

# River Currents

Winter 1998

**T**wenty years ago this fall Christian and I acquired land here in Conway (South River Farm), bought the fledgling Ohio Miso Company, and learned we were expecting our first child. And that was only the beginning! Since that time, through the backing of family and the efforts of many good friends, we have built a shed for work horses, a cabin, a barn, another cabin, a traditional miso factory, and finally our own home, which is almost, but never quite finished. Our daughter Anni, now 19, is teaching English in Turkey. Isaiah, our second born, is fully into his freshman year at a nearby boarding school which leaves us with an empty nest. I review fondly the faces of so many young people who have worked and lived with us: 21 names come to mind. You all know who you are, and wherever you live now, you are the backbone of the living, breathing life at South River. Thank you.

Currently we are blessed to have three exceptional young people living on, and working with the land: Arthur Lerner, Emily Kellert, and David Fisher. This summer their fine organic produce was sold at the local outdoor market. Our root cellar is overflowing with carrots, rutabagas, giant leeks, and potatoes.

Miso production is in full swing under the steady management of Yukio Doyama, now in his fourth season with us. He is energetically assisted by Andy Mathey who lives above the miso shop. They both share a great love of drumming.

The friendly voice you hear on the phone when you call is Robin Cole, administrative manager, UPS shipper, and valued friend for fifteen years.

Meanwhile, Christian has been put out to pasture...

*Gaella Elwell*



*Christian and Gaella Elwell*



*Yukio Doyama*



*Robin Cole*

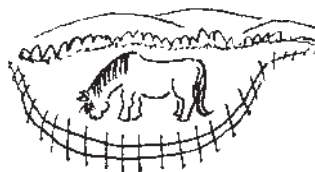


*Andy Mathey (in a vat of miso)*

## *Giver*

It's all right if you no longer know my name.  
You didn't know it when you thought  
you knew it, anyway.  
It's all right for you to undress  
and go naked into the river.  
You don't have to know how to swim.  
You don't have to go into old caves.  
Just stand in the water  
at the edge of the river.  
Fill the cup of your life.  
Lift the cup to your lips and let it overflow.  
I am the giver  
as well as the one who takes away.  
I give you your own naked body.  
I give you the river.  
I give you the cup. See?  
It is made of your own two hands.

— Pat Schneider, Amherst, Massachusetts



# Have you heard of Weston Price?

We would like to dedicate this first issue of the newsletter to Dr. Weston Price, a dentist from Cleveland, Ohio, who undertook one of the most valuable studies of our time.

In the early part of this century, Dr. Price was concerned about the alarming decline of dental health among his patients and among modern people in general. He interpreted this as a danger signal, evidence of a possible trend which would manifest in other more tragic symptoms of degeneration as time advanced, if the causes were not directly addressed.

A man of common sense and spiritual commitment, Dr. Price believed that physical degeneration was not inevitable. In the 1920's he set out with his wife, Florence, on a series of expeditions, traveling around the world to study native peoples' health in relation to their way of life and diet. His investigations took him to remote areas of Switzerland, Scotland, Alaska, North and South America, Africa, Australia and New Zealand, to communities still isolated from contact with processed foods of modern commerce. Wherever he went, Dr. Price found that beautiful, straight teeth, freedom from decay, stalwart bodies and resistance to disease were typical of native peoples eating their traditional foods, rich in essential nutrition.

He went on to compare these more isolated groups with neighboring members of the same tribes or ethnic relations that had come into contact with modern foods. The results were clear. Within a single generation the facial structure narrowed, crooked teeth became common, and tooth decay was rampant. When indi-

viduals returned to their native foods, improvements in dental and general health were apparent within the next generation.

Dr. Price's book, *Nutrition and Physical Degeneration*, should be included in every high school curriculum. The text is illustrated with striking photographs of healthy native peoples and their modernized counterparts. The photos make clear in an unforgettable way the physical degeneration that occurs when human groups abandon their nourishing traditions.

As we now come to the close of this century, our collective health is in question on many levels. Although heart disease and cancer were rare as the century opened, they are now common. In spite of billions of dollars in research to combat these and other serious illnesses, little effort has gone towards understanding their cause which Dr. Price so clearly demonstrated.

Now, sixty years after Dr. Price's study, we have become a global village where very few populations remain truly isolated, and people everywhere have access to the modern "convenience" of empty, processed foods.

At the same time we also have access to the original food wisdom of diverse cultures today. Unpasteurized miso, made the traditional way from organic grains and beans, represents one of the finest foods from this collective food wisdom of humanity. We hope South River Miso, with its savory taste and healing properties, will play an important role in the creation of your own new, nourishing traditions.

