



FREE RANGE FOOD CO-OP

2016 Annual Meeting
&
Local Harvest Dinner
October 11th ~ 6p.m.

Grand Rapids Armory
930 NE 1st Avenue
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

AGENDA

- 6:00 pm Welcome and overview of evening
- 6:05 pm Annual Summary
- 6:10 pm Financial Report
- 6:15 pm Educational Development Report
- 6:25 pm Volunteer Outreach Report
- 6:35 pm Looking Forward - Goals and Planning for 2017
- 6:40 pm Presentation by Stuart Reid, Executive Director of Food Coop Initiative
- 6:55 pm Adjourn

MISSION & ENDS STATEMENT

A member-owned grocery store that will increase access to local foods and goods, provide a foundation for educational activities, enhance health and well-being, and promote sustainability within our community.

YOUR ORGANIZING TEAM



Sarah Verke, Board Chair, Committee member & Owner

Sarah lives in the northern part of Grand Rapids in Wabana Township, and she is married and has two children. She holds degrees in Paralegal Studies, and Interactive Graphic and Web Design. She runs a business called Naturally with her mom, where she makes handmade products created to reduce

single use waste, promote social responsibility and sustainability, and reduce our exposure to toxins. Sarah enjoys gardening, cooking, reading, exercising, traveling, spending time with her family, and being outside as much as possible in the spring and summer months. Sarah joined the co-op effort because she believes that co-ops have a great potential to improve the quality of life in the communities they serve in so many different ways because of the collective member voices, as well as the principles and values they stand upon.



Carrie Barsness, Board Vice Chair, Committee member, and Owner

Carrie is a life-long resident of the Grand Rapids area and currently resides in Cohasset. She is currently employed at Grand Rapids State Bank as an Account Services Representative. Carrie enjoys running, reading, cooking and spending time with friends and family in her spare

time. She is proud and excited to be a part of the efforts of bringing a food co-op grocery store into the Grand Rapids area. What attracted her to the project is the sense of community togetherness this will bring. That is truly what a Cooperative stands for; a group of people working together to reach a common goal or effort.



Corinn Tiwari, Board Treasurer & Records Officer, Committee member & Owner

Corinn has a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing, and is also a Board Certified Emergency Room Nurse who has spent the greater part of the last decade researching chemical exposure in our environment, and food sources.

She puts a strong emphasis in education of such topics, and enjoys helping others achieve a chemical free diet, and lifestyle. She also enjoys eating, and preparing ethnic cuisine, reading, oil painting, spending time with her husband and children, hiking, camping, and taking advantage of living in the great north woods. Corinn came onto the co-op team in January and found her niche in organizing right off the bat. Her love for research and learning spills over into every area of her life including a passion to share with others the things she has discovered. Her favorite thing to talk about, as of late is the co-op.



Annaliesa McCartney, Board Director, Committee Member, & Owner

Annaliesa is a Registered Nurse with the Women's Health and Birth Center at Fairview Hospital in Hibbing, MN. She has lived in Northern Minnesota all of her life, most recently in the Blackberry area. She is married with three children.

Annaliesa didn't even know what a Food Co-op was until about a year ago when her son introduced her to Harmony Co-Op in Bemidji. After attending the first Free Range Food Co-Op community meeting, she wanted to be involved any way possible to make it a success. Annaliesa now serves on the board and volunteers for cooperative events whenever she can.



**Jen Toewe, Board Director,
Committee Member & Owner**

Jen has been a massage therapist since 2008, and an Integrative Nutrition Health Coach and Personal Trainer since 2016. Health and Wellness truly became a passion of Jen's about 5.5 years ago she figured out that she had a gluten intolerance. She loves helping people

feel better inside and out, and teaching people what good nutrition means. Jen joined the co-op team to help to continue her passion for health and wellness and to have better access to healthier foods all year long.



**Katelyn Dokken, Committee Member
& Owner**

Katelyn is a relatively new resident of Grand Rapids, having lived here only 5 years. After college at the University of Minnesota, she moved to the Northeast neighborhood of Minneapolis where she spent many hours perusing the beautiful shelves of her local Eastside Co-op. She always appreciated the

Eastside co-op's willingness to implement itself into it's community, holding cultural events, classes, and having many volunteer opportunities available for interested community members. Luckily, her work with Minnesota Reading and Minnesota Math Corps (two AmeriCorps programs that place tutors across the state of Minnesota to help students in literacy and math) brings her frequently to Bemidji and Minneapolis, where she makes the local co-ops her mandatory stop. She's excited to use her skills and commitment to national and community service to help the Freerange Food Co-op coordinate volunteer opportunities for member-owners and community volunteers. With the passion and commitment of our volunteers, we will succeed in making Free Range Food Co-op a wonderful Grand Rapids institution!



