

KEWEENAW.COOP

WINTER / SPRING 2017

906.482.2030

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CIRCUMSPICE

Bummings



Winter / Spring 2016

kir-'kum-spi-ke

The name Circumspice, Latin for look around, was inspired by Michigan's state motto—*Si Quaeris Peninsulam Amoenam Circumspice*. Which means, "If you seek a pleasant peninsula, look around." The motto originally appeared on the Great Seal in 1835 designed by Lewis Cass.

The Circumspice newsletter is published three times a year for the Owners and customers of the Keweenaw Co-op. The newsletter provides information about the Keweenaw Co-op, the cooperative movement, food, nutrition, and community issues. Views and opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of the Co-op Management, Staff, Board, or Owners.

The cover for this issue is a respectful nod to our past. We were inspired by the very first hand-drawn Circumspice newsletter and wanted to get back to our roots with this issue. To view some of the original artwork from the early Circumspice issues go to: <http://keweenaw.coop/history.php>

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See more of her work at brookecummings.com

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www.keweenaw.coop**

**Store Hours
Open Daily from 8am-8pm**

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In loving memory of
Kenneth Steiner



This issue of Circumspice is dedicated to Ken Steiner. Ken was one of our founders, a dear friend, and long-standing member of our Keweenaw Co-op family. He was an outstanding figure in our community who touched the lives and hearts of many. His love for good food, his delicious recipes and contagious spirit to serve others will forever inspire us to support and serve our community.

Thank you, Kenny, for all that you shared with the Keweenaw Co-op and our community.



Eager.

Carl Blair, President of the Board of Directors

That is the word for this newsletter. I and the rest of your Board of Directors are Eager. We are Eager to move ahead, Eager to build upon our remarkable base, Eager to bring – you – into the effort, Eager to look ahead.

There is so much to do and so much that is taking place. While those who have read what I have written over the last few years might be forgiven for thinking that the Board note is “just” an “altar call” for the future; it is not. We are progressing and the Keweenaw Co-op has never been in better shape. Our sales in 2016 passed the \$3,300,000 mark! Pause and consider \$3,300,000! When I first shopped at the store it was barely \$1,000,000 - wow. We are a vital and growing business, but our cash sales and value are not even a fraction of why we are here. Our community classes are being re-started, local producers, local jobs, outreach and support all are growing. Yet also the bottom line is growing – each quarter. Great; so what next for the Co-op?

One of the main themes from last year’s annual meeting was the desire to increase both wages and the number of full-time staff. We have made progress this year in bringing things in-line with other co-ops. Should wages and full-time staff numbers increase even more- of course! Still we are on track to do what we want. Please note, “what we want” this is a statement/summation of what you, the owners, have stated you want.

So what's next? Some of us want to leap off the cliff and start the relocation process yesterday. We CAN'T yet – we really can't, while all signs are more than positive, and work is making great strides (see next newsletter!) We are not quite there. We must build upon our existing strengths and shore up our challenges so that when we do move ahead there will be the base we need.

Specifically what can you as an owner do?

Pay with cash or check so the co-op doesn't have excessive credit card charges – in the third quarter of 2016 the Co-op paid out over \$11,000 in credit card fees, up over \$2,000 from third quarter 2015! Obviously we want your business no matter how you pay but wouldn't it be great if we had \$11,000 more to devote to improvements and relocation?

The Co-op added 120 new owners in 2016, and welcome to all! But what can you, as an existing owner, do to encourage even more new owners? 240 or 360 would be a better number and if just ¼ of our owners brought a new owner in we would more than reach these numbers!

Become more active in the governance of the Co-op. Attend meetings, express your opinion and in particular VOTE!

Beginning with this year's annual meeting – April 20, 2107, save the date – we will be doing electronic voting in addition to the in-store paper ballots begun last year; in addition you may still request a paper ballot be sent to you. Last year we saw almost twice as many votes cast as the year before. Take action and vote this year.

If we all are active, participate, shop mindfully, vote, and express our opinions then we, as the owners of the Co-op, will be able to take the next steps sooner, and also be confident that the Co-op will succeed.



2017 Annual Meeting

Where:

First United Methodist Church
401 Quincy Street, Hancock

When:

Thursday, April 20th, 6-9:00pm

What:

- Community Meal
- Door Prizes
- Board Elections
- Bring-a-Bag Vote
- Childcare Provided

Be an active Owner! VOTE!

