Shop the Co-op and SAVE!

Want to eat good, healthy food – but still stick to a budget?

We’re working to make that easier all the time.

We know you care about how your food is grown. You want to eat organic foods because they’re better for your body and the planet. You care about how farm workers and animals are treated. You want to support local farmers and producers.

So do we. That’s why we emphasize selling organic, Fair Trade, Non-GMO and local foods. We also know that buying these foods can seem like a luxury for some shoppers.

We believe healthy, ethical foods should be available and affordable for everyone in the community. We give you many opportunities to save money when you shop Co-op Market Grocery & Deli.

Shop the Co-op colors!

Look around the store and you’ll see signs and price tags in three different colors: purple, green and orange. These colors mark different types of sales.

Co-op Basics: Purple signs mean you pay less for basic goods! We’ve lowered prices on organic staple items well below the suggested retail price. Basics are items like canned beans, pasta sauce and toilet tissue. Co-op Basics is our newest savings program, and we’ll be adding many new items over the coming weeks. This means you can stock your pantry and save! Co-op Basics prices are good for everyone.

Co-op Deals: Green signs are for the specials found in our biweekly sales flyer. Co-op Deals are great sales on organic and natural favorites from across our store. Our sales flyer is published every other Wednesday in the food section of the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner and is always available in the store. Co-op Deals prices are good for everyone.

Target: $3 Million

We’re on track to achieve $3 million in sales this year – meeting our goal of 12% growth.

What does this mean? We are growing as projected in our original 10-year financial plan. Sales growth allows us to work towards becoming profitable. That will allow us to pay our Owners a dividend.

In 2016, we will focus on bringing you more great products, improving our efficiency and making your shopping experience more enjoyable. We want to make good, healthy food more available and affordable for everyone in our community.

Mary Christensen
General Manager

Annual Membership Meeting

Board of Directors Election & Revised Bylaws
6:30 p.m. October 15
Birch Hill Recreation Area
Doors open at 5:30 p.m. for a soup supper & social hour.
Childcare provided.
Please attend this important meeting.

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Help grow your co-op with Owner loans

by Mary Christensen, General Manager

Did you know that we could not have opened without substantial loans from our Owners?

It’s true. More than 100 Owners believed in us enough to lend anywhere between $1000 and $50,000 each. And next year, we’ll begin to pay off the loans that were made back in 2010. Yes, it has been nearly six years already!

Did you know Owners can still invest money in the co-op? Here’s how it works. The minimum loan amount is $1000. The Owner lender can choose repayment terms of six, eight or 10 years with interest rates between 0% and 3%. Lend us more than $10,000 or choose a 10-year term, and you’ll earn 4% interest. That’s a great return on your investment!

We’ve been open more than two years, so why do we need new Owner loans now?

It’s smart business. We’ll use new loans to pay off our highest interest bank debt and reduce our loan costs.

So, here are the benefits.

- Owner lenders receive a highly competitive rate of return.
- We’ll lower our debt to banks, which means we’re less dependent on outside capital.
- Owner loans keep our dollars local.
- And you’ll benefit from investing your dollars in a business you love.

Want to know more? Email me (gm@coopmarket.org) or call bookkeeper, Christina Rowlett, at 457-1023 Ext. 105.

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By the numbers: a snapshot

For the current year, our sales have hit $2.245 million after discounts. At the same time last year, we were at $1.988 million.

That’s an increase of 12.9%.

We’ve had 51,784 individual transactions so far.

Our average sale this year has been $32.64: an increase of 1.78% over last year’s $32.07.

We’re averaging 258 sales each day, 12% over last year’s 231. And we employ 29 people.

At press time, we had 3045 Owners – and growing. Approximately 60% of our sales are to Owners.

Thank you!
Our 3rd year:
Keeping it local, from Fairbanks to Kenai

Unlike most other grocery stores – and even many co-ops – we specialize in providing local products whenever they’re available. We’ve spent $212,000 on local goods – more than $63,000 of it produce – from 50 vendors this year!

Farm to store
It’s true the all of our produce is either organic or local – or both. This year we decided that we would not order any produce from our regular distributor if we could get it locally. Our farm-to-store produce included everything from root veggies to tomatoes, herbs to peonies.

