

COOK COUNTY  
WholeFoods  
CO-OP

ANNUAL REPORT

# the blueberry jam

FALL 2021

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THE BALLOT





# The Value of the Human Spirit

Jill Barber, Board President

Growing up, I always wanted to study psychology. I'm a people person. But when it came time to choose a college major, I was [sometimes not so subtly] guided towards accounting, where the career opportunities were presumably more numerous and "lucrative".

My winding career path ultimately led to payroll and employment law — for me, a perfect blend of people and dollars. I've come to firmly believe, that while the numbers may measure the success of a business, it's the people who make a business successful.

This past year the financial results speak for themselves at Cook County Whole Foods Coop. How were we able to achieve such positive outcomes? I contend it was a demonstration of the cooperative human spirit.

Even with the loosening of the COVID mandates, store operations were by no means "business as usual". Jennifer announced her decision to step down after serving 11 years as General Manager. Thankfully, she has graciously agreed to remain in that role while we search for a replacement. Department managers juggled inventory adjustments caused by supply chain changes and product shortages. In spite of this, their teams kept Co-op shelves impressively well-stocked, even with increased demand for groceries due to limited hours at local restaurants. And, as the number of shoppers increased like never before, the entire staff worked at a sometimes-frenetic pace while continuing to cheerily assist customers.

Owners from near and far showed their continued support by navigating a second year of construction detours through town. In the store, we saw shoppers chatting with each other in the aisles once again, waiting patiently for the joyous return of bulk spices. (By the way, they're back!) We're looking forward to having our Canadian friends join us again as well.

Even the Board was not immune to change. Following two resignations mid-year, we welcomed back former directors Erik Hahn and Alyssa Hedstrom to assist with the search for a new GM. After throwing my hat in the ring and landing the position, I could not be more grateful for a team that so willingly embraced a new president. Through it all, each and every director stepped up, taking on new responsibilities to honor our Ends through shifting priorities.

By all accounts the grocery industry faces ongoing challenges in the coming year(s) — price increases (see Jennifer's article) and supply shortages are still very real. And, like most businesses in our community, staffing and housing are a growing concern. However, the past two years have shown we can weather the storm when we stand together.

If the financials could truly speak to all the people who contributed to the success of our Co-op this year, perhaps they might ask, "How can we collectively support ourselves and each other in even bigger and better ways?"

I contend the answer would involve the optimism and resilience of the human spirit.



## About the BlueberryJam

The opinions of the authors featured in the BlueberryJam do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Cook County Whole Foods Co-op.

Nutritional & Health information found in these pages is not meant to substitute consultation from a licensed health care provider.

### GO PAPERLESS!

Send an email to: [info@cookcounty.coop](mailto:info@cookcounty.coop), and we will put you on the email list. Once a year, however, the ANNUAL REPORT is mailed to all owners by mandate of our bylaws.

## Our Board of Directors:

**JILL BARBER**  
President  
*Term expires 2022.*

**YUSEF OREST**  
Vice President  
*Term expires 2023.*

**DON GRANT**  
Treasurer  
*Term expires 2019.*

**LIBBY LARSON**  
Secretary  
*Term expires 2022.*

**JANE ALEXANDER**  
*Term expires 2021.*

**ALYSSA HEDSTROM**  
*Term expires 2021*

**ERIK HAHN**  
*Term expires 2021*

# State of the Co-op

Jennifer Stoltz, General Manager

As a second summer with COVID-19 restrictions comes to a close, it's time to reflect on how the pandemic has impacted our Co-op. Panic buying, supply chain issues and closed factories led to shortages and out of stocks that are still impacting our shelves today. Part shortages mean refrigeration repairs take months to complete. Staffing shortages mean shorter store hours, overtime and raises for all. Mask mandates and vaccine hesitancy have polarized shopper and staff opinions on the right path forward. As cases of COVID-19 rise in Cook County, it's tough to create a timeline of when we'll be offering soups and deli seating. However, we have opened our bathrooms to the public and brought back most bulk items. Cook County Whole Foods Co-op continues to follow CDC and Cook County Public Health recommendations as we cautiously work and serve our community during COVID-19.

