

UNICORN NEWS

SUMMER 2022

FREE - HELP YOURSELF

IT'S THE EVERYDAY JOYS

Unicorn co-op member Leah muses on our reason-for-being

People shop at Unicorn for all sorts of reasons, but our raison d'être is to be a wholefood grocery. Our first Prospectus (written in 1996) set out that we would sell "a broad wholefood product range of 300-500 lines at very competitive prices", sourced with respect. 26 years later we offer ten times as many lines - over 3,000! - but our top 300 sellers still make up most of our sales.

Sure, all the extras are nice and Unicorn has some great drinks, snacks and quick dinners - but providing what most of us eat, most of the time, is what we do best. Two-thirds of sales are basic cooking ingredients, and half

of this is fresh fruit and veg. The rest are commodities that we pack onsite - bags of pulses, grains, nuts, etc. - or other basics like oils, seasonings, flours or tinned beans.

The fact that all these wholefoods are sourced as affordably and responsibly as possible makes Unicorn impossible to beat for the weekly shop. When I shop for my family of five elsewhere, I realise how much we take for granted. The veg at Unicorn is fresh, packaging is minimal, organic is the (affordable!) default, and I don't have to check labels for weird unpronounceables.



When friends or family visit, I like to show off Unicorn but - like so much of Manchester! - its joys are everyday rather than showpieces. My American parents notice the little things - the carrots are the most delicious, the peanut butter has the best texture, the tinned tomatoes are the tastiest. Maybe these basics aren't sexy or shiny (okay the new shop is a bit!) but when they're good they make life a bit better everyday, and it adds up.

THE PRICE IS RIGHT:

Checked 28/6/22	UNICORN	ASDA	TESCO	SAINSBURY'S	WAITROSE	MORRISONS
Organic kidney beans (400g tin)	69p	90p (390g)	80p	80p (380g)	80p	90p
Oatly organic oat drink (1 litre)	1.39	1.80	1.80	1.30 (offer) 1.85 (normal)	1.48 (offer) 1.85 (normal)	1.80
Nairns fine oatcakes (218g)	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.10	1.00
Clipper decaff FT teabags (x40)	2.99	n/a	2.99	4.50 (offer) 5.00 (normal) (x80)	5.50 (x80)	n/a
Dr Karg 3 seed crackers (200g)	1.99	n/a	n/a	n/a	2.20	n/a
Aspalls organic cyder vinegar (500ml)	1.95	n/a	1.70 (350ml)	1.85 (350ml)	1.90 (350ml)	1.70 (350ml)
Organic linseed (500g)	1.85	n/a	n/a	2.00 (100g)	n/a	n/a
Organic porridge oats (1kg)	1.85	2.40	2.30	2.15 (750g)	2.40	1.25 (500g)
Organic sunflower seeds (500g)	2.19	n/a	1.50 (100g)	1.50 (100g)	n/a	n/a

HOW WE ARE RESPONDING TO RISING PRICES

We've all been hearing about the supermarkets expanding their "value" ranges. These reduced costs usually rely on lower quality produce, added sugar and additives, and squeezing already low-paid suppliers and growers.

These are things that we won't do.

Instead we are doubling down on our core practices: working ever more closely with our existing suppliers, going more direct to growers and manufacturers, and generally trying to use our time wisely in the shop. We are working very flipping hard to keep prices competitive and so far, that's happening.

Being a worker co-op puts us in a really good position to respond to the landscape - there are no shareholders knocking on our door for big returns! Instead our many minds can focus on providing good food at good prices, which has always been at the heart of what we do.

SOYA BEANS: NOT JUST FOR MILKING!

Co-op member Britta has recently discovered the joy of soy :)



Apart from their use in making tofu and milk, soya beans are one of the more neglected legumes. But they are one of the best; rich in protein, fibre, iron, calcium and even containing omega 3s and twelve other essential vitamins and minerals. Protein rich foods are perfect if you are menopausal, exercising a lot, or just want to watch your weight.

Soya beans have a delicious nutty flavour, and are really versatile; making a great substitute for chickpeas. Here are some recipe ideas, but easier still; next time you're making a stew or curry, just replace the protein source you usually use with soya beans, or follow a regular hummus recipe but use these instead. You can also roast them and add them to your homemade loaf of bread.

How to cook dried soya beans

Soak the beans overnight (about 8-12 hours), rinse them and then put the beans in a pan and cover with plenty of water. Once they boil, turn to a medium heat and simmer for about an hour. If you have a slow cooker cook for 6-8 hours on the highest setting (double check the slow cooker instructions as times may vary). If you have a pressure cooker then they cook in about 10 minutes.

I only make small batches at a time; about 250g will give you enough for a couple of salads and a snack.

Soya Bean salad

It's the perfect time for this, as the fresh ingredients are at the height of their season.

Cook about 100g of the beans as outlined above, then leave to cool. Toss with a cubed avocado, a handful of cherry plum tomatoes (halved) and ¼ cucumber sliced and quartered.