Good Old-Fashioned Cooperation

...in three acts

Prologue:

Our world continues to change in ways that often seem bigger than us. The Keweenaw Co-op is directed by our Owners through our Ends and the Cooperative Principles to be an agent for positive change. The Co-op's Ends zero in on food, health, education and community. We can have the greatest impact by focusing on what we can most control: The shopping experience that we offer, the workplace we maintain and our cooperative approach to business.

ACT I. Customer Satisfaction.

In November, we received another informative round of feedback from our 2016 Customer Survey. Of the 237 households that completed the survey, 92% were Co-op Owners, and 32% spent most of their grocery dollars at the Co-op. Ninety seven percent of you thought the Co-op serves your needs well (up from 94% in 2014). Your overall satisfaction increased on average, but 5% fewer of you gave us the top rating of "very satisfied" in comparison with the last survey. And you are still highly likely to recommend the Co-op to a friend or colleague. Thanks!

Here are the top things we learned from your feedback and an update on some of the progress we've made since the last survey:

What would increase your patronage at the Co-op?

- Lower prices. We are assessing our overall pricing structure, and there's still work to do.
- A better facility in a better location. Yes! We continue to weigh options and assess feasibility, but this is a process.
- Greater selection and variety (while at the same time refining our product line to reflect our purchasing guidelines).
- Better quality and freshness and more local and regional products.

What we've improved!

- Our ratings on store cleanliness improved markedly.
- Customer service. While I mention a few customer service comments below, many of you rated our staff more friendly and courteous. After the last survey we expanded our store hours, and that's been well received.
- You applauded our selection of organic and natural food.
- We're providing better product and sourcing information.
- You confirmed that the deli is definitely a major draw.
- Lots of satisfaction expressed regarding our store updates over the last year. Many updates were in response to the prior survey. You gave a hardy nod to the addition of fresh meat options. We're planning for expansion of this offering.
- You liked that the Cooperative Principles are now prominently on display and that we're changing Owner Appreciation Day.

Where do we need to improve?

- More focus on quality and freshness. This focus on fresh means making our produce and deli even better. We're bringing specialists in these areas to advise us on systems, staffing, selection and merchandizing.
- Faster service all around.
- You told us we could do more to build a sense of community.
- Some of you would like to see better response to customer feedback, while others thanked us for continually asking. We will continue to raise the customer service bar. Our new (and first ever) Human Resources manager is revamping our training program with that as a goal.
- We need to work on out-of-stocks, and we are! We're developing systems to better stay on top of this, and we negotiated one more UNFI truck per month to fill a delivery gap.
- We're working to de-clutter the aisles, hopefully resulting in an easier family shopping experience. And we're rearranging the store within the confines of our building to make the layout more intuitive.
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"We are fortunate that our work revolves around good food, and food has the power to bring people together."

-Curt Webb, General Manager



ACT 2. Employee Satisfaction.

We recognize that a key to an excellent shopping experience is a happy staff, and that one of our roles in the community is to provide a healthy, fair, fun workplace. We surveyed our staff again in 2016 to check-in on employee satisfaction.

We heard that staff are feeling more empowered to solve customers' problems. Staff feel that their jobs make good use of their skills and abilities. They maintain pride in working at the Co-op and are determined to give their best effort. We avoid micro-management and allow for independence to get the job done. The Co-op is a fun place to work, allows for creativity and allows for expanding one's skills. Our staff appreciate each other as well, and their network of support and teamwork is acknowledged.

There is priority work to do in the following areas: Creating an atmosphere of respect, improving communication, managing change, enforcing policy, and continuing to work on wages and benefits. We see an underlying need for continued staff development, starting at the management level. Building a shared understanding of our common goals will support all of these efforts.

