.

In co-operation,

Chris Phan
Board Vice President
vicepresident@bluff.coop

Monthly BOARD MEETINGS

The Co-op Board of Directors meet

3rd Monday

of every month at 6 pm
in the BCC Community Room

Meetings are open to Co-op owners,
with time reserved for owner comments.

Want to attend a Board Meeting?

Contact our Board President and
review our meeting guidelines below.

Visit our website:
www.bluff.coop / Our Story /
Our Board / Meeting & Governance



Gardner Family Farm

Local Vendor Feature



"Food should be simple, not a jungle of marketing terminology. We're raising meat with a classic, old-school flavor, free of additives and raised with it's natural diet and lifestyle." – Gardner Family Farm

Situated on a beautiful 160 acre farm in the heart of the Driftless Region of SE Minnesota, Jim and Ellen Gardner raise delicious, ethical and nutrient dense meat while respecting the dignity of their animals and regenerating the health of the ecosystem.

Jim and Ellen are passionate about regenerative agriculture and helping people experience food and farming in new ways. Both graduated from the University of MN in 2018. Jim handles more of the day-to-day work with animals and machines while Ellen handles the management, sales and marketing.

They are excited to share their passion for amazing food with you. Gardner Family Farm is the realization of their goal to help bring people together around regenerative agriculture, good food and wholesome farm experiences. After getting married in November of 2019 they moved down to the farm near Spring Grove, MN with the hope of realizing their shared dream "some day", without committing to a hard deadline. Then the pandemic of 2020 hit everyone like a freight train.

Why we value them:

Regenerative agriculture practices that produce high-quality meat raised on pasture in a healthy ecosystem.

What we sell:

Chicken breast, wings, leg quarters and eggs.

"Suddenly, we were working from home part of the time, expecting a baby, and food security was forefront on many peoples' minds. The time seemed ripe to begin taking baby steps towards our dream. So...we bought a chicken.

Or rather, we bought 150 chickens, enough to get our feet wet. We struggled with that first batch, trying to figure out temperature control, for the new chicks and then how to pasture chickens effectively, but we did it and sold Gardner Family Farm's first chickens. It felt incredible and we still had part of the year left so we bought an additional batch of 250.

We knew we wanted to use a pastured system for raising our chickens and future livestock because we wanted a high quality product and we wanted our animals to live a natural life. Meat raised on grass is consistently more lean, higher in omega 3 fatty acids and has a more rich and complex flavor.

While it was a small start, we realized that we had the means and motivation to start our farm sooner than we ever could have imagined, so we became intentional about moving ourselves forward.

Now, the farm is beginning to take shape and we couldn't be more EXCITED to share it with you. Our goal is to provide you with the healthiest and most flavorful meat and eggs possible, teach you interesting homesteading skills while we introduce you to our beautiful animals and this paradise that we call home." – Ellen Gardner



Source: www.gfamilyfarm.com
photos courtesy of Ellen Gardner.



Autumn Harvest Pizza

By: Co+op

Total Time: 50 minutes; 15 minutes active
Servings: 2 as a meal, 4 as an appetizer

Ingredients

3 cups cubed, peeled sweet potato
2 tablespoons olive oil
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 14-inch pre-baked pizza crust
4 ounces cooked chicken, chopped
1 1/2 cups shredded smoked Gouda cheese
1/4 cup chopped walnuts
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

Preparation

1. Heat the oven to 400°F. Spread the sweet potato cubes on a sheet pan and drizzle with olive oil and salt. Toss to coat. Roast for 20-25 minutes, until the sweet potato cubes are tender when pierced with a paring knife.
2. Place the crust on a large sheet pan. Spread the sweet potato cubes onto the crust and drizzle with any remaining olive oil from the roasting pan, then top with chicken. Cover with Gouda and sprinkle with walnuts and parsley. Bake for 15 minutes, until the cheese is golden brown and the crust is crisp. Slice and serve.

Serving Suggestion

Hungry for even more of those deep, earthy autumn flavors? Serve the pizza with a kale salad.

Nutritional Information

840 calories, 26 g. fat, 75 mg. cholesterol, 1190 mg. sodium, 118 g. carbohydrate, 12 g. fiber, 34 g. protein.

Bluff Country Co-op Community Fund

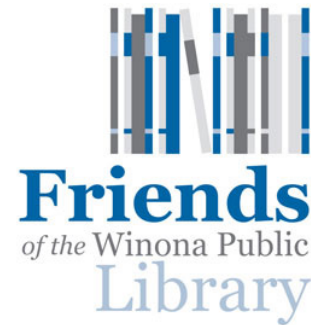


HOME & COMMUNITY OPTIONS

2026 Recipient

*Our Bluff Country Coop Community Fund
has reached its 9th year of community giving:*

Home & Community Options – 2026
Winona Farmers Market – 2025
Winona Volunteer Services – 2024
Winona Sheltering Network – 2023
Winona Outdoor Collaborative – 2022
Engage Winona – 2021
Advocacy Center of Winona – 2020
Manitou Center – 2019



For the Community Fund's donation next year, 2027, the advisory committee and board of directors have chosen the Friends of the Winona Public Library (Friends). In rumblings of potential government funding cuts to the Winona Public Library (Library), it seemed like an important time for the Co-op to step up and show support for this dynamic community resource.