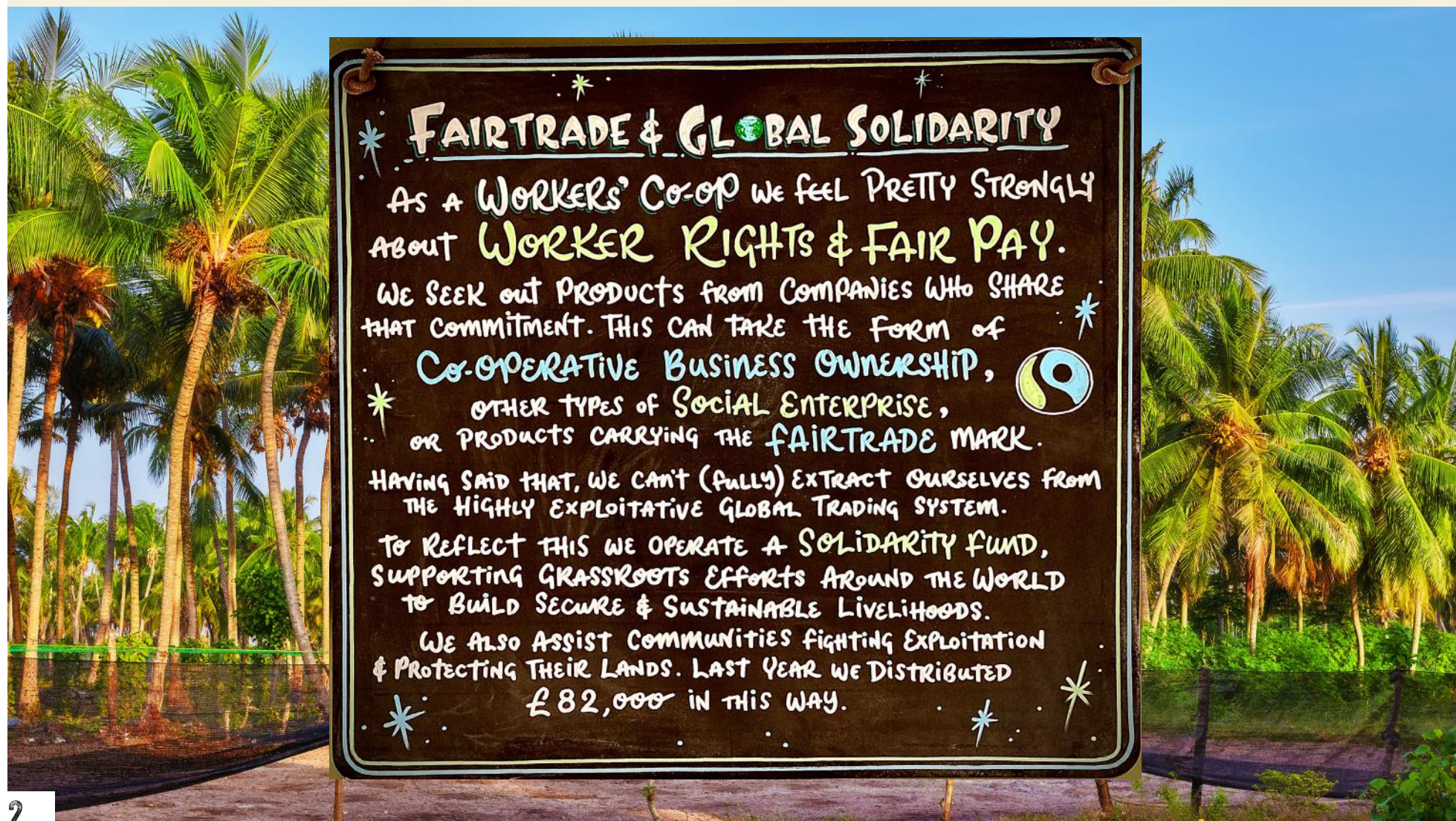
Dressing-wise, the ingredients are so tasty that a bit of oil, salt and pepper would probably do! But if you want to make a bit more effort, add a splash of lime juice or balsamic vinegar and if you like your dressing creamy, some tahini or almond butter.

Soya Bean snack

If you have any cooked beans left over, marinate them in a bit of soy sauce or tahini and add your favourite spice (I love smoked paprika) then put the beans on a baking tray and pop in the oven for 15 mins at 200 C, until they go slightly brown. You can eat them straight out of the oven or let them cool and add them to your lunch box.



If you are still a bit sceptical of soya beans, just try switching another bean you usually get in tins to the dried version and cook it yourself. You'll be amazed that the taste is better and so is the price.





A SMATTERING OF INSPIRING GOINGS-ON IN THE CO-OP WORLD, HERE AND ABROAD

WORKER CO-OP FEDERATION

We don't know exactly when worker cooperatives first started. The idea of working with others to meet your common needs is as old as the hills. But for us, there are definitely some key dates that come to mind when we think about worker co-ops as a movement.

1761 when the The Fenwick Weavers' Society was formed in Ayrshire.

1873 when the workers took over the Nutclough Mill in Hebden Bridge and formed the Fustian Society.

1956 when the Mondragon Co-operative, now the largest worker co-op in the world, was founded.

1996 when we became a worker co-op ourselves.

Or maybe it really starts now. In 2022 Unicorn, alongside many other worker cooperatives, decided to create our own federated body.

This new federated organisation made up, we hope, of the over 400 worker co-ops in the country, is looking to build and network and support the growth of worker co-ops and broad alliance of people and organisations "with an explicit focus on worker issues, worker-led organising, social solidarity, and economic social justice campaigns".

We believe worker ownership and democratic control leads to healthy workers, great workplaces and strong local businesses supporting their local communities. With all the issues we are facing at the moment, the time feels right to do this. We hope you are

interested in it too. Keep an eye out for more as we co-create our future Federation.

BE INSPIRED!

We're part of a global movement of worker-owned co-ops, helping people create decent jobs with a culture of equality and respect at work, where people benefit fairly from their own labour and take collective control of their working lives.

Celebrated Co-op: Co-operative Home Care Associates, New York

Founded 25 years ago as an employee-owned home care agency in the South Bronx, NY, Cooperative Home Care Associates is now the largest worker cooperative in the United States, made up of roughly 2,000 African American and Latina workers.



It has three goals:

1. To provide reliable, high quality home health care services for those who are elderly, chronically ill, or living with disabilities
2. To offer the highest possible salaries and benefits while building a profitable worker-owned company
3. To give workers opportunities to learn and grow as members of a healthcare team.