Throughout the pandemic, food prices have been increasing. This trend is expected to continue throughout 2021. Some companies have been raising prices while others are reducing quantities. One example is Field Day recently reduced the size of their canned beans from 15.5 ounces to 15 ounces. Supply chain issues, drought and extreme weather all contribute to this trend. Packaging prices have increased substantially as well. The price of deli clamshells has increased 58% compared to one year ago. As costs go up, the Co-op has raised prices as well. If shopping on a budget, try to stock up on Co+op Deals and Co+op Basics items. We also offer owners a 20% discount on case special orders of non-sale, and non-meat items. If you're a low income owner meeting certain criteria, sign up for the Good Harbor Hill 10% discount. Luckily, the USDA predicts that food prices will stabilize in 2022.



If your favorite product is no longer on the shelf, it probably is not available or has been discontinued. Examples include Blue Sky Soda which has been discontinued and Drew's dressings and salsa are long term out of stocks due to sourcing issues. The deli plans their menu based on what ingredients are available. Co-op staff have done an excellent job of substituting products to fill long term out of stocks which has resulted in record store sales. Thanks for your willingness to try new products as availability fluctuates.

Quality staff are key to keeping the Co-op running smoothly. We raised our wage scale this year, and I'm happy to say that we now have a \$15 minimum starting wage. In addition to wages, we gave out \$88,541 in profit sharing and offer store discounts, paid time off, Simple IRA with a company match, hazard pay and health insurance. I have deep gratitude for all of the hard work that staff have done during difficult times and would like to say thank you to all of the hard working people keeping the store running.

As I wrap up projects and prepare to pass the baton to a new general manager, I thank owners and shoppers who have supported my work at the Co-op over the past eleven years. The Co-op is celebrating its 45th Anniversary this year, and I'm sure it will thrive for years to come. Please vote in our board election and join us at our virtual Annual Owner Meeting on October 26th.



# NUMBERS

## 2020-2021 Preliminary Financial Report

Cook County Whole Foods Co-op preliminary financial statement is below. We had another profitable year and will be distributing a patronage dividend once our tax return is finalized. Patronage dividends are great for everyone. They give money back to you, our owners, based on how much you spent at the Co-op, and they reduce the Co-op's tax burden. We'll keep you posted on the status of a patronage dividend and hope to have more information available at our annual meeting.

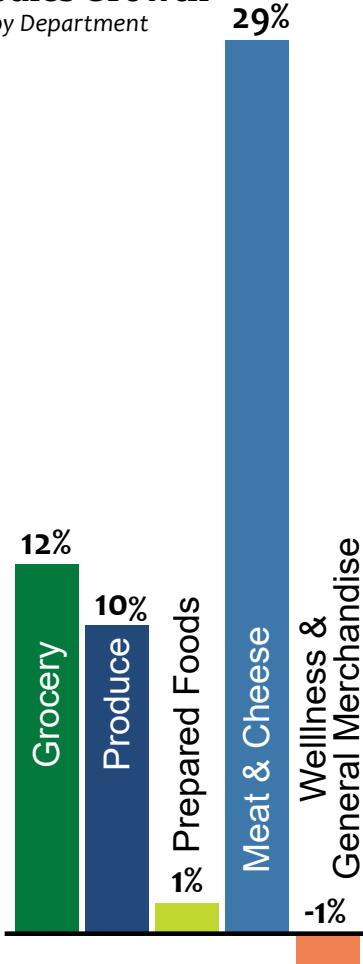
Comparative Balance Statement	Fiscal Year End	Fiscal Year End
	June 30, 2021	June 30, 2020
<b>Assets</b>		
Current Assets	\$1,126,648	\$967,476
Property/Building/Equipment	\$1,686,115	\$1,792,417
Other Assets	\$184,119	\$183,264
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$2,996,882</b>	<b>\$2,943,157</b>
<b>Liabilities &amp; Equity</b>		
Current Liabilities	\$688,606	\$723,454
Long Term Liabilities	\$629,368	\$790,710
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$1,317,974</b>	<b>\$1,514,164</b>
Owner Equity	\$599,913	\$576,826
Capital Reserve Fund	\$68,445	\$68,445
Earnings/Assets/Income	\$1,010,550	\$783,722
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>\$1,678,908</b>	<b>\$1,428,993</b>
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Equity</b>	<b>\$2,996,882</b>	<b>\$2,943,157</b>
<b>Comparative Income Statement</b>		
Sales	\$6,123,466	\$5,473,697
Less Cost of Goods Sold	\$(3,836,278)	\$(3,394,828)
<b>NET SALES</b>	<b>\$2,287,188</b>	<b>\$2,078,869</b>
Operating Expenses	\$2,026,345	\$1,891,808
Other Income/Expense	\$(34,013)	\$71,415
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>\$226,830</b>	<b>\$258,476</b>

