MOSCOW FOOD CO-OP
General Manager Monitoring Report

General Manager's Monitoring Report – January 20, 2016
Policy Type: **Ends** Policy Title: A1 – Community/Services
I report compliance with all parts of this policy.
Melinda C. Schab, General Manager, Moscow Food Co-op

Policy Language

Building on the foundation of the Seven Cooperative Principles, the MFC shall:

1. *Promote the local, sustainable, and organic foods economy.*
2. *Be a workplace of choice for all employees.*
3. *Increase economic and cultural accessibility for all community members.*
4. *Educate our owners, customers, and the wider community about food and food systems.*
5. *Model environmental sustainability through our activities, facilities, products, and services.*
6. *Grow and expand to further our mission.*

Introduction

This report summarizes the Moscow Food Co-op's baseline and first-year progress towards achievement of the recently adopted Ends policies. These new Ends policies became effective on October 1, 2014 and are intended to describe the desired outcomes that ought to result from the Moscow Food Co-op's activities – these highest-level statements of a desired outcome give purpose to our entire organization.

Ends create a framework for management's development of measurements that provide the Moscow Food Co-op community with a tangible way to see the Co-op's value to the community. Ends are visionary in nature and progress towards achievement is necessarily incremental and forward-looking. This is in contrast to Executive Empowerment policies where compliance is meeting a static set of criteria, generally based on recent history. With Ends, success must be seen as a series of purposeful steps that are inevitably driven by long-term plans.

The first step toward accomplishing Ends is interpretation. Once we have established a reasonable interpretation of the End, Moscow Food Co-op staff can begin to put together a plan for accomplishing it. These Ends are relatively new to our organization and while we have spent some staff time to develop our plans for accomplishment in the context of these new policies, we have some adjustments to make. In some instances, we developed a plan that needs to be further revised and fine-tuned. Some of the new Ends are closely related to previous Ends – these will have better developed interpretations and metrics. Our interpretations and metrics will inevitably evolve as we have

more time to consider, succeed and even fail at times in our work to operationalize these directives. It is also important to note that as an organization we have never truly embraced our Ends as guiding our business. We are working toward this cultural shift within the framework of the updated Ends.

This year's Ends report is a reflection of the work done in the first year following adoption of the new policies.

Policy A1.1 *Promote the local, sustainable, and organic foods economy.*

Interpretation & Operational Definition
The Moscow Food Co-operative, which operates a natural foods store, is charged with being a champion of the local, sustainable, and organic foods economy. The Moscow Food Co-op exists to serve its owners and the community while educating them about the importance of sourcing local, sustainable, and organic food.

We define *Local* as *grown within 200 miles of the Co-op and sold to the Co-op directly by the producer.*

Sustainable agriculture is legally defined by US Code Title 7, Section 3103. At the Co-op we rely on the University of California Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Programs explanation of sustainable agriculture. We interpret *sustainability* with regard to food systems as the idea that *we must meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainability* is, therefore, stewardship of human resources and natural resources.

The USDA defines the term *organic* with regard to food as that which *is produced using sustainable agricultural production practices*. The agency goes on to say that use of conventional pesticides; fertilizers made with synthetic ingredients or sewage sludge; bioengineering; and ionizing radiation is prohibited. Organic meats, eggs, and dairy products come from animals that have not received antibiotics or growth hormones. The Co-op relies on this definition and use of the USDA Organic label to highlight certified organic foods.

Promote is interpreted as meaning *contributing to the growth or prosperity of.* In the case of our Co-op's operations, *promoting* means that we actively seek to grow the local, sustainable, and organic foods economy by:

- offering a broad and ever-expanding selection to consumers
- paying producers fair prices for local food & goods
- actively promoting the value of buying local food and goods
- directly and indirectly educating consumers about the importance of the local, sustainable, and organic foods economy

Using the key points summarized in the Strategic Plan for each priority (End statement), management drilled down into the following key points:

- **Educating customers and building demand**
    - Educating customers
    - Communicating local
    - Merchandising with an emphasis on local
    - Building customer demand
- **Facilitating development and capacity of local producers**
    - Direct support of local producers
    - Community partnerships

Data:
The immense work of educating customers and building demand can be divided into smaller parts: **educating customers, communicating local, merchandising with an emphasis on local, and working to build customer demand.**

The task of educating customers begins with the education of staff. We began this process in 2015 by teaching staff about our business – in order to understand the value of local, they must begin by understanding the bigger picture. In 2016 we will expand the education of our staff by developing additional financial workshops that communicate the importance of doing business locally. Beyond 2016 we hope to expand this staff education to customers and community members. Educating customers also includes the data below under *building customer demand.*

Promoting the local, sustainable, and organic foods economy includes all the ways the Co-op communicates to the public the importance of locally produced food and goods. In 2015 we set out to evaluate our current signage for the *local* category. Building upon the definition of local as included above, we expanded it to also include *Idaho made/grown* food and goods, regardless of mileage.

Examples of the way we use in-store signage to communicate that products are local:

- Signage in the Deli calls out locally sourced ingredients.
- The new photos above the Meat Department are of local meat producers who belong to the Country Natural Beef family.
- The Produce Department uses signs that clearly identify the producer/farm that produced the specific product.
- We are installing new photos of local producers in the Produce Department in early 2016.

All new co-op owners receive a new owner packet that includes the strategic plan brochure and the local produce calendar, both of these items help us communicate that we value local.

Rooted, the Community News online, the e-newsletter, the blog, and our social media all communicate the values of the co-operative, especially the value we place on supporting the local economy.

In 2016 we will conduct merchandising audits to determine when and how to give locally produced food and goods priority shelf placement. As part of this process we will also review and revise the Vendor Table program in order to maximize its effectiveness and to ensure that it's fully utilized.

Education about local, active promotion of local food and goods, communication of the value and priority of local, and great merchandising all help drive customer demand for locally sourced food and goods. In addition, many of the Co-op's outreach and education efforts work to support this goal.

- In-store events that connect consumers to producers help build relationships that drive demand – Tasteful Thursdays, Taste of the Palouse, the FED Initiative, and casual demos/sampling.
- In 2015 we introduced Owner Picks and Staff Picks which highlight favorite local products.
- Owner Week raffles feature local products.

