



BLUFF COUNTRY CUIZINE

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



Spring
2026

Calendar

March

all month

Round Up at the Register
to benefit **Four Acre Farm**
Lewiston, MN
View our or social media for info.

Saturday, Mar. 7
Herbs for Nervous System
Herbs to help you say ahhh!
10 AM - 11:30 AM • Community Room
Cost: \$15 or food donation equivalent
Details on website calendar.



Join Nurse Herbalist, Lora Krall, as she shares strategies to calm the chaos from a holistic perspective.



March 11 - 24
Easter Ham
Pre-order Sign-up
Estimated delivery date:
Wednesday, April 1st.

Monday, Mar. 16
Co-op Board Meeting



6 - 8 PM
Community Room
Details on page 3.

Saturday, Mar. 28
Spring Clothing Swap
10 AM - 1 PM • Community Room
Everyone welcome. More details on our website calendar of events.

April

Co-op Events
Calendar

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



Sunday, Apr. 5
Easter Sunday
OPEN
8 AM - 8 PM

Saturday, Apr. 11
5 Herbs & 5 Different Ways
to work with them for good health
10 AM - 11:30 AM • Community Room
Cost: \$15 or food donation equivalent
Details on website calendar.

Monday, Apr. 20
Co-op Board Meeting



6 - 8 PM
Community Room
Details on page 3.

Friday, Apr. 24
Arbor Day

Watch for free native tree seedlings to arrive around this time in April.



May

all month

Round Up
at the
Register



Visit our website for more info.

Saturday, May 2
Herbal Tonics for Good Health

10 AM - 11:30 AM • Community Room
Cost: \$15 or food donation equivalent
Details on website calendar.

May 3 - 10
Mother's Day Plant Sale

Locally grown native and veggie starter plants from Whitewater Gardens.

Saturday, May 16
Plant & Seed Swap
10 AM - 1 PM • Community Room
Seedlings, houseplants, seeds, gardening and plant supplies. Everyone welcome.



Monday, May 18
Co-op Board Meeting

6 - 8 PM
Community Room
Details on page 3.

Monday, May 25
Memorial Day

OPEN
8 AM - 8 PM

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

Ann Prochowicz
secretary@bluff.coop

BOARD MEMBERS

Violet Yoon
Adam Muschler
Krishna Roka
Nikki Ciulla
Sara Burros

violet@bluff.coop
adammuschler@bluff.coop
krishnaroka@bluff.coop
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sarahburros@bluff.coop

STORE CONTACTS

GENERAL MANAGER

Heather Kitching
gm@bluff.coop

KITCHEN

Mark Liedel
deli@bluff.coop

PRODUCE & MEAT

John Bride
freshmanager@bluff.coop

GROCERY & MERCHANDISING

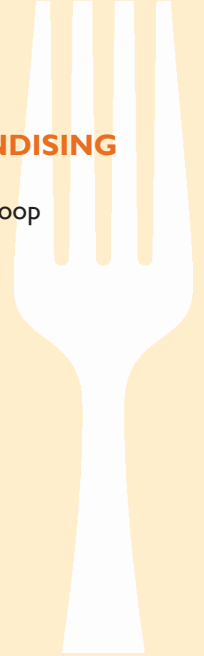
Andrea Strain
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WELLBODY

Amy Shea
wellbody@bluff.coop

INTERIM FRONT END

Heather Kitching
femanager@bluff.coop



Monthly BOARD MEETINGS

The Co-op Board of Directors meet on the

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



Fresh, local ham for your family table!

Easter Ham Pre-Order

Find more details at:

<https://www.bluff.coop/ham-pre-order/>



GM Report

BY HEATHER KITCHING, GENERAL MANAGER

I love how winter makes us look forward to spring. The forced retreat indoors and the shorter days can feel confining, but they also create a kind of stored-up energy—a reservoir of enthusiasm that’s ready to spill over once I can finally get my hands in the soil of my garden again. I’m learning to create mini ‘winters’ in my work at Bluff Country Co-op—and force myself to step away from things long enough to return to them with renewed energy or a new perspective.

