



# HUMMING WORDS

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## Let's Make Some Dust! by Karin Sundberg

We are thrilled to announce the opening of Camas Country Mill, a new stone mill in North Eugene specializing in grinding 100% whole grains by a slow, nutrition-retaining method. (The milling process does not heat the grain or flour and does not separate out the germ, so the nutritional benefits of the grain remain intact.)

Camas Country Mill is owned by the Hunton family, whose goal is to "share the full bounty of locally grown grains." A third-generation family of farmers, Hunton's Farm is Food Alliance Certified and one of the first farms in the Willamette Valley to transition grass seed acreage to grains and beans. This single stone grist mill, manufactured in Denmark, will be



Mill Manager, Steve Jones (center front), with owners Tom and Sue Hunton (on left) and their family, Ellen (center back), Kim and Jason Hunton (on right).

used to grind grain grown on Hunton's Farm and other Oregon farms.

Building a stone-ground mill was an inspiration based on a need. A local food market analysis completed by the Community Planning Workshop at the University of Oregon noted that Lane County has a defi-

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*"We are delighted to have Hummingbird as our wholesale distributor. While we may not know what's around the next corner, we know we are traveling with good company... heading to the new frontier—pretty darned exciting! Thanks for being our partners in this..."*

Tom Hunton, on behalf of Camas Country Mill



## Young Farmer by Paige Kouba

There's a bit of a secret that I'm keeping from my parents. I didn't get a tattoo, I didn't fail my math test, I didn't total the family car. It's just that, when I grow up, I want to be a farmer. Now that doesn't sound very glamorous. But I don't plan on donning a pair of overalls and jumping on the first tractor that passes by. Organic farming on a global scale, or agroecology as I've learned to call it in intellectual circles, is my plan for saving the world.

I fell in love with the concept of organic agriculture this summer, working in my neighbor's verdant jungle of a garden. I had always been amazed by the sheer volume of produce he summons forth from the earth each season. The day I agreed to a summer's worth of weeding, hoeing, repotting, composting, planting, digging and sweating on that acre of pure life and energy, I made one of the best decisions of my life. It was those early morn-

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*Let's Make Some Dust! Continued from page 1*

cit of infrastructure for locally grown organic and conventional bean, grain and seed crops. The study identified a need for a local mill to help farmers process grain for local customers. Tom Hunton considered the challenges and possibilities and decided to open a mill.

Big dreams sometimes incur big risks. The projected cost for the mill was \$300,000. Tom used his personal savings, and was supported by a \$97,000 economic grant from Lane County and a \$50,000 loan from HW. We are thankful to be able to help make the dream a reality.

After building the mill, then waiting six months for the permitting process to be completed, James Henderson, HW Farmer Liaison, received the news—the mill was ready to open. He expressed the crux of the matter joyously and succinctly, saying: *Let's make some dust!*

*Young Farmer, Continued from page 1*

ings of grinding a fresh layer of mud into the knees of my gardening pants while the sun rose over the Willamette Valley that taught me the beauty of replenishing and harvest, the fundamental cycles of the soil.

One of the reasons that my summer experience so surprised me is that I, like most Americans, had lived my life categorically separated from the origins of my food. Who can look at a bag of Cheetos, with its foot-long list of ingredients, and even attempt to trace it back to something that came out of the earth? The chemicals and bio-engineering that go into that bag are pervasive, present in every step of today's machine of food production. Factory farms and million-acre monocultures have become the norm, and what is more, accepted as the only way to feed the world.

The truth, that integrated organic agriculture is a better alternative to today's globalized system, is denied by the big names in agribusiness, companies with a vested economic interest in keeping things the way they are. The seed companies want their genetically modified, patented soybeans to supplant the organic varieties. Chemical companies feed on the interminable cycle of pesticide and fertilizer usage, which leaves



**Now Available from Camas Country  
Mill Through Hummingbird Wholesale:**

**Locally grown in the Willamette Valley (at Hunton's Farm)**

- CM Hard Red Wheat Flour
- CM Hard White Wheat Flour
- CM Red Fife Flour
- Transitional Buckwheat Flour
- Brown Teff Flour, no chemical spray

**Grown in Oregon (outside the Willamette Valley)**

- Organic Hard Red wheat

Learn more about the mill at [CamasCountryMill.com](http://CamasCountryMill.com)

the natural balance of the soil completely destroyed. Meat companies turn their greatest profit by treating each chicken as a unit, not an animal, a resource to be drained and discarded. And they would have you believe there is no alternative.