In a chronically undervalued sector, characterised by poor pay and poor status, CHCA is a beacon; owned and controlled by the care workers, with a corporate culture built around them. Their training is double the length demanded by statutory requirements, and covers active listening, nonjudgmental communication, collaborative problem-solving, and participative leadership as well as preventive health, bathing, transport, and meal preparation.

The future of care? The UK's Equal Care Co-op (featured in previous newsletters) thinks so, and there's now a similar model operating here in the NorthWest. Perhaps a sign of better things to come. We hope so!

PEOPLE SUPPORT CO-OP

Unicorn members help grow the co-op economy

In 2020, Abbie and Britta (both long-term members at Unicorn) took part in a course training co-operative workers to help develop other co-ops. They've both been involved in the wider movement for many years; whether representing, training or supporting other worker co-ops... very largely in their free time!



The course was developed for people who had developed skills and experience starting, managing and growing their own co-ops who wanted to help others. When it ended, along with fellow trainee Lorraine who'd worked in two Yorkshire co-ops, they decided to form a new enterprise to provide Governance & HR advice for co-ops.

Worker co-ops like Unicorn have radically different people management needs and organisational structures to conventional businesses, so when support is needed, traditional businesses advisors just aren't qualified. It's really only those who've been at the coalface themselves who can provide this!

So last year, People Support Co-op was born. They've already supported 14 worker and multi stakeholder co-ops and 6 community businesses, as well as 4 activist groups

Go to peoplesupport.coop for more!



FREEZE FRESH

It’s a bountiful time of year, with an abundance of UK fresh produce on the shelves. By freezing some seasonal produce at its peak you’ll have a ready supply of pre-prepped ingredients to throw into a soup, stew or smoothie, even in the deep, dark winter.

Freezing is also great for produce you only use a little of at a time but want to have around; celery’s a must-have for stews but Unicorn’s celery “trees” can be a bit overwhelming for a single person household!

Step 1: Wash your produce then prepare it as shown in the prep column below

Step 2: Blanch

Most vegetables (but not fruit) should be blanched - briefly cooked in boiling water - before freezing. This kills bacteria and stops the action of food-degrading enzymes, slows vitamin and mineral loss and also brightens up the colour. Freezing it after blanching ‘locks’ the vegetables in a pretty nutrient-rich state.

Having said that, if you plan on using the produce within a month or two, you can probably skip this step.

How to blanch:

Bring water to a boil in a large pot - enough to cover the veg. Add the vegetables, cover, return to a boil and cook. See suggested blanching time for different things in the table. Transfer the vegetables to a large bowl of very cold water to cool off (for about the same amount of time you blanched them for), then drain well and pat dry.

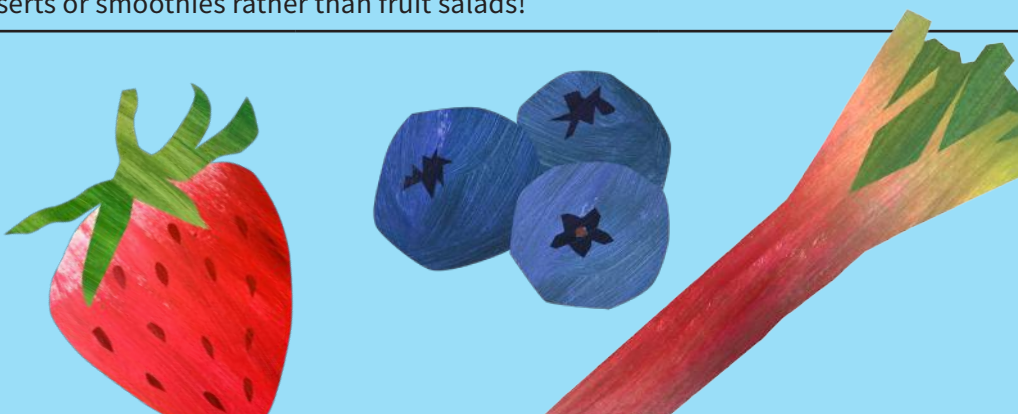


Step 3: Freeze

If you have time and space, you can first spread fruit or vegetables in a single layer on a large baking sheet and freeze til solid, before transferring to freezer bags. That way, the individual pieces don’t congeal into a single solid block and you can easily take out a bit at a time.

Or, more simply, just pack the amount you think you’ll use in one go into each freezer bag!

Unicorn’s own-brand product plastic bags are great for this - just rinse and dry them first. Try and squeeze as much air out of the bag as you can before sealing.

VEG	PREP	BLANCHING TIME	TO RE-HEAT (MICROWAVE)	TO RE-HEAT (STEAMING)
However you're using your veg (as a side or in a soup or stew) it's best to throw it straight in without thawing or reheating first; this'll keep its shape and texture more intact!				
ASPARAGUS	Trim woody ends	2-3 minutes	1-2 minutes	2-3 minutes
PEPPERS	Remove seeds; cut into 1/2-inch pieces	N/A	1-2 minutes	2-3 minutes
BROCCOLI & CAULIFLOWER	Cut into 1- to 1 1/2-inch florets	3 minutes	2-4 minutes	2-4 minutes
BRUSSELS SPROUTS	Remove outer leaves, trim stems. Halve small sprouts or quarter larger	2-3 minutes	2-4 minutes	4-6 minutes
CARROTS	Peel and cut into 1/4-inch slices or cubes	2 minutes	1-2 minutes	2-3 minutes
LEAFY GREENS: CHARD, KALE & SPINACH	Remove any woody stems and/or ribs; chop if desired	2-3 minutes (less for baby spinach)	1-2 minutes	2-3 minutes
GREEN BEANS	Trim stem ends	3 minutes	1-2 minutes	2-3 minutes
CELERY	Cut off leafy tops (use in stock or as a garnish) and cut into ½-inch chunks	2-3 minutes	1-2 minutes	2-3 minutes
COURGETTE & SUMMER SQUASH	Cut into 1/2-inch slices	2-3 minutes	1-2 minutes	2-3 minutes
FRUIT	PREP	NOT NEEDED		
Once frozen, fruit tends to lose its shape and texture, but its flavour and nutrition are fantastic. Just use for cooked desserts or smoothies rather than fruit salads!				
BLACKBERRIES, BLUEBERRIES & RASPBERRIES	Wash and pat dry			
NECTARINES, PEACHES & PLUMS	Remove stone; cut into sixths			
RHUBARB	Trim woody ends; cut into 1-inch pieces			
STRAWBERRIES	Remove the stem and hull. Cut large ones in half			

