From the Back of the Editor’s Mind:

Kelly Watters, Conspiracy News Editor

This Monsoon issue is the first themed issue for which we called for contributors. Thanks to everyone who submitted! While on a steep learning curve and tight timeline, we bring you the first of this endeavor with beautiful original cover art by Sandra Jean Esposito, an original Monsoon Song by Connie Brannock, and lots of inspiration from Michael Pollan, as well as from our Conspiracy Kitchen cooks in anticipation of the Eat Local Challenge. We hope the Monsoon issue will free you to declare all kinds of independence—from mainstream radio with its market researched hits, from fast food chains supplied by industrial agriculture. Perhaps you’ll be inspired by the new creative ad hoc committee currently exploring ways for Food Conspiracy to expand in place. Or you might embrace water harvesting as a way to curb the use of precious Colorado River water. After all, this is the very foundation on which Food Conspiracy was built: freedom and independence—or is it interdependence? Where to begin? Observe, grab a shovel, eat food from the Sonoran Desert region, and celebrate the rain! Happy monsoon-ing everyone!

Monsoon Boogie

Connie Brannock, Food Conspiracy Owner

Verse 1
Counting raindrops
Falling on the streets of this desert town
Clouds of steam rising
While the water tumbles down
The washes start flowing
Wild without a care
Pretending to wind all the way to the sea
Even though it isn’t there

Chorus
Monsoon boogie
It’s a monsoon boogie day
When the monsoon gets started up
Gotta drop everything and play
Gonna dance in the garden
Dance in the street
Gonna dance until I’m out of breath
With everybody I meet

Verse 2
There’s a pitter patter on the roof
I go out an’ jitterbug with the trees
Drunk with the smell of 100 proof water
I shimmy down on my knees

Chorus
Monsoon boogie
It’s a monsoon boogie day
When the monsoon gets started up
Gotta drop everything and play
Gonna dance in the garden
Dance in the street
Gonna dance until I’m out of breath
With everybody I meet

Questions? Comments?
You can reach the board at board@foodconspiracy.coop

Food Conspiracy Board Meetings are held at 6:30 p.m. at the Hoff Building, located behind the Co-op at 425 E. 7th St. All owners are welcome. Stay involved in Co-op decision making. ( Owners receive a coupon for 5% off one shopping trip).

The next Board meetings are:

No Board Meeting in July

Wednesday, August 3

Wednesday, Sept 7
“The spirit beholds a new world every moment”
- Rumi

As I sit writing, looking out my window at the struggling garden and the mesquites that have gone a waxy gray/green in the raging June heat, I feel change coming. Soon, the heat will lift thunderheads into the atmosphere, building higher and higher as the sky holds her breath for a moment before releasing that first cool, fragrant exhalation. The skies will crack with lightning, split open, and life-giving rain will pour down, revitalizing the desert. My garden will grow lush, long dormant seeds will sprout and those crazy Palo Verde Bugs will fly, as best they can.

It may be an imperfect metaphor, but our Co-op is truly a living part of our community and change is coming for us, too. It will not happen like a thunderclap, but it will be dramatic and will breathe new life into the Food Conspiracy. We have always had dedicated people working together for the health and vitality of our Co-op, and now is no different.

Yes, the market is changing and yes, we have more competition, but that is nothing new. It is a trend we have seen coming. The Food Conspiracy is on solid ground, and we will continue to stay true to our values and do what we do best, which is to provide sustainable and locally produced healthy foods and products. At the same time, we will dig deeper into other creative endeavors such as the fruitful partnerships we have made with community organizations and local producers, our urban garden and educational programs all of which add so much to what our Co-op has to offer.

You are probably aware that we are looking into other innovative ways to not only keep the Co-op economically strong, but also to expand our vision into the Food Conspiracy. We have always had the possibility of expansion, perhaps relocating to a larger store near our current location. What you may not be aware of is our research into staying right where we have been for 45 years, but maximizing the potential of our existing properties. We are also looking into other innovative ways to not only keep the Co-op economically strong, but also to expand our vision of what is possible with our member owned, community based business. We know a thriving business is the best way to reach the vision we hold for the Food Conspiracy, and we continually strive to support that vision, letting it guide our actions. This is a good moment for a fresh look at our

Ends Statement and the vision it represents:
The Food Conspiracy Co-op’s purpose is to provide:
- Healthy, high quality food and products as locally and sustainably produced as possible.
- A thriving, ethical, environmentally conscious and cooperatively owned business.
- Education that encourages informed choices about health, food, the environment and cooperatives.
- An expanding presence in the community.