Kacie Carlson ~ Committee Member & Owner

Kacie has lived in Grand Rapids for 3 years. She has worked for MN State Parks and Trails with the DNR for 10 years, most recently as the NE Regional Naturalist. She enjoys being outdoors with her fiancé Eddie and two dogs. She loves hiking, biking, hunting, gardening, and skiing. Her favorite garden treat is butternut squash. Kacie is excited to start setting up educational activities for herself and others to participate in as part of the food co-op's effort to bring more awareness to health and wellness into our community.

ANNUAL SUMMARY

We met to discuss the idea of The Co-op for the first time on October 7th, 2015. From that date on, we continued to meet regularly, educate ourselves, reach out to industry experts, and grow our team to what it is today. The amount of work accomplished in the past year is far beyond what any of us could have imagined. We learned that building a food co-op from scratch is a tremendous undertaking, often stressful and complicated, but also very, very rewarding.

We incorporated legally under MN Statute 308B as a Food Cooperative in February 2016. This required that we file Articles of Incorporation, have written by-laws, and a functioning board of directors before we accepted any new owners, or any ownership fees. We had our first community meeting on March 29th, 2016, and with over 120 people present, we signed up our first 20 owners!

We were awarded a \$10,000 grant from Food Coop Initiative in May 2016. The criteria for the grant was that we must articulate a clear vision, and have a strong committed team. Priority was given to co-ops with a high likelihood of feasibility, potential for significant community impact, and evidence of strong partnerships and support. Most of the funds from this grant will be used for our market and financial feasibility studies that we will have done in the next few months as we enter Stage 2A of our timeline.

In June, we adopted a new task force structure designed to allow volunteers to focus in a more specific way based on their experience and skills.

Over the last year, a number of us attended co-op specific conferences and trainings to help us understand how to understand the Principles, Values and governing structures of food co-ops, learn how to integrate policy governance with our board, focus on stage specific tasks within our timeline, and how to use proven marketing tactics in our community to grow our owner base and support within the community. Through these conferences, we have met people from a number of other start-up food co-ops from all over the country that are also working to get their co-ops open.

We got out into the community and tabled at many different events over the last six months. We were at the Old Central School for numerous First Fridays, two Roller Derbys, the Master Gardener's Expo, Open Streets, The Bash, Tall Timber Days (including walking in the parade!), The Women's Expo, and the YMCA Health Fair. In addition, we also presented to other groups, organizations, and businesses whenever possible.

Throughout this first year of planning and organizing, we have had many conversations on making sustainable decisions, and what that means when we also want to purchase locally whenever possible. We have found that mindful choices need to be made whenever a product or service is purchased; especially when our pledge is that we purchase reusable, compostable, recycled, recyclable, and nontoxic products and services whenever possible. Oftentimes research and collaboration needs to be done so we can understand and make the best decisions for our organization. We have found that the local businesses we have worked with have been very responsive to our requests for recycled, and eco-friendly products.

To prepare for this annual meeting and harvest dinner, we utilized a process development flowsheet and prioritized the tasks that go into planning an event. We knew that Mr. Roberts' restaurant in Pengilly showcases the use of local food on their menu and called up Sarah Master, owner and chef, to ask her to donate her time and talent to the co-op. She graciously agreed and came up with the menu with the only guidance being a focus on local goods. We connected with the farmers at the Grand Rapids Farmer's Market and discussed the list of ingredients and what they would have at the time of our party. We used the money we made at the garage sale fundraiser to purchase from the farmers what was not donated.

As part of the cooperative principle six, "Cooperation Among Cooperatives", we asked for the help of the surrounding area co-ops to fill the rest of the ingredients through the power of donation, and they all graciously agreed to help.

