

Free | Fall 2020

# grassroots

*A Quarterly Newsletter from People's Food Co-op*



## Board of Directors

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## Attend a Board Meeting!

Board of Directors meetings are held the 4th Tuesday of every month from 6-8:30pm. You're welcome to join us at 5:30 to eat and chat! Member-Owners are always welcome! This is a great chance to get your message to the Board or just to see what's going on at the Co-op. **Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these meetings may be held online via Zoom, or may be rescheduled. Find updates on our website at [peoples.coop/from-the-board](https://peoples.coop/from-the-board).**

**Upcoming Meetings**  
Tuesday, October 27th, 6-8:30pm  
Tuesday, November 24th, 6-8:30pm  
Tuesday, December 22nd,  
6-8:30pm

# grassroots

## Editors

Gabi de León, Marketing & Design Manager  
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October is Co-op Month!

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# invest in your community

**Invest \$15+**

Get an equal exchange chocolate bar!

**Invest \$30+**

Get a 50th Anniversary People's Hat,  
& a chocolate bar!

**Invest \$60+**

Get a bottle of Equal Exchange Olive Oil, a  
hat, & a chocolate bar!

**Find the Golden Tickets!**

There are 3 golden tickets hidden in the  
chocolate bars! If you find a golden ticket,  
you'll get a \$100 gift card to People's!



# The Astrology of People's Food Co-op

by Kahadish Wa'adabisha, Co-Manager

***Astrology is a 6000 year old science (some historians proclaim it is even older) that measures the cyclical nature of events on Earth, astronomically. Every person or event has a birth, and that moment determines the circumstances of a thing's experiences; its present and future.***

***Human beings are symbolic creatures. Our personal and cultural mythologies or stories are as potent, if not more so, than the current belief in science.***

## Chart #1: Opening Day 11/8/1970, 10am

**Sun: Scorpio**  
**Moon: Pisces**  
**Rising: Sagittarius**

This natal chart is the story of the beginning of an entity called People's Food Co-op. People's was born on November 8th, 1970 at 10am. This is People's 50th year of being "alive!"

This chart is a blueprint of our solar system when People's Food Co-op opened for business. For those unfamiliar with a birth chart, you can see that the solar system is placed within a circle divided into twelve areas of experience or houses. The most important highlights are those places that are of most significance to us as Human beings witnessing the sky. That is, the Sun, Moon, and the eastern point on the horizon where the Sun and Moon arise. In this chart the Sun is in the constellation of Scorpio, the Moon is in Pisces, and the horizon or ascendant in Sagittarius.

When People's Food Co-op opened to the public, the Sun, Mercury, Venus, and Jupiter were

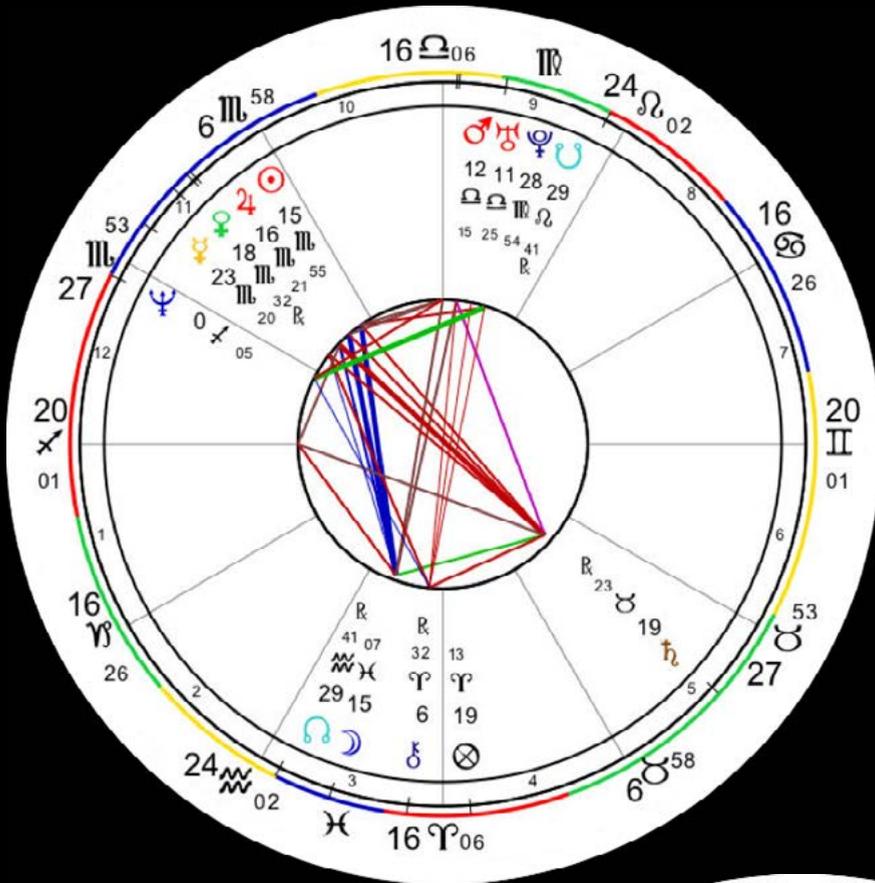
conjoined in the constellation of Scorpio, situated in the 11th house of the natal chart. Scorpio is a pretty serious, and let's say, intensely emotional sign for a business to have. The 11th house represents an attempt to transcend the personal ego in order to approach a larger understanding. In this way we develop a relationship with a larger community. In other words, the 11th house is about group identity.