VEG NEWS

The direct relationships we have with our suppliers are a source of great pride to us on the veg team. The insight, knowledge and experience we gain through talking to the people growing our food is indispensable, and a huge part of what makes Unicorn's fruit and veg offer so unique.

At times like these however, these relationships become even more important. Soaring costs of fuel, seed, packaging and labour are affecting all of our suppliers, with some reporting increases of up to 40%. While these are not easy conversations to have, we appreciate hearing about the challenges first hand and getting creative in the ways we can offer support.

Where supermarkets are driving farmers down to pennies in the 'race to the bottom', we continue to pay our growers a fair price for their hard work and dedication. Luckily, our low operational costs and unique coop structure means we don't have to pass all of these costs on to our customers. The weekly price comparison board has had a really positive response and is a great way to demonstrate our tremendous value against the supermarkets. Affordability has, and always will be, of great importance to us.

Because we believe in the future of short supply chains, we've continued to invest a portion of our profits back into the sustainable food networks that supply us. Already this year we've invested £4000 from our growers fund to our local growers for improvement works on their farms.

But the support works in both directions too, where supermarkets have had headline-worthy gaps on their shelves, our range has not been affected at all. As we enter the peak of the UK growing season our only problem is finding space for all the incredible produce on the shop floor.

It's not just vegetables we're excited about at the moment. We recently introduced our return and reuse bag scheme to help combat our dependence on single-use plastic. As always we're more than happy to take fruit and veg loose at the till, but we recognise that for some lines this can be impractical. Now any of your old, clean unicorn plastic packaging can be deposited in the return station (just a turtle bag for now!) by the chillers for others to use. Such small steps might feel



like nothing more than a token gesture, but changes like these are so important in adjusting the way we shop and how we think about our waste.

We'd like to dedicate this veg news to all of our growers, without whom our shop simply wouldn't exist.

Strawberry Fields, Duncan Gielty, Farmstart, Libby Flintoff, Ward & Thompson, Glebelands and others have all been working tirelessly throughout this difficult period. It is with enormous pride that we may see all their ongoing hard work so perfectly reflected in the variety and quality of our current display.

VEG PRICE COMPARISON

green = organic, red = conventional
Prices checked 5/7/22

PRODUCT	UNICORN	ASDA	TESCO	SAINSBURY'S	WAITROSE	MORRISONS
BUNCHED BEETROOT / EACH	£1.69	£1.50	£1.80	£1.60	£2.00	£1.79
CARROTS / KG	£1.39	£1.40	£1.43	£1.73	£1.75	£1.48
CAVOLO NERO / 100G	59p	67p	75p	75p	83p	-
NEW POTATOES / KG	£1.59	£1.73	£1.40	£1.60	£4.27	£1.85
ONIONS / KG	99p	£1.60	£1.60	£1.73	£1.87	£1.78
CHERRY VINE TOMATOES / KG	£7.99	£8.00	£9.75	£9.00	£8.89	£7.95
COURGETTES / KG	£2.99	£2.00	£3.52	£6.67	£7.34	£4.48

DELI EVOLUTION: AND RETURN OF THE SOUP!

You'll notice the deli has gone through a few changes over recent months...

From being fully serve-over up to 2020, we moved to all pre-packed, self-serve products when the pandemic hit. We wanted to minimise 'open' food handling and in those difficult days we also had to reallocate staff so we could continue to meet our core mission as an ingredients shop. It was a sad time for us; we'd worked hard to encourage you all to bring your own tubs and reusable bags for all the unpackaged products, and we loved the customer contact the deli gave us.



But once we'd made those changes, for lots of different reasons, we weren't sure we wanted to go back to exactly how things were. The deli was an incredibly labour-intensive part of the business; so popular we couldn't really fit the necessary staff behind it to keep up with demand. It could also be quite a stressful and physically demanding place to work. All that bending over the counter put some serious strain on our backs!

Unlike a conventional supermarket where a remote management team would have decided how to proceed (largely on the basis of what was most profitable?) Unicorn is a "Do-ocracy" - the people who do the work make the decisions. So our deli team has taken some time to consider the options; aiming to satisfy customer wishes whilst also taking into account worker well-being and business needs.

They have decided to pivot towards unpackaged products that you can help yourselves to - minimising labour and thus keeping prices down, whilst allowing you to choose exactly what you want and bring your own packaging, if you'd like to.

Best of all, our hot soup is coming back!! We'll provide takeaway cups but as before, you are more than welcome to bring your own. Increasing the amount of soup we make in-house means we can take even better advantage of seasonal veg gluts; making our veg buyers (and growers!) super happy.



We hope this evolution of the deli will tick plenty of boxes - providing the tasty snacks and treats you love while minimising handling (so we can keep prices down) and unnecessary packaging. Let us know what you think.