## The Fiscal Year



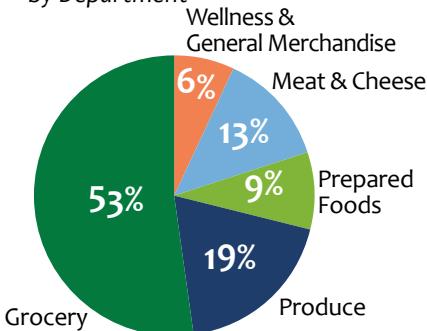
## Sales Growth

by Department



## Percentage of Total Sales

by Department



## As We Strive to Be...

### SUCCESSFUL

11.9% Sales Growth

\$32,295 in community contributions

A **TRUSTED** source of healthy, local and sustainable products and services

22% of sales were local products

31% of products sold were organic

\$205,921 sales of Cook County products

### AFFORDABLE

\$767,845 in sales of Co-op Basics Everyday Low Price Items

44% increase in discounts for Good Harbor Hill low income shoppers

\$58,662 in Shopper Discounts

A **LEADER** in Environmentally Sustainable Practices

Awarded lowest emissions from EPA GreenChill **3 years** in a row with the addition of a Superior Goal Award!

Energy Star Certified with a score of **100**

We have a goal to be plastic free by 2033.





## Where Community Health is Our Greatest Wealth...



A **SOURCE** of employment that provides meaningful work and fair compensation

**38** employees all earning paid time off and eligible for retirement plan

**63%** of staff eligible for full health insurance benefits

**\$88,541** shared with staff in profit sharing

**\$1.5 million+** in staff wages and benefits



A **WELCOMING** and friendly gathering place where the community has a sense of belonging

Offers outdoor space for musicians to play and entertain

Positive Feedback. ★★★★★

“The Co-op is one of my favorite stops in Grand Marais!! I love the fresh baked goods and fresh cold food options. I love stocking up on unique items.”

**ROOTED** in the cooperative principles

**2701** active owners

**215** new owners

**4%** increase in owner equity

**31 Years** of Adopt-A-Highway Clean Up Events



### 2020-2021 Recipients of Co-op Donations

- Alliance for the Great Lakes
- Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon
- Birch Grove Community School
- Cook County Chamber of Commerce
- Cook County Extension
- Cook County Food Shelf
- Cook County Higher Education
- Cook County Historical Society
- Cook County Public Health & Human Services
- Cooperative Development Foundation
- Cooperative Development Fund of CDS
- Empty Bowls
- Explorers Club
- Family Farm Defenders
- Food Co-op Initiative
- GES
- Give, Send, Go
- Grand Marais Art Colony
- Grand Marais Playhouse
- Grand Portage Nutrition
- Great Expectations
- Hamilton Habitat, Inc.
- Lutsen LUT Church Pollinator Garden
- Local Producer Scholarship Recipients
- Midwest Organic & Sustainable Education Services
- Minnesota Children’s Press
- National Fire Safety Council
- Norpine Fat Bike Classic
- North House Folk School
- North Point, Inc
- North Shore Health Care Foundation
- North Superior Ski and Run Club
- Oshki Ogimaag Yearbook Fundraiser
- Sawtooth Mountain Clinic
- Smith Benefit Online Raffle
- Superior Hiking Trail Association
- Violence Prevention Center
- WISE
- WTIP

