Monday, April 6, 2020
Hi everyone,

Sales + Ecommerce
Yesterday's sales were down 41% for a grand total of $21k in sales. We were moderately busy with curbside pickup today. We trained another baker and another cashier to assist with this. We expect to be absolutely slammed tomorrow for Senior Tuesday. The extra help is nice to have!

UNFI
We received our order today and it had several cases of TP on it (which is remarkable). We're still experiencing higher than normal out-of-stocks. We are having trouble sourcing bulk rice, canned beans, tofu, cleaning supplies, and hand sanitizer. We continue to be low or out of these items.

Masks
Kerry was approached by a community member who wants to make masks for us to buy for staff. We're going forward with this, although they will not be required, just recommended.

Weird things from today
We had to call the police because a regular customer of ours was laying down in a parking spot in the parking lot, refusing to move. The Powell Plumbing guy nearly ran him over.

We also had to call an ambulance today for a staff person. She's fine now.

Thanks for a great meeting tonight!
Melinda

Tuesday, April 7, 2020
Hi everyone,

Sales
Yesterday's sales were down 17% (Prepared Foods -67%). We've been pretty busy today with both in-person customers and curbside orders.

Today
I participated on a call this morning hosted by the Chamber. All owners of food establishments (who are chamber members) were invited to participate. There were about 10 local restaurant/brewery owners, plus me on behalf of the Co-op. What I heard is that all the other restaurants on the call are experiencing sales declines of anywhere from 60% to 90%. Our 75% appears to be about average.

That's about it for today.
Thanks for all the support!
m

Thursday, April 9, 2020
Hi everyone,

Sales
Yesterday's sales were down 19% overall, PF was down 70%. The Meat department was up 22%, though.

Storage Units
We are slowly, ever so slowly cleaning out and condensing down our many storage units. I may have mentioned this to you already, but Kerry and I discussed having a small sale on Thursdays of the things we're parting with. This will take place in the parking lot, so it's weather dependent. I'll staff it so that we can enforce social distancing guidelines. Anything that isn't claimed will be donated.

We're also reassigning one or two staff people to support facilities for the time being. They're working on the storage units and on cleaning out other nooks and crannies we have in the building where things are left and then forgotten about.

Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)
I'm sure some of you are keeping up-to-date on all the new legislation related to COVID-19. Here's a summary of one type of emergency leave that we are now able to offer to our employees who qualify. This specific act (FFCRA) provides emergency FMLA coverage due to "public health emergency leave".

Reason for Leave
Employee is unable to work or telework due to a need for leave to care for a child under 18 years of age and if the child's school or place of care has been closed or the childcare provider is unavailable due to a public health emergency. This is the only reason added to the normal FMLA reasons for leave and is the only reason eligible for paid leave under E-FMLA.

We currently have two staff people taking advantage of this option in order to care for their children.

The Co-op pays this leave up-front and is reimbursed through tax credits

PPP
The SBA has restricted the number of applications they're taking - they are just overwhelmed. We are working closely with Banner Bank to get a loan application submitted as soon as possible.

Let me know if you have any questions,
Melinda

Friday, April 10, 2020
Hi everyone,

Sales

Yesterday's sales were better than I anticipated. We ended up 25% down, for a total of $21,533 in sales. PF was down 73%. Deb created a spreadsheet to track sales by day during the pandemic. I'm including the first nine days of April for your reference.

UNFI

Out-of-stocks are still bad, but we did get canned beans and more TP today.

Bulk

More and more bulk items are being pre-packaged by staff. We've placed signs around indicating where customers can now locate some of those items. We're using the salad bar to stock some items.

Curbside

We've been busy again today. I'm training a Baker tomorrow on filling orders so that we will have more help. It's nice that people are so thankful that we're able to provide this service.

And it feels good to be taking action in this situation.

Enjoy your evenings!
Melinda

Hi everyone,

PPP Loan
Deb and I finished the loan application and submitted it earlier today (about 1pm). I'll let you know when we hear something. The loan amount is for $553,000 (= 2.5 times average 2019 payroll).

Sales
Saturday's sales were down 25% ($32,787). PF sales for Saturday were down 61%. For the week that ended Saturday, sales were down 22% ($189,695) and PF sales were down 68%. Produce and Meat Departments finished up the week 11% each up compared to last year. Last week was an improvement over the prior week. Sales improved overall (-28% compared to -22% and $170,567 compared to $189,695). I think that's a little good news.

Yesterday's sales were down 50% ($17,754). We expected a slow Easter, but no one expected it to be quite that slow. I'm interested to see if we make up for some of that later this week.

Does the Board want to discuss closing the store to the public on Sundays (for the next three weeks)? We would rearrange staffing so that no one loses any hours.

Curbside
We set our order cap at 6 per hour and we've been filling curbside orders for 8 hours each day. Saturday we set a new record and filled a total of 47 orders for curbside delivery (48 is the current daily max). It was insane in here on Saturday (in the best possible sense of the word). I'm working on a graph so you can see how curbside is growing!