FED INITIATIVE RECIPE

Tracking our local purchases (dollars spent) is another way to hold ourselves accountable to our commitment to promoting the local economy.

Our goal at this point is to grow our local purchases in terms of dollars.

	2015 Purchases	2016 Purchases	2017 Purchases	2018 Purchases
Grocery	$ 230,825.00			
Deli	$ 135,239.00			
Wellness	$ 45,524.00			
Meat	$ 32,140.00			
Produce	$ 112,874.00			
Total	**$ 556,602.00**			

Tracking sales of local product through the register in order to report on local sales as a % of total sales is something we've spent 2015 researching. Our POS system will support the labeling of items classified as local and we will be able to report on local sales in the future. Our success in communicating our commitment to supporting the local economy will be documented by an increase in local sales through the register.

Beyond 2016 and subject to an upgrade in the POS software, we may be able to call out local dollars on the receipts of our customers.

Facilitating the development and capacity of local producers is not work that the Co-op can undertake on its own – success on this goal involves our support of existing mechanisms to develop our local producers.

TUESDAY GROWERS MARKET

The Co-op has a history of supporting producers through our direct involvement in the development of the Saturday Market. Although we no longer directly support that market, we do continue to organize, operate, and fund the Tuesday Growers Market. In 2015 we partnered with Heart of the Arts to relocate the TGM to the 1912 Center.

Additionally, in 2015 the Co-op co-sponsored and tabled at the Pullman Farmers Market and organized a handful of crop-mobbing events to directly support producers.

We continue to support our local producers by hosting an annual Farmer Mixer, by updating our vendor applications and our price list in order to remain transparent and fair. For example, in the Produce department, fair pay for producers is demonstrated by publication and distribution of a wholesale price list that clearly states what the co-op can pay producers for each crop. This level of transparency guarantees that all producers of local carrots will be paid equally.

The Co-op often partners with other organizations working to increase the development and capacity of local producers. This work includes our work and support of the Palouse Clearwater Food Coalition, the Know Your Farmer event, and the 2015 Local Investment Workshop.

Data shows accomplishment in the last year.

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Policy A1.2 *Be a workplace of choice for all employees.*

Interpretation & Operational Definition
Being a workplace of choice means that the Moscow Food Co-op is one of the best employers in the region – the regional workforce would choose to work at the Co-op over most competitors. To help achieve this, the General Manager is responsible for creating a rewarding work environment for our many talented employees.

A rewarding work environment is one where the employer works to continuously improve workplace culture and workplace communication, it is an environment that offers robust development programs for employees, and it is an environment that offers competitive pay and benefits that align with the organization's mission and goals.

Data:
Before we can work to **improve workplace culture and communication**, we have to have a baseline to start from. This baseline is determined bi-annually by our Employee Opinion Survey (conducted by a third-party consultant). The most recent EOS was conducted in fall 2015 and reported on to the Board in November with the annual monitoring of policy B1. That report outlines our baseline and objectives for the following two years.

In addition to the Employee Opinion Survey, we created a Workplace Culture Committee (the Culture Club) to help ensure management is in-tune with the needs of our employees. This committee meets regularly under the oversight of the Human Resources Manager. They report on and respond to concerns about culture, as well as designing games and treats to help build up workplace culture. Some of the culture-building activities our committee initiated in 2015 were dress-up days leading up to Christmas, rewards for Halloween costumes, they planned a staff ice skating party, coordinated our employee softball team, and more. They also help plan our all-staff meetings last year and will continue to do so in the future.

Workplace culture is greatly improved when employees understand the business, the organization's goals, and its purpose.

Open Book Management is one of the tools we use to educate staff and enhance workplace culture. We officially launched storewide OBM in August 2015. Department OBM huddles have begun in some departments and will be in place across all departments by April. In addition to meeting weekly to report out on the previous week's figures, OBM is about projecting future sales and building culture around driving those sales. As part of the OBM curriculum, we developed and offered a workshop that introduces employees to business finance, budgeting, and financial statements.

Working to improve workplace communication is an ongoing effort. Some channels of communication have been greatly enhanced by the existence of all-store OBM huddles. Each week there is a recap sent to all employees that covers the 5 big takeaways for the week. This recap helps keep us all on the

same page and is very timely. The Co-op's Culture Club publishes a monthly staff e-newsletter that is full of relevant and useful information about store operations and promotions.

As mentioned above, the Co-op hosted 2 all-staff meetings in 2015, and has the goal of hosting between 2 and 4 all-staff meetings annually. These meetings involve a business update, an educational component, food, and some fun.

Currently, we are investigating whether using ADP (our time clock and payroll service) to communicate with employees is a good option. We are also looking into the development of an intranet.

Robust training and development programs are another key to providing a rewarding work environment.

In the past, the Co-op has not necessarily been proactive about staff development. Now that the market for natural and organic foods is becoming more competitive, the Co-op needs to generate employee loyalty by investing in the ongoing development of valued employees.

In 2015 we created and launched the OBM class (described above, about business finances) and an orientation class that teaches about our food co-op and the cooperative business model (described below).

We also launched a monthly leadership training program for our assistant managers. This program is designed to enhance their job satisfaction, increase the lengths of their tenures, and to help prepare them for a future promotion.
Going forward, we are looking into development of some of the following:

- Natural foods education (although we did review the program offered by the NCG and don't feel it meets our needs)

- Cooking education
- Household finance education
- Management training
- Technical skills education
- Ongoing professional development trainings

We are also working on providing access to other training opportunities.

- Developing and implementing first-rate on-the-job training programs for new hires with clear measures of success
- Developing and implementing a formal cross-training program that rewards employees for learning
- Measuring participation in the formal cross-training program
- Reporting on our participation in trainings provided by our vendors and suppliers

Finally, we are working on providing opportunities for advancement and a transparent system.