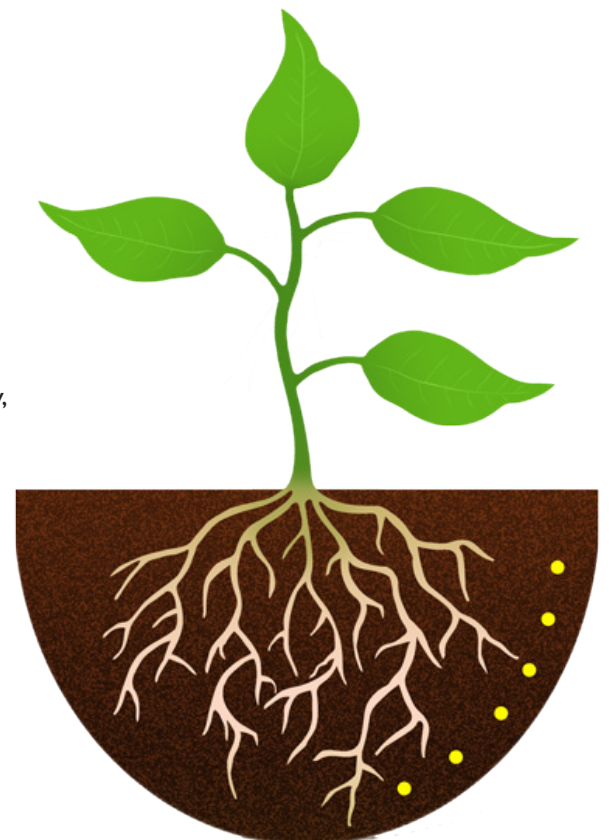
We are poised to make positive things happen. With determination we are responding positively to the survey results and our team is present and willing to join in this work. Our new personnel policy that is clear and enforceable will serve both staff and management. Progress is being made to improve benefits. As our efforts to improve our workplace also improves productivity, further wage increases will be possible. We are excited by the opportunities afforded us.

A huge step in that direction was the creation and filling of a Human Resources position at the Co-op. Savannah's approach is summed up nicely: "I am here as a resource for humans; my job is to help find solutions."

ACT 3. Building Cooperation.

Why does all this matter? The Co-op's Ends define the difference we make in the world. Because the Keweenaw Co-op exists, the physical and social health of our community is sustained. We serve our community by providing good food and information from within the cooperative model. We value self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity and the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others. These roots run deep.

We are fortunate that our work revolves around good food, and food has the power to bring people together. Customer satisfaction expands our impact and employee satisfaction carries that impact forward. Around food we can find common ground, a place to begin the practice of cooperation. We all need food to survive, and with the proper nourishment, together we can thrive.



Off the Wheaten Path: Buckwheat

by Carley Williams, Head Baker

Have you noticed the co-op's bakery expanding in the last year? We've been busy keeping up with increased sales thanks to our lovely new bakery case and a dedicated team of bakers. As we've grown, we've focused on maintaining our homemade quality. We bake small batches each day using ingredients you can buy at our store to bake with at home. I would like to use this column to share news from the bakery and to feature ingredients that I am working with. I hope you enjoy reading about and tasting my creations as much as I enjoy baking them!



We aim to bake a wide variety of treats and snacks to suit many dietary needs. In the bakery case you'll find wheat-free, vegan, and low sugar options as well as some traditional favorites. Recently, in search of a wheat-free bread recipe for our bakery and my own kitchen, I've been exploring alternative flours. Commonly, gluten free baked goods are made using flour mixes that combine refined flours and starches to achieve similar qualities of wheat-based products. These flour mixes are often pricey and contain bland ingredients that are highly refined, thus sacrificing the plant's original nutrients and flavor. These mixes certainly have their advantages, but I think they should be used sparingly or balanced with whole-food ingredients. Better yet, buy the ingredients separately and develop your own flour replacement mix!

In my quest to add grainy variety to our gluten free selection, I stumbled across buckwheat—a humble seed with amazing qualities. The name itself keeps it shrouded in confusion. Is it a grain? a seed? a nut? Most likely you've bought it and pushed it to the back corner of your pantry, unable to remember how to use it. Buckwheat is an ancient food source with an appealing, earthy taste. A triangular shaped seed, in the Polygonaceae family, a relative of common garden Rhubarb and Sorrel. Buckwheat is a short, bright green, herbaceous annual with lovely little white flowers that bloom July through September. Many gardeners will know buckwheat as a useful cover crop or bee fodder. Buckwheat was domesticated in southeast Asia many thousands of years ago and has been used in a variety of ways by many cultures around the world. It has been cultivated in Europe and Russia for bee and pheasant forage; made into ceps and eaten in place of bread during holidays in the Himalayas; and made into the culturally important soba noodle in Japan.

Buckwheat is a versatile ingredient. When used in its whole-kernel form, the triangular shaped seed is known as kasha or groats. These kernels provide a delicious crunch to baked goods. When the kernels are ground they produce a fine, violet colored flour. I've found that buckwheat flour can be used on its own (see the pancake recipe) or mixed with a gluten free flour blend to add texture, nutrition, and flavor (try our wheat-free scones, bread, and tarts). When I rediscovered buckwheat, I was surprised to find that it is in fact gluten free. I've been baking with it here at the co-op and at home, and I'm pleased to report it makes great pancakes!