# OWNERS

## Greet Our New Owners! (6/17/21 to 9/9/21)

Emma Adams & Kendall Prehn  
Deborah Alexander  
Rudy & Rachel Alvey  
Nancy Anderson  
Kevin Anderson  
Sara & William Anderson  
Haron Arama  
Jennifer Banas  
Emily Barker & Joel Paxson  
Anna & Robert Barrett  
Sarah Beggs  
Heather Ceparano  
Tara Chapman  
John Church & Katelyn Key  
Robert & Michele Connelly  
Jennifer Cummings  
Susan Daole & Joe Miller  
Dan DeMars  
Michelle des Islets & Shelley Thron  
Susan & Paul Dragsten  
Jean Dunbar  
Debra Ehret-Miller  
Mandy Ellerton & Peter Wagenius  
Aaron Fletty  
Trudy Fredin & Al Trippel  
Laura & Todd Hagen  
Jacob Hamilton  
Allison Healy  
Scott & Laura Helgeson  
Julia & Eric Horner  
Christina Kadelbach  
Janet Kampa & Bob Rehberg  
Diana Karwan  
Emily Katzenmeier & Wyatt Jeffers

Britta Kelson  
Katherine Kowalsky  
Laura & Mike LaFontaine  
Tessa Larson & Mark Lawler  
Mark Lavallie & Karen Chernyaev  
Abby LeGare  
Maddy Marquardt & Andy Seaberg  
Patricia & John Maunsell  
Kevin McKay  
Mary & Joe Morehouse  
Carah Nelson  
Alison Nicoli  
Charles & Sylvia Peters  
Donald Peterson  
Terri & Lewis Poe  
Mike & Paula Pratt  
Christopher Pumper  
Kaye Raden  
Shannon Ratey & Barb Rose  
Mike & Emily Running  
Carolyn Sakstrup  
Andrea Schoch  
Ruth & Bob Schuchardt  
Denise & Dale Sundstrom  
Bria Thom  
Maressia & John Twele  
Stephanie Vos  
Charlene Wallace  
Karen Waver  
Nathan White  
Sarah & Jonathan Wilmshurst  
Maran Wolston & Thomas Saunders  
Christene & Nathaniel Wood

### HOW MUCH IS AN OWNERSHIP?

Full equity is \$120 (not an annual fee) or: x10 quarterly payments of \$12. Benefits start with first \$12 payment.

Stop by the store and register to become an owner.  
More info at: [cookcounty.coop](http://cookcounty.coop).

### BENEFITS OF OWNERSHIP:

**News:** A subscription to the Blueberry Jam Newsletter and the Annual Report and keep up with what's new.

**Earning:** Patronage Dividends in profitable years, the more you spend, the more you earn.

**VIP:** Attend our annual meetings and get discounts on Co-op classes. Eligible to apply for financial aid scholarships

**Voting:** Vote for the Board of Directors and run for the Board. Have a say in our future

**Savings:** Enjoy quarterly coupons, and Owner Appreciation Day

### WHAT IS FULL EQUITY?

Full Equity means an owner has paid their total \$120 equity share into the Co-op. The more full equity payments we have, the more we can grow, the more we can give back to the community!

Pursuant to our bylaws, you may request a refund of your equity account balance. Refunds will be made within 90 days of a written request if replacement funds are available at that time as determined by the Co-op Board of Directors. If your ownership account expires and you do not request a refund, your account balance will be added to the Co-op's capital fund after two years of inactivity.



Healthy lunches are important! The Co-op's Explorers lunch box monthly raffle is meant to promote excitement about healthy lunches and non-commercial, prepackaged foods for children, which often contain preservatives, dyes and other additives. Enter your (under 8 y.o.) child to win one in the Co-op!

Our Latest Lunch Box Winner  
Congratulations!



Raven Heiden

# BOARD

**Vote for Three Board Candidates by October 25<sup>th</sup> & Learn the Election Results at our Virtual Annual Meeting!** *See page 15 for details.*

## Our Board of Directors



**JILL BARBER**  
President  
Term expires 2022.



**YUSEF OREST**  
Vice President  
Term expires 2023.



**DON GRANT**  
Treasurer  
Term expires 2022.



**LIBBY LARSON**  
Secretary  
Term expires 2022.



**JANE ALEXANDER**  
Term expires 2021.



**ALYSSA HEDSTROM**  
Term expires 2021.



**ERIK HAHN**  
Term expires 2021.

It's time to fill three seats on our Board. Please take time to read about the candidates and VOTE—it's easy and vital to the well-being of our Co-op and community.