We are committed to moving ever closer to that vision, and our Board of Directors has just approved the creation of a new ad hoc committee to help do just that. I am happy to be part of the Alternative Proposals Committee along with fellow board members Gontran Zepeda and Guru Das Bock. Our responsibilities include, “generate, organize, plan and present actionable proposals for alternate products, services and expansion concepts,” and I want to point out two critical points here. We are not going to do this on our own. We will work closely with the Board, management, staff, Co-op members and the broader community to generate ideas and develop those ideas into a plan of action. And, our members will make the big decisions, because we need your full support to be successful.

We are excited by the prospects and look forward to your participation in the process. We will be reaching out with opportunities for members to get informed and involved in planning events that are fun, easy and effective. This is what being a Co-op is all about. Here are a few ideas restated from the original 1844 Rochdale Principles, which still guide the Food Conspiracy’s direction forward:

“A cooperative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise.”

“Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions.”

“Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of the cooperative.”

I am new to the Board this year, but I go way back with the Food Conspiracy and still find inspiration in the principles that created our Co-op. I do not see even the first cloud to hint at the possibility of the approaching monsoon season, but I feel it coming. And with similar anticipation, I feel a resurgence of creativity and cooperative engagement coming for the Food Conspiracy.
Articles about health or nutrition are for informational purposes only. We recommend that you consult a healthcare professional for medical advice. Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the writers and not necessarily the views or policies of Food Conspiracy Co-op.

Submissions to Conspiracy News are encouraged and due by the 1st of the month prior to the publication date. All unsolicited material—including letters—is subject to approval. Written submissions by email are preferred, but hard copies can be mailed or delivered in-person during business hours.

The Community Calendar highlights events and meetings of interest to Co-op members. If you or your group would like to be considered for inclusion in the calendar, please submit all information about the event to newsletter@foodconspiracy.coop. Be sure to include a contact name and phone number. Due to the quantity of submissions we receive, we are not always able to publish all events.

Unclassifieds—Non-commercial ads of 50 words or less from Co-op members are free. Free ads include: personal messages, personal items for sale, lost & found, notices, and miscellaneous wanted. Limit one free ad per issue. Free ads to run more than one issue must be resubmitted. Unclassifieds from non-members, or those that do not meet the standards for free ads, are charged $0.40 per word. Full payment for ads must accompany the order. Ads for instruction and services offered for a fee are not free.

Moving? Please notify us, so we can keep the newsletter coming to you.

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**SUGGESTIONS QUESTIONS COMMENTS**

One of the ways the Co-op receives input from owners and shoppers is through cards titled: *Suggestions, Questions, Comments*. The Co-op management team reviews each card and responds. If you want to make a comment, suggest a product, or have a question look for our customer comment area at the front of the store.

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**FOOD CONSPIRACY CO-OP**

**suggestions / questions / comments**

**Customer Comment:** Popular demand requests the return of the power veggies!

**Staff Response:** We are bringing back the power veggies in our new rPET recycled reusable shopping bag. They are made from 85% post-consumer recycled PET reclaimed from water bottles. The base fabric is 100% post-consumer waste spun from recycled water bottles. We’ll give away one free bag on our First Friday Summer Sales to customers purchasing $50 or more. Also, look for a sale on organic cotton power veggie tanks and t-shirts.

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**STAFF PICKS**

Want to try something new? Let us help! These are some of our favorite local products at Food Conspiracy Co-op that we think you’ll love, too!

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**CONSPIRACY KITCHEN**

**ALMOND SESAME CABBAGE CRUNCH SALAD**

JIM’s favorite salad made at the Co-op is the Almond Sesame Cabbage Crunch Salad. It has a nice flavor with the tamari and the ginger. We toast the almonds and sesame seeds to give it a crunchy texture. I like it a lot!

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**LOCAL CARROTS**

JENN’s local pick is local carrots from Forever Yong Farm. They are so sweet that they taste like candy and incredibly tender. This is how a carrot should taste. Eat plain or adorn with hummus or your favorite dip.

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**DEDICATED TRIPLE CHOCOLATE VEGAN BROWNIE**

One of the Co-op’s Tucson High School interns made this pick because it has a pleasant taste and texture. It has a hard crunchy outside, but is soft on the inside. Dedicated is also known as Got2Be Gluten Free Bakery.
Call for Contributors

We are seeking your contributions to Conspiracy News! Formats solicited include but are not limited to: recipes, poems, cover photos or orginal art, personal essays, and reported stories. Our Next deadline is August 1 and the theme is Cooperation.

Contact the Editor at outreach@foodconspiracy.coop to contribute to Conspiracy News

We are also growing the newsletter! If you have a service or offering and you would like to advertise, contact us for rates.
Downtown Radio

Born in a downtown basement just nine months ago, Downtown Radio not only serves greater downtown Tucson with commercial-free rock and specialized programming but it is now streaming online for the entire global community! I chatted with Jason LeValley, our community partner at Downtown Radio, which Food Conspiracy proudly underwrites, to learn more about the station and what makes it so unique.