The Friends is a nonprofit organization that supports all aspects of the Winona Public Library, including fundraising, programming, and the freedom to read as expressed in the American Library Association Bill of Rights. The Friends meet monthly, and you can join them or find more information here: <https://winona.lib.mn.us/friends/>

The Library is a busy community service hub in downtown Winona. As a public library, its doors and services are open to everyone. The city incorporated, and the first library was organized in 1851, nearly 200 years ago. Over the decades, the Library has improved and expanded services in sync with the times. Today the Library offers books (print, digital, and audio), movies, and magazines. It provides internet access, computers, and programming ranging from a variety of book clubs, tax forms, employment-supporting events, children's story times, teen events, crafting, art exhibitions, and historic library tours. There seems to be something, or many things, for everyone at the library. You can find more information about the library here: <https://winona.lib.mn.us/>

Round Up At The Register

Each year, to help raise money for the Bluff Country Co-op Community Fund, the Co-op holds a Round-Up-at-the-Register campaign in October (Co-op Month) and in the spring. In 2019, the community donation amount was \$157.54. In 2026, the donation was \$1,115. As the fund grows, our charitable donations in the community grow.

This October, to celebrate Co-op Month, we will have our ninth annual Round-Up-at-the-Register campaign to raise donations for our Bluff Country Co-op Community Fund. Here's how Round-Up-at-the-Register works: Every time you make a purchase at the co-op in October, your cashier will ask if you'd like to round up in support of our Community Fund. You can choose to round up to the nearest dollar or any amount to contribute. All your round-up donations are tax-deductible.

For example, if your co-op purchase comes to \$32.39, and you opt to round up to the nearest dollar, your total would be \$33.00, and your tax-deductible donation to the fund will be \$0.61.

If your co-op purchase comes to \$32.39 and you opt to round up to a \$50.00 donation, your total will be \$82.39, and your tax-deductible donation will be \$50.00.

Your co-op register receipt will separate your donation to the fund from your grocery purchases, and you can keep it for your tax records.

If you'd like to learn more about our Community Fund, please visit our webpage at www.bluff.coop or the Twin Pines Cooperative Foundation website: www.community.coop/ccf.



Donations to the Community Fund are accepted year round and can be made at the register any time. Thank you for helping us strengthen our local community through our Community Fund!



Make checks payable to: TPCF/BCCCF

owners
save an
extra 10%
on **coop deals**
every day!

New in Local

Since May, the following local products have been added to or appeared seasonally on our grocery shelves.

WellBody

Scentral Zone Skin Care, Minneapolis, MN

GenMerch

Driftless Fish Stickers

Viroqua Creative Workshop LLC - Viroqua, WI

Bulk

Honduras Single Origin Coffee

Mugby Coffee - Winona, MN

Frozen

Dumpling Wrappers

MinnTofu - Spring Lake Park, MN

Blue Corn Soft Tortillas

Tortilleria Zepeda - Lone Rock, WI

Meat

Brats: Wild Rice, Cheddar and Butter Garlic

Hidden Stream Farm - Elgin, MN

Produce

Asparagus, Rhubarb

Round the Bend Farm - Rushford, MN

Garlic Scapes

Larry Theismann - Wabasha, MN

Organic: Romaine, Cilantro, Parsley, Collards,

Lacinato Kale, Broccoli

Featherstone Farm - Rushford, MN

Organic: Green Kale, Spring Mix, Chard, Radishes,

Cilantro, Green Leaf Lettuce, Cilantro, Heirloom

and Roma Tomatoes, Cucumbers

Pine Creek Farm - Plainview, MN

Blueberries

Charlene Todd - Fountain City, WI



Co-op Staff Feature

Get to know a familiar face from our Front-End! If you have shopped at the co-op, you've likely met Amaya at the cash register. She shares more about herself below.

What do you love most about food co-ops?

Amaya: "One thing I love most about food co-ops is the sense of community. I also love the accessibility to sustainable and local food"

What drew you to your current role at the co-op?

Amaya: "I have worked at the co-op for a few years now and I enjoy having multiple roles to enhance my understanding and knowledge of the store."

What has been your favorite part of the job so far?

Amaya: "My favorite parts of the job are the people I work with and getting to interact with new and regular customers every day."

Are there any particular projects or challenges you're looking forward to tackling in your role?

Amaya: "I am currently looking forward to continuing to learn more about the new POS system at the co-op. Additionally, I recently began working the board administrative assistant position and am looking forward to growing in that role and learning more about the board."

Can you share a favorite quote or piece of advice that has inspired you?

Amaya: "Do it scared."

What is currently your favorite food indulgence at BCC?