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Dr. Weston Price (1870-1948)

Dr. Price's classic book, *NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL DEGENERATION*, is available through the Price-Pottenger Nutrition Foundation, PO Box 2614, La Mesa, CA 91943; Tel. 619 574-7763. Ask for their catalog. Their web site is [www.price-pottenger.org](http://www.price-pottenger.org)

Two books advancing the important work of Dr. Price have recently been published and are also highly recommended to our readers:

- ♦ **NOURISHING TRADITIONS:** *The Cookbook that Challenges Politically Correct Nutrition and the Diet Dictocrats*, by Sally Fallon (available through the Price Pottenger Foundation, see above)
- ♦ **TRADITIONAL FOODS ARE YOUR BEST MEDICINE,** *Improving Health and Longevity with Native Nutrition*, by Ronald Schmid (Rochester, VT., Healing Arts Press, 1997)

## MAKING MISO IN THE NOURISHING TRADITION



1 Cooking with wood fire.



2 Inoculating the steamed grain with koji culture (*Aspergillus oryzae*)



3 Two days later, harvesting the cultured grain koji.

# Soup Stocks

*The latest from Wall Street*

Soup stocks are a vital part of the nourishing traditions of many peoples and represent a glaring omission in modern diet. Properly made, chicken soup and whole fish broths are nourishing for body and soul, strengthening the immune system, relaxing the nerves, and soothing the entire digestive system. As a base for miso soup, these broths are in the highest class of medicines which prevent disease and strengthen the body through continued use.

## Oriental Fish Stock

- 2 medium fish carcasses, including heads, of non-oily fish such as turbot, rockfish or snapper [cod also works well, Ed.]
- Shells (and heads if available) from 3/4 pound fresh shrimp (reserve shrimp for other uses)
- 2-3 quarts filtered water
- 1/4 cup vinegar
- 3 stalks celery, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled and chopped
- 1 inch fresh ginger, peeled and chopped
- 1 teaspoon black pepper corns
- 2-3 pieces of kombu sea vegetable [Ed.]

Place carcasses, shrimp shells, water and vinegar in a large stainless steel pot. Bring to boil and skim [off any scum that may float to the surface]. Add remaining ingredients. Simmer, covered, for at least 4 hours or overnight. Strain into a bowl and refrigerate, or into smaller containers and freeze. [Use as a stock for miso soup.]

This recipe is from Sally Fallon's *Nourishing Traditions*, pg. 111.

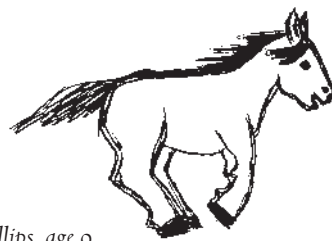


## Dressing for Health

### Miso Mustard Salad Dressing

- 1 tbsp. Sweet White Miso, or other light miso
- 1 tsp. Dijon type mustard
- 2 tbsp. plus 1 tsp raw wine or cider vinegar
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp. unrefined flax seed oil

With fork, mix miso, mustard, and vinegar in a small bowl. Add olive oil in a thin stream, stirring all the while with the fork., until the oil is well mixed or emulsified. Add flax oil. Pour mixture into small glass jar with screw top lid and shake vigorously. Use immediately. (adapted from Sally Fallon's basic salad dressing, pg. 118, *Nourishing Traditions*)



By Erin Phillips, age 9

## Frequently Asked Questions about Miso

How long does miso keep? I've had a jar in my refrigerator for about a year. Is it still OK to use?

Because of its salt content, miso will keep indefinitely under refrigeration, and it is OK to use miso that has been in the fridge for a year or more.

I have heard it is best not to cook miso; if so, how do I make miso soup?

When cooking with South River Miso it is always good to remember that it is a living food. Unpasteurized miso is rich in live enzymes. Furthermore, each teaspoonful contains millions of active microorganisms which are beneficial to the dynamic digestion and assimilation of all foods, and which help to establish and maintain a healthy, vigorous digestive system. For these reasons, miso should not be subject to prolonged cooking or high heat. Add miso at the end of cooking and turn the heat source down very low or remove soup from the stove and serve several minutes later, allowing the flavors to blend.

How much miso should I use? Can I use too much?

For greatest benefit, miso should be used in small amounts on a regular basis. A few teaspoons up to a few tablespoons per day would be average use.

When seasoning soup, begin by adding a small amount of miso — one to two teaspoons per cup of liquid — adding more if needed. The miso should mingle with the flavor of the soup and enhance, not overpower it.



4 Cooling the beans after they've been cooked by wood fire for 20 hours.



5 Raw miso, after the cooked beans have been mashed and mixed with the salted grain koji.



6 Miso aging in the wooden vats.

# SOUTH RIVER MISO COMPANY

## MISSION STATEMENT

*Life is sacred. Food is sacred.*



South River Miso Company is dedicated to the health and well being of all those it serves.

We strive to produce and distribute the highest quality organic, unpasteurized miso and other traditional foods with the conviction that wholesome food can be our best medicine.

We honor miso for its strengthening and rejuvenating qualities and promote its use as part of a healthy diet.

Our aim is to create a fair-minded, open-hearted learning environment within our organization and to serve each customer honestly, warmly, and effectively.

Our hope is that South River Miso Company and those it serves may evolve together towards greater fulfillment, wholeness and peace.

*June 1998*

SOUTH RIVER MISO CO., INC.  
SOUTH RIVER FARM | CONWAY, MASSACHUSETTS 01341

WOOD-FIRED HANDMADE MISO SINCE 1979  
Certified Organic & Unpasteurized

SOUTH RIVER  MISO COMPANY