Buckwheat is available at our store in a variety of forms. Whole groats and buckwheat flour are found in the bulk section. In the grocery department, you will find a hot breakfast cereal made of buckwheat and the well known Japanese soba noodles. Check out the bakery case for a variety of items containing buckwheat. Next time you're looking for ways to add variety to your diet I hope you'll give buckwheat a try and let me know what you think! Here is my recipe for pancakes. They turn out thick and fluffy and are delicious with added apple, banana, blueberries, cranberries, nuts or even chocolate!

Friendly reminder: Though many of our bakery items are gluten-free, our kitchen is not gluten-free and therefore our items are labeled as wheat-free.





Fresh Baked Goods Featuring Buckwheat at the Keweenaw Co-op:

Wheat Free Scones Kasha Bars Wheat-free Bread Wheat-free Muffins

Buckwheat Nutrition Facts

Buckwheat is high in Potassium, Magnesium and B-Vitamins. Buckwheat is a good source of the minerals: Manganese, Copper, Iron, Zinc, and Phosphorus. The bioavailability of Zinc, Copper, and Potassium from Buckwheat is quite high. Potassium helps to maintain the water and acid balance in blood and tissue cells, Zinc helps to bolster the immune system, and Copper helps protect against neurodegenerative diseases and disorders. Buckwheat not only is protein rich, it contains essential amino acids, and is high in soluble fiber. This can be especially important in people with diabetes and anyone else trying to maintain balanced blood sugar levels. Buckwheat provides various plant compounds and is richer in antioxidants than many common cereal grains. The plant compounds found in buckwheat include rutin, quercetin, vitexin and D-chiro-inositol. Bottom line? Having buckwheat in your diet can help you stay fit, nimble, and healthy.

Buckwheat Pancake Recipe

- 1 cup buckwheat flour (or ½ buckwheat and ½ flour of choice)
- 1 Tablespoon sugar or a squirt of agave or honey
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 ½ cups milk or alternative
- 1 large egg (or sub flax egg)
- ½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- Generous amount of butter (or oil), for the skillet

Mix thoroughly in a pitcher; pour onto hot griddle or skillet, top with fruit or nuts, check bottom and flip when golden brown. Serve with your favorite pancake topping.

Enjoy!

welcome



New Owners

- Michael Adams
- Kelly Aho
- Heather Anderson
- Chelsea Batten
- Sandra Butler
- Kelly Christensen
- Chelon Compton
- Wyndeth Davis
- Kirk deDoes
- Savannah Dougherty
- Jonathan DuBetz
- Nancy Fenton
- Judy Fynewever
- Paul Gemignani
- Suzi Gerstberger
- Brendhan Givens
- Caroline Gwaltney
- Pamlynn Hansen
- Melissa Majjala
- Donna Maskill
- Jennifer Geis Miller
- Alan Ollanketo
- Douglas Polzien
- Mile Rebholz
- Alice Reynolds
- Jennifer Ryfe
- Bridget Riversmith
- Ryan Rivest
- Taylor Schroeder
- Susan J Schumacher
- Zhenyu Song
- Keith Sopp
- Megan Thayer
- Janet Trevarrow
- Eric Trombly
- Kimberly Vaitkevicius
- Brenna Van Schoick
- Sherri Waineo
- Daniel Wells

THINGS WE LOVE



The Eden Organic line

"I love this line for so many reasons! First of all, it goes above and beyond typical organic standards, with double certifications on most of their items. They take organic products very seriously, and have been producing great tasting, quality products since the 70's. There are no surprise ingredients in Eden Organics products, even their soy milk has no sugar added! If you're looking for a product you can trust without compromising taste, the Eden Organic line is the way to go!"

-Sydney, Deli Counter

Rishi Peach Tea

"This tea is just amazing! Anyone looking for a sweet yet mellow tea flavor should add this to their grocery list. This loose leaf tea is made in Milwaukee which is where I am from, so it's great to see that Rishi products are in our store! I love that the Co-op carries a variety of Rishi flavors, and although Peach is my favorite I would recommend trying all of them!"

-Aandi, Assistant Produce Manager



Bananas!

"Bananas are my absolute favorite food! I grew up in Cameroon where banana trees are naturally abundant, so seeing organic bananas at the Co-op makes me feel at home. Bananas are a great source of Potassium and an all around staple food for me. I enjoy a perfectly ripe banana that is evenly yellow, no green or brown spots. Bananas make me happy, and I encourage everyone to incorporate bananas in their life!"