What does local mean? It depends: It could mean beef, lamb and pork from Fairbanks, potatoes from Delta, or even tofu from Anchorage and salmon from Kenai. Alaska’s vastness, the location of resources, and the low number of farmers make the entire state local for us.

We get many out-of-town visitors in the store, so this year we also set up a four-foot shelf to showcase local products – birch syrups, reindeer jerky and blueberry jams are very popular with Fairbanksans, too!

A wonderful problem
We’re excited to see many of our local farmers and producers expanding their operations to supply us. A great example is Pita Place: Our first order of pitas, hummus and falafel sold out in hours, so we doubled it – and that sold out in less than a day! They’ve really had to work hard to keep up. Isn’t that a wonderful problem to have?

Becoming more efficient
Working with so many individual local vendors can be challenging: Each one has a different capacity, delivery schedule and invoicing. We’ve spent two years learning how to be a grocery store – no small feat! Now it’s time to perfect our training, systems and store organization so that we are efficient and competitive.

We think local food just tastes better: It’s fresher, tastes better, retains more nutrients and is more diverse. Purple cauliflower? Blue potatoes? You can get them here – and keep your dollars in your community, too.

Thank you for shopping local with us!
Community
I was taken by the power that savoring a simple cup of coffee can have to connect people and create community.

Howard Schultz

Pay it forward: reaching out to our neighbors

We chose to open in the old Carr’s Food Land not only because of the building’s history. We also wanted to locate in a “food desert,” a place where healthy food wasn’t readily accessible to the people who live there. Opening the store put good food within distance, but not necessarily within reach of everyone’s pocketbook.

We know many of the people who live nearby sometimes have to choose between buying groceries and paying the rent. We want to help our neighbors who are food-insecure.

We are planning a program that will allow our shoppers to “pay it forward” and purchase an extra carton of eggs or head of broccoli for a family in need. Our program will be modeled after one started by our sister co-op, Wild Oats Market in Williamstown, MA.

Here is how we think it would work.

• We will designate 5-7 items that are basic building blocks for good nutrition and create a “menu” with bar codes for each item.

• When a shopper wants to buy an extra item for the program, the cashier will scan the bar code. The shopper will pay for the item with her regular groceries.

• Coupons will be generated from the special bar-coded sales and given to an agency to distribute to families in need. These families can then come in with the coupons to pick up their food.

We would not determine which families receive the coupons. Instead, we propose to partner with the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation. AHFC serves our target population: low-income families with children, who have access to a kitchen.

Our grocery store is owned by 3045 of your friends & neighbors – and we’re growing every day.

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Shop the Co-op and SAVE!

*Owner-Only Deals:* Orange signs show exclusive sales for our Owners. Owner-Only Deals are monthly specials in every store department.

Other ways to save

*Become an Owner* – You don’t have to be an Owner to shop here, but Ownership does have its perks. In addition to our monthly Owner-Only Deals, we offer our Owners five opportunities each year to save 10% on one entire shopping trip. Ask your cashier for more information.

*Co+op Deals Coupon Books* – Available at Customer Service, these bimonthly coupons offer $1, $2, even $3 off favorite national grocery brand items.

*Shop in Bulk* – By the pinch or by the pound, save money when you shop our Bulk food bins. Buy only what you’ll use, eliminate unnecessary packaging – and save an average of 89% over packaged goods!

*Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program* – Co-op Market is proud to welcome SNAP benefits.

Did you know?

Our Bulk Foods aisle offers more organic bulk options than any other store in town!

We have 362 bulk foods, from beans to teas. Of those, 261 are certified organic, 38 are certified Fair Trade and 29 are certified non-GMO.

135 of our items are produced by Frontier Herbs, a sister cooperative.

We also have bulk wellness goods, such as soap and shampoo. And you can bring your own container! Just have a cashier weigh it before you fill it.

It’s Turkey Time!

We know you love your turkey: You bought 375 of them last year and helped us win 1st place in NCG’s Thanksgiving turkey-selling contest.

**It’s time to place your order for your holiday turkey!** The first 165 people to order will be able to pick up their turkeys between 10/29 and 11/1.

We will again have Mary’s Free-Range Organic, in sizes ranging between 10 and 20 pounds.

