



August 2022

# Good Thymes

DNF CO-OP'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER





Are you familiar with Private Equity firms? Most folks I talk to have a vague idea what they're about. Truthfully, I'm not sure I fully understand them but they are playing a bigger and bigger role in our economy.

We generally understand companies buying other companies. At the mega-levels, this is often cringe worthy. There are many reasons that a company may want to expand but it generally comes down to how it effects their bottom line (profitability). When Coca-Cola bought companies such as Odwalla Juices, Zico Coconut Water and Honest Tea, they were trying to get into the "natural" channel. What better way than to just purchase existing companies and gain credibility that way. I mention these three companies because Coca-Cola has now discontinued them mostly because they did not generate enough dollars but also they were not "scalable": it was difficult to grow them to fit into their world marketing plans.

They didn't try to sell those companies. They just discontinued them and absorbed the assets because it's easier. These were viable companies that were growing before Coke bought them and now they are no more.

But it's understandable what these giants are trying to do. Although there are exceptions, a company like Coke doesn't buy an oil company or an auto manufacturer. They generally "stay in their lane".

One exception may be Mars. This is a private (and often secretive) company mostly known for making candy. What many people don't realize is that they also own about 60 percent of the pet food market. Brands such as Pedigree, Nutro, Whiskas and Iams are owned by Mars as well as about 36 other brands. But wait – there's more! They also have been buying up veterinary services such as Banfield Pet Hospitals and others. A candy company that dominates the pet world.

Are you familiar with Tasty Bites and Seeds of Change? Mars owns them. Seeds of Change was started in 1989 outside of Silver City in New Mexico. A few years later they moved their offices and research farm closer to Santa Fe. That organic farm had thousands of different plants on land that the Tewa people farmed for hundreds of years. Mars bought the company, closed the farm and moved operations to L.A. Hey – it's just business, as they say.

And as I said, there are many reasons that one company may want to buy another one. Sometimes it's just to get the assets and technology without really wanting the underlying company. Our tech companies such as Microsoft, Google, Facebook and Apple are notorious for doing this.

Even our little Co-op has been looking at buying some small companies that can enhance our product lines and reach. Inherently, there is nothing wrong with this but it's unlikely we'll buy a gas station – or would we? In England, the huge food Co-op there needed to boost their struggling bottom line and invested in energy companies. A tenuous consumer connection can be made with food and energy businesses so there's that.

Private Equity companies are a bit different but often appear (and often function) as mega-companies such as Coke and Mars. Essentially, they are investment firms that buy companies, generally private companies but sometimes a controlling interest in companies on the Stock Exchange. They then often run the company.

There is nothing really wrong with that and there are good Private Equity Companies that may invest in green businesses and try to better the world. Unfortunately, they may not be the norm.

I don't really understand the mechanisms at play but there are ways for Private Equity companies to buy a company, saddle it with debt, pull the profits and eventually force the company into bankruptcy while still reaping millions. Toys R Us is probably the most famous of these situations but is representative of many more failures purposely generated by Private Equity firms.

Have you heard of the Private Equity fund, Cerberus? They appear to be one of the firms that actually care about the health of the companies they buy – although that is not fully clear. They are important to us because through some amazing wheeling's and dealings they put back together the fractured Albertsons enterprise and then bought Safeway to become the 3rd largest grocery chain in this country.

That's good, right? It has allowed them to compete significantly with the 2nd largest grocery chain, Kroger (under many names: City Market in our neck of the woods). But unlike Kroger who are mainly interested in groceries, Albertsons is just one part of Cerberus.

If you watch Cerberus buy and sell companies, your head begins to spin. Munitions have been a large part of their portfolio including Bushmaster and Remington. Interestingly, they came under pressure from one of their investors, the California State Teacher's Pension Plan to sell these off after the Sandy Hook shootings. They "tried" but couldn't find a buyer. They did reject a billion dollars offer though.

Cerberus also has holding in Pharmaceuticals, Paper goods, Aviation, Real estate, Transportation, Automotive, Financial services and Entertainment. There is no "lane" for them to stay in.

I've wondered what would happen if some Private Equity firm targeted the Co-ops. Would our structure prevent a buy-out? Generally, there isn't any profit in the Co-ops nor valuable assets to sell off so our sector is probably safe.