-Vanessa, Deli Counter



Update from our current Bring-A-Bag Recipient:

Houghton Energy Efficiency Team

The Bring-a-Bag Campaign is one of the ways the Co-op gives back to the community. Every bag the Co-op saves because shoppers bring in their own reusable bag earns money for the community. A different recipient is awarded every 6 months.

HEETing Up the Home Front

*Marcia Goodrich,
HEET Media Coordinator*

It's the day after Thanksgiving, and Joann Peterson is very, very grateful. "This has been unreal," she says. "You can't imagine how happy I am."

Peterson is one of the dozens of Copper Country residents who've been assisted by the Houghton Energy Efficiency Team, under the direction of Melissa Davis. In Peterson's case, HEET was able to facilitate four major energy-saving improvements to her home.

The first was winterization.

"There was a breeze in here all the time," Peterson says, sitting down for a chat in her kitchen. "But then Melissa came here with a group of high school kids."

Davis and a team of students from Horizons Alternative High School got to work insulating the rim joists on the north wall of Peterson's basement. HEET finished the job earlier this year, when an Americorps crew came to the Copper Country for a winterization blitz.

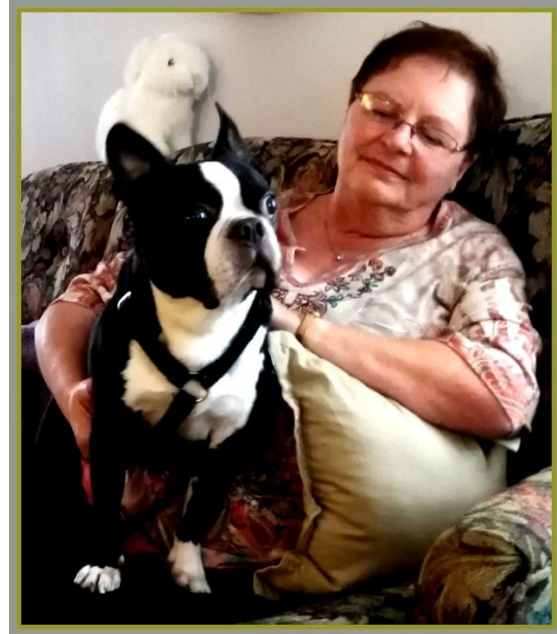
Now Peterson's kitchen is cozy and comfortable. It also has a new, energy-efficient refrigerator--energy-saver number two.

"When they were insulating the rim joists, Melissa asked if I wanted a new refrigerator," Peterson said. Even though the one she had was over 20 years old, she almost said no: "I thought for sure I'd have to pay \$100 or something, and I didn't have it." Nevertheless, the new, refrigerator arrived as promised, no strings attached.

It was provided by Efficiency United, which offers a variety of energy-saving programs to UPPCO and SEMCO customers. Some are targeted at income-qualified residents, like Peterson, who was forced to retire early from her job at the Michigan Tech Bookstore because of a chronic illness.

"Joann is on her own with her dog, Jake, and has been slowly upgrading her house, but her income is such that she can't handle many sudden, big expenses," Davis said. "We helped put her in touch with Efficiency United. People usually don't find these resources on their own."

Buying a new water heater would have been one of those sudden, big expenses, and Peterson's old water heater was fading fast. So, HEET steered Peterson toward another Efficiency United program, and energy-saver number three arrived in the form of a tankless, on-demand water heater.



Please Play with Your Food

As a small child I loved to watch my mother Virginia prepare food and cook. My father was often gone, laboring in the steel mills of Detroit, and by economic standards we were considered “working poor;” yet we did not want for food. What stands out in these fifty year-old memories is her deep sense of connection to the simple ingredients she had at hand. With decades of experience cooking for an extended family of first generation Polish immigrants, she was nothing short of amazing to watch in the kitchen. I pestered her with questions about what she was doing and why she did things a certain way.

We always shared whatever food we had with others; family, close and distant relatives, friends and neighbors, all were served equally at our table. This spirit of generosity, especially when it relates to food, is one of the cornerstone values of my Polish American heritage. In a real way it is what led to the creation of Ray’s Polish Fire Hot Sauce.

Virginia created an array of wonderful dishes, soups, roasts, casseroles, vegetable dishes, breads, muffins, pies and crepes, without relying upon recipe books, cooking shows or on line resources at her fingertips. She created as she cooked from a deep sense of connection with her ingredients. She seemed to be playing with her food all the time she cooked.