- With the publication of the latest version of the Employee Handbook, we published a transparent pay scale.
- Developing and implementing a system to track internal promotions
- Developing tools to better guide and prepare internal applicants
- Updating all job descriptions (per the HR audit) to clearly identify the minimum qualifications for each position
- Updating all performance management tools to include a "looking forward" section wherein employees can identify their intention to move up and the skills they need to develop to be a qualified candidate

Creating a rewarding work environment involves **offering competitive pay and benefits that align with the organization's mission and goals.**

Policy B2 covers many of the limitations imposed on the General Manager with regard to fair and competitive compensation and benefits. This policy is reported upon annually and really covers only the minimum efforts to create a rewarding work environment.

We strive to exceed the minimum requirements. While the Co-op's pay scale is fair from an internal equity standpoint, it is not as competitive as we would like it to be. In the fall of 2015 we hired a consultant to truly evaluate our compensation and benefits for their competitiveness in the marketplace.

What we learned is that we don't always pay competitively and we have some work to do going forward to ensure that we retain our highly skilled and trained employees.

We do, however, offer a highly valuable and generous benefits package which contributes to employee satisfaction and retention. Our Work Perks are in addition to our formal benefits package and exist to further reward our employees for their contribution.

- Co-op Bucks (internal currency)
- The lunch program
- Bike to Work program
- Anniversary Rewards program
- Birthday Bucks program

Our work going forward is to endeavor to pay competitively in the marketplace. We will be taking baby steps towards accomplishing this goal.

Data shows accomplishment in the last year.

Policy A1.3 Increase *economic and cultural accessibility for all community members.*

Interpretation & Operational Definition
In the broadest sense, it's the goal of the Co-op to serve as many community members as possible and to ensure that all members of the greater community are welcomed. In order to achieve this, we must address and overcome real and perceived barriers, upholding the right of all persons alike to purchase healthful foods at the Co-op.

In its simplest form an **economic barrier** is nothing more than **affordability**. Economic barriers are the easiest to overcome.

Cultural barriers are more difficult to define. They consist of:

- The **perception of elitism,** which includes the notions that the Co-op is only for rich people, only for healthy people, or only for well-educated people.
- A **lack of knowledge about & comfort with natural foods** stemming from a lack of exposure to co-ops and natural foods.
- **Misperceptions about co-ops and co-op ownership** includes confusion about whether non-owners can shop, if non-owners have to pay a surcharge, and general underexposure to the Co-op business model
- **Confusion about industry political issues** including misconceptions about vegan & vegetarian lifestyles, about what Non-GMO means & why it matters, or about what free-range means.

Data:
The original goals we set in late 2014 for addressing barriers of economic exclusivity (improving **affordability**) are as follows:

- Creating and tracking participation in discount programs
- Developing a robust *Every Day Low Price* program (Co-op Essentials) and promoting the program
- Developing a grant program to fund low-income ownerships
- Implementing a formal loss-leader program to combat price image
- Evaluating sub-department margin and recommending reductions

I would like to report progress and challenges for each of the original goals.

Creating and tracking participation in discount programs – student discounts, senior discounts, and low-income discounts.

In early 2015 we worked with cooperators from GreenStar Natural Foods Market in Ithaca, NY. They developed a low-income discount program that has proven to be successful for them. With their support, we replicated their FLOWER program and launched in on April 1, 2015. To attract new co-op owners and participants in the FLOWER program, we have made applications and program information available at our local food banks, local schools, all Backyard Harvest events, the Health & Welfare office, and at the county courthouse.

We initially launched a Senior Discount program in August of 2014. At that point we offered a 5% discount. In January 2015 we increased this discount to 10% and co-branded + co-advertised with Bookpeople. The Co-op's Senior Discount is has been advertised in the Daily News as part of the Senior Fair and is promoted at Co-op events around town.

While working with Bookpeople on the details of our Senior Discount for owners, we decided to adopt their Student Discount Program as well. They offer a 10% discount to college students every Friday – we again partnered with them on signage and branding, launching our Friday 10% discount for college student owners. We promoted our Student Discount at events on both UI and WSU campuses.

The oldest ongoing discount program in place is Wellness Wednesdays which began in March 2013. This program was specifically designed to offer a 10% discount to owners (first Wednesday of every month) on Wellness items, which usually have a higher price tag than grocery items. Originally, this program was conceived of as a loyalty program (something that creates customer loyalty) for a department facing stiff competition. It has evolved into both a

loyalty program and an access program because it helps overcome economic barriers.

Access discount tracking:

	Wellness Wednesdays	Senior Discounts	Student Discounts	FLOWER Discounts	FLOWER Participants
2014	$ 7,100.00	$ 1,700.73	$ -	$ -	0
2015	$ 6,400.00	$ 37,641.57	$ 15,758.10	$ 4,740.84	46
2016					
2017					
2018					

Developing a robust Every Day Low Price (EDLP) program and promoting it.

At the end of 2014 we had an existing EDLP program called Co-op Essentials. Paula Gilbertson of the NCG evaluated the program when she provided the Co-op with our Readiness Assessment and described it as weak and disorganized. Management spent the first part of 2015 working together to review EDLP programs at other co-ops and to settle on the over-arching goals of our program.

Before we had an opportunity to revise and rebrand our own program, Marketing & Outreach staff attending the NCG's Marketing Matters Conference where the NCG introduced its official EDLP program, Co-op Basics. We adopted the Co-op Basics Program as our EDLP program on September 1st. Customers can look for the purple signs (example below) and know they are getting a great price.

We are tracking the number of items we carry that are included in the Co-op basics program. Our goal for 2016 is to increase the # of skus from 42 to 100, and to continue increasing as possible.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Co-op Basics Items	0	42	100		

3. Developing a grant program to fund low-income ownerships.

This original goal is under review to determine whether or not low-income ownerships are needed. No progress has been made.

4. Implementing a formal loss-leader program to combat price image, and 5. Evaluating sub-department margin and recommending reductions.

These two original goals have been merged together into a higher-level goal: **Developing a formal pricing strategy to help combat a negative price image and position the Co-op to be competitive in a new landscape.**

The Co-op's Merchandising Manager owns the task of developing a formal pricing strategy and, although we are not expecting a final product until late 2016, work has begun. This project involves many steps:

- Margin evaluation, assessment, and adjustment – using CoCoFiSt data, review departmental margins in comparison to our peer co-ops. Adjust to be competitive.
- Train staff on sophisticated item-level pricing strategies. Currently, margins are set at the department level. Work with buyers and IT to set margins at the item level while achieving a target department margin. Considerations include impulse vs. staple items and Good-Better-Best options within major categories.
- Use industry best practices for determining individual price points.
- Comparison shopping at our competitors. Regularly compare prices on key price-sensitive items offered at other retailers in the area. Adjust pricing to be within 10% of other outlets.