It seems the Co-op was founded on the premise of intentionally building community around one of the basics of survival: food. Perhaps when People's was founded it was not thought of as a business in the usual sense of the word, but more as an entity with a strong commitment to inner transformation and a powerful overturn of "business as usual." This would be accomplished by building an aspirational community around healthy food, from seed to harvest.

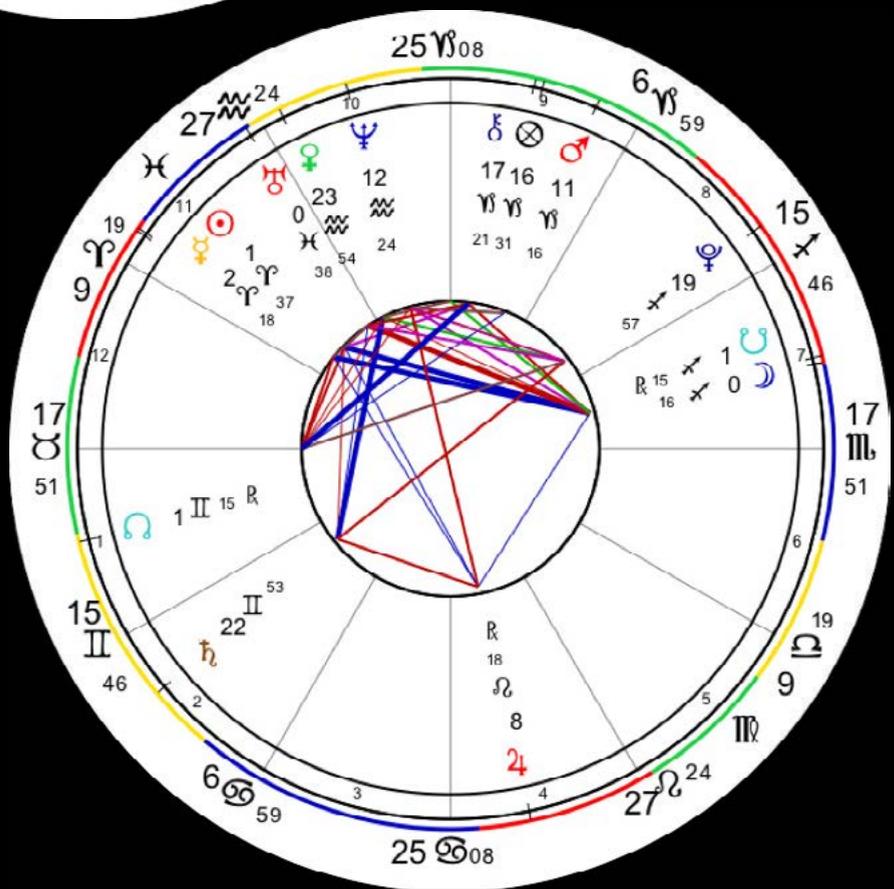
In the chart, Saturn is in Taurus in the 5th house opposing the stellium in Scorpio. Saturn represents measurement, restriction, and the concept of time. The 5th house is one of creative expression and entertainment. Having such a serious planet and a light hearted house opposing the 11th speaks of the restrictions of cultural, political and maybe even governmental laws on a budding even revolutionary food store.