Downtown Radio is housed in the basement of Sinfonia at 1 East Toole in downtown Tucson. The station began broadcasting in mid-September 2016 on Jason’s birthday. The station launched with two dozen volunteer DJs, but now has close to 60, and offers programming 24 hours a day (though some of it automated when programs are not scheduled). Downtown Radio plays mostly rock. From 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m., the station hosts a mix of rock. Specialty shows playing heavy metal, punk, goth, old time jazz, funk, Jazz fusion and psychedelic rock are featured during late nights and on weekends. The DJs are passionate about music and the station’s potential—and it shows. The response from the community has also been strong. Though the frequency broadcasts 3.5 to 5 miles in every direction, there have been reports of hearing it on Mt. Lemmon or in the Foothills Northside of Tucson.

Local musician, Downtown Radio DJ, and Co-op owner, Leila Lopez says “I have been volunteering at Downtown Radio for just over two months. As a longtime supporter of radio that goes against the clear channel mentality, I was thrilled to hear when Downtown Radio first began their broadcast. This meant that we now had two amazing community radio options (the other being 91.3 KXCI) that are focused more on the music, and less intertwined with the mainstream. Through this experience I have had the opportunity to meet and connect with amazing and driven individuals who display their passion for music and community through service and hard work, all for the love of sharing the music that they feel connected to.”

The mission of Downtown Radio is as multifaceted as its DJs. Their mission is to expose people to great music that you might not hear on commercial radio. While listeners might hear familiar artists, the song selection is not as widely known and is not a hit song. The station commits to playing one local act per hour whenever possible. Additionally, Downtown Radio strives to improve mental and emotional health through their programming, as well as to decrease the stigma around mental health issues.

During The Depression Session, the host interviews someone living with a mental illness in order to shed light on the struggle, share it openly, and let others know they are not alone in their suffering. Another program, The Mental Health Minute, features Pamela Field, a mental health writer and nurse. During her program, Field discusses local agencies and community resources offered to Tucsonans at no cost or on a sliding scale. The goal of the Field’s program is to reduce the stigma associated with seeking help with an emotional or mental health issue. She maintains that we are each likely to experience an emotional tragedy or trauma at some point in our lives, and that we should take care of our own mental health—just as we do for our physical health—by seeking the support of a professional.

LeValley and the rest of the Downtown Radio DJs hope they are “proving there can be a popular radio station that’s free of any corporate partnership. There is no one to tell us what to do or play. It is not based on market research.” Instead, it is based on passions, civic engagement, holistic education, and the creativity of community spirit. Welcome to the neighborhood, Downtown Radio! We hope you will be here for many years to come!

Tune into 99.1 on your FM dial or stream online by visiting www.downtownradio.org.

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free Peach Scones

by Julie Coleman, Food Conspiracy Kitchen Crew

MIMES 8 SCONES

2-2/3 cups brown rice flour
1-1/2 cups + 1 tablespoon garbanzo bean flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
3/4 teaspoon sea salt
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 cup coconut oil
1 cup organic whole cane sugar
1 cup rice milk
1/2 cup diced fresh local peaches

1. Combine the brown rice flour, garbanzo bean flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt and cinnamon in a large bowl. In the bowl of a standing mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, combine the coconut oil and organic whole cane sugar until well mixed. With the mixer on low speed, add the flour mixture and rice milk alternately, a little at a time, until well mixed, about 3 minutes. Chill the dough for at least 3 hours or overnight.

2. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.

3. Dust your counter liberally with brown rice flour. Knead the peaches into the chilled dough and pat the dough into a 2-inch thick disc. Cut the disc into 8 wedges. Place the wedges onto a greased or parchment-line baking sheet, spaced evenly apart. Bake until scones are golden brown and firm to the touch, about 30 minutes.
Pie Party 2016

Pie Party raised $979.38 for Tucson Roller Derby selected by Best in Show winner. Another $979.38 went to Camp Born this Way voted by attendees.

AWARD WINNING PIES

“Best in Show”
The Tasteful Kitchen
Lemon Verbena-Kiwiberry-Chocolate Meringue

“Closest to Home / Home Slice”
Emma Stahl-Wert
Sleeping Pig Farms Apricot-Fringepine Tart

“Most Original & Creative”
Evelyn Lopez
Dragoon Apple-Caramel

Fruit Category
1st Place: Evelyn Lopez (Dragon Apple-Caramel)
2nd Place: Lisa O’Neill (Lavendar Lemon Icebox)
3rd Place: B Line (Strawberry-Rhubarb)

Other Category
1st Place: Tony Ewing (Smoked Pork Chile Verde Pot Pie)
2nd Place: Jim Evers (Chocolate Walnut Bourbon)
3rd Place: Emily & Chris (Carrot-Ginger Springtime Pie)