- Merchandising for value – use the Landing Pad and endcaps to communicate good value. Develop written merchandising standards to ensure that expensive items are excluded from big displays. 100% compliance with endcap header usage guidelines.

All of the **cultural barriers** described above in the policy interpretation and operational definition (**perception of elitism, lack of knowledge about & comfort with natural foods, misperceptions about co-ops and co-op ownership, and confusion about industry political issues**) can only be addressed by intentional education and outreach that reaches beyond our current customer base. There is considerable overlap between A1.3 and A1.4 with regard to education.

The original goals we set in 2014 are as follows:

- Grow beyond-store education about food and wellness.
- Grow in-store education about food and wellness.
- Increasing outreach to specific, underserved & underrepresented populations.

I would like to report progress and challenges for each of the original goals.

Creating and offering educational workshops about our Co-op, about natural foods, about natural health and wellness, and about the co-operative business model in our community.

Our first undertaking in regard to this broad educational goal was to develop workshop materials about the Moscow Food Co-op and the Co-operative Business Model. This workshop rolled out in February 2015. It was offered 7 times for owners and volunteers. Approximately 60 owners and volunteers participated in 2015 and this workshop will be required of all new volunteers going forward.
The content of this workshop was modified to suit an employee audience and offered beginning in August 2015. Since then we have offered it to staff a total of 6 times and approximately 125 employees have completed it. In 2016 and beyond, this workshop will be required paid training for all co-op employees.

Space continues to be our biggest challenge when it comes to planning and executing classes and workshops. The Co-op simply does not have the space for a dedicated classroom. In 2015 we offered education about natural foods

and natural health through our other outreach channels. Below are some examples:

Mamas & Papas 2015 curriculum included topics such as making your own natural, organic baby food, GMOs, Eating for Energy, Ayurveda, breastfeeding, homeopathy, and healthy sleep.

Co-op Kids 2015 curriculum included an opportunity to learn about probiotics, including making their own kefir (with Tourmaline Farms). Co-op Kids families also learned about natural foods, with special attention to fruits and vegetables, and essential oils.

The Co-op cosponsors the Vandalizing the Kitchen program at the UI. This is a cooking class that also teaches about using natural foods and nutrition.

We accepted an invitation to present to a UI Family and Consumer Sciences class about current labeling laws with regard to "organic" and "natural". We also gave our Eating for Energy presentation at Palouse Prairie Charter School.

We offered a cheese-making class!

Looking beyond 2015, we have researched best practices for implementing a robust workshop/class schedule. You can take a look at our recently launched online calendar here. We are working with other organizations in the area to provide space in lieu of our own classroom.

Developing and providing in-store education.

In-store education consists of educational materials provided for customers and interactive in-store programs that provide education.

Both the FED Iniative and the Demo program provide food samples and education (about natural foods, selection and preparation of ingredients, recipes) to customers who are shopping. In addition to these food demos, the Wellness Department regularly invites vendors to both demo and educate about their products.

Marketing and Outreach staff has created many printed materials for the purpose of educating our owners and shoppers about natural foods, co-ops, natural health, and more. Some examples include:

- Gluten-Free Guide

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General Manager Monitoring Report

References and Resources

Celiac Central
www.celiaccentral.org

Gluten Intolerance Group
www.gluten.net

Enjoy Life | Survival Guide
www.enjoylifefoods.com/survivalguide

Denver Post | Tips for Gluten-Free Holidays
www.denverpost.com/search/ci_7696020

Mayo Clinic | Gluten-Free Diet
www.mayoclinic.com/health/gluten-free-diet/MY01140

Whole Grains Council | Gluten Free Whole Grains
www.wholegrainscouncil.org/whole-grains-101/gluten-free-whole-grains

Today's Dietician | Is There a Link Between Nutrition and Autoimmune Disease?
www.todaysdietitian.com/newarchives/110211p36.shtml

University of Arizona | Gluten Free Diet: Brand Name List
www.health.arizona.edu/health_topics/nutrition/handouts/Gluten%20Free%20Diet%20Brand%20Name%20List.pdf

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Gluten-Free Guide
Tips, tricks + information for a gluten-free diet

Whether you were diagnosed with Celiac disease, you've discovered that you are gluten-intolerant or you simply decide to eat a gluten-free diet, imagineing your diet without gluten—and the plentiful food products that contain it—can be a bit overwhelming. But it doesn't have to be! With the help of this guide, you'll learn the ropes of a gluten-free diet, including:

- Gluten FAQ
- Nutrition guidance
- Recipe substitutions
- Tips for the socially active gluten intolerant
- A list of companies who use dedicated processing facilities
- Common (and hidden!) sources of gluten to avoid

What is gluten?
Gluten is a protein found in wheat, barley, and rye. Gluten also shows up in many whole grain foods related to wheat, including bulgur, farro, kamut, and spelt. Baked goods such as breads, bagels and pizza get their chewy texture from gluten.

Why a gluten-free diet?
The most common reasons are for those who suffer from Celiac disease, gluten sensitivity, or a wheat allergy. Research has recently began to determine whether or not a gluten-free diet is beneficial for other autoimmune diseases, including lupus, multiple sclerosis, and rheumatoid arthritis.

Disclaimer: This is an informative brochure, it is not meant in any way to substitute for medical advice. All guidelines in this brochure should be questioned, discussed and confirmed with your doctor.