FINANCIAL REPORT



Free Range Food Co-op

BALANCE SHEET

As of September 30, 2016

	TOTAL
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
Affinity Plus FCU	2,487.69
Affinity Plus FCU Savings	10.00
Paypal Merchant	9,259.74
Total Bank Accounts	\$11,757.43
Other current assets	
Inventory Asset	5,292.73
Undeposited Funds	0.00
Total Other current assets	\$5,292.73
Total Current Assets	\$17,050.16
TOTAL ASSETS	\$17,050.16
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
Reimb Due to Board Members	762.76
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$762.76
Total Current Liabilities	\$762.76
Total Liabilities	\$762.76
Equity	
Unrestricted Net Assets	
Net Income	16,287.40
Total Equity	\$16,287.40
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$17,050.16

Free Range Food Co-op

PROFIT AND LOSS

January - September, 2016

	TOTAL
INCOME	
Direct Public Grants	
Foundation and Trust Grants	583.20
Total Direct Public Grants	583.20
Investments	
Interest-Checking, Savings	1.30
Total Investments	1.30
Program Income	
Membership Dues	18,872.00
Total Program Income	18,872.00
Total Income	\$19,456.50
GROSS PROFIT	\$19,456.50
EXPENSES	
Facilities and Equipment	
Rent, Parking, Utilities	95.00
Total Facilities and Equipment	95.00
Operations	
Postage, Mailing Service	301.00
Printing and Copying	853.21
Supplies	422.94
Total Operations	1,577.15
Other Types of Expenses	
Advertising Expenses	201.63
Bank Fees	0.16
Credit Card Fees	337.26
Memberships and Dues	16.00
Staff Development	550.00
Total Other Types of Expenses	1,105.05
Travel and Meetings	262.48
Travel	129.42
Total Travel and Meetings	391.90
Total Expenses	\$3,169.10
NET OPERATING INCOME	\$16,287.40
NET INCOME	\$16,287.40

LOOKING FORWARD

GOALS & PLANNING

As we enter our second year of organizing, we will continue to follow our timeline and move into Stage 2A, the Feasibility Stage.

Areas and tasks that we will be working on are:

- Build and strengthen our organizing team with engaged and committed volunteers.
- Begin the process of our market study, which requires us to identify at least three potential locations; existing buildings that are either for lease or sale.
- Begin the process of our financial feasibility study.
- Continue to meet our ownership goals, in tandem with our planning and development goals.
- Develop a capital campaign model and seek out professional help that we will need to conduct a successful campaign once we reach Stage 2B.
- Continue the process of developing a strong business plan.
- Develop relationships and contracts with growers and producers that will meet our goals of transparency and sustainability.

THE FOOTPRINT OF YOUR MEAL

YOUR LOCAL FARMERS, AND SURROUNDING FOOD CO-OPS



Bryndlewood ~ 3 miles
Brynden & William Lenius
www.facebook.com/bryndlewood
We are a six acre farm located just a few miles from downtown Grand Rapids, MN. We currently operate four high tunnel greenhouses, following organic principles and sustainable practices, to provide clean grown produce (meaning chemical free!) to the

local community. We have been selling at the Grand Rapids Farmer's Market past five years, offering a wide selection of fresh fruits, vegetables, plants, flowers, and chicken eggs. This year we expanded our growing space, opened a farm stand at our home, and transformed our farm into our dream wedding venue. We love what we do and get excited by the prospect of providing delicious, quality, local, home-grown produce to our community.



Skunk Creek Farm, Meadowlands MN
Craig Turnboom ~ 41 miles
www.skunkcreekfarm.net

Skunk Creek Farm specializes in biological farming. Biological farming is an approach to food and fiber production that respects the natural processes in the farm or garden ecosystem in order to yield top quality products, provide a viable living for the producer, and sustain

long-term productivity. Practitioners use ecologically sound methods of agriculture, horticulture, aquaculture, and livestock husbandry to provide food that is a nutritious and free from toxic residues as possible, and which preserves the balance found in natural ecosystems.



Wally Zerebko & Kathy Cone ~ 16 Mi
Wally and Kathy live on a 640 acre ranch with 6000 feet on both sides of the Praire River running through it, stretching over three generations. There are 120 head of cow calf mix of Scottish Highlander/ English Park, Yak, buffalo, Red Wattle Pigs, and 75 laying hens.

They also raise 80 Fallow Deer, plus two high tunnels and five acres of row crops.



Willow Sedge Farm, Palisade, MN
Jane & Joe Jewett ~ 40 miles
www.janesfarm.com

Willow Sedge Farm is a third generation family farm in Palisade, MN. It offers grass-fed Angus-Hereford beef, grass-fed lamb, pastured pork, chicken, ducks and turkey. Hogs and poultry

are raised outdoors, with no cages or crates.