Then I think, "Could we become a Private Equity firm?" What if we attracted green investors and we managed the capital by buying and running alternative companies. I wonder how much Mars would want for Seeds of Change? Just a thought, right?



# co+op deals®

AUG 17 - AUG 30, 2022

## naturally fizzy

Keep your fridge full of refreshing kombucha for a nice, cool beverage anytime of day. GT's Gingerade is made from fresh-pressed ginger and is on sale at the co-op!



**2/\$5**

GT's  
Organic Kombucha

16 fl. oz., selected varieties



**2/\$5**

Back To Nature  
Crackers  
4-8.5 oz., selected  
varieties



**2/\$6**

Annie's  
Pizza Poppers  
6.8 oz., selected  
varieties



**2/\$6**

Equal Exchange  
Organic  
Chocolate Bars  
2.8-3.5 oz., selected  
varieties



**2/\$6**

Que Pasa  
Organic Tortilla  
Chips  
11 oz., selected varieties



**2/\$6**

Van's  
Waffles  
8-9 oz., selected  
varieties



**6.49**

Nature's Path  
Organic Cereal  
22.9-25.6 oz., selected  
varieties

End-of-summer savings are at the co-op.

Stay refreshed on hot days.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE CO-OP DEALS!

# MEET JORDAN

Jordan, Front MOD, has been at the Co-op since July 2020.

Let's meet Jordo:



1. Where are you from?
  - a. Arizona
2. How did you end up in Durango?
  - a. This is where my family moved to when I was fresh out of high-school.
3. When not working at DNF, how do you spend your time?
  - a. Playing music & playing with my two wonderful pups.
4. What is one thing that might surprise shoppers about you?
  - a. I love four-wheeling in my Jeep and gaming with friends.
5. Why is supporting your local food Co-op important to you?
  - a. I love supporting our local farmers!
6. What is one of your favorite things about working at the co-op?
  - a. The people and food!
7. What is something you are excited to bring to the Co-op?
  - a. To pass my love & enjoyment for local and organic foods onto the community.
8. What are your three favorite products currently being sold at DNF?
  - a. (1) Ham & Microgreens Grab n' Go Sandwich , (2) Talenti Gelato and (3) Bakerly Hand Braided Brioche Loafs
9. How would you describe your diet – vegetarian, carnivore, etc.?
  - a. Forever Expanding & Multi-cultural
10. Share your favorite meal with us.
  - a. A yummy Chicken & Shrimp Stir-fry.



## RECIPE 1 - COLORADO DEPART OF AGRICULTURE

## RECIPE 2 - CO-OP, WELCOME TO THE TABLE

### HAWAIIAN STYLE STREET WITH COLORADO SWEET CORN



#### INGREDIENTS

- 6 Corn, Colorado Sweet Corn, Shucked, Soaked
- 1-2 tsp Sea Salt
- 1 cup Pineapple Juice
- 2 Tbsp Cilantro, Chopped
- 1/4 cup Fire Honey or Colorado Honey
- 1/2 cup Dark Brown Sugar
- Tiki Tiki seasoning (Island Style BBQ rub)

#### Preparation

1. Soak shucked corn in water 10 minutes prior to grilling
2. For the corn glaze - mix the Pineapple juice, Tiki Tiki seasoning, Fire Honey/Colorado Honey together in a basting pot and reduce on the grill.
3. Preheat gas grill, pellet grill or charcoal grill to 500 degrees. Place the soaked corn on the frill, close the lid, and let cook for 5 minutes. Open the lid and rotate the corn 180 degrees to the next side.
4. Baste the top side of the corn. Continue this process until all side have been roasted/grilled/basted.
5. Garnish with basting liquid & chopped cilantro

### GODDESS BOWL



#### INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup dry Quinoa or Bulgur
- 1 1/2 cups water
- 1/4 cup Tahini
- 1 Tbs Cider Vinegar
- 1 Tbs Sriracha Sauce
- 1 Tbs Tamari Sauce
- 1 Tbs Honey
- 1/2 cup Raw Unsalted Pumpkin Seeds
- 1 bunch Tuscan Kale, thinly sliced
- 2 Large Carrots, shredded
- 2 Medium Avocados, halved & pitted

