Daily Updates on Store Operations, COVID-19

March 20, 2020

Hi everyone,

We're going to try to meet the needs of our seniors and other at-risk customers by offering curb-side pickup. As much as I would love to report that this will be a smooth process, it'll probably be messy while it get it up and running.

- Marketing and myself are the leads on this, with the Finance Team as back-up so that we don't put any additional burden on floor staff.
- We'll announce later today (I think) that customers can place an email request at orders@moscowfood.coop
- We're still working on the language and on all the info we need people to provide to us.
- We're going to start with a 1pm - 5pm Monday through Friday pick-up window. We will not accept cash (cc preferred, checks accepted)
- I requested a reserved parking spot on Washington from the City.

We're currently down about 10 employees for various illnesses and some self-quarantining. In anticipation of slower sales, we're not hiring any new folks until it's absolutely necessary.

Several admin staff are going to be trained to cashier. When we reduce Prepared Foods offerings (probably this Sunday), we'll shift around any displaced folks and train them to run a cash register, among other things.

The City Council had an emergency meeting today and signed a couple of orders - all bars and restaurants are impacted, grocery stores are exempt. You can read the info here:

https://moscowid.civicclerk.com/Web/GenFile.aspx?ad=1176

https://moscowid.civicclerk.com/Web/GenFile.aspx?ad=1177

As I'm sure you've noticed, we're experiencing serious supply chain disruptions. Our standing delivery schedule from UNFI is Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings. Currently, we're getting trucks at least 24 hours later than normal. Today's truck is supposed to arrive tomorrow morning.

Thank you for everything!
Melinda

March 21, 2020

Hi everyone,

We did get a UNFI truck this morning. I came in to help get the shelves stocked so that we have some stuff to offer folks. We still do not have every item we normally stock - we did get some

pasta and some varieties of canned beans, but not much in the realm of non-foods (TP, paper towels, cleaners, etc.)

For perspective:
Week ending March 7th - total sales were up over 11%, grocery was up 9%
Week ending March 14th - total sales were up over 43%, grocery was up 50%
This week - total sales are currently up almost 12% (stocking levels have been a challenge), grocery is up 25%

The city did provide us with a dedicated parking spot for curb-side service. The sign was up early this morning. We're still planning to try this out on Monday afternoon, knowing that it won't be ideal - but it is the right thing to do for however long this lasts.

Stay safe and healthy!
Melinda

March 22, 2020

Hi everyone,

It's super quiet in the store today -- eerily quiet.

Sales were down yesterday fairly significantly. I suspect it's a combination of factors. People are staying at home (plus, they all panic shopped, so they don't need anything yet) and our inventory levels are still terrible.

We ended the week 4.7% up (total sales), and Grocery was up just shy of 15%.

I'm anticipating that lots of folks are going to want curb-side service - hopefully that'll be wildly successful.

We haven't heard about our truck that usually arrives on Monday morning - we'll expect to see it as scheduled until we hear otherwise. Keep your fingers crossed.

Stay healthy out there!
Melinda

March 23, 2020

Hi everyone,

I completely forgot to send this last night.

Sunday sales were also pretty terrible - again, we're not sure how much of it is the lack of products for sale on our shelves vs. folks opting to shelter at home. There were a fair number of shoppers in the store.

We did get our UNFI truck on Monday, as expected. I helped get the order stocked before we started shopping for curb-side pick-up. Not too many people tried that service yesterday (which is good, we wanted to try it out at a slower pace), but the folks whom we helped were incredibly thankful to us.

Plus, it was nice to feel like we were doing something for people in a time when lots of people are feeling disenfranchised.

We're imagining that we'll be very busy with curb-side today because it's senior Tuesday.

That's about it for now - I hope you're all doing well and staying healthy!
Melinda

March 24, 2020

Hi everyone,

Here's what we know today:

- Yesterday's sales were down 25%. All departments were down a bit, PF was down 65%.
- Today has been significantly busier - we may not reach LY sales ($39,355.89), but we're getting close! ($35,425.98 as of 6pm). For comparison, yesterday we only did $21,407.31 in sales.
- We helped many customers buy groceries for curbside pick-up today - it was definitely the highlight of my day!
- I chatted with the folks at Main Market today about our curbside pick-up option and specifically what we're doing.
- We are still planning on receiving our UNFI truck tomorrow AND, rumor has it, that we're expecting that delivery to include toilet paper (which we haven't had for over a week)!
- Going forward, we'll be asking folks to bag their own groceries if they want to use their own bags.
- It is likely that we will not open up the campus store after this week. We may not even be open all week, this week. Sales on Monday were only $42.
- We're considering installing a couple of plexiglass barriers to protect cashiers from customers (they can't effectively keep to social distancing guidelines). Some other Co-ops have done this. I kind of hate it, but we're not sure what else to do.
- We're working with UI extension to help our local producers who are suffering from restaurant closures and who will be negatively impacted by the changes made to the Moscow Farmers Market schedule. I'll share more as I know more.

More tomorrow! Stay healthy out there.
Melinda

March 25, 2020

Hi everyone,

UNFI

Our UNFI truck did come this morning, but with only a portion of our order. Our entire packaged grocery order was cancelled at the warehouse. I spent some time on the phone with NCG folks today to try to get this resolved (and to complain about our empty shelves). Brandon at NCG said he'd ask UNFI to prioritize us for Friday's delivery. At this point we're hoping for one great order every two weeks.

1/3 of warehouse order-picking staff called out last night, so UNFI is working with severely limited resources and a significant increase in demand. Our customers have been very understanding of our supply chain issues.