Reflecting on those memories I realize how fortunate I was not to have been told or scolded as many people are, “don’t play with your food!” This message may be intended by adults who want to impart a respect for food and the hard work that it takes to get food on the family table, but it is a negative and harmful message to give to children or to adults. I love to cook and eat, and sharing good homemade food with friends, family and new acquaintances alike is one the great joys in life for me.

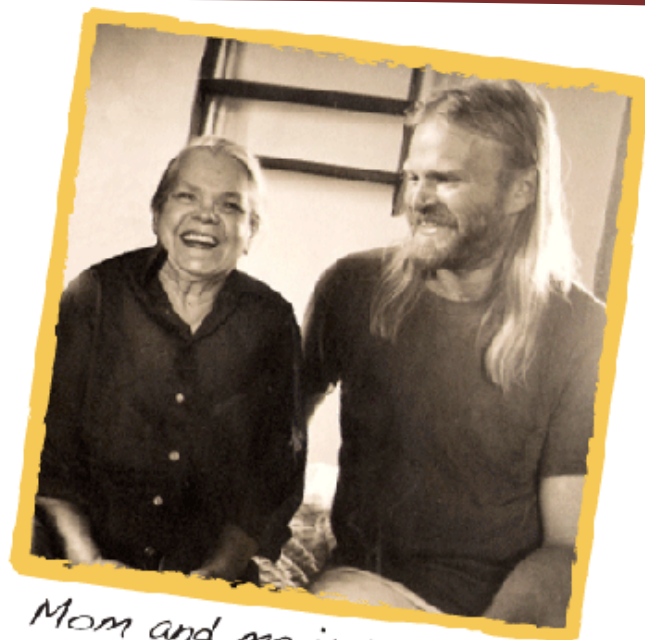
If you are hesitant to cook for yourself or others, I encourage you to start by abandoning the stale notion that your dishes have to look or be presented like anyone else’s dishes, especially those in recipe books or on videos. Pay no mind to the voice of either the internal or external “food police.”

How liberating and empowering it is to experiment in the kitchen and “play” with different ingredients. Like a child with finger paints, note the various textures, colors, shapes and unique qualities your ingredients possess.



Virginia Weglarz

"Over time, with practice and experimentation you will develop a special intimacy with some ingredients that you naturally connect with..."



Mom and me in 1985 *

aromas and flavors, allow yourself to explore cooking like an artist with a wide palate of colors and mediums. Over time, with practice and experimentation you will develop a special intimacy with some ingredients that you naturally connect with; use these more frequently and others perhaps not so much.

Polish food has many wonderful qualities but frankly it lacks the spices and wide range of flavors found in many ethnic traditions. It wasn't until I left home to attend college I was introduced to hot sauce and salsa's and began experimenting with my own creations in the kitchen.

I found my body and taste craved certain spices and flavors, and began incorporating them into sauces and dips and dishes. Garlic, cumin, ginger, cayenne, turmeric became mainstay spices in my cooking and tamari, shoyu and Ume plum vinegar were simply not part of my mother's repertoire. These became some of the cornerstones of the deeply flavorful and nutritious ingredients in Ray's Polish Fire Hot Sauce. Experiment in the kitchen, pay no mind to the food police and please play with your food.

-Ray

Ray and Viki Weglarz have been making and distributing a unique line of organic, GMO free hot sauce for over 20 years. Many of the ingredients are reported in health care literature to have immune system enhancing properties and cancer prevention qualities.





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*"Most hot sauces are hot
 but have a shallow taste,
 this stuff is deep!"*



((Shake
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-  Hand-crafted in small batches.
-  A special blend of five health-promoting spices.
-  No emulsifiers or thickeners.

www.PolishFire.com



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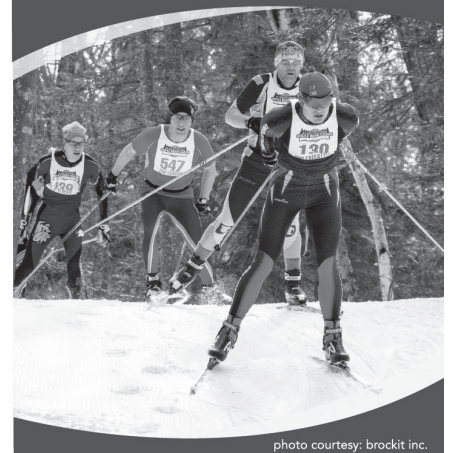


photo courtesy: brockit inc.