

REAL PICKLES

FERMENTED & RAW

Our Changing Climate

If you follow climate change news, you know the importance of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to keep our planet below a 1.5°C average temperature rise. You know that even a 1.5° increase will have profound impacts on ecosystems, wildlife, infrastructure, and agriculture. With climate change now a reality, it has also become essential to plan for climate adaptation – that is, reduce our vulnerability and enhance our resilience to the impacts of climate change. Fiscal Year 2019 was a year that tested our climate resilience at Real Pickles along with our local farms.

Rain... and more Rain

This past season was one of the hardest in memory for most of the farms we work with. When it comes to farming, though the crops need moisture, a dry spell can be easier to manage than a wet one. And we had a very soggy late summer.



A sunny day at Atlas Farm.
(Photo: Boston Organics)

Of the 364,000 pounds of vegetables we had arranged to buy from farms within 40 miles of our facility, only 60% were harvestable.

Thanks to Ryan Frizzell, our superstar vegetable manager (see page 4), we were able to mostly make up the shortfall from farms further afield in New York, Vermont, and just over the border in Québec.

Our Farmers

In the process, we made some valuable new connections with Northeast organic farms (though we paid much more for our vegetables in FY'19 largely due to transport costs). But, we weren't able to keep as much money

going to our local farms as we'd hoped to. Indeed, our hearts go out to the farm families that struggled this past year and will need to make up the loss in future growing seasons. Here's hoping for a perfect farm season in 2019. Be sure to get out and support your local farms this year!

A Resilient Food System

Environmental sustainability and strong regional food systems are at the core of our mission. We are always seeking ways to reduce our carbon emissions, increase our use of renewable energy (see page 3!), and support policies that push for climate mitigation.



PV Squared and Real Pickles staff pose on the roof with our brand new solar array! (Photo: PV Squared Solar)

Especially given the past harvest season, we are now thinking hard about what we can do to increase our resilience as a business and as a community in the years ahead. We certainly don't have all the answers, but we do know that a strong regional food system - one that supports everyone including farmers, farmworkers, distributors, processors, and consumers - will boost resilience for us all.

Keep reading to learn more about our work!

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal year ending March 31, 2019

Our mission is to promote human and ecological health by providing people with delicious, nourishing food and by working toward a regional, organic food system.

COMMUNITY

Distributor Highlight: Associated Buyers

Associated Buyers is our primary distributor for the New England states. We've been working closely with them



(Photo: Associated Buyers)

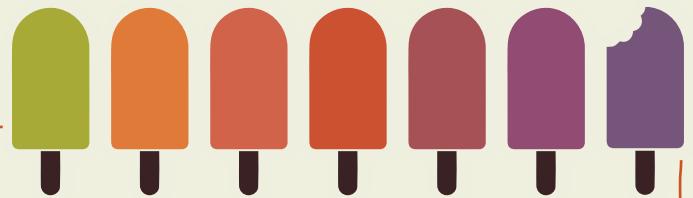
since 2005 when they helped with our first major sales expansion, setting Real Pickles on the path to viability. Independent distribution is an important part of a strong regional food system, and **Associated Buyers** is supporting numerous small family farms, producers, and independent markets with their distribution service. We are grateful for the opportunity to work with this family-owned and operated business.

Retailer Highlight: Park Slope Food Co-op

One of our top five accounts, the Brooklyn-based store is owned by 17,000 members and puts its notable buying power to use in support of small, regional food and farm businesses. They are known for their extensive member work program and for being a vibrant community institution. Real Pickles jars have been on the shelves at the Park Slope Co-op for well over a decade and we're proud to be part of the success of this impressive business!



Thank you to all of our community partners who together are building a stronger, more resilient, and tastier food system!



Pickle Pops Collaboration

We began an unlikely and delicious local food collaboration this year with Crooked Stick Pops in Easthampton, MA. These savory treats are salty-sour and sensational! Our ferments are frozen along with fresh and roasted veggies ... and voilà! Dill Pickle, Ginger Carrot, and Beet Kvass. Think borscht on a stick. We served these up at the Boston Fermentation Fest and the North Quabbin Garlic and Arts Fest to an enthusiastic crowd.



PRODUCT & SUPPLY

Good Food Awards: Go Garlic!

Co-owners Kristin Howard and Katie Korby traveled out to San Francisco to receive TWO **Good Food Awards** this year for our most garlicky products! We are so proud to receive this medal that recognizes our work to make food that is authentic, responsible, and tasty. The ceremony was hosted by International Slow Food Movement founder Carlo Petrini and renowned chef Alice Waters, and celebrates a sustainable and delicious food system revolution. This is a fourth win for our Garlic Dills and a first-time for our Garlic Kraut.

SUSTAINABILITY

Solar Powered!

We made new investments in renewable energy this year! In the fall, we installed a solar hot water system on the south side of our building with help from Spartan Solar based here in Greenfield. We saw instant reductions in our natural gas usage, and



we look forward to the system providing all of our hot water in the summer. We also hired our worker co-op neighbors PV Squared to install a 31 kW photovoltaic system on our flat roof. The array is made up of 2,000 square feet of panels and the generated power is shared between the two businesses, Real Pickles and PV Squared. Along with our original 17 kW array installed in 2011, Real Pickles will be once again 100% solar powered!