This spring, I’m inviting any staff members who are interested to share in my seed-starting excitement by setting up a small project in the Co-op basement. We’ll be starting drought- and heat-tolerant flower varieties to use in the store’s planters and living wall. Those who are interested can help determine what varieties we grow and participate in the care of the seedlings. If things go well and we all turn out to be decent flower farmers, we’ll also have a steady supply of stems for bouquets around the store. How fun!

I have high hopes that the project will be a positive, team-building, and educational experience—but even if nothing else, I’m hoping that the presence of green, growing things right here in our workplace will offer a bright spot during the remaining cold and unfriendly days winter still has in store. I know it will serve as such for me.

It’s hardly the only thing I’m looking forward to here at the Co-op, however! As usual, spring at the Co-op offers so much to look forward to! Make sure to read on to learn about the swaps and sales, Earth month and holiday plans, Rain garden projects and other events in store this season.

Wishing you all a spring where good things take root!

Yours in Cooperation,

Heather Kitching
BCC General Manager
gm@bluff.coop



Exterior Flower Boxes

We are growing our own plants from seed this year!

Does anyone have seed starting equipment they could lend to the Co-op?

We are looking for:

plant lights

heating mats

seed starting trays

(72 cell or close to that size)

Let Heather know at: gm@bluff.coop



Board Report

BY CHRISTOPHER PHAN, BOARD VICE PRESIDENT

Dear Bluff Country Co-op Community,

My name is Chris Phan, and I will be serving as your board vice-president for the year of 2026. I love Winona and the Co-op, I love being an active member of our community, and I hope to get to know all of you better over the coming year.

I'm writing this in early February, with freezing temperatures and the ground covered in snow. The groundhog just told us that there will be another six weeks of winter, and I hope Bill Murray managed to avoid being trapped in any time loops this time. Spring brings wonderful events to Winona in general and our Co-op in particular. The farmer's market moves back to Levee Park, volunteers clean up our rain garden, college students emerge from their rooms to play frisbee or study outside, and local businesses prepare for the tourists who will be coming in the summer.

Our Co-op is a special kind of store, where the profits don't go to a small handful of rich people, but are shared among the thousands of ordinary people who own shares of our store. The Co-op's board of directors represents you, our owners, in the oversight of the store, and we are honored in the trust you have put in us. All owners are welcome—indeed, encouraged—to come to our monthly board meetings and participate in our committees.

Last fall, we welcomed new members to the board: Krishna Roka, Sarah Burros, Niki Ciulla, and Adam Muschler. Stepping down in 2025 were Lisa Lorsch, Pingping Zhang, Brenna Curry, Brian Pruka, and Stacey Huber. We thank them for their service.

This year on the board, Vanessa Perry will be serving as president, I will be serving as vice-president, Jennifer Monsos will be serving as treasurer, and Ann Prochwicz will be serving as secretary.

Last year went really well for the Co-op, thanks to the dedication and professionalism of our wonderful employees and the brilliant leadership of General Manager Heather Kitching. Due to their efforts, the store turned a profit, which we were able to return to our owners as a patronage dividend, as well as another dividend to owners of the Co-op's C-shares, issued to fund the 2017 expansion of the store.

This year, we hope to build on the successes of last year, and make some investments into the long-term future of the Co-op. I look forward to talking with owners about issues facing the board, whether those conversations happen in email, in the bulk food section of the store, or at an event featuring our smoothie bike. (My daughter loves the smoothie bike!)

May the coming year bring you peace, love, and prosperity,

Chris Phan
Board Vice President
vicepresident@bluff.coop

Volunteers Welcome

- Owner Outreach
- Food Access
- Community Fund



Owners can join a committee, like those listed above and take part in co-op related decision-making!

Learn more and connect with the Board Committees at <https://www.bluff.coop/meetings-governance/>



Sweet + S

Savory

Fruit adds a burst of flavor and eye-catching color to savory dishes. These lively, fruit-forward recipes are sure to delight your tastebuds!

Grilled Pork Chops with Cherry Sauce

Serves: 4. Total time: 50 minutes.