With a Sagittarius ascendant demonstrating social engagement and advancement, the Pisces Moon in the 3rd house is offering a transcendence of what

***"Perhaps when People's was founded it was not thought of as a business in the usual sense of the word, but more as an entity with a strong commitment to inner transformation and a powerful overturn of "business as usual." This would be accomplished by building an aspirational community around healthy food, from seed to harvest."***



**Chart #1**



**Chart #2**

is considered normal in everyday life, and another group of planets in the 9th house driving the group to a philosophical investigation of its "truth." This bears out that People's Food Co-op is a philosophically intentional and community-oriented organization that was founded to grant access to quality, low priced and organic foodstuffs in a grocery market that was still based on WWII economic outlay of pesticide use and indentured labor. The Co-op was apparently established on revolutionary food access with a special emphasis on developing equitable community relationships.

To give some context of what was happening in the world at this time: People's Food Co-op opened in the thick of the Vietnam war. The USA was in a great Scorpionic turmoil and the Co-op was founded 5 years before its end, and 4 days before Oregon's infamous great whale explosion. The second wave feminist movement, Black revolution and self determination, and the Stonewall uprising were all concurrent with this time.

## Chart #2: Post-Renovation Opening Day, 3/22/03, 8am

**Sun: Aries**  
**Moon: Sagittarius**  
**Rising: Taurus**

The second natal chart is based on the first day the Co-op was open once the store renovation was complete on March 22nd, 2003 at 8am. One of the reasons for the renovation was to create more space for members to shop. The business could not

sustain itself any longer because it was too small to accommodate reasonable growth. The expansion of the store was a community effort that contributed to the Co-op's second birth.

The Sun was in Aries, a powerful position on the day of the spring equinox. The pioneering qualities that were initiated in 1970 are now growing into fruition. The Sun is in a beneficial relationship with the Moon in Sagittarius, demonstrating an harmonious reflection between the Co-op's intention and purposeful expression. Jupiter is in the fourth house in Leo, and now the Co-op is larger, beautiful, and inviting.

The storefront as we experience it right now is a manifestation of that time period. With a Taurus ascendant and Mars in Capricorn, the ability to grow a business and create financial viability is present.

There is so much more that can be said about these charts but these are some of the highlights.

The 50th anniversary of People's Food Coop has been a particularly challenging year. A pandemic, cultural uprisings, catastrophic wildfires, and a possible down turn of the economy. Yet People's has survived many adversities, and so far continues to be nourished by the community that continues to support its original mission: to supply the best food while maintaining a democratic workplace as the culture around us continues to morph and sway in a variety of directions.



# 50 Years of Cooperation

**Reflecting on People's Past  
& Visioning our Future**

by Brita Zeiler, Marketing & Membership Manager

## **Disrupting “business as usual” through innovation and experimentation**

Since its inception, People’s Food Co-op has been at the forefront of the natural, local, sustainable, ethically produced, minimally packaged food marketplace. The radical roots of People’s have always extended beyond “business as usual,” with an emphasis on building a strong community through economic partnerships and good food for all. Beginning as an activist-led, volunteer-run buying club, People’s provided access to minimally processed foods at low costs to members. We opened to the public as People’s Food Store on November 8th, 1970.

Through years of advocacy and educating the public, food co-ops like People’s set the stage for a dramatic shift in consumer food buying habits and values. The demand for organic, locally grown, minimally processed food has soared, and paired with allergy and food sensitivity awareness, led to a tidal wave of growth in demand at co-ops in the 1990’s-2000’s. Increasing numbers of customers wanted to connect with their food, eat seasonally, and found the transparency, product selection, community, and informed guidance they were looking for at co-ops like People’s. The addition of a year-round Farmers’ Market in 1994 revitalized People’s into a destination for community gathering and exceptional local produce. These factors contributing to increased demand led People’s to expand the store in 2000 and nearly double our retail space, allowing for a better product selection and shopping experience.