Cream Category
1st Place: Ally Baehr (Black Bottomed Banana Cream Pie)
2nd Place: Gigi Owen & Molly Kincaid (Coconut Pistachio Cream)
3rd Place: Andi (Key Lime)

Vegan Category
1st Place: Veg Box Cafe (Cool Coconut Cream)
2nd Place: Veg Box Cafe (Lemon Meringue)

Photos by Mario Juan see all 250 Pie Party photos at www.facebook.com/PiePartyTucson
PLANTING THE RAIN

Q&A with Brad Lancaster

Brad Lancaster is a teacher, consultant, and designer of regenerative systems that sustainably enhance local resources and our global potential. He is the author of the award-winning, best-selling book series Rainwater Harvesting for Drylands and Beyond. He is also a co-founder of Desert Harvesters, which strives to repopulate Tucson’s urban core with rain-irrigated indigenous-food plants. He received a 2016 MOCA Local Genius Award.

How did your love for desert permaculture and rainwater harvesting begin?

My family moved here when I was three years old. I grew up playing on a one-acre suburban lot that was mostly desert. I developed a love and a familiarity with our Sonoran Desert ecosystem. I was always fascinated by how people lived here before we started importing all of our food, energy, and water. But for me, it was the Sonoran Permaculture Guild’s Permaculture Design Class that brought it off the trail and back home. I was sick of protesting the problems I saw in the world, and I was looking for ways to be an active part of the solution.

What were your early permaculture and rainwater harvesting experiments?

I purchased a property with my brother in the Dunbar Spring neighborhood in 1994. There was almost nothing growing on the property—just sterile bare dirt. I wanted to transform that and started working with my neighbors to organize what became an annual food-bearing native tree planting project. We tried to get people to get people to “plant the rain” by creating basins before they planted the trees. The first year, we planted 200 trees. Since then, we’ve planted over 1400 food-bearing native trees in the Dunbar neighborhood.

How did the movement grow beyond Dunbar Spring?

Desert Harvesters came out of this tree planting effort. I was taking a Sustainable Communities class and the instructor was from Switzerland. He told the story about taking a walk with his grandfather and looking at the foothills of the mountains, where the forest was being cleared for development. His grandfather said, “That forest is where we got our food in the war. Where will we get our food in the next catastrophe?” The instructor looked at us and said “Where are your foothills? Where are your forests of resiliency?” And I realized that I don’t have access to the foothills at all. I’m in downtown Tucson. So I began thinking about our public land, our commons—literally the streets and the pieces of land along the streets where nothing was growing. I thought, “Let’s grow those forests of resiliency in the public ground.”

Why did you choose to focus on native food-bearing trees?

I missed the desert I grew up in as a kid. When I moved into the center of the town, I was surrounded by all these exotics connected to irrigation systems. We worked with Trees For Tucson, which at that time did not offer native trees. They let our neighborhood create a custom order form. Within a few years, a number of the trees were starting to produce well, but we weren’t exactly sure how to use the harvest. I was able to try native mesquite flour for the first time, because Clifford Pablo had started the mesquite program at the San Xavier Cooperative Association. At that same time, the Cascabel Conservation Association was organizing milling events in Cascabel with an old hammer mill. When we went to their event, we were surrounded by the trees, we could mill the pods, see the flour, and then taste food made from it. Everything clicked for me. I thought “We’ve got to bring this to Tucson in a way that is accessible to everyone and where they can see the whole system.”

How was the Desert Harvesters mesquite milling born?

We got a grant from PRO Neighborhoods to get a hammermill put on a trailer, so that we could take it to neighborhoods. In the first year (2002), we had maybe a dozen people show up. We had one camping stove cooking up some pancakes. But by the last year we did all that, we had to have three mills going at the same time, sunrise to sunset, and we served 1500 pancakes.

For 10 years, we did it at the Dunbar Spring Community Garden so people could see the trees, taste the pancakes made with pods harvested from those trees, and see how to plant the trees and the rain in their own neighborhoods. It was all great, but we realized this isn’t going far enough. People were getting too focused on the pancakes. We thought, “We’ve got to widen this out.” The intention was not just to have people come out to an event—we wanted people to practice this in their own lives and neighborhoods. So we switched from doing pancakes to having bake sale events, where we had the community bring what they had made. It was way more diverse. There were still pancakes and waffles, but we also had mesquite Indian naan bread with prickly pear chutney, baklava, mesquite dog biscuits, tamales, mesquite beer. It blew our minds and our palates. We made a cookbook and added only the recipes that tasted amazing and were easy to replicate.

It seems like Desert Harvesters is really working to get people connected to native foods beyond just mesquite. Is that the intent?