The Cook County Whole Foods Co-op has been serving Cook County since 1976. Both then and now, we strive to be a cooperative grocery store that provides healthy food, fair wages and trade. We support a healthy community and sustainable business practices. Please help us to maintain our Mission Statement by being involved.

### **Our Mission Statement:**

Cook County Whole Foods Co-op is a member owned community grocery, working to create a healthy and sustainable society.

## **TWO WAYS to VOTE in the upcoming Election**

**1.)** in the Store: The Ballot Box will be in the store from October 1-25, 2021.

**2.)** by Mail:  
Mail your completed ballot to:

Cook County Whole Foods Co-op  
PO Box 813  
Grand Marais, MN 55604

**All ballots must be received by October 25, 2021 to be counted.**

**Your Ballot  
is on  
Page 15**

Do you have questions, comments or suggestions for the Co-op's Board of Directors? Send an e-mail, leave a note, or come to a Board meeting. Board meetings are typically the fourth Tuesday of each month (check our Events Page for times), and owners are always welcome. Notify the Board President in advance if you would like a topic to be added to the agenda or attend a meeting.  
Email: [board@cookcounty.coop](mailto:board@cookcounty.coop)

# CANDIDATES

## Meet the Board of Directors Candidates



**Erik Hahn** —

I am seeking a position on the CCWFC board because I believe the Co-op is at an especially exciting time in its life cycle. The co-op is amazingly successful,

especially given the size of the store and the size of our community. It is time for the board to re-engage with owners as we hire a new general manager and build on our past successes. I believe the most important role of a board member is ensure the co-op's continued growth and success and to ensure that we continue to move toward meeting the values and expectations of the owners we represent. These values and expectations are spelled out in our Ends Statements. Chief among these is the continued financial success of our cooperative grocery, but the co-op is now so successful that we are in an enviable position to make significant growth in meeting our other Ends. I envision a time of exciting opportunities for furthering the values of our owners while maintaining and improving upon the financial successes of recent years. We have never been at a better time to improve the quality of life for our staff, owners, and community while staying true to our core of healthy, organic, food produced as locally as possible. We can now afford to be the best environmental stewards we can be. We can find ways to bring these products and services to underserved members of our community and to be a safe and welcoming space for all.

I believe my past years of experience on the board at CCWFC and at Whole Foods Coop in Duluth make me an ideal candidate. I believe my work as a teacher and professional writer have given me the skills to effectively communicate with and listen to owners, fellow board members, and general manager.



**Alyssa Hedstrom** —

I would like to continue serving on the board to support the hiring process of the general manager, and the continued evolution of the Co-op in our community.

I will continue to attend board meetings and serve on sub-committees as needed, while being a listening ear for the community.

The most important role currently is to hire a new general manager and then support and follow through with that hire to see that the Co-op continues to thrive. The board holds both a supportive role and a quality assurance role, ensuring the Co-op continues to operate at its high standards and reaches its Ends.

My vision is to support the process of hiring a new general manager and then support the transition from current GM to new GM. I am committed to the overall wellbeing of the Co-op; I want our Co-op to continue to support our community along with continuing to grow into its place as a leader in the community.

I am a business owner and longtime community member; I have served on the board in the past and understand policy governance. I have a long-term understanding of the Co-op and its role in our community, along with how it can evolve to meet the needs of our community in the future.

*Continued on the next page.*

# CANDIDATES

## Meet the Candidates



### Jaye White —

My name is Jaye White and I would like to serve on the Cook County Whole Foods Co-op Board of Directors

because I love the Co-op and the community surrounding it, and want to become a more active and engaged member. I have been a member of the Co-op since moving back to the area in 2014. I am someone who likes to eat healthy and practice alternative wellness so the Co-op has been a valuable asset for me and my family, and I hope to help it move into the future and continue to be the valuable community asset it has become.

I will likely be able to commit at least 10-15 hours per month to BOD activities. My schedule is busy but very flexible and I have a supportive employer who understands and encourages community engagement so I am happy to dedicate the time needed to be an active member of the BOD.