That's it for today!
Melinda

Tuesday, April 14, 2020
Hi everyone,

Sales
Yesterday's sales were down 29% ($20,556). PF sales were down 68%. Meat Department sales were up 19%! Produce Department sales were up 8%!

Curbside - some stats

Curbside - some stats

Staffing
Through regular attrition, we've reduced staff by 15 people since March 1st. As of today, we're sitting at 110 employees and we won't be hiring anyone until sales rebound. This attrition is helping the bottom line fairly significantly.

Take care out there!
Melinda

Wednesday, April 15, 2020
Hi everyone,

PPP Loan Application
We got an update this morning from Tamara at Banner Bank. Our application passed through their underwriting process and now we're waiting on the E-Trans # from the SBA. Once we receive that, it has been approved by the SBA and those funds are earmarked for us. This process will take at least a week.

Sales
Yesterday's sales were down 9% overall ($36,653 in total sales yesterday), 52% drop in Prep Foods sales. Meat was up 34% and Produce was up 33%.

Curbside
We ordered two additional tablets today for processing curbside orders. It will likely be two weeks before they arrive, but we really need them if we want to be able to scale up. We're also working hard on building a mobile cash register so that we can take EBT payments curbside.This will also allow us to take giftcard payments curbside - customers have been asking for both options.

NCG
I participated on a peer support call with other GMs in the Western Corridor this afternoon. It was interesting to hear how other co-ops are doing right now, what steps folks are taking to deal with the sales declines, social distancing guidelines, potential layoffs, etc.

Thanks for everything!
Melinda

Thursday, April 16, 2020
Hi folks,

Sales

Yesterday's sales were only down 10% overall, Prepared Foods was down 65%. Grocery was up 8%. Meat was up 16% and Produce was up 37% (seriously!). Maybe we saw some improvement because people received stimulus money?

PPP Loan Application
We have no update on this today.

CX Survey
I received this in an email from Lily at NCG: *Thanks to your continued efforts, your shoppers are taking note and sharing their appreciation in the comments section of your CX Survey dashboard. Our vendor partner SMG went through the long list of positive comments from co-op shoppers and created a thank you poster, highlighting a few comments that stood out. Please see attached.*

Please do see the attachment!

Otherwise, we're just trucking along here.

Melinda

Friday, April 17, 2020
Hi everyone,

PPP Loan Application
We received this frustrating update from Banner Bank this morning:
We are writing with an important update about the CARES Act Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), because you submitted an inquiry about this special funding for businesses impacted by the pandemic. We have been notified by the Small Business Administration that the $350 billion made available from Congress has been expended. We regret to inform you that one or more of your inquiries may not have been fulfilled prior to the SBA funding lapse.

On April 7, Congress began discussing the possibility of approving an additional $250 billion in funding for the PPP Loan program. We are watching this development closely and if additional aid becomes available, we are ready to immediately resume processing PPP Loan applications for our clients.

In anticipation of possible additional funding, ***we will continue to move your inquiry or application through the process.*** *Please be advised potential future funding may carry different eligibility criteria from the PPP program. If so, you may need to provide additional information or documentation. Such a variation may also result in your business being ineligible.*

Rest assured we are doing everything within our control to expedite the inquiry and application process to be fully prepared for a program reinstatement. Thank you for your patience.

Sincerely,

Banner Bank SBA Team

Can we schedule a call for next week to discuss labor?

Sales
Yesterday's sales were down 24%. Prep Foods sales were down 73%. Produce was up 15% and Wellness had a great day - they were up 24%. Through yesterday, we are down 25% week-to-date.

Store Hours
Kerry and I were just discussing the value of shortening our "open to the public" hours on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. This would give staff an opportunity to get the UNFI order stocked without having to work around customers. If, for example, we opened up at noon on those days, we could increase the amount of curbside orders we were processing. Just thinking - but I'd love some feedback here.

Seniors
Kerry and I were also discussing the senior discount. It is currently available on Tuesdays and this past Tuesday there was a line out the door waiting for us to open. While that's good for business, it's not so good for public health considering this pandemic. We're both thinking that now is the right time to shift to a weekly coupon that a senior can choose to use on any day of the week. Can I hear your thoughts on making this change?

Thanks so much - I hope you can all get outside and enjoy a little sunshine while it lasts!
Melinda

Saturday, April 18, 2020

Hi everyone,

Once again, I forgot to hit send on this on my way out yesterday.

Sales
Friday's sales were down 17% overall, 63% on Prep Foods. Meat and Produce were both up 13%. I did see in the headlines that another meat processing plant has been closed in the midwest because of COVID-19. While this won't impact our supply chain (it was Tyson Foods), we may actually see new customers because of disruptions to the conventional supply chain. This is the second closure of a meat processing facility in a week.

Curbside
Friday curbside orders were moderately busy. There seemed to be more people in the store than on prior days - perhaps folks are tired of this isolation order. We did get the opportunity to train Quin (Deli Service Lead, formerly a cashier) to fill orders. He's helping out all weekend.