Brands You Can Trust
Certified Gluten-Free Brands at the Co-op

We have numerous gluten-free products, but not all of them are produced by a completely gluten-free company or facility. Below you'll find some of the brands we carry on the shelf or in bulk that produce gluten-free products using only dedicated gluten-free facilities:

Dessert Essence	Gluten-Free Mama	Mary's Gone Crackers	Dr. Schar
Mineral Fusion	Enjoy Life	So Delicious Dairy-Free	Lucy's
Vitamin Code Vitamins	Gluten-Free Pantry	Oskri Organics	Rudi's
Udi's Gluten Free	Namaste Foods	YumEarth Organics	Bob's Red Mill
Lundberg	Pamela's Products	Bakery on Main	Mrs. Leeper's
Lara Bars	Kind Bars	Daiya	Gluten Free Café
Bumble Bars	Feel Good Foods	Harvester Brewing	Food For Life
Glutino	MegaFood	Ancient Harvest	Glutenfreeda

Important information for STUDENTS on a gluten-free diet

Students in K-12 education can fill out paperwork to enroll in a 504 plan requiring the school to provide accommodated lunches due to a diagnosis of Celiac disease or non-Celiac gluten sensitivity. In college, the student must contact the disabilities office and provide documentation of the medical condition in order to be accommodated.

Need an allergy-friendly snack for your child's classroom? Place an order for our **Gluten-Free or Vegan Cupcakes**

Please note, our GF baked goods are not made in a wheat-free facility. Visit www.moscowfood.coop for more options.

TIPS for the socially-active gluten intolerant

1. **Call your host** or hostess ahead of time. Find out what will be served and let him or her know why you are asking. Don't be shy! Use this conversation as an opportunity to educate someone about what it means to be gluten-free. This also works for restaurants—call ahead to inquire about their gluten-free options, or visit the Gluten Free Registry (www.glutenfreeregistry.com) for an interactive list of restaurants that provide gluten-free options. They even have an app for your smartphone!
2. **Always offer to bring a dish** that will work for you when going to a social event. This takes the pressure off of the host, and guarantees that you will have at least one thing you can eat.
3. **Always thank your host** for any accommodations they make for your allergy.
4. **Keep snacks** in your purse, pocket or in the car. If you don't get enough to eat, you can fill up on something during the ride home.
5. **Keep great gluten-free treats** at home. If there was a great dessert in which you could not partake, you should have something to satisfy that hankering when you get home.

- Cheaper by the Dozen pamphlet

10. Bring Your Own Bags

For every reusable bag or reusable drink cup that you use during your shopping trip, we take 10 cents off of your shopping total. You can also choose to donate this money to local non-profits and charities through our Dime in Time program, which features a new local organization each month.

11. Join Our Grow-Op Garden or Become a Participating Owner

The GROW-Op Garden brings volunteers from the Moscow Food Co-op and Backyard Harvest together to grow a garden cooperatively. The garden plot will be used as a teaching and learning space for people with all levels of knowledge related to gardening as well as an opportunity for food access. Don't know how to grow peas? Consider yourself to have a black thumb? Not a problem! We're simply looking for volunteers who are eager to help grow food and community. Volunteers will also be treated to special perks provided by the Moscow Food Co-op, such as free garden-grown produce!

The Participating Owner Program provides our owners with a means to deepen their involvement and impact in our community. These volunteers play a pivotal role in our cooperative by sharing their talents and donating their time to activities such as teaching customers about food and nutrition, facilitating playgroups and clubs, contributing to our publications, and more. Currently, participating owners receive 18% discount vouchers for their efforts.

12. Become a Co-op Owner

A cooperative is a business owned by its members. Everyone is welcome; once customers discover the benefits of ownership, they may want to join and take advantage of owner sales and discounts and the benefits of local investment and control. Being an owner is an investment that helps build a healthy and thriving food community.

The Moscow Food Co-op has one of the lowest rates in the country when it comes to our share prices (we call this "equity"). For just $10 a year, anyone can get access to a host of special benefits just for our owners and all of which help to make the Co-op a wallet-friendly place to shop.

In addition to democratic control, some of our owner perks are:

Special Sales Prices
- "Owner-only" sale prices
- 10% off the shelf price when you buy a case of any single product
- 10% off supplements, body care and mercantile items on Wellness Wednesdays (first Wednesday of each month)
- Seniors over 55 save 10% every Thursday
- College students with their student ID save 10% every Friday
- Discounts at over 80 local businesses through our Business Partner Program

Patronage Dividends
The cooperative model is based on sharing the wealth — literally. Each year that the Co-op is profitable, a portion of those profits may be given back to owners based on how much they spent.

Frequent Buyer Cards
Utilize our "owner-only" frequent buyer cards to gain a free item:
- Co-op Bread (gluten-free, too!): buy 10 loaves and the 11th is free
- Co-op Cookies: buy 12 cookies and the 13th is free

MOSCOW FOOD CO+OP SINCE 1973

Cheaper by the Dozen
12 Ways to Save at the Co-op

1. Make a Meal Plan & Shopping List

Knowing your food budget and what items you plan to purchase helps you make the most of your shopping dollars and prevents impulse buying. There is a great online recipe book called "Eat Well on $4/Day Good and Cheap" by Leanne Brown – you can find a copy on our website and a printed version with our recipe books in bulk.

Also, try keeping an ongoing list of staples that family members can add to when an ingredient is running low or gone. Placing the list in a visible, common area such as the refrigerator or kitchen counter encourages everyone to participate.

2. Scour Your Pantry

It's amazing how easy it can be to forget about those items that drift to the back of your pantry. Checking it regularly, along with your refrigerator and freezer, can help you stay on top of your inventory and prevent you from buying food that you don't need. Utilizing straggling ingredients also gives you an opportunity to exercise your creativity and put your chef hat on!

The Co-op has a host of recipes available that incorporate sales and seasonal ingredients. Check out the recipes in our Information Center across from the Customer Solutions Desk in the front of the store, the featured recipes in our weekly and bi-weekly sales flyers, our educational food demos, the budget cookbook, and our blog for even more ideas!

3. Make a Little Extra

When you create your meal plan for the week, try to incorporate meals that you know will make great leftovers. Things that are easily reheated and keep well in the refrigerator, like casseroles, soups, and stir-frys are all great, easy options.

Another idea is to start a "leftover train" by making more of a time-consuming ingredient on one night that can be used in meals throughout the week. For example, try preparing a big pot of black beans or roasting a whole chicken. In the end this can save both time and money.