We never intended for people to stop at mesquite. Mesquite is meant as the gateway food. So now we’re expanding the cookbook to include many more wild perennial foods—desert ironwood seeds and flowers, palo verde seeds and flowers, cholla buds, cactus fruits, wild herbs, and much more. While we’re loving mesquite, we’re missing the boat on these other 400 food plants available in the Sonoran Desert. So we’re there now.

How do wild foods support the health of the individual and the community?

Wild foods slow the body’s intake of sugars.
They’re great for people struggling with diabetes and obesity. And they improve community health by creating more shaded, walkable, bikeable communities. We are really trying to create an alternate agricultural system where you can be the farm, or at least part of it. It’s not about extracting groundwater or using CAP water to irrigate those crops. We’re about not changing the land to suit the crop. Instead, select a crop that’s suitable for the land.

Can you talk about Desert Harvester’s partnerships in the community?

When we stopped doing the pancake breakfast in the neighborhood, we started collaborating with the Community Food Bank at their Santa Cruz River Farmers’ Market. Since people are already drawn to local food there, hosting our events there expose more people to native foods. We work with vendors and restaurants—Exo Roast Co., John’s Brewing, La Cocina—to incorporate wild foods in their offerings. We’ve done consultations with farmers on how to incorporate wild foods in what they’re growing.

What role has the Food Conspiracy Co-op played in your work?

The Co-op’s round-up program helped fund Desert Harvesters and get our messaging into the community. We also worked together to do rainwater harvesting and a native bean tree planting workshop at the Hoff Building. The Co-op also sells some of the locally made products with wild foods. We worked with vendors and restaurants—Exo Roast Co., John’s Brewing, La Cocina—to incorporate wild foods in their offerings. We’ve done consultations with farmers on how to incorporate wild foods in what they’re growing.

ROUND UP AT THE REGISTER IN JULY FOR NO MORE DEATHS/NO MÁS MUERTES

The mission of No More Deaths/No Más Muertes is to end death and suffering on the U.S.-Mexico border. Volunteers are in the desert every day of the year, providing food, water, and medical aid to migrants in distress. In an increasingly militarized border zone, No More Deaths is a humanitarian, nonviolent presence.

In the 10 years since No More Deaths was founded as a coalition of existing organizations, the work has expanded from direct aid in the desert to working to stop deportations here in Tucson, through the work of our Keep Tucson Together free legal clinic.

www.nomored deaths.org
Michael Pollan teamed up with documentarian Alex Gibney to produce a Netflix docu-series based on his book *Cooked*. While some online reviews suggest Pollan delivers nothing new (no new factual information and is preachy and patronizing about getting people to cook “real food”), I disagree. Because Pollan looks at cooking through the lens of science and anthropology, just as he did in *Botany of Desire* and other books, I don’t find it to be judgmental, because cultural beliefs are so personal for each individual. Pollan, who has shaped a lot of dialog around food and agriculture in the last decade, has written the Earth end of the food system with *Omnivore’s Dilemma*, then going on to write about nutrition science and health. In *Cooked*, he writes about what he calls the “link or influential step of cooking” because “if we are eating industrially, if we are letting large corporations and fast food chains cook our food, we’re going to have a huge industrialized monoculture agriculture because big likes to buy from big. How we cook or whether we cook has a bearing on what kind of agriculture we are going to have.” What is true is that the industrialization of food creates various problems to solve, from the pasteurization of milk to the use of commercial yeast to make bread. In these examples, instead of solving the problem by returning to an original way of doing things, the food industry capitalizes on and creates a new product.

*Cooked*, the Netflix series, considers four natural elements (fire, water, air and earth) in different episodes. Through these elements, Pollan explores the transformations and technologies we discovered over time—fire, pots for cooking water, baking, fermentation and cheese making. Like the book *Cooked*, Pollan explores the idea that the ways in which we transform food or cook is truly what makes us human. When Pollan visits Richard Bourdon of Berkshire Mountain Bakery to learn about sourdough bread, Bourdon points out that animals transform their food too. Birds sprout seeds and dogs bury their meat to ferment it. “Nature knows what to do and we are also part of nature.”

**FIRE**

In the first episode, “Fire,” Pollan spends time with the indigenous Martu people of Australia for whom fire is essential part of their culture. After a hunt, the animals are not brought back alive, and the community prepares the feast by fireside. Pollan talks with a Harvard primatologist and anthropologist and learns that humans are biologically adapted to eating our food cooked. Humans have been cooking for nearly a million years and maybe longer. The brain is a hungry organ. It was Homo erectus, the first human, who cooked. Later, Pollan learns about barbeque tradition, from a North Carolina Pitmaster, who describes it as a rite of passage, and explains that it is from the wood that barbeque gets such great flavor.