Fast-forward to 2020, and it is easy to find natural, organic, and sustainable foods at major grocers and online retailers. People’s remains relevant in a food market that is increasingly competitive and consolidated by keeping our values and community ownership at the heart of our work, opposed to a solely profit driven business model with shareholder

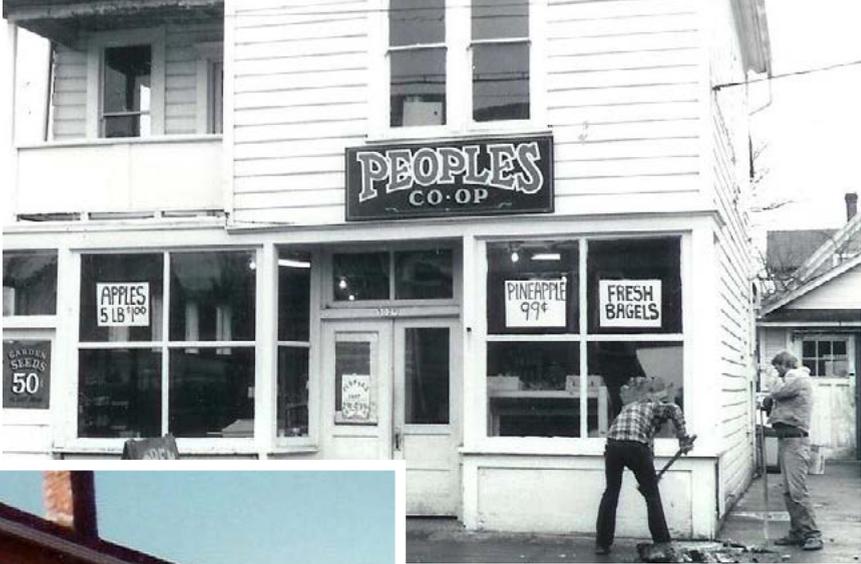
or investor interests to be primarily considered. The Collective Management recognizes the need to meet our communities’ needs now more than ever, and has been innovative in how we adapt. As a member-owned food cooperative, People’s is dedicated to reinvesting in our community, supporting our staff, and creating a thriving food economy even during an unprecedented global pandemic and national recession.

## **Looking ahead during unrest and uncertainty: adapting to a new marketplace and community driven goals**

Community-owned cooperatives bolster the communities we represent by making impactful decisions within, and with deep consideration of, the communities we reside in. The relationship between shopper and business is drastically more democratic in this model, with a prioritization of, and the agility to, meet the needs of the community and shoppers as they may change. The combined economic benefits of local business partnerships with farmers and vendors and profits from the Co-op are invested directly in the community rather than being extracted elsewhere. For example, in 2019, the Board of Directors decided to reallocate \$30,566 in profits back to our Member-Owners as patronage dividends. Every time you shop at a food co-op, you are investing in the health of your local food system and community, which sometimes literally pay dividends!

In the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Collective Management quickly implemented operational change. People’s was one of the first food stores (if not the first) in town to limit the number of people shopping in the store at any time. Despite this impacting our sales, we were committed

*People's in the 70s*



*People's in the 80s*



*People's in the 90s*

***“People’s is and will always be a community-owned cooperative that turns profits and business back in our community.”***

to prioritizing staff and community health. People’s required customers to wear masks way before it became mandated by the state. We have other notable adaptations including continuing hazard pay for staff throughout the pandemic, and investing in a HEPA air filtration system for the building. Throughout the pandemic, we’ve consistently heard from our immuno-compromised and elderly communities sharing that they feel safer shopping here because of the systems we’ve implemented and maintained.

The core of our work at People’s is to increase access to good and healthful food, and we are unwavering in that mission through this global pandemic and economic crisis. The launch of our contactless, curbside pickup program has helped reach customers who are reducing their contact with the public, or who simply prefer online ordering. Currently being offered as a once a week pickup day on Thursdays, orders can be placed anytime online through People’s website ([peoples.coop](http://peoples.coop)). The Collective Management anticipates expanding our Food For All program for more Member-Owners, and the Double Up Food Bucks program for all SNAP users at the Farmers Market.

In addition to those efforts to increase food access in our community, People’s has remained dedicated to never unnecessarily raising prices on goods – especially essentials like sanitizing solutions and staple foods. Price hikes and gouging were widely seen during the first months of the pandemic at grocery retailers and in some instances still continue. Our Buyer Team is continually working to offer a relevant mix of high quality, everyday low price products alongside specialty, bulk, minimally packaged, local products relevant to our shoppers’ needs. The

balance of price, packaging, and product integrity is something the Collective Management is prioritizing as we strive to provide more variety of affordable choices to meet changing needs.

