

FRUIT & VEGE CO-OP

WELLINGTON REGION

Bringing healthy food to our neighbourhood



SEASONAL NEWSLETTER | SUMMER EDITION



Sallie's UPDATE

As we approach the end of the year I have been reflecting on the people who make this initiative happen at the grass roots level. Every Tuesday there is an array of people (volunteers) who turn up at your local community packing hub to lift, pack, clean, share a cuppa, man the pick-up times and generally make the co-ops a welcoming and effective place to access your fruit and vegetables from. We estimate about 250 volunteer hours a week goes into our 9 different co-ops Wellington wide, this edition of the newsletter is a huge **THANK YOU!** to you all.

The early summer late spring harvest has seen the end of the availability of some types of fruits and vegetables and the beginning of others. New potatoes are out now and delicious, apples are at the end of the season and oranges have peaked. Pumpkin and kumara are still out of reach for us cost wise with prices for these items almost tripling over the last 12 months because of a very wet winter and the demand from the export market. Strawberries have been delicious and most of the hubs have had some of these in their orders now. Potatoes, broccoli, carrots and cabbages are all up by 20-30% in cost since last December.

As always with our link between our buyers co-op and the growers co-op we continually work hard to bring you the value for your money and the best way for us to do this is to bring you the best of seasonally available produce, with as much as possible locally grown. Our co-ops are a win-win for many small local New Zealand growers who struggle to compete against the bigger growers supplying the international market. Climate change is also bringing extra pressures such as wet winters causing some crops to rot before harvest and limiting what is available to the local market.

You as members all benefit by the growth of the co-ops. More people buying means we get more produce for our money; so spread the word and post on your social media pages. In the lead up to Christmas we have been running a very popular promotion and free give-away for fruit and vege orders, and will be running it again in the first week or two of the New Year. Be an active member by spreading the word!

Te Rongo to you and your families over the Christmas break.

Ngā mihi, na

Sallie Calvert

Regional Coordinator, Wesley CA



Seasonal recipe

CHRISTMAS SANGRIA

INGREDIENTS

- 3 tart granny smith apples (or other if you prefer)
- 1 large orange
- 1 cup of fresh OR frozen OR tinned berries (cherries, blueberries, boysenberries, strawberries, raspberries, blackberries)
- 2 bottles of white wine and ¼ cup of sugar
OR 1 bottle of lemonade and 1 bottle of soda water (for an alcohol free option)
- 1 cup of cranberry OR apple juice
- 2 cups of ginger ale OR club Soda
- 3 sprigs of rosemary OR mint

METHOD

1. Chop the apples into quarters and remove the core, then finely slice and put into a large jug.
2. Slice the oranges (skin on) and put into the jug. Add berries.
3. Pour in the wine and sugar OR lemonade and soda and juice.
4. Stir carefully so as not to break up fruit.
5. Put in the fridge and chill for at least half an hour.
6. When you are ready to serve add the ginger ale or club soda and rosemary or mint.
7. ENJOY!

Variations:

- Use a mix of berries instead of the same kind.
- Use sliced mango instead of the berries.
- Serve with homemade pancakes for Christmas breakfast.
- Serve with sliced carrot and cucumber sticks as the entrée for your Christmas dinner.
- Serve with fruit and cheese as the dessert option for Christmas dinner.



Hub *profile*

WAINUIOMATA



INTERVIEW WITH PASTOR ANDREW COORDINATOR AT WAINUIOMATA FRUIT AND VEGE CO-OP

How long have you been involved with the Fruit and Vege Co-op?

More than 2 years since November 2015.

What drew you (and your organisation) to get involved?

Because we had Pacific Health Services here doing cooking and physical activity and we were looking at ways to get affordable fruit and vegetables to our community. We were looking at gardens and I was introduced to you – and this is a really good buy! I wanted to be a role model, especially for Pacific people. As a minister here I feel a connection to the community when they come in and I know the people and their needs and situation, and it makes me really passionate to be able to help.

What are you most proud of about the Wainuiomata Fruit and Vege Co-op?

What I am most proud of is the buy - no one can't access it - compared to other things. One thing, our church is not a big church, but we are so proud about how well we have engaged with the community [not just through the co-op, also through the playgroup and the Wainuiomata Women's group] so we have become a model church. Other ministers have come to me and asked me how we have done this with the co-op.

What plans do you have for the future for the Wainuiomata Fruit and Vege Co-op?

