

Dear Concord Food Co-operative Member Owners ~

We hope you have been enjoying a bountiful summer and the peace and beauty of Concord's new Main Street atmosphere. The Concord Food Co-operative is humming along, and the Board of Directors wants to provide you with an update on some highlights of the past year:

- ❖ **Annual Member Celebration:** We have lots to celebrate! Our Annual Meeting is Saturday, September 16th, from 1:30 – 4:30 at the Co-op: music by Strings & Things Band; samples from local food, wine, and beer vendors; a barbecue meal; Board Balloting; and a brief 15-minute business meeting. The full schedule is at <http://concordfoodcoop.coop/amc/>
- ❖ **Sales:** Our GM and staff have been successful in turning our sales growth into positive territory in recent months. Thanks to each of you for your role in this!
- ❖ **Staff Engagement Survey:** In March, we worked with an outside consultant to conduct a Staff Engagement Survey. The data provided some great validation, identified some areas for growth, and gives us a good baseline of information as we track progress on the well-being of our Staff.
- ❖ **We Heard You:** In response to our June Customer Satisfaction Survey, our GM has been working hard to lower prices, particularly in the bulk department. Our monthly sale offerings continue to be strong, with 1,020 items marked down this month. Other highlights of that were that people are generally happy with the Co-op experience and value local and healthy foods.
- ❖ **Local Foods:** We continue to strive to offer local goods; we currently offer over 50 produce items from 11 local farms and over 750 total local items from 110 local vendors.
- ❖ **Shaker Farm:** This is our 3rd year of partnering with the Canterbury Shaker Village: our staff farmer, Stacy Cooper, has restored the Shaker's agricultural tradition with a revival of organic farming and bee-keeping that provides over 45 products sold and used by both the Village and the Co-op.
- ❖ **On-line Shopping:** The proposed purchase of Whole Foods by Amazon has prompted discussion on the impact on Co-operatives nationwide: Will it hurt sales with increased competition, convenience, and lower prices? Will it help sales as people seek to keep their dollars in their community, buying local food and supporting local producers, and maintaining a meaningful human connection with people in their community? We are fortunate that the disruption of last year's Main Street construction prompted our Co-op to launch earlier this year an eShop option for online ordering using "Rosie" – you can establish an account, place orders through your computer or mobile phone, and have your order delivered to your vehicle upon your arrival at the Co-op.
- ❖ **Community Engagement:** We participate in numerous community events with our community partners, including Spring Into Healthy Giving, Market Days, Education Events, and Donations.
- ❖ **Membership:** We just passed a milestone with our membership – we are now 7,007 members strong!

These are important times to maintain and build community strength and cohesion. We are grateful to our GM Chris Gilbert for his hard work and leadership of our great Team of Co-op Staff! Thank you for being a Member and vital part of what makes the Concord Food Co-operative a special resource in our Concord & New London Communities. Please be sure to vote, and we hope to see you at our Annual Member Celebration in September – we'll be happy to share more details on any of these highlights or any other thoughts you have about the Co-op!

~ Your Co-op Board