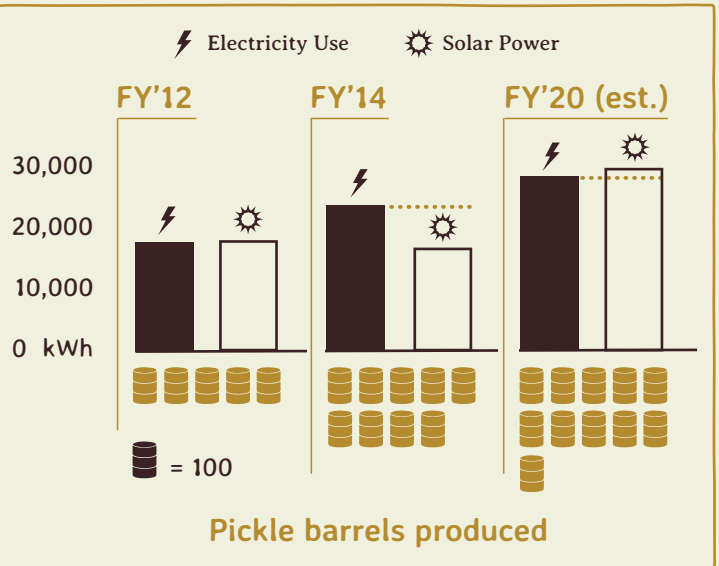
New 31 kW solar array on our flat roof!
(Photo: Jerry Monkman Photography)

Small Batch Nettle Kraut

If you didn't catch our newest small batch flavor, Organic Nettle Kraut, you'll have another chance this coming fall! It's a simple and flavorful blend of cabbage, fresh nettles from Foster Farm Botanicals in Vermont, sea salt, and scallions. Pairing the benefits of kraut with the green vitality of nettles, this kraut will help keep you nourished through the winter until you can get out and pick some fresh nettles in the spring. Check out a delicious summer recipe for savory Nettle Kraut pancakes with a chilled herbal soup on our blog.



Worker owners in July 2018. Back (L to R): Addie Rose Holland, Kristin Howard, Greg Nichols, Alex Kestyn, Lucy Kahn, Ryan Frizzell. Front (L to R): Brendan Flannelly-King, Katie Korby, Tamara McKerchie, Dan Rosenberg, Annie Winkler. Missing: Andy Van Assche.



Our Facility Microbiome

University of Massachusetts Amherst microbiologists published cutting-edge research in the fall studying microbial populations in our facility. The report, published in Applied & Environmental Microbiology, shows that our facility's microbiome is distinct between production and fermentation areas, and that raw vegetables - cabbages destined for sauerkraut - are the main source of microbes in production areas and in our ferments. It also suggests the important role that healthy organic produce plays in providing a diverse microbial community to support a vigorous fermentation. This study is the first of its kind in a fermented vegetable facility, and we're excited to be a part of the science exploring these important questions.



PICKLE PEOPLE

ALEX KESTYN

Assistant Production Manager

Alex Kestyn joined us in 2015 as production assistant, and has worked his way up to assistant production manager. Alex keeps a close and capable eye on all of



our production systems, constantly coming up with new innovations and improvements. Alex grew up in this area and lives locally with his partner Merri and their son Matthew. He enjoys playing basketball, softball, fantasy football, and video games. We appreciate Alex for his funny jokes,

reliability, and for being an honest and caring co-worker. We're so happy to welcome him into our ownership group!

“This is my hometown, so it’s awesome to be a worker-owner of a company with such great values right here in my backyard.”

RYAN FRIZZELL

Vegetable Manager

“Being a worker-owner at Real Pickles allows me to actively participate in the culture and success of my workplace, while also strengthening my connection to the local food system.”

Ryan Frizzell joined the ownership ranks this past August, and we are psyched to have him on board! Ryan has been with us for three years, and as our vegetable manager since early 2017. His experience with longtime Bay Area organic vegetable distributor, Veritable Vegetable, has been extremely valuable in his role here at Real Pickles. He has fearlessly scoured the region for organic produce when our local farmers



have come up short, and has forged many new and important relationships with organic growers across the Northeast. Ryan has a great presence on our crew and brings a wonderful sense of humor. He and his wife and their 2 year-old son live in the wild foothills of the Berkshires.

COMMUNITY INVESTORS

We're proud to be supported by our community of investors. The 77 investors that responded to our original 2013 preferred share offering were an essential part of our co-op transition and allowed us to continue to invest in our facility and expand our fermentation space. In FY'19, we sold an additional \$248,675 in preferred shares to 27 investors in Massachusetts and Vermont. This new capital allows us to continue expanding production of our Northeast-grown ferments and helped fund two new solar projects (see page 3). We view Real Pickles Co-operative as a community asset and partner, not just a pickle business.

In joining together with local, socially-minded investors, we are engaging with the community to help build a better food system and an economy that supports both people and our planet.

“Our club exists to invest in co-ops, and Real Pickles' preferred shares are a great way to advance our impact goals while generating a fair return!”

- Vermont Solidarity Investing Club