We ask for a deposit of $30. If you’d like to place an order, just stop by the Customer Service desk and fill out the form.
Customer comments:

Your requests, your ideas, your vote

Every time you buy organic, you’re persuading more farmers to grow organic.

– Mother Earth News

You may not realize just how powerful your dollar is when you spend it at Co-op Market. Your purchases – and your suggestions – guide our decisions about the products we put on our shelves. When you buy locally grown, fairly traded and organic products from us, you are voting with your dollars for a better world.

We want to know what foods and goods you’re excited about. We want to know if you’ve had a problem so we can fix it and work to do better in the future. And of course we want to know if we’re doing things right.

Have you ever filled out one of our brown comment cards and put it in the wooden box at Customer Service? We know it can feel like your words are disappearing into a black hole, but we promise that we’re listening. And we’re working to improve the way we respond.

Every morning, we collect your comments and log them into a database before giving them to the appropriate buyer or manager. If we have contact information, we get in touch. When the question is answered or the problem solved, the result is dated and logged.

We’ve made the database available to all employees so that we all share the solutions. Soon we’ll install another metal bulletin board at the front of the store, and we’ll post selected comments and answers there for you to read, too.

The vast majority of your comments are product requests. Sometimes we can stock the product – and we’ve found some wonderful new things because you asked for them. If we can’t put your request on the shelf, we may be able to special order it for you.

Thank you for your passion: You’re helping us become the best store we can be.

Pay it forward

We hope to start our program in November – a food- and family-centered time when we focus on giving thanks for all that we have. As with our Lend-a-Hand register round-up donations, this program will be entirely voluntary.

With our new Co+op Basics program making staples more affordable – and perhaps some workshops on how to shop the co-op on a budget – we’re excited about finding a new way to serve our community.

Since October 2014, our shoppers have rounded up at the register & donated $8212. You’ve given $16,330 of your spare change to 14 groups since Lend-a-Hand started in October 2013!
Artichoke Basil Hummus

INGREDIENTS

• 4 cloves garlic
• 1 15-oz. can chickpeas, drained (reserve juice)
• 1 tsp coarse sea salt
• 1/3 cup tahini
• 6 TBSP lemon juice
• 1 jar marinated artichoke hearts (approximately 6 ounces)
• 1 bunch fresh basil

1. Wash basil and remove stems.
2. Combine all ingredients except reserved chickpea juice in a blender or food processor. Include liquid from the marinated artichoke hearts.
3. If mixture is too thick, slowly add chickpea juice until you reach the desired consistency.
4. Serve as-is with crackers or as a delicious sandwich spread.

We are a team...

My favorite thing is to go out to the Deli during lunch rush and hear people raving about our products – especially when they say they’ve never been to our store.

I am proud of our team and the amazing, selfless effort everyone puts in to make the store thrive. I’ve never worked a job that I look forward to coming to every day before, but I get excited about work now.

I think we’ve hit our stride. We have a well-rounded menu, with more items coming all the time. Look for breakfast burritos – and more – on our new hot bar!

Our ideas matter here, and our voices are heard. If a customer requests a certain thing, we can make it for them. That is very empowering.

– Jessica Loppnow, Deli Team Leader

Strawberry Coconut Chia Pudding

INGREDIENTS

• 1 cup whole milk (substitute a nondairy option if you prefer)
• 2 TBSP chia seeds
• 1 cup strawberries (fresh or frozen)
• ¼ cup shredded coconut
• 1 fresh strawberry for garnish (optional)

1. Blend milk, coconut and strawberries in blender or food processor until smooth.
2. Pour into a different container and mix in chia seeds.
3. Chill in refrigerator for 2 hours.
4. After 2 hours, stir pudding with a spoon. Garnish with a fresh sliced strawberry and enjoy!

– Serves 1.
October Celebrations…

**National Cooperative Month:** Co-ops across the US celebrate all the ways co-ops build a better world – through equality, through ownership and by investing in people and their communities.

**Fair Trade Month:** Investing in people secures the future of the products and planet we love. Fair Trade improves lives, protects the environment and produces high quality goods.

**Non-GMO Month:** Coordinate our voices and actions to stand up for our right to know what’s in our food, and to choose non-GMO.

**Bulk Is Green Week:** From October 11-17, we celebrate all the benefits of shopping in bulk: saving money on nutritious food and reducing packaging and food waste.

Please join us!