Our ability to maintain this balance of affordability, integrity, and environmental awareness is rooted in our model of community ownership. This allows us to offer precisely the things that are relevant here and now, unlike large publicly or privately owned companies and chains with national marketing strategies. While Amazon and its acquisition of Whole Foods has allowed for incredible profits for its shareholders and founder resulting from a dramatic increase in demand and market consolidation, they have been selling essential goods at often inflated prices throughout a global pandemic, which raises serious ethical questions. People’s is and will always be a community-owned cooperative that turns profits and business back in our community.

At People’s Food Co-op, we are proud to celebrate 50 years of revolutionizing our local food and economic systems. With your participation through being a member-owner and shopping at People’s, we can continue to exist as a reliable and revolutionary community food resource for all in Portland for many years to come.



# Fostering Accessibility for Farms in the Produce Department

by **Makayla Micheal, Produce Keeper**

In this upcoming season, you may see some new things coming to the produce department at People's. You may, in particular, see more non-certified organically grown (NCOG) produce. The produce department has decided collectively to foster accessibility for farms by prioritizing farms that do not have organically certified produce. As we dedicate ourselves to anti-oppressive ways of moving at the Co-op, we are building new

relationships with farms, and working to bridge the gap of accessibility both with the farmers and with folks buying produce at the Co-op. For instance, many of the BIPOC farms in the area that follow organic farming practices do not have organic certification. Requiring organic certification is important, but creates an accessibility barrier for farmers who do not have the capital, labor, or time to pursue organic certification.

There are many hurdles farms must leap over in order to obtain organic certification:

### **Cost of Transition**

Organic certification can cost many hundreds to many thousands of dollars. Many new and/or small farmers do not have the capital to start out to use toward organic certification. Farmers only receive certification after three years of practicing at organic standards with the ability to be labeled as transitional after a year. During this time, farms are spending more on production costs to run an organic farm but are unable to sell through markets that are restricted to only organically labeled produce. A long term investment of resources, time, and planning is not always feasible for farmers from the start, since the returns are long term as well. If the market drops while farms are in the process of becoming certified organic, and farms are not able to maintain their prices, then they lose their investment. Farms that use organic practices but that are not certified organic have little access to the advantages that organic certification can bring. As of 2016, less than 1% of farmland in the USA is certified organic, but together, certified organic farms sold nearly \$7.6 billion in certified organic goods. The market is both limited and lucrative.

### **Land Use**

Some farms can only access land by leasing it. The issue with this is that if a lease only lasts a small amount of time – like five to ten years – then by the time the three year certification process ends, the farmers only have a few years left to yield a better profit. If they are not able to renew their lease and must move to a different space, then farmers must start the three year certification process all over again.

### **Upkeep of Organic Certification**

Some of the requirements of organic certification include more intensive recordkeeping and paperwork, as well as regular visits from certification agents from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). Other requirements also can be vague and up to the interpretation of individual inspectors. This intensive recordkeeping, as well as understanding the ins and outs of what must be saved and recorded for organic certification, can prove to be a setback for some farms.

In general, up and coming farmers are a hopeful source for an increase in organic farming practices. The incoming generation of farmers and consumers alike are wanting even more transparency and movement towards greener practices, and are bringing more insight and innovation.

The produce team will continue to review farms in order to make sure farms are following organic standards, but we find that creating a hard rule around organic certification does not fully align with our strive towards social and economic justice. Providing non-certified organic produce allows for more affordable options in order to make the Co-op more accessible for all shoppers.

Through the vetting process at People's, our produce department is able to more closely connect with farms. We are able to foster relationships and create a more community-oriented atmosphere around the food we sell at the Co-op. I encourage folks to look past organic certification and the label, and spend more time doing research on who and where you would like to buy organically grown produce from. This can look like visiting the farms' websites to see what practices they are using or, even better, asking farmers what they are doing directly at markets or by email. Our value of knowing about our food and being in relationship with the folks who grow it is more salient than ever.



# Apple Olive Oil Celebration Cake

*adapted by Brita Zeiler*

Celebrate People's 50th Anniversary by baking a delicious cake! This take on a traditional olive oil cake is an opportunity to enjoy a favorite baking apple variety – be sure to check out our selection of this year's fresh and local crop apples!