I feel the most important role of the BOD is to ensure the direction the Cook County Whole Foods Co-op goes in will benefit the members and community the most. Ensuring that the Co-op stays true to its purpose and goals in order to benefit members, employees, and the community. In other boards I serve on I especially love the process of visualizing the future of the organization and found this process to be very important. Creative visualization and implementation is a strength of mine and I always aim to bring that with me to any board I sit on.

Visualizing the future is challenging these days. It's still unknown how much longer we will be in "pandemic mode" and what the long term results will be from the pandemic in regards to how community spaces and organizations function. However, I feel the pandemic has also opened up opportunities to reach people in new and innovative ways. Expanding social media reach, online ordering, and utilizing technology to make interactions easier and more efficient regardless of where you are in this world. Technology has opened up more of the world to many who had to learn to interact and communicate in a socially distant world. I do see this continuing beyond 2021 and becoming an important element in society going forward. I visualize how the Cook County Whole Foods Co-op can harness these opportunities and grow the organizational reach, hopefully reaching new potential members in areas of the county like the Gunflint Trail, Arrowhead Trail, Grand Portage, and even Lake County.

I feel I can best support the Cook County Whole Foods Co-op Board of Directors through my knowledge and experience with digital technology and social media. I have the ability to assist with technology-related projects like photos, videos, website development, SEO, and other innovations. With social media I would love to assist the Co-op in reaching a wide variety of owners and potential members through multiple social media platforms.



## Honored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for Third Straight Year

In striving to protect both the ozone layer and climate system, the Cook County Whole Foods Co-op's refrigeration practices have brought national attention to town yet again. For the third consecutive year, the Co-op was recognized for its achievements in reducing harmful refrigerant emissions. The United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) GreenChill Partnership recognized the Co-op for two separate achievements. Best Emissions Rate recognizes the GreenChill Partner that achieves the lowest refrigerant emissions rate among small or independent supermarket Partners and Superior Goal Achievement recognizes the Co-op for reaching its refrigerant emissions reduction goal. The announcement was made by EPA during its annual GreenChill recognition event, which was held virtually this year on September 9, 2021.

Reducing the impact of harmful refrigerant emissions is important for protecting the environment and also benefits public health. If every supermarket in the United States met the GreenChill Partners' average emissions of refrigerants, the supermarket industry would save more than \$251 million in refrigerant replacement costs and reduce annual refrigerant emissions by 31 million metrics tons carbon dioxide, equivalent to 3.7 million homes' energy use for one year. The Co-op is proud to be part of the group of supermarkets leading the industry in reducing refrigerant emissions and transitioning to environmentally-friendlier refrigerants.

Cook County Whole Foods Co-op strives to fulfil its goal of being a leader in environmentally sustainable practices in multiple ways: green refrigeration operation and maintenance practices, triple-glazed windows, more insulation than required by code, energy-efficient lighting, a system that recovers heat from refrigeration to heat water and the building, and solar panels. As a result of these practices, Grand Marais continues to be a more environmentally-friendly place. The Co-op wants customers and owners to be proud of the fact that it actively does its best to protect the environment.



3 years in a row!



“We applaud Cook County Whole Foods Co-op for their third consecutive recognition as part of the GreenChill Partnership Program,” said Kirsten Cappel, GreenChill Program Manager.

“Their accomplishment demonstrates that small and independent food retailers can also achieve consistently low emissions rates, which benefits the environment and saves money at the same time.”

For more information on EPA's GreenChill Partnership, please visit [www.epa.gov/greenchill](http://www.epa.gov/greenchill).



## Welcome, Britta!

*Britta Kelson, Wellness Coordinator*

I hail from Saint Paul and have worked in the natural healing world for 5 years. I've been studying herbalism and natural healing modalities since childhood and graduated from the Northwestern Academy of Homeopathy in 2015. Since then, I've worked in the wellness department of multiple natural food stores and co-ops, most recently at the Seward Co-op in Minneapolis. I am delighted and honored to have joined the Cook County Whole Foods Co-op team as the Wellness Coordinator. I'm excited for the opportunity to serve the community, so please reach out if you have questions!