2 tablespoons lemon juice
2 tablespoons avocado oil
1 teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon black pepper
1 medium shallot, minced
4 center-cut pork chops

Cherry sauce

2 cups fresh or frozen pitted sweet cherries
¼ cup minced shallots
½ teaspoon chili powder
1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
1 tablespoon honey
¼ teaspoon salt
1 cup chicken stock, divided
½ teaspoon arrowroot

1. In a shallow pan, stir together lemon juice, avocado oil, salt, pepper and shallots. Place pork chops in pan, coat with marinade on both sides, and let rest for 15 to 30 minutes.
2. For the sauce, put the pitted cherries in a

small saucepan. Add the shallots, chili powder, vinegar, honey, salt and ¾ cup of the chicken stock. Place over medium-high heat and bring to a boil. Cook for about 12 minutes to reduce until thickened. Whisk the arrowroot into the remaining stock and add to the hot pan, whisking as it thickens.

3. Prepare a charcoal fire or preheat the broiler. Place chops on grill or under broiler, about four inches from heat, and cook until browned on one side (about four minutes). Turn and cook the other side until lightly browned and slightly firm when pressed with a metal spatula (about three minutes).
4. Top the chops with cherry sauce and serve immediately.

Take advantage of fresh sweet cherries to make a sauce that perfectly complements savory grilled pork. When fresh cherries are out of season, a bag of frozen cherries works equally well.



Pomegranate Glazed Salmon

Serves 4. Total time: 25 minutes.

- 4 6-ounce salmon fillets, skin on
- 2 cups unsweetened pomegranate juice
- 2 tablespoons light brown sugar
- ¼ cup chopped shallots
- ½ teaspoon arrowroot powder (or cornstarch)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ¾ teaspoon coarse salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper

1. Pat the salmon fillets dry with paper towels and allow them to come to room temperature while you make the glaze.
2. In a small saucepan, combine the pomegranate juice, brown sugar and shallots, and bring to a boil over high heat. Boil for about 15 minutes, stirring frequently, until reduced to about ¾ cup. Pour into a metal or glass measuring cup and let cool. When slightly cooled, whisk in the arrowroot to thicken.

3. In a large saute pan, heat the olive oil over high heat. Sprinkle salt and pepper over the salmon. Place the fillets in the hot oil, skin side up, and sear for about a minute and a half, until the salmon releases from the pan when a thin spatula is inserted underneath. Carefully turn the salmon pieces.
4. Take the pan off the heat and carefully pour the pomegranate mixture in the pan (since the pan is hot, pour it in on one side and tilt to cover the bottom of the pan). Return the pan to the stove; cook for about 2 minutes longer, depending on the thickness of the fillets, using your spatula to scoop the glaze over the fillets. Serve hot over cooked brown rice or rice pilaf.

When pomegranates are in season, scatter a few brilliant red seeds atop the salmon fillets for a finishing touch.



Chicken Kiwi Salad

Serves 4 to 6. Total time: 20 minutes.

- 1 pound cooked chicken breast, chopped
- ½ cup full-fat Greek yogurt
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 2 large scallions, chopped
- 2 kiwi fruit, peeled and chopped
- 1 large orange, peeled and chopped
- 1 avocado, diced
- ¼ cup slivered almonds, toasted

1. Place the chopped chicken in a large bowl.
2. In a cup, stir the yogurt, olive oil, lemon juice, salt and pepper, and pour over the chicken.
3. Add the scallions, kiwi, orange and avocado and toss to mix.
4. Mix in almonds just before serving.



Staff Pick

Fizeology Foods Jalapeno Chutney

"Crisp, bright, not-too-hot jalapeno flavor, it pairs superbly with cream cheese on rye."

— Brian Pruksa, Chill Buyer



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Bluff Country Sustainability

BY INGRID OGREN, SUSTAINABILITY & COMMUNITY OUTREACH COORDINATOR

My Dear Cooperators,

How has it been one full year since I wrote my first BCC Newsletter article?!? Well, what a wonderful whirlwind it has been. I have loved being a part of this dynamic corner of the world once more. Thank you for the year.