Supporters of industrial farming cite global hunger, not wealth, as the motive for their methods. Organic farming, they protest, is not enough to feed the billions of hungry mouths if their streamlined machine can't do it. They believe that pesticides, fertilizers, and genetically modified organisms are all forces of good to combat starvation around the world.

But when their products fail, the fields are left barren, inundated with unnatural chemicals and stripped of crucial soil nutrients. The delicate, thriving ecosystem of a healthy topsoil, a veritable universe in each cubic inch, cannot be replaced by synthetic fertilizers and crossed fingers. Modern agriculture is built as a house of cards, each layer of chemical advancements more precariously balanced than the one before, and farmers and consumers alike suffer when it all comes crashing down.

Again, the truth is that, especially in developing and impoverished nations, the only solid sys-

tem of agriculture is one built from the ground up on time-tested, organic growing practices on a regional scale.

Globalized agriculture is unfair to these developing nations, where native farms cannot keep up with the pace of big-name corporations. In India, for example, one thousand farmers commit suicide every month under the pressure of debt they have taken on to buy genetically modified cotton seeds. The farmers adopted new growing techniques— “magic” seeds and their accompanying chemicals— because they were promised enormous success, and because, for the first few years, they got it. For a few seasons after the chemical revolution of the late 1960’s, cotton yields spiked dramatically, and all farmers had to buy the new seed at outrageous prices to compete. Once the organic seed was almost completely replaced, the crop began to fail due to the infestation of a pest they were designed to resist. The company’s promises fell through, devastating already-impoverished farmers, and the seed company came out on top again, with hefty profits and little or no accountability. This system of half-truths and profiteering doesn’t stand up to any moral standard; it is fundamentally unfair for these companies to perpetrate such an exploitative scheme against the people of India.

Only bit by bit is India making a recovery from this blow. Farm by farm, traditional practices are regaining ground, and organic farming in India has proved a healing force, one that has unified its people for a common good.

India is not the only example. In Afghanistan, what once were opium fields are being replanted with organic grape vines, seeds of peace sown to renew a war-torn economy. Even in Lane County, wholesale companies promoting the growth of organic chickpeas are saving debt-burdened farmers who have traditionally relied on conventionally grown grass seed.

Each success story is one more farmer willing to lend a hand to help another see the wisdom of organic farming. The movement sows goodwill as much as organic seed, replacing manipulative chemical corporations with truly friendly business connections.

It is these relationships that give life to the organic cause. A grassroots movement from the

start, organic agriculture is driven by community and respect, not corporate greed. The modern organic farming movement began when people seeking environmentally and nutritionally sound food came to each other’s aid. Even as the idea picks up steam and moves beyond your neighborhood farmer’s market, the core value of goodwill for people and the planet remains. Agriculture as a global interest and a local force has tremendous power to promote community growth on every level.

As you can see, the benefits of organic farming are wide-ranging. The environment benefits when we stop pouring toxins into the soil and rivers. Local economies benefit when farmers have true control, fiscally and legally, over their own crop. The consumer benefits when the chemicals begin to disappear from the family dinner table. And, most crucially, the world’s hungry benefit when we recognize that food is not an industry but a life source.

How do we see our food? The problem is that, all too often, we do not see it at all. We are blind to the system that produces our food and the effects that system has, ranging from animal cruelty on the farms to disease resulting from poor food quality to the exploitation of third world farmers.

So when I say that my highest ambition is to become a humble farmer, I speak with a sense of pride and exhilarating optimism. The simple goal of informing the public, creating connections, fostering the growth of organic agriculture, is one that inspires me on a daily basis. I want to share the understanding I gain from kneeling in the dirt, exploring the rich ecology of the soil beneath me with my own fingertips.

Based on all the good I can see in this movement, I know that studying agroecology and doing all I can to advance it is the best service I can render for the world. A true understanding of the value of organic agriculture is a tiny change in the minds of the people, but it effects a necessary and significant change in the quality of their lives.

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**Paige Kouba** is a Junior in South Eugene High School. She wrote this article for one of her classes after apprenticing with Charlie Tilt in his home garden.