## Ingredients

- 2 tart apples, like Granny Smith, Empire, or Cortland
- Juice from one lemon
- 3 cups flour of your choice
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon ground sumac (optional)
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ¾ cup sugar
- 1 cup Olive Oil (Olive oil contributes a lot of rich flavor to this cake, so make sure to use a fresh, quality oil. I used Seka Hills Arbequina olive oil from the bulk section, but any of our bulk olive oils will taste great.)
- 2 eggs
- 2/3 cup raisins or other chopped dried fruit, soaked in warm water and drained

## Instructions

Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a 9-inch cake pan with parchment paper and set aside.

Cut apples into thin slices and coat with lemon juice to prevent browning.

In a large bowl, sift together flour, spices, baking soda, and baking powder, then set aside.

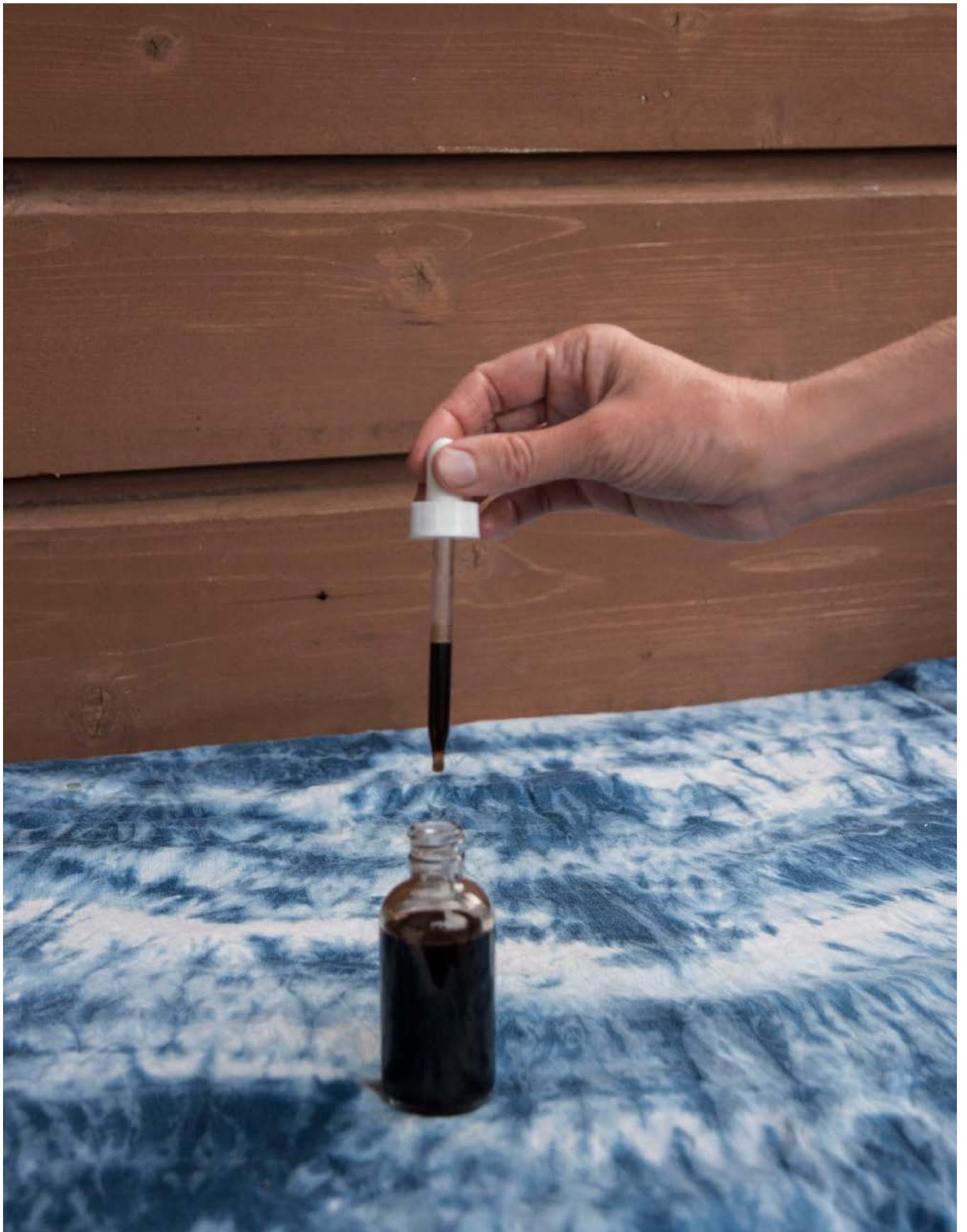
With a whisk or stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment, mix the sugar and olive oil on low for 2 minutes. While whisking, add the eggs one at a time, and continue to whisk for another 2 minutes. The mixture should thicken slightly.

