



Sunnyside Natural Market is a locally owned, family operated, community focused, small business. Operating in Kensington

This Season at the Market

October is Non GMO Month, and despite several years of polls revealing the majority of Canadian consumers want to know if the food they buy contains GMO's, there is still no mandatory labeling of GM foods in Canada.

The Non-GMO Project is North America's only third party verification and labeling for non-GMO food and products. We proudly joined this organization in 2014.

This past summer, we petitioned the shortsighted approval of the genetically modified Arctic Apple in Canada. We've sponsored and promoted several events that draw attention to the harmful effects that GMO's are having on our health, organic food security, and the global food system itself. This is an issue we are unequivocally dedicated to.

At the heart of mandatory labeling for GM foods is the idea that consumers should have the ability to freely choose what they want to eat, and support. That the federal government and biotech industry have kept the public intentionally uninformed is perhaps the most disconcerting and incensing aspect of this issue.

Beyond having the right to choose, the health concerns and environmental impact of GMO's are incredibly unnerving. There is still no scientific consensus on the safety of GMO's, and very few independent or long-term studies have been



conducted. With the safety of GMO's still being debated, it seems ridiculous that GM food be allowed on shelves at all, let alone presented to the consumer unlabeled.

At SNM, we are working towards becoming a store that empowers its consumers with the ability to make an informed choice. To begin, we want to hear from you. Come into the store and write down why GMO labeling is important to you. Then, take a picture of yourself with your written statement at our 'photo booth,' upload it to Instagram or Facebook and tag #nongmooyc. At the end of the month, we will choose two winners, with first prize being a \$25 gift certificate and a non-GMO verified product from the store, and second prize being a \$25 gift certificate.

Remember, the best way to avoid GMO's is to buy certified organic products, or verified non-GMO products. We've labeled all verified non-GMO products in the store with the label you see to the left.



Who's Your Farmer? Poplar Bluff Organics

Rosemary Wotske has been growing organic vegetables on Poplar Bluff Farm since 1985, and her potatoes are among the best. Located just outside of Strathmore, Alberta, Poplar Bluff grows a wide variety of potatoes each year. Each type has a unique colour, flavour, and texture.

Before farming, Rosemary pursued an education in physiology and biochemistry, and earned a Masters in genetics. Her background in science, and a long-time desire to farm inspired an inclination to experiment with unconventional potato varieties.



Alberta's climate is perfect for growing root vegetables, especially in the Palliser Triangle, where Poplar Bluff spuds are grown. The Palliser Triangle is a cold desert climate infamously known for the low yields and harsh weather it provided early settlers. While yields may be low, these conditions provide root vegetables with higher mineral content and a sweeter more flavourful taste. One bite of Poplar Bluff's potatoes is enough to prove it!

Seasonal Recipe

Here's a great side dish containing Poplar Bluff Potatoes, and another local producer, Cam's Carrots. It's a great addition for a chilly autumn meal.

Matt's Garlicky Potatoes & Carrots (Serves 4)

What you'll need:

- ~ 2lbs Poplar Bluff potatoes (any variety will do!)
- 6 tbsp Broek Acres Rendered Leaf Lard OR ½ cup Olive Oil
- 1lb Cam's rainbow carrots
- 4 cloves finely chopped Alberta or B.C. garlic
- Coarse salt & fresh ground black pepper
- Fresh ground black pepper to taste

Directions:

1. Chop up potatoes and carrots to your desired size and mix with garlic.
2. Set oven to 350 degrees F, and place roasting tin with lard or olive oil into oven while it preheats.
3. When oven is ready, add potatoes, carrots, and garlic.
4. Roast in oven for about 30 minutes, tossing occasionally. May take more or less time depending on size of potatoes.
5. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Sunnyside Natural Market will be featured in the next issue of *Canadian Natural Health Retailer*. We're thrilled that Carolee Coulter chose to do a profile on the passion and enthusiasm that all our employees bring to our humble market. Carolee has worked for consumer and worker co-ops, and other small community based businesses since 1984 with CDS Consulting Co-op (www.cdscounseling.coop). SNM has had the pleasure of working with Carolee on two separate occasions. Here's what she had to say about us:

Mission Driven Employees

Carolee Coulter

It's fair to say that most employees of natural food retailers choose to work there because they believe in what the store does. Drawing on a database of 240 natural foods retailers where colleagues and I have conducted employee surveys, I see a strong correlation between job satisfaction and direct experience with the store's mission. For example, those who strongly agreed with "I would recommend this company as a good place to work," also strongly agreed with "I see a clear link between my work and the company's mission," and "I believe this company operates consistently with its mission statement." By the same token, those who disagreed with the first question also tended to disagree with the following two.

But it's not enough to have a mission. Leaders must make sure the mission manifests in a real and concrete way in employees' day-to-day work. At Sunnyside Natural Market in Calgary, the owners' vision has created a vibrant community of staff, farmers and customers. When Patty Nowlin and Pat Guyn took over 10 years ago, they had been long-time shoppers. In building the new website, Nowlin and Guyn articulated their vision, "their purchasing ethics and principles, and "Our Commitment to You and Our Planet." That commitment mentions not just the customers, but also local farmers and staff.

Over the years, Sunnyside has attracted staff who are themselves passionately committed to this vision and these principles. While Guyn and Nowlin look for interest and commitment in job candidates, the applicant pool tends to be self-selecting.

Like many of their coworkers, Tyler Doucette and Matt Gigg applied intentionally. Now that he does hiring himself as assistant store manager, Doucette remarks that, "people come specifically to apply because they know what we're about." Part of new worker orientation involves visiting the website and reading the owners' guiding philosophy.

But what seems to make that philosophy come alive for staff is the personal connection with local farmers. Sunnyside employees are paid for one farm visit a year, while purchasers visit more frequently. "I'm proud of having personally visited every ranch selling to Sunnyside," says Gigg, now head purchaser for meat as well as editor of the newsletter. Moreover, employees are encouraged to take a paid workday once a year on any of Sunnyside's supplier farms in order to help out.

Sunnyside employees are also motivated by a strong sense of community with customers.

As Doucette puts it, "The customers shop here for the same reason I work here," and Gigg describes the staff and customers as a "close-knit group." Knowledgeable staff members have conversations on the floor with customers about the sources and sustainability of the food.

But Guyn and Nowlin go further by involving staff in charting the direction of the company. Input is encouraged in daily to weekly department meetings called scrums, and twice yearly all-staff meetings. Purchasers have direct influence on bringing in new products. Having so much input is one of the reasons Doucette has stayed. "I have a lot of autonomy in purchasing. Pat and Patty are very open to hearing ideas about new products and new firms in line with our values."

What Sunnyside's example shows is that an inspiring mission can attract good staff, but to retain them and motivate them for the long haul, the mission needs to be made real in their daily work, and they need a voice in interpreting it.

Why We Support GMO Labeling

We certainly are a principled and passionate bunch. In honour of non-GMO month, and the change we hope to help inspire, here are just a few Sunnysider's stating why they support mandatory GMO labeling:



Tyla, Store Manager

I want to easily avoid GMO's and instead choose food that comes from the agricultural practices that I believe in.

My son deserves to choose clean food!



Tyler, Assistant Manager



Patty, Owner

If GMO food producers Monsanto and Dow Chemical have nothing to hide then they have no reason to keep this information from me.

I don't want to support producers who hide what practices they are involved in. I want to know what is in my food.



Jamie, Purchaser