



Volunteer Orientation

August 2017

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

CONTENTS

Encouraging Conversation

Asking Questions

The most important thing that you can do to encourage truly engaging conversation is to ask good questions. The right question will encourage answers that are more than one or two words and will allow you to gather information. The more information that you gather, the greater your chances of having a meaningful dialogue.

Examples of great questions to ask

- Have you ever shopped at a co-op?
- What's the most important thing to you when choosing where to shop?
- How important is it to you to have a place to shop where you feel a sense of community, a place where your values are represented?
- What is the best way help our local economy grow?
- Would you like to have more of a say in where your food comes from?

How to Respond

After you have heard them tell you what really matters to them, you can respond in a way that is meaningful. Use terms like, "I understand" or "I know what you mean" or "I feel the same way". Then share how being a member of a co-op can help both them and the community.

- Always address what's on their mind first
- Become familiar with the talking points, FAQs and Timeline
- Use your passion for the Co-op to generate excitement
- When the moment is right, don't forget to ask them to join!



What is a Co-op?	2
Talking Points	3
Understand the key reasons to get involved in a co-op.	
FAQs	4
Answers to frequently asked questions. Arm yourself with answers!	
Timeline	5
Additional Resources	5



What Is a Co-op?



The International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) defines a co-op as “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.

Our mission: To open a community-owned grocery that brings together local producers and consumers to cultivate a healthy community.

The difference between Wasatch Cooperative Market and a conventional grocery store:

1. **The Co-op reflects the values and desires of our community** because hundreds--at some point, thousands--of community members own and control it.

2. **The Co-op is committed to the Seven Cooperative Principles:**

- voluntary and open membership
- democratic member control
- member economic participation
- autonomy and independence
- education, training, and information
- cooperation among cooperatives
- concern for the community

With the launch of Wasatch Cooperative Market in Salt Lake City, a full service grocery store owned by community members (member-owners) will be introduced. Members join neighbors and friends dedicated to having a voice in the sources of their food, and Salt lake City will join more than 350 communities across the country that have cooperative grocery stores.

What will Wasatch Cooperative Market offer?

- A wide selection of local, high quality, fairly priced products
- A brick-and-mortar store open to the public
- Dedication to supporting local farmers and producers
- Enable healthy choices by bringing sustainable products, services, and education to our community
- Building a strong local economy

Talking Points



How do Co-ops help communities?

Co-ops act as conduits for local producers that may face barriers to supplying larger grocers and chain grocery operations. These larger outfits generally require a certain amount of previous sales and guarantee of larger stock quantities.

Co-ops on the other hand work with local start-ups to help them grow.

Co-ops act as incubators for new, local start-up businesses. This commitment to support small, local farmers and producers is integral to growing the local food economy and providing greater local food security.

In the process of building other local businesses, more of the profits stay in Utah.

Stats

A study conducted this past year by ICA Group looked at the social and economic impact of food co-ops on engendering healthier communities. Some of the findings included:

- For every dollar spent at a food co-op, \$.38 is reinvested into the local economy as opposed to \$.24 at national chain stores
- Co-ops act as incubators for other new businesses
- Nationally, on average, cooperative grocers contract with 150 local growers and producers, while conventional grocers contract with, at most, 65 local growers and producers
- For every \$1,000 a shopper spends at a local grocery co-op, \$1,604 is generated in economic activity. That accounts for \$240 more local economic activity than when the same amount is spent at a conventional store.
- Co-ops tend to have better recycling practices thus extending landfill life and reducing individual tax burdens

	<u>Cooperative</u>	<u>Conventional</u>
Cardboard:	96%	91%
Food waste:	74%	36%
Plastics:	81%	29%

When it comes to health and well-being:

- Eighty-three percent (83%) of co-ops offer classes on healthy eating and nutrition
- 10% of co-ops have nutritionists available to consult with customers. Consumer education also takes place through:
 - store signage highlighting product origins
 - shelf hangers indicating a product is local or produced by a co-op
 - labels showing which products are gluten free
 - food co-ops give shoppers the information they need to make the choices that are best for their families.