## Why (and How) to Be a GMO Gatekeeper by Kristie Steele

The more I read and understand about GMOs, the more I feel the need to share what I'm learning, as this issue is having a profound impact on our global community, environment, and health. The definition of a GMO is: "the result of a laboratory process where genes from the DNA of one species are extracted and artificially forced into the genes of an unrelated plant or animal. The foreign genes may come from bacteria, viruses, insects, animals or even humans."



A few facts about GMOs:

- The most prevalent GMO food crops in the US include: "soy (91%), cotton (88%), canola (88%), corn (85%), sugar beets (90%), Hawaiian papaya (more than 50%)"
- While many other countries have banned GMO foods all together, the US does not even require GMO foods to be labeled as such. GMO ingredients are "now present in the vast majority of processed foods in the US."
- "Genetically modified foods have been linked to toxic and allergic reactions, sick, sterile, and dead livestock, and damage to virtually every organ studied in lab animals. The effects on humans of consuming these new combinations of proteins produced in GMOs are unknown and have not been studied."
- "...the two main traits that have been added to date [into food crops] are herbicide tolerance and the ability of the plant to produce its own pesticide."
- "Pollen from GM crops can contaminate nearby crops of the same type, except for soy, which does not cross-pollinate. In fact, virtually all heritage varieties of corn in Mexico (the origin of all corn) have been found to have some contamination."



The GMO definition and quotes above are from the Institute for Responsible Technology website, <http://www.responsibletechnology.org>. I encourage you to visit the Audio & Video page under the Resources menu; the audio recording at the bottom titled "Don't Put That in Your Mouth" is a great place to start. In addition I highly recommend the film *Future of Food* by Deborah Koons Garcia and any books by Jeffrey Smith on the topic.

Our current National Organic Program standards require only that organic crops are grown with non-GMO seed; there are no testing requirements for harvested crops. As corn pollen can travel over a mile on the wind, it is possible for an organic corn field to be contaminated by GMO corn pollen. If cross-pollination takes place between organic corn and GMO pollen containing the trait that enables the plant to produce its own pesticide, both the organic and the GMO status would be compromised and the consumer left unaware. This is why I believe post-harvest GMO testing is essential, otherwise the people who depend on us to provide them with healthy, clean food are at risk.

So how can we all do right by our customers and make sure our food is clean? Lucky for us, there are very few items Hummingbird Wholesale carries that are high-risk. We are currently reviewing our inventory

and improving our protocols so we can be certain we are providing only foods that are free of GMOs. The Organic Blue and Yellow Cornmeals have been tested and found to be free of GMO contamination.

Stores can also act as GMO “gatekeepers.” One of our local markets here in Eugene is taking steps to ensure their inventory is free of GMO foods. Sundance Natural Foods, a small, independent natural food market recently audited their entire grocery inventory, checking each item for ingredients that are at risk for GMO contamination, from citric acid to corn and corn byproducts. They have pulled products from the shelf and implemented screening protocols to prevent any new products containing GMOs from entering the store. In addition, Sundance is in the process of contacting manufacturers to see whether they are using GMO ingredients and to raise awareness of the possible GMO contamination of their products.

If your business would like to audit its inventory for GMO ingredients, see the brochure “GMO Free Tips” (<http://www.responsibletechnology.org/docs/141.pdf>) for a list of high-risk ingredients. Once you have audited your current inventory, remember to add a screening process to your sourcing protocols so you don’t accidentally bring in foods containing GMOs.

## From Out of the Blue: GMO-Free Organic Blue Cornmeal by Kristie Steele

How does a food become one of my favorites? Usually it’s a combination of excellent flavor and health benefits. But sometimes there is an additional attribute that makes the item unique or special. With our Organic Blue Corn Meal, the additional factor is this: a corn product free of genetically modified organisms (GMOs). This GMO-free status is *the* reason I believe you should carry this item in your store.

Although our Yellow Cornmeal is wonderful, I am particularly excited about Blue Cornmeal. Why, you may ask? First of all, it’s beautiful. Imagine dark blue-purple griddle cakes or corn bread—a feast for the eyes as well as the taste buds. Second, I believe it is healthier. Like many other blue foods, blue corn is high in antioxidants. In my research I discovered that blue corn also has a higher level of protein and less starch than white or yellow corns. Third, after a lengthy conversation with an experienced farmer who strives to grow the most nutrient dense corn possible, I have a theory that darker corns are less susceptible to GMO contamination. He told me that he once grew his darker corn varieties in Illinois adjacent to fields that he knew to be planted with GMO corn, and that his crop tested free of GMO contamination. Also, my sister developed a severe allergy to corn in her late teens (about three years ago), which I

suspect may be related to GMOs. Yet she has never had any difficulty with blue corn, organic or not.