4. Shop the Sales + Use Coupons

Planning meals around what you know will be on sale allows you take advantage of the best deals. Pick up a new sales flyer and the latest Co+op Deals coupon book from the Customer Solutions Desk. You can also check the Weekly Fresh Flyer for some great owner deals. Look for orange dollar off labels on things like meat, produce and baked goods that are close to "sell by date". These items are perfect for a meal that night or to toss in the freezer for later.

Follow your favorite food producer or companies on Facebook (and the Co-op too!) as they often advertise impromptu coupons and savings. You can also sign up for our e-newsletter or download our app to receive special coupons directly.

TIP: As a Co-op owner, you can save an additional 10% on sale items by ordering a case during the sales period. This is especially good for non-perishable staples such as pasta, beans, boxed dinners and frozen foods, and for household items such as soap, toilet paper, and cleaning supplies.

5. Co-op Basics + FLOWER

The Co-op is actively working to find opportunities to make the items you use most often more affordable. That's why we joined the Co+op Basics program, through which we're happy to offer popular products at consistently low prices. Keep your eyes peeled for items marked with our purple Basics signage throughout the Co-op, or ask any staff person to help you find these products.

FLOWER stands for Fresh, Local, and Organic within Everyone's Reach. This is a new owner discount program designed to directly increase food access to those most in need as well as provide them with educational resources and tools for healthy cooking on a budget. Through FLOWER we are able to extend a 10% discount to owners that have limited resources to allot to natural, wholesome food and eco-friendly products. Any owner receiving food stamps, WIC, Medicaid, TANF, or free school lunches are eligible. The FLOWER discount can be stacked with the Co+op Basics deals, but can't be used for certain purchases such as alcohol and branded merchandise.

6. Shop Locally and Seasonally

As a food co-op, we source a lot of our produce from local and regional farms, which means food travels a shorter distance to get to you and that the money you spend on it stays in our community. Locally grown produce stays fresh and retains more valuable nutrients than fruits and vegetables shipped over long distances. Plus, a shorter commute means lower shipping costs, resulting in cheaper food for you – when supply is high, the price goes down.

Another great way to shop locally and seasonally is by shopping at the various Farmers Markets in our area to get farmer/grower direct prices. Backyard Harvest attends many of the markets each week matching each EBT and SNAP dollars spent up to $10 with their Shop the Market program. With Shop the Market you can literally double your savings!

7. Love Bulk

All of the effort and materials required to put rice in a box isn't cheap. By filling up in the bulk section, you can cut prices. In fact, a 2012 study found that shoppers can save an average of 89% by purchasing natural and organic food from the bulk department of grocery stores. Also, consider replacing high cost single-serving snacks with ones you package yourself. Buy in bulk and package your own nuts, dried fruit, and other items in reusable containers.

You can save even more by placing special orders for larger quantities – for example 25 pounds of flour, a one pound bag of cinnamon, or a gallon of honey will save owners an additional 10% on the per-pound price. That 10% special order owner discount stacks with sale prices too! Even if you don't have storage space for large bulk purchases, you can ask a friend or two to go in on these bigger purchases and then divy it up yourself. This way, you can still take advantage of low bulk prices and the special order discount, but also get the quantity you need.

8. Shop the Perimeter

The outer aisles of your Co-op are stocked with whole foods: fruits and vegetables, dairy, bulk foods, eggs and meat. You get more bang for your buck with these nutritional powerhouses. In general, packaged foods are more expensive because they have been prepared for you. Start considering dry beans vs. canned, bulk whole grains vs. instant or pre-cooked grains (like rice or oats).

9. Store, Store, Storage

An estimated 25% of our global food supply is lost to spoilage and about 40% of America's food supply goes uneaten. Ask our knowledgeable staff how to store produce so it stays fresh longer — like storing mushrooms in a paper bag (as opposed to a plastic one), wrapping the crown of a banana bunch with plastic wrap, and storing potatoes and onions separately (the gases released by the potatoes will cause the onions to spoil faster).

Since in-season items are often much cheaper (and tastier), you can always buy them when they're cheapest and freeze them for use throughout the year. You can also freeze produce you know you won't get to use before it goes bad, making it available for future dishes.

TIP: It can be difficult to use up a whole package of fresh herbs before the leaves start to wilt or spoil. Try this technique: Fill each section of an ice cube tray with two or three tablespoons of your cooking oil of choice. Chop your fresh herbs and add about one tablespoon to each section of the tray. Simply store in the freezer and pop a cube into your pan while cooking.

- In October, we celebrated National Co-op Month with an educational table, take ownership education, co-operatively themed raffle prizes, and "Did You Know" signage at the shelf.

MOSCOW FOOD CO-OP

General Manager Monitoring Report

CO-OPS Take OWNERSHIP

MOSCOW FOOD CO-OP

EST. 1973

CELEBRATE CO-OPS

People form cooperatives to pool their resources and secure needed services or products. Co-ops operate in every industry, including agriculture, energy, housing, and insurance.

Like the Moscow Food Co-op, cooperative businesses are equally owned and democratically controlled by members who use their services. Unlike businesses with a focus on shareholder profit, the democratic co-op model helps ensure that our store serves the needs and desires of our local owners and community.

COOPERATIVE FACTS:

- In the early 1900s, rural citizens formed electric cooperatives because for-profit utilities did not think it would be profitable to serve rural areas. Today, more than 900 rural electric co-ops deliver electricity to more than 42 million people.
- Recreational Equipment Incorporated (REI) is a cooperative that was formed in 1938 by 25 Northwest mountain climbers who wanted high quality ice axes and outdoor gear. REI is now the largest consumer cooperative in the United States with more than 3 million member-owners.
- Food co-ops pioneered nutritional labeling, the growth of organic and bulk foods, and consumer education.
- People formed credit unions in the early 1900s because most banks at that time only served businesses. Credit unions return earnings to their members, not outside shareholders, through lower loan rates and fees, and higher interest rates.
- Nearly 30,000 co-ops, empowered by 350 million member-owners, operate in the U.S.

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Increasing outreach to specific underserved and underrepresented populations.

Based on our most recent shopper survey results (2009), the typical Moscow Food Co-op customer is female, over the age of 40, college educated, lives in Moscow, and has no children living at home.

Underrepresented populations are those folks who fall outside the description of our typical customer. Below is a summary of our 2015 Outreach work that is intended to reach beyond our typical customer. This is not an exhaustive list.