**WATER**

In the “Water” episode, time is the ingredient missing in cooking and in our life. The time for long slow cooking. In the 1960s, the average American spent 60 minutes preparing food, whereas today we spend only 27 minutes. Pollan asks if the 1950s is the end of cooking in America. Post WWII there was a division of labor and more women joined the workforce. Processed food was created to feed the troops and what resulted was a supply-driven phenomenon. In the 1950s, we introduced hyper or ultra-processed foods, such as TV dinners and fast food. As the cost of food goes down, we eat foods that are less healthy and higher in labor to manufacture. As we have begun eating more of these foods, obesity rates have increased. Over the years, the cost of fruits and vegetables has increased by 40% and soda has decreased 7%. We cannot afford the health consequences of this food.

**AIR**

In the “Air” episode, Pollan explores the cultural significance of bread and learns how to make sourdough. Bread is a product and enabler of civilization. It requires humans and is inherently a cooperative venture with the interrelationships of the farmer, miller and baker. Wheat is the largest grown crop in the world with more than 550 million acres grown. There is a month’s supply of wheat in the global market. The price of bread is political and can determine global political stability. No politician wants to mess with the price of bread. In the science of breadmaking, it is the baker’s job to free the nutrients from the seeds. Gluten is the recent nutrient we have demonized. We have a history of demonizing other nutrients such as fat, cholesterol, and carbohydrates. All grains need to be fermented. In the fermentation process, the bacteria break down carbohydrates and release minerals. Pollan and his teachers are clearly advocating for the 100 year old process of making bread with sourdough starter. Not everyone can make their own sourdough, but you can probably find a local baker who does—and you may even find that your gluten intolerance is no longer an issue.
Finally, in the episode “Earth,” we learn about transformation of food without heating it. Fermentation is essentially the process of rot or decomposition—fermented food is partially digested. One-third of the food in our diet is fermented. Historically, there is evidence to suggest that the desire for fermentable crops was to make alcohol, not bread. This is the “beer before bread” theory. Fermentation was originally utilized as a food preservation technology before refrigeration existed. In this episode, Pollan talks with microbiologists who are studying the microbiotic community on cheese rinds to understand more about our own microbiome—the collective genes of all of the microbes living in our body. What they are able to see is that a succession occurs. For example, it takes 100 years for a field to become a forest. In a ferment, the succession is only 4-5 months. He also learns about the art of cheesemaking from a cloistered Benedictine nun and microbiologist, Noella. Noella disproves to the local health department that stainless steel is safer in making cheese by conducting an experiment and inoculating cheese with E. coli. She demonstrates that the E. coli levels diminished in a wooden vat and grew in the stainless steel batch. With the war on bacteria, our use of antibiotic drugs, the presence of antibiotics in our meat supply, and anti-bacterial soaps, introducing ferments into our diet is critical to our health. We are after all only 10% of our own DNA. The other 90% is microbial. In other words, these beneficial bacteria outnumber our cells 10:1.

Watching Cooked on Netflix is a fun informative exploration of cooking techniques to get you inspired to cook for Food Conspiracy's Eat Local Challenge. From July 1-14th, all local produce and locally produced grocery items are 10% off. Gather your friends and family for a barbeque, try brewing your own pale ale, make a batch of pickles—declare independence this 4th of July! Michael Pollan says it best at the end of Cooked:

“In a world where so few of us are obliged to cook at all anymore, to do so is to lodge a protest against specialization—against the total rationalization of life. Against the infiltration of commercial interest into every last cranny of our lives. To cook for the pleasure of it, to devote a portion of our leisure to it, is to declare an independence from the corporations seeking to organize our every waking moment into yet another occasion for consumption. It is to reject the debilitating notion that, at least while we’re at home, production is work best done by someone else, and the only legitimate form of leisure is consumption. This dependence marketers call ‘freedom.’”

1. Transcript from Science Friday on NPR, Michael Pollan: You are What You Cook. May 3, 2013 www.sciencefriday.com

Why Do You Cook?

There is a radical crew of people constantly cooking delicious food for Conspiracy Kitchen’s hot bar, bakery case and prepared salads and sandwiches daily that you may not see. We wanted to show you behind the scene: who the cooks are, why they love to cook and what is their cooking philosophy. All Conspiracy Kitchen salads and sandwiches are 10% off during the Eat Local Challenge so come and get it!

**Masanori**

I love to cook! I am good at it! I love the creative part of cooking. Knowing cooking is knowing the culture. Living in the U.S. and the Southwest, it makes me curious about the ingredients and the produce or why we grow certain crops here and where it comes from. I like the challenge that comes from working with limited ingredients. It’s fun to come up with new things all the time. If I want to tweak something or do a variation on, say, a Thai dish, we will make it with the spices we have. At home, I always try something new. I find the Farm to Chef concept exciting and we have the garden so I am thinking “what can we do with what we just harvested?” Research is fun and I enjoy it! Being Japanese I look at my own roots, I want to find out identity for myself through cooking. Japanese monks eat vegan food. No fish, no meat or alcohol. How can we learn or do that kind of cooking?