We're all especially aware of the climate crisis lately and want to do our part to lessen our footprint on the earth. We have some great products to support this intention. Our African Market Baskets are a staff and owner favorite, and are both sustainable, and a source of beauty. Come find your new favorite! We also have new styles of Klean Kanteen bottles to replace plastic water bottles and disposable coffee cups. Finally, we have some wonderful personal care products that are plastic free, including the HiBar Shampoo and Conditioner bars, the Minnesota made SunLeaf shampoo and soap bars, and the new EcoBalm lip balms from Booda Organics.

I also want to share some of my personal favorites from Wellness. I'm highly sensitive to artificial perfumes, so I really love Pranarom's organic perfume oils. Balsam Fir and Cedarwood is my favorite scent. CBD has been a huge aid to me, for a sense of peacefulness and ease through my days. Lately, I've really been enjoying the gummies from WYLD, especially the Huckleberry flavor. My face has been loving the Vitamin C Serum from Mad Hippie. It makes my skin feel smooth and hydrated, and eases irritation from wearing masks.

Cool New Products!





## Zero Waste Onward

Denny FitzPatrick, Kristina Mattson, Olya Wright and Anne Brataas



**“Zero Waste definition: The conservation of all resources by means of responsible production, consumption, reuse, and recovery of products, packaging, and materials without burning and with no discharges to land, water, or air that threaten the environment or human health.”**

Look at what the local folks at Zero Waste are cooking up to help save the planet:

**Facebook** — The ZWCC site is now up and running. Join the network, become a partner, post tips, volunteer. Be the change. A future without waste and toxics is a necessity. Join Zero Waste, Cook County Whole Foods Co-op, youth environmental leader Olya Wright and the Nordic Nature group, Minnesota Children’s Press, Grand Marais Lions — help create a zero-waste future in Cook County!

**Food Waste** — Hope everyone is composting all organics, including soiled paper. Think homes, restaurants, apartments, hotels. Compost like the Co-op does. Help save our climate, food waste in the landfill creates methane.

**Plastic** — National Co-op goal: go plastic-free by 2033. Let’s haul #5 plastic to Duluth. Let’s haul plastic bags to Two Harbors, including those bread bags and cereal liner bags. Have you tried dry shampoo and dry toothpaste? (Eliminates plastic, plus the liquids are sometimes 40% water which adds weight to transport.) Rethink and reimagine what’s recyclable. We can do this!

**ReUSE** — Working with Emily Barker, director of ReUSE Minnesota. We’re fortunate to have 3 budget shops for starters. Let’s also think lumber and renovation discard use and disposal.

**Litter** — Working with Anne Brataas and YMCA daycamp students. Education is one of our key components.

**Database** — The economic benefit of reduce, reuse, and recycle in Cook County.

It’s a global movement! Check out the Zero Waste International Alliance: <https://zwia.org>.



*Pictured above is a Grand Marais Lions-led collaboration, always looking for partners to end waste and plastic pollution in Cook County, sorting 60 bags of cans and bottles from downtown.*



*Opportunities abound in our community. Next up: how to manage all the plastic waste from school cafeteria meals. There is a heartbreaking mountain of plastics, styrofoam & wasted food!*

# What's For Dinner?

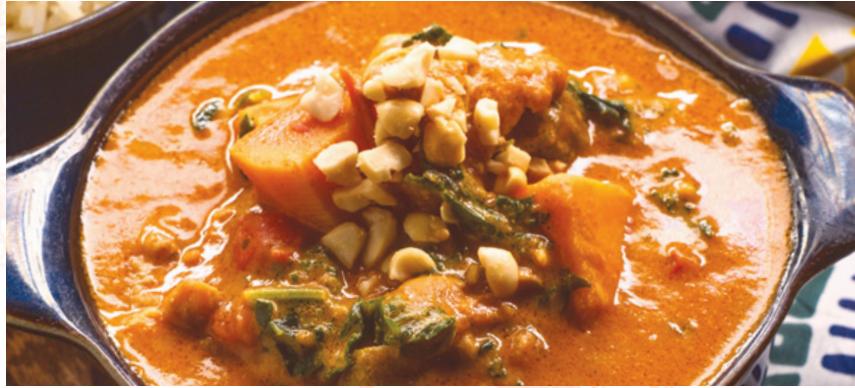
By: Co+op welcome to the table

Why are sweet potatoes at the heart of so many beloved family recipes? Is it the warm color palette? The subtle, sweet flavors? Or a versatility that lends well to being roasted, mashed or candied in dishes that are perennial favorites of the holiday season? Well, yes! Besides being delicious, sweet potatoes are practical: They're affordable, they store well after harvest and they're quite nutritious, offering a good source of vitamins A and C, potassium and fiber.