HODMEDODS FERMENTED PASTES A MUST-HAVE TOOL IN THE KEEN COOK'S FRIDGE!



Overlooked by the less curious, these simple ingredients are a must for flavour-seekers.

The **Fava Bean Paste** is made from fermenting British-grown fava (broad) beans, very much in the same way that soybeans are treated in the production of miso. It can then be used instead of miso or soy sauce to add a salty, umami depth of flavour. It transforms any cooked dish into a hearty, rich, satisfying delight.

Dissolve one teaspoon of the paste in a little water and add towards the end of cooking to

soups, stews, marinades, sauces and dips. Try it and add a little more to taste.

A staff favourite is adding it to a tomatoey pasta sauce or goulash.

The **Fermented Naked Barkey** is different in texture, with the whole barley grain being the star of the show, full of natural sweetness and roastiness. You can mix it with olive oil and use in a salad dressing for added structure and crunchiness.

These ferments are a must try, no soup or stew will ever taste the same!



BLACK HISTORY MATTERS

Nahella Ashraf of 'Manchester Stand Up To Racism' on drawing inspiration from past struggles to build the unity and solidarity needed to fight racism today.

“

In Greater Manchester we have a proud history of helping those fleeing persecution.



We have published a book 'Black History Matter - Made in Manchester'. It takes a brief look at the lives and contributions of just some of the notable Black people who have come from Manchester or made the north-west their home, remembering that these are just a handful from amongst the

multitude of Black folks that have helped to build the region over the years.

Read about Ramila Patel's fight against the racist National Front. How Manjeet Kaur and Anwar Ditta fought the Home Office and won their claims for asylum. The campaign led by the boxer Len Johnson to break the colour bar in pubs in Manchester.

With the Nationality & Borders Act now law - all but ending the right to legally claim asylum in Britain and threatening the citizenship rights of 6 million people - and the horrendous plans for the 'offshoring' of asylum seekers to Rwanda, the government is clearly determined to use scapegoating and racism on an unprecedented scale.

The attacks on the rights of refugees and migrants is all about dividing and ruling ordinary people. We can't allow our communities, workplaces and campuses to be divided in the face of the biggest attack on our standard of living for generations - refugees are not to blame for cuts and austerity!

To oppose their plans we draw inspiration from past struggles against racism in order



to build the unity and solidarity needed against racism today. ”

Nahella Ashraf

You can pick up a copy of 'Black History Matters - Made in Manchester' at Unicorn.

MASSAGING KALE

As you have probably noticed already, we are huge fans of this humble, nutritious brassica. Being one of the most frost hardy crops around, we are able to enjoy UK-grown kale from early summer all the way through autumn and winter too, with our European suppliers able to plug the gaps in spring while the UK crops get growing.

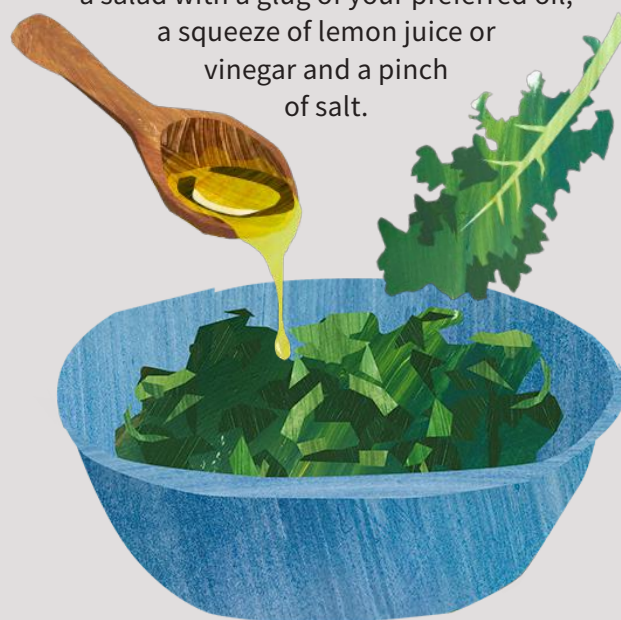
Whilst the most commonly grown and recognisable variety is curly green kale, look out for thick plumes of cavolo nero (Italian black kale), curly red kale and colourful winter wonderland mixes.

Whilst some varieties are perfectly suited to eating raw such as the sweet and more delicate leafed Red Russian kale, others are a little more tough and fibrous when eaten raw in their natural state.

There is a simple and wonderful little trick however which helps to tenderise even the thickest, curliest varieties, making kale a wonderful base for summer or winter salads.

First, tear or chop away the leaves from the stems. Whilst these are great to chuck into a soup, stir fry or pesto, you probably wouldn't want to eat these raw.

Give the leaves a quick rinse and pop them into a bowl. Dress the leaves like you would a salad with a glug of your preferred oil, a squeeze of lemon juice or vinegar and a pinch of salt.



Next we massage! Rub the leaves between your fingers and thumbs until you feel the leaves start to soften, become shiny and vibrant, and are just starting to wilt. The trick is not to over massage as you will lose too much of the shape and texture - a couple of minutes max. A good way to test is just to taste the leaves as you do it so you know you have reached your preferred texture and consistency. This method works best on large and tougher leaves of kale as tender, young ones do not really need to be massaged or tenderised to be eaten raw.

Once you have done that feel free to enjoy as is or to use as the base for your salad.

Head to our website for our "massaged" Kale Caesar Salad recipe and lots of other recipes and ideas for using kale.

unicorn-grocery.coop/recipe/kale-caesar-salad

SPICE IS NICE



Unicorn member Ali on seven of our spices you might not be using.... but should be!