In addition, the Organic Blue Cornmeal is made of corn sourced from a New Mexico farm, and is an exclusive variety developed by the farmers themselves. The whole corn is stone-milled in Burlington, Washington. Established in 1974, this mill is a small family-run business aligned with Hummingbird values—supporting local growers, aiming to supply high quality wholesome foods, focused on organic, and expanding their gluten-free flours. The cornmeal contains a wide range of particle sizes, coarse to fine, mixed together and unsifted, with the germ and bran included. This gives it the highest nutrient value and a full corn flavor excellent for corn bread and other recipes calling for cornmeal.

A word from the miller: *We have always run only 100% organic grains through our mills and our flour is milled to order from the freshest pure organic grains we can locate. We support and encourage local farmers to grow as many of our grains as possible.*

Of course, the best way to learn whether this item is for you is to try it for yourself; please ask for a sample. I am confident the Organic Blue Cornmeal will become one of your favorites too!

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# Sweet Potato Cranberry Oat Cookies

By Russell Melia

- 2 cups organic oats\*
- 2 cups local wheat flour\*
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 2 teaspoons ground cloves
- 2 teaspoons ground cardamom
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon\*
- 2 pinches cayenne
- 2 medium-sized organic sweet potatoes
- 1 cup extra virgin coconut oil\*
- 3/4 cup local honey (adjust to taste)\*
- 2 tablespoons molasses\*
- 2 eggs
- 1 1/2 cups organic Hummingbird cranberries\*



- Preheat the oven to 325 degrees F.
- Combine oats, flour, salt, baking soda, and spices in a food processor and blend well. Set aside.
- Chop sweet potatoes into 1/2 inch cubes and sauté in coconut oil on medium heat until lightly browned and thoroughly cooked through.
- While the sweet potatoes are frying, cream the butter and sweeteners together in a bowl. Beat in the eggs.
- When the sweet potatoes are done, pulverize them in the food processor. Add this to the butter-egg-sweetener mixture and blend well.
- Blend in the dry ingredients a cupful at a time.
- Stir in the cranberries.
- Roll rounded spoonfuls of the dough into balls and place on greased cookie sheets.
- Bake for 20 minutes.

Makes three dozen small cookies (enough to share with your friends, neighbors, and delightful co-workers!)

\*Available through Hummingbird.

## OUR MISSION

WE ENDEAVOR TO SERVE PEOPLE AND THE PLANET BY PROVIDING THE HIGHEST QUALITY, MOST NUTRITIOUS FOODS, GROWN AS LOCALLY AND SUSTAINABLY AS POSSIBLE, TO NOURISH BODY, MIND AND SOUL.

- ◆ WE STRIVE FOR MAXIMUM BENEFIT FOR CUSTOMERS AND FARMERS, MINIMUM PACKAGING AND WASTE, AND GREAT FOOD FOR LIVING.
- ◆ WE VALUE LONG TERM RELATIONSHIPS WITH CUSTOMERS AND VENDORS, MEETING NEEDS WITH RELIABILITY, CARE AND PRIDE.
- ◆ WE PRACTICE PRINCIPLES OF ECOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE OPERATION OF OUR BUSINESS.
- ◆ LIKE THE HUMMINGBIRD, WE SEEK TO SIP THE NECTAR OF THE EARTH WITHOUT HARMING THE FLOWER. WE ARE HAPPY TO SERVE YOU!

## Event Recap: Fill Your Pantry

by Julie Tilt

People lined up all afternoon on Saturday April 30<sup>th</sup> to buy locally grown staples direct from the farmers. This was HW's first attempt in Eugene to promote locally grown grains, beans, and seeds with this kind of venue. The day was a grand success! The participating farmers were pleased to sell more in one day than they sold all last year at both the Eugene Farmer's and Holiday Markets.

We would like to give appreciation and thanks to Krishna Khalsa and The Lotus Project, and Master Chef and instructor, Clive Wanstall from Lane Community College. They provided a wonderful sampling of our locally grown foods, giving all who stopped by a chance to taste the delicious ways of preparing these items. We also thank our six volunteers from HW's staff who helped set up our annex for the event, fulfill customer orders, and break down when the day was done. We look forward to another Fill Your Pantry event next year!