Outreach to college students

- WSU Wellness Fair
- WSU Week of Welcome
- WSU Earth Day Celebration
- UI Sustainability Showcase
- Bike Fix
- Palousafest
- Career Counseling Tour
- Environmental Studies 101 Tour
- Vandal Cooking classes

Outreach to families

- Headstart presentation
- Mamas & Papas
- Co-op Kids
- Store Tours (Emmanuel Preschool, UI Children's Center, 4-H Teens, Little Explorers Preschool Tour, etc.)
- Kenworthy Cartoon Series sponsorship

Outreach beyond Moscow

- Sponsorship of and participation at the Pullman Farmers Market
- Participation at the Lentil Festival
- All participation at WSU events

Outreach to other populations

- Radio Night at the Pool
- KRFP Radio Show appearances
- Presentation to UI International Students (ALCP program)
- Store tours for international students
- Tuesday Growers Market
- Tasteful Thursdays

- Science After Hours
- Food For Thought Film Series
- Moscow First Thursdays
- Art Walk
- Good Food Book Club
- Tuesday Night Music

We work hard to attract new customers through our Outreach efforts and we work to provide numerous opportunities for customers and community members to engage with the food co-op. For our own internal use, we track attendance at events, count the number of people who visit our table/booth (whenever possible), record the number of new ownerships our outreach efforts generate, and track the number of new e-newsletter subscriptions generated at outreach events.

Annual shopper surveys are the truest metric to determine whether our work addressing these cultural barriers has been effective at expanding our community of co-op shoppers. In 2015 we researched our options as far as resources for conducting a customer survey. We are working with WSU Social Science students to conduct a survey in early 2016.

Beyond 2016, the co-op will survey its customers every two or three years, as we can afford, to establish demographics of our current base of customers. Using survey results, we will tailor our outreach efforts to continue reaching underrepresented populations.

Data shows accomplishment in the last year.

Policy A1.4 *Educate our owners, customers, and the wider community about food and food systems.*

Interpretation & Operational Definition
Our Co-op strives to be an influential champion of the local foodshed, and as such we are responsible for educating our community about food and food systems.

Food is simply the things that people eat. A *food system* is essentially everything from farm to table. *To educate* means that we provide accurate, thoughtful, and well-researched information with the intention of improving the knowledge base of our community and helping to create better consumers.

It is the goal of our Co-op to directly and/or indirectly educate consumers and community members about all aspects of local food from the farm to the table.

In-store education about food and food systems takes place in both formal and informal ways.

- Formal food education happens as part of the FED Initiative, as part on-site outreach and education programs, and with informative signage around the store
- Informal food education happens when customers interact with knowledgeable employees

Beyond-store education about food and food systems includes written and digital education and off-site classes, workshops, and outreach programs. Beyond-store education also includes education that occurs in partnership with other community groups who focus on the local food system.

Some of our education and outreach work is reviewed/discussed/explained in the previous sections of this report.

Data:
Our of the outreach and education initiatives (both **in-store** and **beyond-store**) that and apply here (some of which have already been reported on above) are:

- The FED Initiative
- Our Demo Program
- Tasteful Thursdays
- Taste of the Palouse

- Rooted and blog content
- Social Media content
- Food education at various tabling events
- Participation at the Pullman Farmers Market
- The Tuesday Growers Market
- Vandalizing the Kitchen cooking classes
- Our work with the Palouse Clearwater Food Coalition
- Participation in Food Summit 4.0, sponsorship of Carol Peppe Hewitt's visit, and work on the Camas Community Lending Network
- Participation in the Local Investment Workshop with Michael Shuman
- Our work on the Know your Farmer workshop
- FMPP Grant Work
- Participation in the Rocky Mountain Seed Alliance Event

In addition, the Co-op has offered some additional opportunities to educate our community about all things farm to table. These include"

- Three Crop Mobbing events in 2015 where community members and co-op employees mob a local farm to help with the work. One of our Crop Mobs was helping Sexton Farms with blueberry harvest.
- All of our Gardening Programs designed to teach basic food production to a diverse audience
- The Produce Department participates in farm tours to increase their knowledge
- Our partnership with Backyard Harvest to teach gardening classes
- We worked with Good Samaritan and Brush Creek Creamery to offer a cheese making class

growing UP gardening

MOSCOW FOOD CO+OP

General Manager Monitoring Report

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General Manager Monitoring Report

In 2015 we worked to establish the Moscow Food Co-op's own Cooperative Community Fund. Our fund, the Seed Sowers Fund, was created specifically to generate financial support that will eventually be granted to local organizations whose work aligns with the mission and values of our co-op. Supporting the local foodshed, education efforts about the local foods economy, and farm to table education are all priorities for the money generated by this fund. We will continue to raise money to invest in order to grow our fund.

SEED SOWERS fund

Principle Six
co-operative trade movement

In 2016 we are working toward launching our own P6 program based on the work of our peer co-ops in partnership with Equal Exchange.

This program is about the Co-operative Trade Movement and seeks to educate consumers about co-ops, about the value locally sourced food, and about the work of small producers.

Data shows accomplishment in the last year.

Policy A1.5 *Model environmental sustainability through our activities, facilities, products, and services.*

Interpretation & Operational Definition
On behalf of our owners, we are consistently & actively striving to minimize the Co-op's environmental impact. Our impact includes our direct resource consumption, the amount of garbage we produce, the amount of cardboard we recycle, the amount of compost we generate, and the environmental impact of the products we sell.

Our goals with regard to modeling environmental sustainability are to maintain a permanent and active **sustainability committee**, to consider **sustainability as an important piece of business operations**, providing staff and the community **education about sustainability**, and researching **sustainability certification options**.

Data:
In January 2015 we launched our internal **Sustainability Committee**. Although the Co-op has had committees like this in the past, it had been a number of years since an active committee existed.