Mace

Mace is a yellowish-brown spice derived from the nutmeg tree. Available in ground form and as dried “blades,” it is commonly found in spice blends as well as baked goods.

Mace is the red lacy coating (called the aril) that encases the nutmeg seed. It can be used as a substitute for nutmeg and pairs well with the same things, although it has a spicier, more intense flavour. Add a pinch to your Bechamel sauce or sprinkle on your morning porridge. You could also spice up the Beany Brownie recipe on our website by adding $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp mace, $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp ground allspice and 1 tsp cinnamon!

Allspice

Allspice is made from the dried berries of one plant - *Pimenta dioica* - not several, as its name might suggest. It has a sweet, warm aroma and the flavour brings to mind a combination of cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, and pepper (the dried berries also look like peppercorns).

The allspice tree is native to Jamaica and is commonly used in the Caribbean - it's the main flavour in jerk seasoning - earning it the nickname Jamaica pepper. It can be used whole in pickling vinegar or mulled cider (in which case it's pretty intense), or grind it in a coffee grinder to reduce the intensity and add to cakes and desserts like pumpkin pie, spice cakes and gingerbread.

Pickling Spice

Unicorn's Pickling Spice is a mix of coriander, brown mustard seeds, yellow mustard seeds, cloves, crushed chilli, black peppercorns, bay leaves, juniper berries and ginger.

It makes pickling your favourite veg super easy - just add a teaspoonful to some white wine vinegar, bring to the boil and pour over sliced red onions, carrots or radishes (or whatever you like!) If you don't like your

pickles too acidic, try mixing a little white wine to the vinegar to dilute it.

If you want a full how-to (especially if you want to properly ‘preserve’ the veg), search “pickles” on our website Cook It Up page.

Mixed Peppercorns

Black pepper, which is native to India, is probably the most commonly used spice in the UK. But for the culinary curious, it's worth mixing it up a bit!

White, green, red and black peppercorns are all from the same plant; they're just harvested at different stages, or peeled, in the case of white pepper. They all taste a little different - green is more aromatic for example, while white is less pungent. We also add a few Allspice berries to our mix. The overall blend, one source describes, is “musky, spicy, astringent, hot, fresh, piney, and fruity with hints of berry”.



We're not sure most of us would pick up all those tastes(!) but it certainly does give a better depth of flavour than black pepper on its own. Pop it in your peppermill & see what you think.

Sumac

Sumac is made from the dried and ground berries of the wild sumac flower. It has a tangy flavour similar to lemon juice, and in fact was used in Roman kitchens as a source of acidity before lemons were available.

This fragrant spice is a vibrant red colour and is used to brighten up the spice mix Za'atar. Try using it in salads instead of lemon juice, or alongside lemon and tamarind to create a tangy flavour profile. It also blends really well with other spices like allspice, chilli, thyme and cumin. But the very easiest way to try it is by sprinkling it on top of our houmous!

Black Cardamom

Black cardamom comes from a different plant to green, and whereas green cardamom

gives dishes quite a subtle, delicate flavour, black cardamom packs more of a punch. It is traditionally dried over open flames, and holds its own place in the spice world because of its distinctive smokey flavour.

Native to India, it is used in savoury dishes and curries. It pairs well with cauliflower, lentils, potatoes and red vegetables. The pod should be removed before serving to avoid bitterness (or you can remove the seeds from the pods and grind them up). Unlike green cardamom, which is a popular flavour in Scandinavian cakes, the black variety of this spice is rarely used in sweet dishes due to its strong smokey and menthol flavours.

Try adding it to a dahl like the fava bean dahl on our website Cook It Up page.

Asafoetida

Asafoetida is a strong spice with a pungent smell, often used in Indian cooking. The aroma can be off putting at first, but it's incredibly useful for people who can't eat onions or garlic because it adds a very similar depth and ‘savouriness’ to food. It goes especially well with dishes that involve pulses, potato or cauliflower.

Just add a pinch alongside your other ingredients in an Indian-inspired soup, dahl, stew or curry. Don't worry if you used a bit too much, longer cooking mellows it! Asafoetida works best if you fry it for 5-10 seconds before adding it to your other ingredients.



MANCHESTER'S ACTIVIST MUSEUM

Our own People's History Museum has been shortlisted for Art Fund Museum of the Year - the largest museum prize in the world. They tell us how their work giving space to unheard voices makes them so much more than a museum.



Making its home in central Manchester is People's History Museum (PHM), the national museum of democracy; it's where you'll discover the stories of those who have championed for rights, equality and representation and where causes continue to be fought for. Not just a museum for telling stories, PHM actively works with communities helping people to share their experiences, explore issues such as protest, migration and disabled people's rights and join them in their campaigns as an activist museum.

One of the exhibitions currently showing is the 2022 Banner Exhibition – some of the hundreds of historic and contemporary banners we hold. Spanning across two galleries, in amongst them you'll find banners that will strike a chord with Unicorn fans, not least the beautifully stitched Bermondsey Men's Co-operative Guild Comradeship banner from around 1930. The symbols of the wheat sheaf and lighted torch are strongly associated with the cooperative movement, standing for the benefits of enlightenment and togetherness. Another to look out for (and with its roots a little closer to home) is the Ancient Order of the Foresters, Stockport Court banner. It's one of the earliest examples of a banner that represents land workers as part of a friendly society and carries the words, 'unitas benevolentia et concordia', which translate 'unity, benevolence and concord'.

One way of checking out the full banner exhibition at PHM, and having some fun

looking at the different designs, is to participate in a game of Banner Bingo. Designed to be Family Friendly you can pick up your free playing card from the Info Desk when you arrive.