In the large bowl with dry mixture, add the wet mixture and drained raisins, stirring until blended. The batter will be thick and look like miso paste.

Transfer the cake batter into the prepared cake pan. Decorate the top of the cake with the apple slices into a pattern of your choice, making sure to expose as little of the apple surface as possible, just a sliver! This prevents browning or burning, while still creating an attractive design.

Bake for 45 minutes or until done.

Allow the cake to cool in the pan before transferring to a serving platter. Add your own frosting, powdered sugar, honey, or enjoy as is!



# Elderberry Rosehip Syrup

by Brita Zeiler

Elderberries and rosehips are classic Fall fruits for year round wellness. The addition of rosehips to a classic elderberry syrup adds throat and digestion soothing properties to a renowned Winter remedy. Rich in vitamin C and antioxidants, this delicious syrup can be added to beverages, drizzled over desserts, or sipped on its own. A teaspoon to tablespoon is a daily serving.

Syrup recipes lend well to customization, so feel free to adjust spices to your liking or what's in your pantry, add other medicinal herbs or mushrooms, or modify the kind and amount of sweetener to your preference.

A note on preservation: A syrup is essentially a tea, preserved with sugar. The more sweetener you use, the longer your syrup will last! This recipe doesn't contain enough sugar to produce a shelf stable syrup and requires refrigeration. You can certainly add more sweetener, or even incorporate 1-8 ounces of tincture to help keep your syrup longer. This syrup lasts a couple of month in the refrigerator, and yields about three cups.

## Ingredients

- ½ cup dried elderberries
- ½ cup dried rosehips
- 2 cups water (preferably distilled, but not necessary)
- 1 tablespoon dried or fresh ginger (dried is more pungent, fresh more mild)
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon chips
- 3 cardamom pods crushed
- 3 whole cloves
- zest or peel from half an orange
- 1 cup honey (sugar, maple syrup, agave also work)

## Instructions

Combine all the ingredients except for the honey (or other sweetener) in a medium size pot and bring to a simmer. Allow to simmer for 30 minutes, then remove from heat and remove the lid. Allow to cool and reduce uncovered for an hour.

Strain through a fine mesh strainer or cheesecloth. The cheesecloth makes it easier to squeeze out all the liquid from the plant material once it has cooled down! Compost the herby pulp.

Stir in the honey until combined.

Save in a bottle or jar, and don't neglect to label and include the date!

# Oregon-Made Supplements for Autumn & Winter



## ***Zeaxanthin Lutein Complex*** **\$25.99** **60 Capsules**

Many of us find ourselves in front of a computer more often than we may like and for multiple hours daily. Research shows that blue light generated from computer screens can cause eye fatigue, headaches and, for some, further damage to the eyes. Zeaxanthin and lutein are potent antioxidants that scavenge free radicals created by blue light protecting the eyes from damage.



## ***Back to Health Immune Boost*** **\$28.99** **120 Capsules**

A potent combination of minerals, vitamins and immunomodulating botanicals, this product can be used everyday to stimulate one's immune response. Take one capsule daily. If you feel yourself coming down with a cold or flu, up your intake to one capsule every hour for 4 hours.



## ***Vitamin C with Zinc*** **\$18.99** **120 Capsules**

This is a vitamin C complex with zinc and citrus bioflavonoids. The mineral zinc has been shown to shorten the length of colds if taken within 24 hours of symptoms appearing. Vitamin C has also been shown to reduce the length of colds and flu. This product boasts 1000mg of vitamin C per veggie capsule.

# The Seven Cooperative Principles

## #1 Voluntary, Open Membership

Open to all without gender, social, racial, political, or religious discrimination.

## #2 Democratic Member Control

One member, one vote.

## #3 Member Economic Participation

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of the cooperative. The economic benefits of a cooperative operation are returned to the members, reinvested in the co-op, or used to provide member services.

## #4 Autonomy & Independence

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members.

## #5 Education, Training, & Information

Cooperatives provide education and training for members so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives. They inform the general public about the nature and benefits of cooperation.

## #6 Cooperation Among Cooperatives

Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, regional, national, and international structures.

## #7 Concern for Community

While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies accepted by their members.



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