I just want to see this growing – now that we have schools, I am going for balance in the community – so we can have access for everyone in the community. I am still exploring for [distribution hubs] at Parkway and Fernlea to make it available to everyone. I don't have any doubt [about the value of the co-op] because it is a great way to get to know about the community and their situation. For example, I have learned a lot about what people in the community want through the co-op.



Pastor Andrew and his team of volunteers at the Wainuiomata Co-op

! SHOUT OUT *to all our brilliant volunteers*

The co-ops all have different ways of acknowledging their volunteers, and volunteers have different reasons for volunteering. Here is a little description of what has been happening at Naenae:

We have been celebrating our volunteers in different ways; the first year we gave all our volunteers certificates which said something special about them. Last year we put on a dinner and showcased 4 different salad recipes people could use, and modelled using the co-op food (to make a meal), we invited the volunteers' partners and families. We like to honour their time and value the contribution they make and honour them as people, they are great and awesome. What I like is we have a diverse group of people who come together and contribute; they are a community. For some of them it is the most important part of their week. You can see, for example, from Russell's 'brag wall' (of co-op newspaper articles and photos) how important it is to them.

Some of our wonderful volunteers have been coming every week for years now. Here are some of our lovely people and some of their thoughts about volunteering:



Lindsay from Berhampore distribution hub

How long have you been volunteering at the co-op?
Since February 2017.

What is your favourite thing about volunteering?
The physical exercise, the mental exercise, and the conviviality.



From left: Tony, Rowan and Robbie from Eastern Suburbs Co-op

How long have you been volunteering at the co-op?
Tony: 20 months, Rowan: 2 years, Robbie: Nearly 2 years.

What is your favourite thing about volunteering?
Tony: Satisfaction and friendship.
Rowan: The people.
Robbie: The teamwork, and seeing all the fresh produce ready for people's kitchens.



Russel and Ruth from Naenae Co-op

How long have you been volunteering at the co-op?
It's our third year since Naenae started (February 2015). We read about it in the Hutt News and thought we may as well pop over and do it because we had nothing else to do.

What is your favourite thing about volunteering?
The company, we enjoy the camaraderie and have lots of laughs, stir a bit, or a lot! Give sage advice when we're asked for it!



Derek from Berhampore distribution hub

How long have you been volunteering at the co-op?
Since February 2017.

What is your favourite thing about volunteering?
It's really good helping people and being able to make a difference in their lives.



Ginny from Naenae Co-op

How long have you been volunteering at the co-op?
Since it began in February 2015.

What is your favourite thing about volunteering?
The company, mixing with lots of different people, friendliness and the help we give to the community.



SHOUT OUT *to all our brilliant volunteers cont..*

What is your name?

Janice and Pat (no photo).

What co-op do you belong to?

Naenae.

How long have you been volunteering at the co-op?

On and off since it started.

What is your favourite thing about volunteering?

The company and meeting people, they're friendly and Jill (the coordinator) is the bomb – she's amazing.



Tina from Waiwhetu Co-op

How long have you been volunteering at the co-op?

Since 2015 when it started (in Waiwhetu).

What is your favourite thing about volunteering?

The camaraderie, meeting the people every week, and it's a bit of exercise and giving back to the community. It's a way of giving back for the support you've had from the community. It's nice to see young families come get their fruit and vegetables, it's such good value.



Michael from Waiwhetu Co-op

How long have you been volunteering at the co-op?

Since it started (in Waiwhetu).

What is your favourite thing about volunteering?

Company and the people you are working with and knowing you are helping others.



Craig from Waiwhetu Co-op

How long have you been volunteering at the co-op?

Since it started (in Waiwhetu).

What is your favourite thing about volunteering?

I enjoy the variety of people we get here, I don't like to see our old people (volunteers) struggling, they are hard out volunteering – so I like to help them.



Mel from Waiwhetu Co-op

How long have you been volunteering at the co-op?

Since day 1!

What is your favourite thing about volunteering?

Meeting lots of different people, it brings lots of people together. It's nice in the holidays to bring the children and for them to see how we help in the community – it's good for us to role model.



So please take the opportunity to say a little thank you to our volunteers next time you see them at the co-op or out and about in the community. Take a moment to mihi to them and let them know you appreciate their efforts.

Meri Kirihimete ki a koe me to whānau (Merry Christmas to you and to all your family).