To complete your time at PHM a visit to the museum's café is a must where the flag is flying high for the food issues that we care about. Open Kitchen is led by a sustainable, ethical, locally sourced approach and the interception of food that would otherwise go to waste – it is also Family Friendly with

dedicated menus for younger visitors and serves incredibly tasty food!

People's History Museum is open Wednesday to Sunday from 10am to 4pm during term time and seven days a week during school holidays (check the website in advance: phm.org.uk). Entry is free with a suggested donation of £5.

LEFT BOOK CLUB READING GROUP

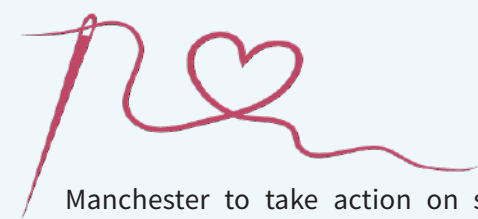
Join PHM for its brand new monthly reading group inspired by the radical writing published by the Left Book Club and organised by PHM shop. A new title will be released each month, with its themes and ideas forming the topics for discussion.

Upcoming dates are Saturday 9 July and Saturday 6 August (1:30pm to 3:00pm). For more information head to phm.org.uk.



UPCYCLED

We have been working with Stitched Up (a not-for-profit Community Benefit Society inspiring communities across Greater



Manchester to take action on sustainable fashion) to make some useful products out of material we no longer need. They have done us proud!

We have a small but beautiful upcycled range including; peg bags made from broken deposit scheme bags, cloths made from old staff workware and sturdy bags made from old vinyl signage and redundant awnings.

Stitched Up offers a whole host of activities the community can get involved in including workshops and volunteering where you can develop essential skills to mend and make some wonderful things. They also get out and about doing talks, clothes swaps and generally inspiring others to make our fashion system less of a 'stitch up' for the people and planet. stitchedup.coop

LIFE GIVING SEEDS

Co-op Member Stu shares his thoughts



Seeds give life - they are crucial to the reproduction of plants that we need for food and we all too often take them for granted.

Our ancestors all over the world have been saving seeds for 1000's of years, picking seeds from the best crops or those with the desired traits they are looking for to select and improve their crops, resulting in the great variety of edible plants we have available to us today.

At Unicorn we understand the importance of seed and so invested and became a member of the Seed Co-operative to support their work in producing organic, open pollinated seed in the UK, seed which is available to buy in our shop.

A threat to our seeds and their diversity

As part of the UK government's drive to rip up EU legislation, they announced in September 2021 plans to deregulate gene edited crops.

A little on GMOs and GE

Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) have had DNA artificially added, removed or changed in the lab rather than changes made through sexual reproduction. Changing one gene can have an impact on the way that others are expressed and the GMO process itself can cause unexpected changes within a crop. New Gene Editing (GE) techniques are being promoted as being more precise, but the truth is scientists still don't know enough about the knock on effects within the genes of a plant from altering part of the genome.

Two traits dominate GMOs worldwide: Herbicide resisters (engineered to survive spraying with weed killers) and insecticide producers (engineered to produce their

own insecticide). However, as weeds and insects evolve tolerance to these chemicals, farmers must use ever more, in a chemical arms race that harms people, plants and the environment.

Deregulation Disaster

In the past, GMO crops have not been grown commercially in the UK. But in Sept 2021 the Government announced plans to deregulate gene editing in England. This ignores 86% of citizens who responded to DEFRA's public consultation, saying GE should be regulated as GMOs. Instead, they have:

1. Amended the Environmental Protection Act (1990) creating a regulatory exemption for field trials of GMOs that "could have occurred naturally" or could have been created through traditional breeding. This means anyone can essentially self-certify that their GMOs are natural/ traditional and will no longer need to seek permission to conduct a trial or to plant an experimental GMO crop. (These definitions are hypothetical and considered an unscientific basis for regulation by a number of learned organisations.)
2. Introduced the Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill to deregulate all forms of GM plants and foods, amending legal definitions and removing safeguards such as environmental and food safety risk assessments and labelling of all GMO foods. The Bill was given its first reading in the House of Commons recently and the government seems set to try to rush it through into law by the end of the year.

What is at risk?

Organic and agroecological farming is rooted in the integrity of the living organism and the connections between soil, plant, animal, farm and community. Deregulation of GMOs undermines this effort, as contamination is impossible to mitigate, especially without transparency and labelling. GMOs are a threat to seed saving traditions, e.g. in Mexico where GMO corn has contaminated some of the world's oldest varieties of maize, farmers and food producers who choose not to grow GMOs must be protected.



The Genetic Technology Bill only applies to England. The devolved nations of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland have made the decision to continue with a precautionary approach to GM, in line with previous EU legislation. Deregulation in England means disruption for the food chain within the UK; friction between the nations as well as potential disruptions to trade with the EU.

What can you do?

Learn more: beyond-gm.org & gmfreeze.org

Write to your MP in order to keep this issue on Parliament's agenda and show that UK citizens are not willing to allow government to disregard either them or the evidence of the harm that GMO technologies pose.



UNICORN'S WEDNESDAY BREAD...

...Comes by bike! From the amazing folk at Deansgate's **Holy Grain Sourdough Bakery**

FROM WONKY VEG TO FRESH & FROZEN FEASTS

We are always working hard in our upstairs kitchen to bring fresh, delicious and wholesome ready made food to the shop shelves for you to enjoy.

Unicorn is primarily and unapologetically a shop for wholesome and good value, ethically traded foods and as such, the now-ubiquitous 'food-to-go' market has never been our main focus. Especially in these unusual times, where incomes are squeezed and prices are rising, keeping a good balance between commercial and value considerations is trickier - but more important than ever.

We strive to provide a good range of competitively priced and wholesome pre-cooked dishes, and now we have the extra freezer space that includes frozen meals. We are very proud of our frozen range and have had great feedback. Unlike many



supermarket equivalents, our meals are made with the best quality ingredients and no nasty extras.