#### Preparation

1. Cook the quinoa or bulgur. in a small pot, bring 1 1/2 cups water to a boil, then add the grain. Return to a boil, and if using quinoa, reduce the heat to low and cook for 14 minutes, covered. for bulgur, bring to a boil for 1 minutes, then cover and let stand for 15 minutes. Fluff the finished grain with a fork.
2. While the grain cooks, place the tahini, cider vinegar, 1 Tbs each tamari & honey, Sriracha sauce and water in a small bowl and stir with a fork until smooth. Add a bit more water if the dressing is too thick
3. Place the pumpkin seeds in a small saute pan and swirl over med-high heat. When they begin to pop and become fragrant, stir in the tamari. the tamari will coat the seeds and the pan will be dry. Transfer to a bowl to cool.
4. Place a quarter of the cooked grains in each of the four low, wide bowl. Arrange the raw kale & carrots on top of the grains, then slice the avocado halves in the skin and carefully scoop them out with a spoon. Top with sauce and pumpkin seeds.

# MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD



ELISE BOULANGER  
BOARD MEMBER

Hello Durango Natural Foods members, employees, lovers, and beyond!

I hope the summer heat hasn't been getting the best of you! I have been spending every moment I can at the river, and have been loving creating fresh meals with the magnificent local summer produce from our store. The arugula from Fields to Plate, shiitake mushrooms from Aztec, and those incredible Palisade peaches have really been rocking my world.

My name is Elise Boulanger and I'm one of your new Board members taking on the role of Secretary. And speaking of produce, many of you have probably seen my face a time or two when I hunkered down in the back of the store whispering to veggies and fruits. I used to spend my time at DNF meticulously caring for and frantically restocking thousands of living products. One of my favorite parts of the job was setting out samples (pre-masks and sanitizer) of plums, pears, apples, and citrus for shoppers.

So far, one of my favorite parts of the DNF Board is being a part of the Feasibility Committee, where we discuss the vision for the store in harmonization with the roles we play in the community. I feel blessed to have a hand in decisions that drive success. But mostly, the success and growth is thanks to our employees that foster sometimes small, but meaningful changes in the lives of our customers. With a lot of staff on our team, I think it's crucial as Members to tell them how appreciated they are. Co-ops are a really big deal- having a hub for local, organic, and nourishing food is not a common thing where I grew up, and it also is not in many of our closely neighboring communities. For me, the food at the co-op saved me when I was diagnosed with a disease that had my body rejecting all food I put in it. I thank my job in produce for getting me the nutrients I needed, and my co-op colleagues for offering cooking advice during that time.

On the Board, we've had meaningful conversations about the state of our current space, the desire to attract and partner with different corners of the community, and how to keep up with a crazily growing town. The key to being sustainable that keeps coming back to my mind is accessibility. Specifically ensuring people feel safe getting into and around the store is one of my top concerns, and I feel improving that aspect would nurture relationships with many impactful, knowledgeable members of the Durango community. That's where the Board comes in. It brings together a team of keen creatives to solve the issues we face. I'm excited to continue to share my voice at our table, and thanks everyone who gave me a vote for your support!

Elise

# DNF'S SOUNDING BOARD



**WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

**DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING YOU'D LIKE THE BOD TO  
ADDRESS AT THEIR NEXT MEETING? PLEASE EMAIL  
US AT [BOARD@DURANGONATURALFOODS.COOP!](mailto:BOARD@DURANGONATURALFOODS.COOP)**

**OUR NEXT MEETING IS WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 17TH  
FROM 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM**



Sheryl McGourty  
President



Weston Medlock  
Vice President



Elise Boulanger  
Secretary



Kate Randall  
Board Member



Victoria Mordan  
Board Member



Hadley Bevill  
Board Member



Cody Reinheimer  
Board Member

**YOUR VOICE MATTERS!**

**[BOARD@DURANGONATURALFOODS.COOP](mailto:BOARD@DURANGONATURALFOODS.COOP)**



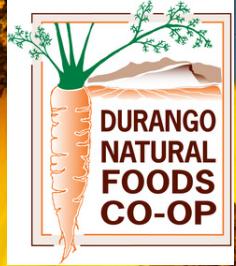
DURANGO  
NATURAL  
FOODS  
CO-OP

# BACK TO SCHOOL SALE

15% OFF  
AUGUST 15-31ST

Find your Back to School  
essentials!  
Over 300 items around  
the store!





# Member Appreciation Days

Coming in  
September!



Members get 10% off your entire purchase on a day of your choosing

**M.A.D. Month**