Statistics provided by ICA Group Healthy Foods' 2012 study titled, "Healthy Measuring the Social and Economic Impact of Food Co-ops"

FAQs



Where will the store be located?

According to a market study conducted in 2014, the first store is likely to be north of 2100 South and east of I-15. It is important to understand, though, that it is the stated goal of the Co-op to open numerous stores. Once the first store is up and successful we hope to expand to additional locations.

When will the store open?

The opening is dependent on several factors: building broad community support, calculating a favorable pro forma, completing the business plan, hiring a general manager, and generating sufficient capital to launch the store. All of these factors are being addressed. The single greatest obstacle is demonstrating sufficient community support through member-owners. The cooperative business model is dependent on that.

How was the cost of a share determined? Can volunteer time be provided in lieu of a cash investment?

Based on our market analysis, a \$300 investment is the most effective share price for attracting both the number of needed investors and raising the necessary capital. Payment plans are available for as little as \$25 per month, making the investment affordable to people on a tight budget. Unfortunately, volunteer time cannot be traded for a share of the Co-op. At this stage it is important to grow the capital needed to move forward.

What else is required of me as a member-owner? Will I be required to work at the store?

Nothing more than your monetary investment is *required* at this stage. However, all the organizing leading up to when a general manager is hired is being done by volunteers. Your participation is encouraged.

Why is it taking so long to launch the first store?

According to the premier grocery cooperative consulting group in the nation, Food Co-op Initiative, our trajectory is typical for this sort of enterprise. We simply need to stay committed to our vision and keep the momentum going. Unlike other business models, a true cooperative builds its capital the member-owner investments. There is no shortcut. Even if there are great locations for a store, without the necessary capital we cannot acquire the property or sign a lease. **Invest and spread the word today to make it happen sooner!**

How will prices at the Co-op compare with other grocery stores?

According to Food Co-op Initiative, we can expect to be on par with most of them when we open, depending on the specific product. Many co-ops participate in educational programs that teach people how to plan meals that cost \$1-\$2 per person. We also anticipate holding down prices by offering an extensive bulk foods section and joining the National Cooperative Grocers Association, which gives us buying power on items we can't source locally. Pricing on local items will be based on fair-trade evaluations. Member-owners will receive patronage refunds in profitable years, lowering the cost to them a bit more.

What are my immediate benefits if I invest today?

Currently, there are a number of Business Partners—other locally-owned businesses—who provide exclusive discounts to WCM member-owners, anything from 5-15%. You can also run for a seat on the Board or participate in other ways that help guide what the Co-op will be for the community. Other benefits we would like to create are a special Member-Owners' Only web page with recipe exchanges and articles on local foods, and classes on urban farming techniques and other food related classes. But these ideas need additional volunteers to be realized. Sign-up to help!

Why should I invest in a grocery cooperative when there are so many other options for where to shop?

Our vision is unique. You will be a co-owner of the store. So, in profitable years, you will receive patronage refunds based on how much you shop at the Co-op, returning the profits to you and other Utah residents rather than shareholders spread across the country. Not only will your voice be heard, it will define the Co-op. You'll have the right to vote for Board members and on other matters that affect your store. You can be on the Board.

How will the Co-op help the broader community?

Co-ops recycle more money in the local economy; on average about \$0.60 of every dollar spent there. We are committed to strengthening Utah's food economy by helping to build and sustain the local food infra-structure. We will accomplish this by making buying local a priority and paying fair-trade prices to growers and producers, and living wages to our store employees. Additionally, co-ops act as incubators for other new local businesses, further strengthening the local economy.

What happens to my investment if the store does not open?

In the unlikely event that our initiative falls short and the Member-Owners decide to dissolve the business, all Member-Owners will receive a pro-rated refund of the capital that remains at the time that decision is made. We do not anticipate that this will happen. It is more likely that the opening date is simply delayed.

Wasatch Cooperative Market Development Goals Overview



Additional Resources

Websites

<http://www.foodcoopinitiative.coop/>

<http://www.cdsconsulting.coop/>

Documentary

Food for Change

<http://foodforchange.coop/>