This standing committee was created with the intention of reviewing our current work and sustainability efforts, and making recommendations for improving our performance. This initial committee was structured to include representation from across departments. The committee met monthly in 2015, accomplishing quite a bit of work along the way. Some of the highlights are below:

- The committee began by creating a mission statement
- They created Employee Sustainability Solution Sheets to gather suggestions, ideas, and feedback from employees and posted them around the Co-op
- They evaluated the waste stream in the Bakery and worked with local food banks to take day-old product rather than seeing it go completely to waste
- The encouraged the development and formal adoption of the e-receipt option
- They evaluated the waste stream in Produce and reached out to the community to find an additional use for waxed produce boxes

In 2016 and beyond, this committee is looking for a way to either expand to include some owners or to create an additional committee of owners.

Measuring impact and direct resource consumption were additional goals we set for ourselves in 2015 and beyond. In order to reduce the Co-op's environmental impact, we must first measure it. In Fall 2015 we enrolled in the NCG's Co+efficient Program – an online tool for measuring environmental impact.

Facilities spent many hours uploading historical data into the tool in order to establish a sustainability baseline for our business. Going forward we will be able to use the dashboard tool to compare our own impact and improvements year over year, and we will be able to compare ourselves to our peers.

Co+efficient will help us track things like energy usage and water usage, it also enables us to accurately track garbage produced, recycling generated, compost generated, cardboard bales recycled, and more.

An additional environmental impact to consider is the **environmental impact of the products we sell.** Because produce and bulk foods have the least amount of packaging, the goal of promoting sales in those departments as the more sustainable option is part of our 2016 Marketing Plan.

In addition to encourage our customers to make more sustainable buying choices, our work with the NCG is supporting efforts to encourage manufacturers to choose the most sustainable packaging options they can.

Modeling environmental sustainability also means **sharing our sustainability story** and working to **educate the community about sustainability**. The Sustainability Committee began sharing our sustainability story with staff. They regularly submitted articles for the Worker Bee and are planning on using the Co+efficient dashboard results to further communicate our successes with both staff and the community alike.

Community education about sustainability and other environmental initiatives is driven by our Marketing & Outreach Department. In 2015 sustainability education components were included in content for Co-op Kids, Mamas & Papas, the Food For Thought Film Series, the Good Food Book Club. The Co-op participated in multiple Earth Day Celebrations, the community Sustainability Fair, and offered another Vermicomposting Workshop.

MOSCOW FOOD CO-OP
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The Co-op continues to offer an incentive program for re-using to-go coffee cups and reusable grocery bags. In 2015, we donated $6385 back to the community through our Dime in Time Program. That's a minimum of 63,850 single use bags and cups we helped keep out of the landfill.

The Co-op encourages and incentivizes using alternative transportation (Not-driving punch card). In 2016 we plan to make changes to this program in order to align with a national program called Bicycle Benefits which, in addition to encouraging bicycle transportation, works to build community among downtown businesses.

Some of our peer co-ops rely on third-party certification to celebrate their sustainability efforts. Specifically, some NCG co-ops have a relationship with

the Sustainable Food Trade Association (SFTA). In 2016, our Sustainability Committee will work with the General Manager to determine whether or not our Co-op should strive toward a third-party sustainability certification.

Data shows accomplishment in the last year.

Policy A1.6 *Grow and expand to further our mission.*

Interpretation & Operational Definition
All of the possible options our Co-op has for future growth and expansion must be considered in relation to our mission statement. We must ask ourselves if a growth scenario supports our intention to work cooperatively in the nurturing and nourishing of our community.

The word community (in our mission statement) can mean many things. For our purposes, we are using an all-encompassing definition that includes all inhabitants of our region as part of our community, not just the smaller community of current Co-op owners. By *community* we mean anyone who lives in our region and may someday become a customer of our Co-op, including children.

Using this definition of community makes the challenge of nurturing and nourishing a big job.

There are many ways our Co-op can grow in support of our mission. We can **grow our ownership and our equity investment**, we can **expand our business** from a single-store local operation to a multi-store regional operation, and we can work to **grow the co-operative economy**.

Data:
Growth in ownership and equity investment are inherently aligned with our mission. This kind of growth includes both attracting new co-op owners to invest, as well as encouraging current co-op owners to pay in more equity (above the $10 minimum) and become lifetime co-op owners.

Our ownership goals (both lifetime and new) are to increase ownership to 8,500 by December 2016 and to 10,000 by December 2017.

Owners Week is our single biggest opportunity to both recruit new co-op owners and to encourage lifetime ownership. We held two Owners Weeks in 2015 and have planned to expand that to three Owners Weeks in 2016.

Owners Week events offer owners tangible benefits of ownership by way of sale pricing and they include an Owner Drive for new owners, as well as incentives for becoming a lifetime owner.

Additionally, we are planning on recruiting 1000 new owners specifically from the Pullman area in 2016.

We are also actively working on **growth and expansion of the business.** This is the combined work of the Board and Management.

Specifically, we've been working on our expansion to Pullman. In late 2014 and early 2015 we hired a consultant to do two market studies. These studies evaluated our trade area, evaluated our growth potential for our current Moscow store, and evaluated our untapped potential in the Pullman area.

Overlapping with our Market Study work, we invited an NCG Development Advisor to evaluate our operational readiness. She provided a written evaluation of our current operation and suggestions for improvements. We have been working on her suggestions during 2015 and this work will continue for the foreseeable future. This work has been the primary focus of the Management Team.

In late 2015 we hosted two owner forums to discuss growth and expansion to the Pullman area. These were great opportunities for the Board and Management to engage with stakeholders and to answer questions about expansion.

We engaged the NCG's Development Co-op to provide some expansion services, Moscow store renovation suggestions, and lease negotiation support.
The DC sent two consultants to visit in December 2015 to help us in the site selection process. They've also provided support for interviewing developers and done some financial pro forma work for our Co-op.

This work continues through 2016 and beyond. A Pullman expansion is only the first step in what I hope will be a regional expansion plan.

Beyond expanding the business of the Moscow Food Co-op, we have worked to expand the co-operative economy and co-op consciousness in the Moscow community.

In 2015 I began working with a group of community members who are interested in preserving the local video store for the community. Although we spoke about private ownership options, the then steering committee settled on cooperative ownership and we officially created the Main Street Video Co-operative.

In 2016 I will continue to work on this project as the MSVC's Board President. This continues to be a fantastic opportunity to spread the work about the benefits of cooperation.

Data shows accomplishment in the last year.