**Wally**

I think cooking is this great cross section of nutrition, education and ecological values. On top of that, you get enticing flavors, cuisines and flavor profiles. You are what you eat! Take local farmer like John from Forever Yong Farm who works hard, and we get his great produce and add value to it. It’s important to share and respect that. I love it when a child will approvingly devour what you’ve made for them and it is healthy and nourishing their little growing bodies and developing brains. I have four children and cooking food for them is an important part of being a parent for me.

**Julie**

Cooking is something that comes naturally to me. I’ve always cooked with my whole family. I have a passion for good quality vegetables and good food. I enjoy cooking for people I care about. (see Julie’s Peach Scone Recipe on page 6).
Cooked – A Natural History of Transformation

Glenn Furnier, Food Conspiracy Board Member

Cooking food goes back to our origins as a species, as we sat around a fire. Many new restaurants have open kitchens so we can watch modern-day cooks at work. Cooking programs now abound on television. You might think that we are a nation fascinated with cooking, but it seems most people view it as a spectator sport most of the time. The amount of time we spend cooking is actually in decline, as we eat out at restaurants or purchase processed foods. This leaves us eating more fat, sugar, and salt, with the attendant health consequences. We also spend less time eating together, with the attendant social consequences.

Michael Pollan, author and journalism professor, has written widely-acclaimed books on food. His latest effort examines cooking as a transformative act, focusing on the four fundamental transformations of grilling with fire, cooking with liquid, baking bread, and fermenting. Along the way, he also shows how cooking can transform us from consumers to producers and decrease overdependence on corporations.

Working under a master barbequer, Pollan learns to barbeque a whole pig. By unlocking more calories in our food, fire fueled the growth of our brains and cultures. Fire also renders simple flavors complex, converting sugars, proteins, and fats into thousands of complex aromatic compounds. One of my favorite transformations is the Maillard reaction that occurs when amino acids are heated with sugars, yielding the flavors of roasted coffee, bread crust, chocolate, and many more. Caramelization, the heating of sucrose, gives sweetness to the onions in my beans and walnut-onion pâte, making them staples in our home.

Cooking with water came later than grilling because it required the development of pots. It makes much more use of vegetables than does grilling. Onions, garlic, and many spices contain powerful antimicrobial compounds and is the base of many dishes cooked in liquid. Cooking releases many flavor compounds and nutrients from plant cells and water lets these compounds mingle to form new flavorful compounds. Slow cookers are particularly effective in generating these rich flavors. Pollen learns to braise food under the tutelage of a skilled chef.

Bread is a way for us to eat the seeds of wheat. We ground the seeds and boiled them in water to make a mash, which could be baked into unleavened bread. Roughly 6000 years ago in ancient Egypt someone noticed a mash with bubbles after some days. When baked, it produced bread. To this day, bread making is about not having full control, because a living fermenting agent is involved. It is a form of cultivation, like gardening. Pollen explores the subtleties of bread making and gives us an excellent primer on whole-wheat flour.

While we often view the microbial world as an enemy, it is actually our greatest friend. There are more microbial cells in you than human cells. It is only a relative minority of microbes that are human pathogens. Many microbes help us by predigesting our food without heat before and after it enters our bodies. Food has long been preserved by fermenting, including such favorites as coffee, chocolate, cheese, bread, wine, beer, yogurt, ketchup, vinegar, soy sauce, miso, corned beef, pastrami, prosciutto, salami, and certain teas. Many of these foods would not exist without the activity of microbes. Pollen learns how to make raw milk cheese under the guidance of Sister Noëlla, a nun with a Ph.D. in microbiology. It is a culinary version of ecosystem management.

We now spend more time eating, but it is secondary eating, which we do between meals while doing something else. Processed food reduced our time cost of eating, making previously difficult items, such as French fries and cream-filled cakes, easier to obtain. We now consume 500 calories per day more than in the 1970s, mostly from processed items. One study founds that over several cultures there is an inverse relationship between obesity and the amount of time spent on food preparation. Corporations skimp on high-quality ingredients and add sugars, salt, and fats for flavor. Home cooking provides a healthier diet. July brings Food Conspiracy’s Eat Local Challenge, and much of the local food that is available in summer in Tucson is minimally processed, forming an excellent base for experiments in the kitchen. For the physical and social health of you and the others in your home, this is a good opportunity to get back in touch with real food.

Botany of Desire, another book by Michael Pollan, produced a special that takes viewers on an eye-opening exploration of the human relationship with the plant world, seen from the plants’ point of view. The program shows how four familiar species -- the apple, the tulip, cannabis and the potato -- evolved to satisfy our yearnings for sweetness, beauty, intoxication and control. Cast: Michael Pollan, Frances McDormand. 1:55 minutes
Conspiracy Classes & Events

Registration for classes must be purchased 24 hours prior to the start of the class. Registration purchases can be made in store or online at www.foodconspiracy.coop/events

*Indicates the class or event will be held in the Hoff Building, 425 E. 7th St.