Now that we are on the cusp of Spring, we can safely say that “we did it!” We made it through another harsh yet beautiful winter, and what a particularly difficult winter it has been for those of us living in Minnesota. I hope that over the last few months, you and your loved ones have been able to find some peace and solace, both within yourselves and within each other. These have been trying times.

Self-care and community are often solid medicines. So, if you’re looking for something to buoy your spirits and a place to plug in, stop by the Co-op or check out our events calendar! Beyond nourishing and comforting food, we are hosting a trio of herbalism classes during March, April, and May, taught by

local Nurse-Herbalist Lora Krall. There will also be a spring clothing swap, a summer clothing swap, and a seed-and-start garden swap held in our Community Room over the next few months! Classes are being developed and added to our calendar regularly, so be sure to keep an eye out for new offerings.

Wondering whether Bluff Country Co-op will host Earth Day this year?!? We are delighted to share that Riverway Learning Community (1200 Storrs Pond Rd., Winona, MN 55987) is hosting a community-wide Earth Day Celebration on Saturday, April 25, 2026, from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm. The theme this year is ‘Consumption & Waste’. There will be a ‘Trashion Fashion Show’, a Free Market (seeds/plants/garden materials/outdoor gear), a Procession of the Species (animal parade), as well as additional entertainment and ongoing activities. Alongside many other exciting community partners, Bluff Country Co-op will have a table there offering earth-friendly crafts and informational material. I also may have heard a little bird say that the smoothie bike might make an appearance...?!? Drop by to find out, create, connect, and celebrate with us!!

Spring is showing herself in the warming of the sun, the longer days, the intermittent melts, and the perkier bird song. I hope that you may be able to pause and find comfort and healing in those small moments of light, community, and change. I remain hopeful and look forward to seeing what the next season brings. Thank you for sharing so much with us. You are our heart. Keep shining and standing strong. We walk hand-in-hand with you.

Ingrid Ogren
(she/her)
Sustainability & Community Outreach Coordinator
outreach@bluff.coop



Parking Lot Oasis

Celebrates One Decade of Reducing Rainwater Runoff

Bluff Country Co-op's rain garden is one of our most visible efforts to lessen our impact on the local environment. Ten years have passed since the rain garden was installed and it has grown into a vibrant ecosystem over time.

What is a Rain Garden?

A rain garden is a low-lying area in a street, yard, parking lot or driveway that collects polluted storm-water runoff. The rain garden naturally filters this runoff through the roots of native grasses and perennials, preventing polluted water from entering lakes, rivers and streams.

Rain gardens allow for more water to soak into the ground, which can help mitigate urban flooding. When Bluff Country Co-op moved to its current location in the early 2000's and grew from a small grocer into a full-sized grocery store, what wasn't foreseen was the inadequate drainage of the municipal parking lot outside our doors. Heavy rainstorms would create a puddle of significant size in the first parking spot next to the Co-op's entryway. After acquiring a grant from the State of Minnesota, the Co-op worked with the City of Winona to build a rain garden in the

middle of the lot, the only sacrifice being a half dozen parking spaces. Now, the rain garden provides us with better storm water drainage and regularly saves over 80 pounds of sand and sediment from entering the Mississippi River every year!

Not only is our rain garden a living filter for runoff pollution, but it also provides refuge and sustenance for birds and insects too. Our rain garden is home to asters, milkweeds, mountain mint, cup plant, yellow coneflowers, river birch and many other native plants.

Throughout spring, summer and autumn, BCC is in charge of maintaining the rain garden. This entails pulling weeds, removing litter and scooping sand way from the drainage points to ensure our rain garden remains functional as well as beautiful.

We hope you will join us this growing season as we celebrate ten years of rain garden growth and water protection. Look for new signs to be installed this spring and watch our events calendar for opportunities to learn, enjoy and care for the rain garden this summer and fall.





May 2025



June 2020



July 2025



Nov. 2025



Bluff Country Co-op

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www.bluff.coop

info@bluff.coop

GOOD FOOD DAILY

8 am - 8 pm