

CELEBRATING THE UN'S 2025 INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF CO-OPERATIVES



On March 20th and 21st, the co-op assembly took place on Gadigal country in Sydney. The Maple Street Co-op sent delegates Charlotte and Kesten to learn about co-operatives and connect with individuals from other food co-ops across the country. The event showcased a fascinating and diverse range of co-operatives.

“This experience has deepened my (Charlotte) understanding of co-ops, not just in the context of food, farming, and housing co-ops that I see in my local community, but also in exploring the broader question: What types of businesses or service providers couldn't be a co-op? as my mate Rod often says, “It's the decentralized autonomous institutional driving force behind the revolution.”

As shop manager, I typically focus on the operational side, so I'm truly grateful for the opportunity to listen to and learn from so many passionate co-operators who are making a tangible difference in their communities and beyond. With 2025 being the International Year of the Co-operative, I'm excited to highlight a different co-op each month that may inspire us to build a better world.”

“From my perspective (Kesten), it was truly inspiring to witness the profound reverence for the land and the unwavering commitment to fostering sustainable communities that echoed through each co-operative featured. The deep dedication to environment and people was palpable, moving, and invigorated a sense of hope for the future of businesses who aim to 'do good'. To paraphrase Rebel Black (chairperson of the Rural Women Co-op) co-operatives, not unlike people, grow like deep rooted trees, and it's up to us to improve, nurture and feed the soil in which they reside.”



International Year
of Cooperatives

Cooperatives Build a Better World



We pay our respects to the Jinibara and Kabi Kabi people of this Country, and to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge that our Co-op stands on land that was never ceded. We honour the profound wisdom, the deep sustainability and connection to land since time immemorial.

MEET THE SUPPLIER - PETER FROM SPIRULINA PLANET



I'm Peter, and have spent a lot of my life living in two communities, Auroville in India and Findhorn in Scotland. I've worked in different areas, Jack of some trades as it were, as a freelance journalist specialising in spiritual and ecological news and edited magazines, including Positive News which as its name implied ran solely positive stories. Later, I studied and worked as a counsellor with a love of Jung's mythic and dream work. I also trained as an interfaith minister and have worked as a celebrant and with ritual.

Wherever I live, I seek out health food shops, as I was vegan for 24 years, they helped me find products to eat. I like to promote social enterprises and creating a better world. I'm enthusiastic about going beyond profit as a motivation and am so happy we have a co-op here, creating an example of a world we want to create and offering ethical and sustainable products. There is a different feel to organisations that are not profit driven which I notice as soon as I step into the Co-op, and I hope and believe they are harbingers of a future life and culture to come.

Twenty-one years ago I started importing spirulina from Auroville. I was happy to find a product that supported a community I believed in and wanted to practically support. Pretty quickly we became one of the main distributors for Australia, Bali, and Hong Kong under the name Spirulina Planet.



The spirulina is unique for a few reasons. Firstly, it's an ethical and social product that supports the Auroville community. A third of its profits go to the community and the spirulina farm employs mostly women from a low social and economic background. Secondly, the crunchy is unique, as it's an edible solid spirulina in little crunchy bites that you can eat raw or sprinkle on salads, cereals, soups. (I also have powder and capsules). Thirdly, the spirulina is mostly sun dried so it had less industrialised energy in it. My partner Kathy and I have moved here from Auroville and feel drawn to and at home in Maleny, with its alternative and informal community feel. Years ago, my first days in Australia were in Crystal Waters, which in hindsight feels significant. Find Spirulina Planet in crunchy, powder or capsules in store!

MEET SAHIL JHA, A 19 YEAR OLD SOIL ACTIVIST CYCLING ACROSS THE WORLD.



On March 26th, Sahil Jha came into our Co-op to share his remarkable journey and mission to raise awareness about soil health. Inspired by the Save Soil movement, which addresses the growing global crisis of soil degradation, Sahil began his journey at just 16 years old. In 2022, he undertook a solo cycling campaign across India, covering 15,000 km across 15 states to spread the message of soil health and sustainability. In March 2025, Sahil launched his latest campaign, starting from Bundaberg, Australia. This ambitious 20,000 km cycling journey will take him across 20 countries in 15 months, including Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, the UK, Europe (12 countries), and the United States.

His efforts aim to engage global audiences, speak at schools and universities, collaborate with environmental groups, and work with influencers and soil experts to raise awareness of the importance of soil health.

The Save Soil movement focuses on addressing soil degradation, a problem affecting 52% of agricultural land worldwide. The movement advocates for global unity and policy change to increase organic matter in agricultural soil. The degradation of soil has been driven by factors such as agriculture, deforestation, and industrialization, leading to a crisis that threatens the very foundation of life on Earth. Sahil emphasizes that soil degradation is linked to almost every major ecological crisis, and the solution to many environmental problems lies in restoring soil health.

Sahil's campaign seeks to highlight the interconnectedness of life on Earth, noting that healthy soil is critical to addressing broader environmental challenges. To learn more about Sahil's cycling journey and the Save Soil movement, visit:

consciousplanet.org/en/save-soil and follow Sahil on Instagram @soilsahiljha with the hashtag #SaveSoil.

gofundme

Scan the QR code to donate to Sahil's cause directly or visit:

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/19-year-old-sahil-to-ride-across-4-continent-to-save-soil/>



EASTER SWEETIES



Check out our Easter display table for all of our offerings. Some stock is limited this year due to cacao shortages. We have Easter sweeties from Tony's Choclonely, Organic Times and The Carob Company (Banjos!) sorry, no large Banjo eggs this year. We'll be well stocked on our Loco Love and other organic, Fairtrade chocolate ranges.

HOT CROSSIES!



Our organic hot cross buns have already started rolling in from Walter's (Mon, Wed, Fri) Ancient Grains (Thursdays) Ten Acres (Wednesdays and Saturdays) Gluten Free Precinct (in the freezer!) and Britt's - fortnightly (Wed) Place your orders at the counter for the Easter period, it helps us know what to order in and avoid food waste.

HOT! HOT! HOT!

NEW HOT SAUCES FROM CRACK FOX IN NORTHERN RIVERS



“Crack Fox is about clean, green eating, but making it fun! From chilli seed to bottle, we've worked to minimise the impact on our planet with mindful packaging and by sourcing pure, local ingredients chemical-free farmed with sustainability in mind.

We are about honouring indigenous ingredients, regenerative agriculture, celebrating gluts and seasonality, supporting small scale local organic growers and food systems because this is the produce we believe in and are inspired by!”

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