CONSPIRACY EVENTS

WEDNESDAY, JULY 6
No Board of Directors meeting in July for summer break. Regular Board meetings resume in August.

JULY 1-14
EAT LOCAL CHALLENGE
All local produce, locally produced grocery items, and Conspiracy Kitchen salads and sandwiches are 10% off for everyone during the Eat Local Challenge July 1-14th. Food Conspiracy defines local as produced within 200 miles of the Co-op.

JULY 1-14
EAT LOCAL CHALLENGE INSTAGRAM TAKEOVER
Follow Food Conspiracy on Instagram for the Eat Local Challenge Instagram Takeover and get behind the scenes look at: 1) ReZoNation Farm and Bean Tree Farm with intern Alexandra, 2) Local First Arizona tells the stories of people behind the food at the Co-op and keeps independence going strong, 3) foraging walks and wild food preparations with herbalist and educator John Slattery of Desert Tortoise Botanicals, and lastly 3) regionally inspired cold drinks & new happenings at Exo Roast Co.’s new space Southern Arizona Work Space, SAWS.

JULY 20 - AUG 2
All meal replacement and supplement powders on sale 10% off or more for everyone July 20 - August 2.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING*
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 3
All owners welcome. Stay involved in Co-op decision making. (Owners receive a coupon for 5% off one shopping trip). A light dinner is served at 6:00 p.m. Meeting starts at 6:30 p.m.

FIRST FRIDAY SUMMER SALE
FRIDAY, AUGUST 5TH
Everyone gets 10% off all day. Maximum discount is 10%. Discount does not include gift cards, special orders and classes. Live music by Naim Amor 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

NEW OWNER ORIENTATION*
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 10
Welcome new owners! We’d like to invite you to learn how you can get the most out of your investment in the co-op. We’ll talk about how the Co-op works, how owners participate, and how you can save money and eat healthy while shopping at the Co-op. 6:30 p.m. at the Co-op. RSVP by emailing outreach@foodconspiracy.coop

AUGUST 17 - 30
10% off all beer and wine for everyone August 17 - 30.

CONSPIRACY CLASSES

MINERALS: NOT YOUR GRANDMOTHER’S SPINACH WITH ROBIN SCHUETT-HAMES, NTP (DEMO)*
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10TH
Think that by eating well you are getting enough minerals? Unfortunately, most of us aren’t. Spinach today has only a small fraction of the iron that it had in your grandmother’s time, and 30% less calcium. Most of us have mineral deficiencies affecting our energy, memory, mental health, and immunity. In this class we will learn about the importance of mineral balance, and some tools for identifying and correcting deficiencies. We will learn how to make a dip with a mineral-rich local superfood. 10:00-11:30 a.m. Cost: $7
GET YOUR SUMMER IN THE CITY CARD AT FOOD CONSPIRACY

Use the Summer in the City card to get discounts at over 140 stores and restaurants in Tucson an unlimited number of times now - August 31st!

For participating merchants and a detailed list of all deals go to tucsonsummer.com

FOOD CONSPIRACY CO-OP’S SUMMER IN THE CITY DEAL:

Purchase a gift card of $50 or more at Food Conspiracy and get a BONUS 10% of the value added when you show your Summer in the City card!

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The Gloo Factory partners with DouglaPrieta Works, a women’s sewing cooperative in Agua Prieta, Sonora. They are a unique local source for fair trade products for printing, such as tote bags, aprons and bandanas.

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We print fliers, newsletters, posters, business cards, envelopes, menus, mailings, and more. We stock recycled paper. Email us your file for same or next day pick-up.

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10% OFF ALL DAY FOR EVERYONE

Live music by Naim Amor 6–8 p.m.

Discount does not include special orders, gift cards and classes. Max discount 10%.
Doug and Amy Smith of Exo Roast Co. are proud to announce a new event space behind Exo Roast Co. The space will accommodate extra seating for Exo patrons and will also focus on educational initiatives. The project, Southern Arizona Works Space (SAWS), begins with the premise that stronger, healthier communities result when people come together in a spirit of purpose toward diversity, resiliency, and durability. Through lectures, workshops, and other events, SAWS will aim to enhance locally grounded knowledge necessary for living in a changing Southern Arizona. The roster for late summer includes lectures by John Slattery (Desert Tortoise Botanicals), natural historian Tom Vandevender, and Louise Misztal of Sky Island Alliance. Additionally, SAWS will feature workshops sponsored by Food Conspiracy Co-op, Spanish classes, book clubs, and music.