Staff Safety

We're going to move forward on installing some plexiglass at the registers to protect staff from customers who may be ill.

We're brainstorming ways to create extra space in the store where staff can safely break without being piled up on top of one another in our small breakroom.

We have approximately 13 staffers out for various illness related reasons.

Following the Governor's orders, we've asked staff to cease all non-essential travel and will ask those who choose to travel to self-quarantine for 14 days.

COVID-19

In light of today's shelter-in-place order (statewide, we streamed Governor Little's press conference), we're anticipating an increase in curbside service requests. We're planning on extending this service to all 7 days of the week and planning to use some prepared foods staff to help.

We're now asking customers who bring bags to use the bag platforms at the end of each register (they pull out) and to bag their own groceries. No one seems to mind.

We're trying to keep the bulk aisle staffed 100% of the hours we're open to help ensure that customers are using gloves. We're offering to pack things for them, when we can.

Tomorrow you can look for additional signs alerting customers that we're doing our best to follow social distancing guidelines and that we need them to follow those guidelines, too.

Onward!!

Melinda

March 27, 2020

Hi everyone,

I totally left yesterday afternoon without sending this draft. Apologies!!

Campus
We've decided to close the campus location at the end of the day today. Ethan will be shifting to working downtown for the time being. All the inventory from campus will be moved downtown so that we have more items on our very empty shelves.

The outdoor furniture at the campus location is on loan from my backyard. My husband is going to pick it up today and take it home to touch up the paint and tighten the screws, etc. We'll put it back out once the store opens back up.

Curbside Pick-up
We're expanded this service to those who would just prefer to not come inside the store (in light of Governor Little's order). We're working with staff PF staff to expand the hours we can offer this. Willow and I will both work Saturday in case folks would like curbside pickup.

Social Distancing
I sent a reminder to the Store Manager and all department managers about social distancing guidelines and asked that we communicate to all staff that we need to model this behavior whenever possible. I've also asked that all meetings

We're installing plexiglass at four cash registers later today (hopefully).

UNFI
As of right now, UNFI is sending us an extra truck tomorrow (so, we should have two deliveries). This is to try to compensate us for the two orders they've cancelled in the last two weeks. Heck, we may even get some TP!

If said deliveries show up at the dock, we'll be using all available staff to try to stock the shelves while maintaining social distancing guidelines.

March 28, 2020

Hi everyone,

UNFI
We did get a partial order this morning. We're missing about 7 pallets of goods that should have arrived (we have an invoice for them), but even UNFI isn't sure where they are. We're on

standby for a miracle truck to appear while UNFI tries to figure out where they sent our stuff. The fun never ends!

E-Commerce
I had a conference call with David and Kate Nelson today (Cordelia) about an ASAP launch of our e-commerce platform. We're working out the last details and are going to try to launch for real sometime next week. It might not be smooth, but we can work out the kinks while using it. And we're hoping it will really help sales. I'll update you as we progress.

Sales this week
Sales have been very slow this week. We're down, total store, 17% compared to the same week last year. Part of that is fewer customers, part of that is that we have less inventory on the shelves. We are continuing to move available staff around so that folks have work to do.

Social Distancing
Plexiglass was installed yesterday at four registers. So far, so good. We've repeatedly asked staff to do their best to adhere to the 6' rule for social distancing.

I'm headed out for the day. I have the unfortunate responsibility of taking my daughter, Madeline, to Quick Care to get stitches removed from her arm (skiing accident on the 15th). Fingers crossed that we don't get exposed to this virus.

Take care out there!
Melinda

March 29, 2020

Hi everyone,

Sales
We ended last week 18% down.

I'm asking Kerry to work with Heather (HR) on a staffing reduction contingency plan should this trend continue. We're planning on doing everything we can to keep folks employed.

Social Distancing
New signs went up around the store and at the cast registers asking people to mind those social distancing guidelines. Don't be surprised if we tape the floors next.

E-Commerce
We've scheduled our first staff training on the web portal for Monday (tomorrow) at 1pm. I should know by tomorrow afternoon how close we are to a launch date. We're planning on offering curbside via web traffic all 7 days of the week, from 10am to 6pm (trying to be available for the most customers).

In the meantime, usage of curbside pick-up (by email or phone) continues to increase. We're filling a handful of orders today even though we didn't offer the service. Once e-commerce launches, we will try to route as many orders through the web portal as possible, but we will not eliminate phone and email ordering for those folks who need extra assistance.

March 30, 2020

Hi everyone,

E-commerce
We go live with this shopping app tomorrow. No, it isn't perfect and we'll discover the kinks along the way, but it's usable. We still have items that need to be added to the catalog. We won't advertise this option until later today or tomorrow morning. You can check it out here:

moscowfoodcoop.cloudcoop.info

You can either create a new account or browse as a guest. If you want to try it out, you'll need to create your account.

We received and filled nine email orders in the last hour, so I'm hopeful about the web app and it's ability to increase sales.

UNFI
We did get most of what we were expecting today and we're thankful that we've got some TP on the shelves, although it may not last until tomorrow.

Sales
Yesterday's sales were down almost 47%. Sales are better so far today, but it's still really slow. I would like to see if the launch of the shopping app improves sales next Sunday. If we experience this significant of a drop next Sunday, I would like to propose that we close up on Sundays for the duration of this pandemic. At the very least it would give us a day off.

As of now (4pm), we're at 50% of budgeted sales as compared to the same day last year.

Keep calm and carry on!
Melinda