Amaya: "My current favorite food indulgences at BCC are the rotating soups or chocolate mousse made by our kitchen staff!"

If you were a vegetable, what vegetable would you be? Why?

Amaya: "Probably an onion with their multiple layers."

What is your favorite local product?

Amaya: "My favorite local product is the yummy sourdough bread from Castlerock!"



What is the most difficult dish you have ever prepared? What was hard about it, or for whom did you prepare it?

Amaya: "I enjoy baking cakes from scratch for my family and friends' birthdays. I would say the most difficult cakes I have made were three layered cakes for both of my brothers birthdays. Thankfully, they turned out great as I followed the recipes measurements down to the gram."

What food cuisine do you find yourself cooking at home most often? Why?

Amaya: "I meal prep weekly to help save time with work and school. Recently, I have been making tofu quite often. I enjoy tofu as there are a wide variety of recipes to choose from and ways to cook it."

What is something people might be surprised to learn about you?

Amaya: "I am finishing my masters degree in clinical mental health counseling and highly enjoy live music. I have been to more live shows than I can keep track of since the age of 13."

What's been your favorite new discovery in Winona or around the Driftless Region?

Amaya: "At the beginning of the summer I visited both the Elba Fire Tower and the Trempealeau Wildlife Refuge for the first time. Since then I have visited both more times than I can keep track of!"



Bluff Country Sustainability

BY INGRID OGREN, SUSTAINABILITY & COMMUNITY OUTREACH COORDINATOR

Dearest Cooperators,

I don't know about you, but I have noticed a shift in light and a slight hint of yellowing at the edges of the leaves. Garden harvests will keep rolling in, cicadas continue to hum, and there is plenty of sparkling weather yet to be had, but the nights are cooling, and the air is a little lighter. Though I thoroughly enjoy each magical moment of summer, a transition is brewing, and I am ready for the change of pace. Aaaaah: Fall. How I have missed you...

If you need a break from canning, gardening, or are looking to ring in the Fall with us, Bluff Country Co-op has a number of exciting happenings in store for you during the next few months. We are thrilled to announce that Chef Akebono is back to teach a new cooking class on an award-winning Japanese salsa dish Saturday, September 12, from 11 am-1 pm! If cooking isn't your thing, we rescheduled the 'Rain Garden Meet & Greet' collaboration with the Winona Chapter of the Master Gardeners for Saturday, September 19, from 10 am -12 pm. This event will offer free lemonade and lots of fun materials focused on pollinators and rain gardens, co-hosted with the Master Gardeners chapter of Winona. We will round out September by joining Project Get Outdoors for one of their 'John A. Latsch Week' events, held at Windom Park on Tuesday, September 22, from 2 pm -5 pm, where we will have a veggie printing activity available.

In October, we have the pleasure of hosting Akebono's cooking class on making Japanese traditional miso ramen on October 3. Then, BCC will host its beloved Garden & Harvest Swap on October 10. To end the month, we will also hold a delightful Pumpkin Decorating Event on October 24. In November, we look forward to working with Mark & Matt from Kowabucha Kombucha (Rochester, MN) for an introductory kombucha brewing class during Owner Ap-

preciation Week on November 7; and to round out the month, BCC will host an Arts & Crafts Swap on November 21, in our Community Room. We hope you will be able to join us for as many of these festivities as you're able (details posted on our website). We look forward to seeing you there!

In our last newsletter, we asked for your help collecting toys for our upcoming Community Corner revamp. You heard and generously gave. We at Bluff Country Co-op are just so humbled to be a part of this community. Thank you for sharing your hearts, hopes, spirits, and toys with us! We are working hard to create a new space for you.

Lastly, you may have noticed some changes in our bulk department. We are making a few changes to our current packaging to minimize our reliance on single-use plastics and create a more Earth-friendly & sustainable shopping experience. If you miss the way things were, we totally understand. Change can feel a little tricky at first, but we thank you for bearing with us as we all grow and adapt together in hopes of better supporting our ecosystem and the Planet we call home.

May I ask: how do you feel about the shift in the seasons? Are you someone who looks forward to the first frost, cozy sweaters, and the pumpkin-spiced everything of Fall? Or are you someone who will miss each and every sun-kissed day of Summer? ... Perhaps you are someone who straddles the fence, like me? Wherever you land on the spectrum of seasonal love, we are here for and because of you. Thank you for being a part of the Bluff Country Co-op family. See you out there, among the aisles.

Ingrid Ogren
(she/her)

Sustainability & Community Outreach Coordinator
outreach@bluff.coop

Cooperation is Radical



Food co-ops are about more than bulk granola and essential oils, we're about local, democratic ownership, community food security and solidarity with workers across the supply chain.



Learn how food co-ops are revolutionizing the grocery industry to make it work better for people and planet.



Look for the Co-op Trade mark to find brands cooperatively owned by their workers, farmers or community.



Bluff Country Co-op

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GOOD FOOD DAILY
8 am - 8 pm