Having the capacity to make frozen food extends our ability to limit waste - and takes a bit of pressure off our veg buyers too. If we end up with more of a vegetable than we can sell; if we have produce that is ripening too fast, or is a bit wonky or weird, then we take it upstairs and turn it into soup (or salad or curry or granola pots!). As cooks, we love the challenge of finding creative and delicious ways to use any seasonal glut, and it is very satisfying to use veg that otherwise may

have been wasted. Plus it brings an element of creativity for the kitchen team that can be lacking when we make our standardised staples. We all love making dhal but they say a change is as good as a holiday!

For quick, flavourful and wholesome meals when you're in a rush, find our delicious Puttanesca pasta sauce and Unicorn Kitchen curry sauce in the fridge where the houmous lives. Simply stir the Puttanesca sauce through cooked pasta and heat gently, adding some steamed green veg on the side, or create a moreish curry by frying cubes of tofu and veg of your choice before adding the curry sauce - serve with rice and maybe a spicy snack from our new self serve fridge in the deli area!

We'd love to hear what you think of our new frozen range and if you have any ideas of other frozen meals you'd like to see!



MASSAMAN CURRY
available in the freezer



FENNEL BARLEY RISOTTO
available in the freezer

UNPACKED A COUPLE OF THINGS TO HELP YOU SAVE ON PACKAGING...

Plastic bag reuse

We've been encouraging you to bring your veg loose to the till for many years now, but we know that's not always practical, especially for loose leafy greens. So we now have a little plastic bag reuse station in the veg area.

Bring in your old, clean (and dry!) Unicorn plastic bags - the ones we use for our own-brand pulses, grains, nuts and dried fruits, so that you and other customers can use them for loose produce as you shop.

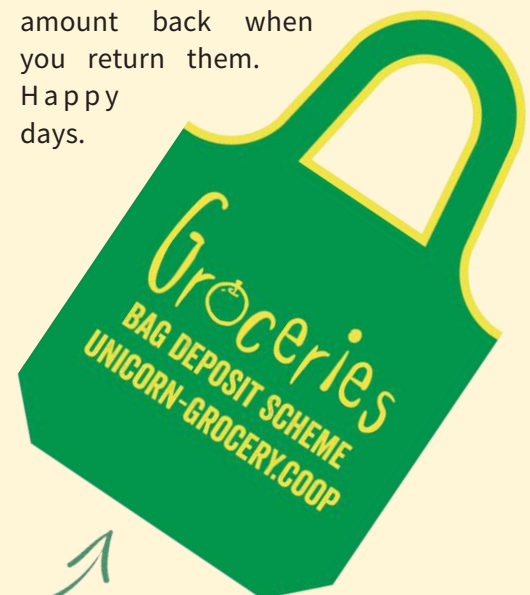
When you get things home, some veg is best kept in plastic (or a lidded box) to keep them fresh and moist; including leafy greens, sprouts, french beans, radishes, spring onions, broccoli and cauliflowers. See the 'Looking after your fruit & veg' guide on our website for more on this.



Deposit bags

Reusable shopping bags are ace, but the environmental impact is huge if you have to keep buying new ones all the time. We've all got a 'bag of bags' at home!

So we offer a 'deposit bag' - shopping bags (made from recycled plastic bottles) that you can rent from us if you have loads at home but forgot to bring them. They're £1.85 but you get the whole amount back when you return them. Happy days.



REKINDLE: THE SCHOOL YOU WISH YOU'D ATTENDED



It's been amazing to see this project develop from a vision to a reality. HUGE congratulations to founder Ruth Ibegbuna, who, having taught in Moss Side and elsewhere, left the teaching profession after reaching a senior management position and "feeling utterly frustrated at the lack of creativity and innovation afforded to teachers".

Having already founded RECLAIM; a youth social action and leadership charity, and winning awards including Peace Activist of the Year and Manchester Woman of the Year, Ruth has gone on to start up Rekindle. Open to all teens from working-class communities, Rekindle has echoes of the 70s Black supplementary school movement (when Black communities set up weekend schools in response to racism within the mainstream school system). They tell us what they're all about...

Rekindle is a unique supplementary school in South Manchester. Opening from 4-8 pm on weekdays and on Saturday mornings; the school provides a soulful safe space for working-class young people aged 12-15 to learn and grow together. Rekindle aims to help pupils fall in love with learning and has been developed through the dedication and lived experience of 8 powerful young pioneers, aged 17 to 25.

We're focused on critical thinking, change-making, creativity and cultural education. We also have a SNAP framework that ensures that everything we do is through the prism of:

Support – Young People will have bespoke academic support from University students

Nourish – Young people from low income backgrounds will receive a free, nutritious evening meal each day

Achieve – Young people & parents will champion personal achievement, develop a culture of cooperation & celebrate group successes

Protect – Young people will benefit from developing healthy and supportive



REKINDLE FOUNDER RUTH TEACHING A CLASS

relationships with positive adults in their community to safeguard physical and mental health

Rekindle encourages young people to develop their self-confidence and recognise they have every right to soar. Rekindle

currently uses space in Manchester Museum, but will move to its forever home in St Mary's Courtyard in Hulme in September.

We're really hoping we will be able to have some of Rekindle's students visit the shop and learn about the co-op model.

LIKE WHAT WE DO?

We love our shop! And we want other people to create similar ones. So back in 2010 we wrote a free guide to our business model - everything from what we sell & how we sell it to how we manage and govern the business. It's been used by many fledgling co-ops, and we've recently given it a big update - we hope this'll make it more useful than ever. Search [grow a grocery](#) on our website.