Trout Lake Garlic, Bovey, MN
Warren Alto and Jesse Davis ~ 10 miles
Warren and Jesse are the fourth generation of family farmers on the original Trout Lake Township homestead 5 miles east of Grand Rapids. Now focusing on garlic and other specialty crops, the farm also

raises grains and hay. Former generations, beginning with Warren's Finnish immigrant great grandpa, focused on dairy and beef cattle. Both Warren and Jesse have a deep love for good food and are thrilled that the growing membership of the Free Range Food Co-op will bring more of it to the Northwoods.



Schmidt Farm, Grand Rapids, MN
Arnold and Patti Schmidt ~ 10 miles
Arnold and Patti both grew up in farm families in the Grand Rapids area. In 1960, Arnold's family bought the 90 acre farm they currently live on. The farm is 10 miles southeast of Grand Rapids.

Over the years there have been many different ventures, including raising pigs, beef cattle, quarter horses, deer and elk. They no longer raise livestock, but the vegetable garden has been a constant.

The Schmidt's have always raised vegetables to feed their family and as a way for their kids to make some spending money while they were growing up. In 2004, seeing a community that wanted fresh, locally grown food, Arnold and Patti expanded the garden and began taking a few extra crops to sell at the Grand Rapids Farmers Market. It began modestly, having extra strawberries and raspberries to sell, and Patti made jams and jellies with the leftover berries. There were also a few tomatoes, carrots, and cucumbers mixed in. Gradually the garden expanded, and currently they have around 6 acres of vegetable and fruit production. If it grows in northern Minnesota, chances are the Schmidt farm has grown it at one time or another.

In 2006, with the purchase of their first high tunnel, the tomato patch expanded. In 2011 a second high tunnel was added, and with a controlled growing set up, they now have hundreds of pounds of tomatoes to sell every year. Schmidt's also sell bushels of cucumbers, beets, carrots, asparagus, peas, beans, zucchini, cabbage, kale, kohlrabi, onions, squash, potatoes, peppers, eggplants, strawberries, raspberries and blueberries. In the early season there are hanging flower baskets and in summer stems of gladiolas.

For the Schmidt's, "Fresh from our garden to your table" has been their calling card for many years.



Natural Harvest, Virginia, MN ~ 51 miles

Current Owners: 3300

Natural Harvest began as a buying club in 1976. They joined as a member of the National Cooperative Grocer \$2 million dollar club in September of 2014. They are in the middle of a capital campaign and expansion, and their official groundbreaking ceremony was August 31st, 2016.



Crow Wing Co-op, Brainerd MN ~ 69 miles

Current owners: 1020

In 1979 a group of like-minded individuals banded together to create an “everyday” source for healthy, natural foods within a community that cared about the health of their families and the planet. Over the years the membership has grown and the “storefront” has changed, “Members” are now referred to as “Owners,” but the same philosophies and values of that group in 1979 are still important to the Owners today.



Whole Foods Co-op, Two locations in Duluth MN ~ 76 miles
Nearly 10,000 owners
Whole Foods began as a buying club in 1970 with 20 members.
They opened their second store in Denfeld in March of 2016.



Harmony Co-op, Bemidji, MN ~ 64 miles
Current owners: 2890
Harmony Moved into their new building in 2011
They submitted an application to become a Certified B Corporation, which is pending.

- Certified B Corps are leaders of a global movement of people using business as a force for good.
- They meet the highest standards of overall social & environmental performance, transparency, and accountability.
- They aspire to use the power of business to solve social and environmental problems.
- They act with the understanding that they are each dependent upon another and thus responsible for each other and future generations.

COOPERATIVE IDENTITY

Definition

A co-operative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.

Values

Cooperatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, cooperative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

Principles

The cooperative principles are guidelines by which cooperatives put their values into practice.

VOLUNTARY & OPEN MEMBERSHIP

Cooperatives are voluntary organizations open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political, or religious discrimination.

DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary co-operatives members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote) and co-operatives at other levels

MEMBER ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the co-operative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing their cooperative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the co-operative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

AUTONOMY & INDEPENDENCE

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organisations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organisations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their co-operative autonomy.

EDUCATION, TRAINING & INFORMATION

Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives. They inform the general public - particularly young people and opinion leaders - about the nature and benefits of co-operation.

COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES

Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY

Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.

For more information on the cooperative identity, see: www.ica.coop/en/whats-co-op/co-operative-identity-values-principles

Thank You

We would like to extend our most sincere thanks and gratitude to all Owners and their families for supporting the co-op in it's earliest stages, and for having the patience and vision to see all that the Free Range Food Co-op will be for our community.