## Rooted in Tradition

Hearty, comforting sweet potatoes are a natural for winter meals and festive gatherings with loved ones. Sweet potato or yam — which is it? Though the terms “sweet potato” and “yam” are often used interchangeably, they are actually two different vegetables. Related to the morning glory, sweet potatoes have thin, smooth skin and moist flesh. Yams, with their drier, starchy flesh and rougher skin, are tubers related to the lily that grow in tropical regions, primarily West Africa, the Caribbean and Asia. You're less likely to see true yams in U.S. grocery stores — in fact, the “yams” you find in the produce aisle may be sweet potatoes, such as the Garnet yam. To complicate matters, there are white-fleshed or firm sweet potatoes that are nuttier and less sugary. But the more common varieties — including Garnet, Jewel and Beauregard — are soft and intensely sweet, with vibrant orange flesh.

A popular West African dish, *maafe* is a rich, hearty stew. This vegetarian version features the satisfying flavors of sweet potato in a spicy peanut and tomato sauce.



## Sweet Potato Maafe

Serves 8 | Total time: 45 minutes

### Ingredients:

1 tablespoon vegetable oil	2 turnips (or other root vegetable), peeled & chopped
1 large yellow onion, diced	¼ to ½ teaspoon red pepper flakes
3 cloves garlic, minced	2 cups vegetable or chicken stock
1 - 2 teaspoons fresh ginger, minced	⅓ cup smooth, natural peanut butter
¼ cup tomato paste	2 cups green cabbage, chopped
1 lb. sweet potato, peeled & cubed	Salt & pepper to taste
2 carrots, peeled and chopped	

### Preparation:

1. Heat the oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add onion and sauté until it begins to soften, about 5 minutes. Stir in the minced garlic and ginger, if using, and sauté for 1 to 2 minutes more. Stir in the tomato paste and cook for 1 to 2 minutes. Add sweet potato, carrot, turnip, stock and red pepper flakes and bring to a boil. Lower heat and simmer until the sweet potato, carrots and turnip begin to soften, about 10 minutes.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together the peanut butter with a little hot broth from the pot. Add the peanut butter mixture to the pot along with cabbage and stir to combine. Simmer for 5 minutes more or just until the cabbage has wilted and the other vegetables are cooked through. Add salt and pepper to taste, if needed, and serve hot.



Scan to register



## Join Us for Our Virtual Annual Meeting! Tuesday, October 26th | 6:30-7:30 pm

Register for the Co-op's Virtual Annual Meeting Today — it's Easy!

### Get the Latest News from Our Co-operative

Learn the Board Election Results | Hear the State of the Co-op  
Enjoy Music of Local Musicians | Participate in Gift Card Giveaways  
View Historical Perspectives of Our Growth Over the Years

### How to Register

Access our website at [cookcounty.coop](http://cookcounty.coop).  
Click on the "Register Now" button to sign up. Or scan the handy QR code above.

## The Ballot

### Cook County Whole Foods Co-op Official 2021 Ballot for the Board of Directors' Election

There are three open seats on the board. Please check three candidates of your choice, or write in a choice.

- Erik Hahn
- Alyssa Hedstrom
- Jaye White
- Other \_\_\_\_\_



20 East First Street  
PO Box 813  
Grand Marais, MN 55604

Owner Number \_\_\_\_\_ (Required for valid ballot.)

Your owner number is the 4 digit number listed after your name on this mailing.

**One ballot per ownership.**

**Ballots must be received by October 25, 2021.**

- 1.) Bring your completed ballot to the Co-op. (Ballots are also available at the Co-op.)
- 2.) Or mail it to:

Cook County Whole Foods Co-op, P.O. Box 813, Grand Marais, MN 55604.

Learn election results by attending our virtual Annual Meeting! Register on our website: <https://cookcounty.coop/>



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