I have no additional updates today.
Melinda

Sunday, April 19, 2020
Hi folks,

You should have gotten this update yesterday. I must be getting worn down!

Sales
Saturday's sales were down 38% overall. All departments were down. We only did $27k in sales, which is terrible, especially so on a Saturday. Weekly sales came in at $184,190 which is down 26% compared to last year. Only the Produce Department finished the week up.

Tomorrow's call
I'll put together some info on labor and sales for the past two weeks so that we have an up-to-date idea of where we stand.

Monday, April 20, 2020
Hi everyone,

Thanks for making the time to chat tonight, I appreciate it.

UNFI
Our truck that was due this morning had mechanical issues. It will be here early tomorrow morning.

Sales
Yesterday's sales were only down 15%. Meat and Produce both had great days. Prep Foods sales were down 59%.

Answers to one of Cheyne's questions
At the end of Q1, we had $654,000 in the bank. Because we've been lucky with turnover during this economic downturn, we might finish this month less in-the-hole than I predicted (less than $50k). At that rate, we could go the rest of the year without fully depleting our savings.

During a good year, we can save up about $100k (without projects, if we hit our labor, sales, and margin goals).

I'll be in touch tomorrow!
Melinda

Tuesday, April 21, 2020
Hi everyone,

Sales

Yesterday's sales were only down 16%. Prepared Foods was down 59%. Meat was up 11% and Produce was up 17%.

UNFI
Our order that was due yesterday did arrive very early this morning. Freight stocking was well coordinated today to allow for social distancing, particularly when we opened the doors.

Cheyne's Questions
Cheyne asked for some day over day comparison data. I put it together in two different ways and attached a word document for you to reference.

Masks
We will begin requiring customer-facing employees to wear masks effective this Sunday.

Voluntary Furloughs
Heather and I are working with Tod (our attorney) to make sure we have all our ducks in a row before making this option available to staff.

Delivery
I'm working on the logistics of us being able to provide grocery delivery. To start, I think we'll deliver in Moscow and Troy. We will likely charge a service fee. We're thinking about offering this service Tuesday through Saturday, from 9am to 1pm. I'll let you know when we get ready to roll.

That's it for today!
Melinda

Wednesday, April 22, 2020
Hi everyone,

Sales
Tuesday's sales were down 13%. Prepared Foods was down 56%. Meat was up 33%! Produce was up 19%! Grocery was up 1% (hey, we'll take it!). We're down about 15% week-to-date.

Voluntary Furloughs
We're letting staff know that voluntary furloughs are an option.

Masks
We informed folks today that masks are required starting on Sunday. We got a very volatile complaint today from a customer who actually shouted the f-word at our Marketing Manager. My guess is that people are feeling strongly about masks (one way or the other) and that this behavior will continue to increase. It was disappointing.

I hope you're all well!
Melinda

Thursday, April 23, 2020

Hi everyone,

Sales
Based on Laurene's request for more specific information, I've decided to just attach a snapshot document for you each day. This shows you what managers look at each day to see how the previous day turned out. Please see the pdf.

Ecommerce
I'm working with Kate and David on the software logistics of deliveries and of selling ownerships online. We're working to launch the delivery option ASAP. I'll let you know more as this unfolds. Kate and David have been delightful to work with. Their support has truly been invaluable.

Masks
We announced yesterday that staff will need to wear masks effective Sunday. I got word last night that we had one employee who decided that this requirement was just one change too many. He asked to be laid off.

Thanks!
Melinda

Friday, April 24, 2020

Hi everyone,

I've been trying to figure out how to include a little pictionary in this update - no luck, though.

Sales
We had a really good day yesterday. You can take a look for yourselves!

Curbside
It's going really well. We've noticed an uptick in the number of very large orders coming in. For example, we had an order this week that totalled over $600. When I checked today's orders first thing this morning, I saw that there are already two orders over $400, plus several over $300. Pretty cool.

Thanks,
Melinda

Sunday, April 26, 2020

Hi everyone,

Sales
I've attached the data from yesterday and a separate pdf of results for the entire week last week. I hope this is helpful information. YTD we are down 5% compared to last year, not great but it could certainly be worse.

For the Board Meeting
You'll notice that my FYI report is substantially shorter than it has been. This is because you've been kept up to date with my regular emails, plus we've been chatting more frequently via zoom.

And no one has left any comment cards!

That's it for today - enjoy this beautiful weather!
Melinda

Monday, April 27 – Wednesday, April 29, 2020

Hi everyone,

Here are updates for the week so far.

Sales
Sunday and Monday were both rough. Yesterday was pretty good, though! You can check it out by reviewing the attachments.

Situation Report
I'm attaching a somewhat updated situation report. I did not update the projections, just the actual sales and labor numbers to include last week. This would have been for our discussion on the phone Monday night, but there just wasn't much to talk about.

PPP Loan
I got a text from Tamara at Banner Bank late last night letting me know that the SBA issued us an eTrans #. This means that our loan is being funded and we should get a deposit within 10 days. Great news!!

I hope you're all doing well!
Melinda

Following updates will be added to the final version provided Monday, May 4