

WHOLE FOODS CO-OP

garbanzo gazette

SUMMER 2026





Sarah Hannigan
General Manager

Celebrating Principle 7

As a neighborhood grocer, Whole Foods Co-op faces the same challenges that are felt across the food retail sector; however, as a cooperative grocer, we are called to approach these challenges in a manner that looks beyond our bottom line.

Cooperatives worldwide uphold a shared commitment to the Cooperative Principles, which were adopted by the International Co-operative Alliance in 1995 and can be traced back to the first modern cooperative founded in Rochdale, England in 1844.

Today, Cooperative Principle 7 (P7): Concern for Community, shines especially bright at our Co-op. Our genuine concern for community is second nature to our business, so much so that we are often asked if we're a non-profit. We do focus on operating a

The richness and depth of our commitment to P7 shines in our daily work at the Co-op.

financially sustainable business, but we are more interested in maximizing positive impact rather than maximizing profits.

P7 ensures that our policies, programs and objectives demonstrate a commitment to our community. We're here for local farmers, community-based non-profits, and neighbors facing economic hardship. The richness and depth of our commitment to P7 shines in our daily work at the Co-op, and is illustrated throughout the pages ahead.

The backbone of a vibrant food system will always be farmers and food producers. When our Hillside Grocery Manager penned what can easily be described as a love letter to local, we knew it would be something we'd revisit again and again. It's a delight to share Corrina's heartfelt expression of gratitude for our farmers and food producers on page 5.



When we started our shopper round-up donation program in 2017, we set out to raise funds for, but

With gratitude,

Sarah Hannigan, General Manager
gm@wholefoods.coop



is now

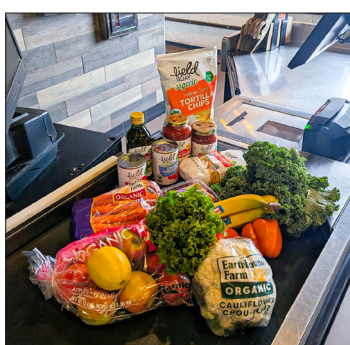


WHOLE FOODS CO-OP
ESSENTIALS
DISCOUNT PROGRAM

Expanding Access to Essentials

THE WHOLE FOODS CO-OP ESSENTIALS DISCOUNT PROGRAM

In June, Whole Foods Co-op rolled out the Whole Foods Co-op Essentials Discount, a new program intended to increase access to nutritious fruits, vegetables and other grocery staples for our Owners enrolled in federal and state assistance programs.



We're proud to announce this new program, which provides a 20% discount to qualifying Owners on Co-op Essentials. Co-op Essentials include all fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as hundreds of everyday staples throughout the store, such as all Field Day items and items included in the USDA's Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). The Whole Foods Co-op Essentials Discount program has replaced the Access Discount program. This change has allowed us to respond to requests from our Owners and community to reduce barriers by providing a deeper discount on nutritious everyday items.

For those who wish to become an Owner for whom cost of Ownership is a barrier, the Fran Skinner Memorial Matching Fund is available to supplement the required equity investment.

For more information on the Co-op Essentials Discount or the Fran Skinner Memorial Matching Fund, including qualifying programs to enroll in either, visit wholefoods.coop/CED.

GIVE! COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

Now Accepting 2027 Applications!

Whole Foods Co-op is proud to support local organizations that help build a healthy community. Through our GIVE! Community Support program, shoppers can round up their purchases at checkout to support local causes.

In 2027, eight nonprofits will be featured for a month each. Half of the donations collected these months will go to the featured nonprofit, while the other half will support the Co-op's Grow Local Food Fund, which helps strengthen our local food system. The other four months of the year will feature roundups for programs dedicated to food access.

Eligible organizations must be non-sectarian, non-partisan 501(c)(3) nonprofits. Organizations that have received GIVE! funding within the past three years are not eligible.

Apply by July 31, 2026:

wholefoods.coop/community-support-program

Round up at the registers this July, August and September to support these three Community Support Program recipients and the Grow Local Food Fund!



JULY 2026

DULUTH CENTER FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Funds raised will help compensate the women who plan, procure, and assemble DCWC's Nourish meal kits.



AUGUST 2026

UNION GOSPEL MISSION

Funds will be used to help provide hot, nutritious meals to people experiencing homelessness in the Northland.



SEPTEMBER 2026

DULUTH FOLK SCHOOL

Funds will be used to sustain, expand, and distribute a diverse range of classes, workshops, and gatherings.



Amber Schlater
Board Member

Cultivating a Strong Board

As we transition into the warmer months in the beautiful Northwoods, the Whole Foods Co-op Board of Directors (BOD) continues to maintain a busy and productive schedule! In addition to the standard cadence of our regular work, the BOD is looking forward to expanding our shared cooperative goals beyond the boardroom of the Co-op.

This year, the BOD summer schedule covers a range of activities, organized both here in Duluth and beyond, focusing on a myriad of professional development topics, such as strengthening our work in policy governance and growing our understanding of cooperative business models, in addition to working on several focused internal matters, such as committee work and policy review.

Regarding our BOD professional development, two Directors, Chris Lee and myself, participated in the Consumer Cooperative Management Association's (CCMA) annual conference, which took place this year in Tacoma, WA. Chris and I, accompanied by some of our Co-op's management team, spent three days immersed in a community of cooperative grocers, producers, educators, consultants, and just about everyone in between to learn about all things cooperative.

We attended workshops on best practices in board work, listened to keynotes addressing current challenges for co-ops, and visited a rich, diverse community of regional cooperatives showcasing the people, habitats, and economies of the Puget Sound. These included a rich diversity of foods, from mushrooms to seafood, and spaces, from farms to shared city market spaces.

The momentum from CCMA carried into our work during our biannual retreat. In addition to professional development, the BOD spent time working with our consultant on board recruitment and perpetuation, reevaluating our on-boarding experience and orientation materials, while also considering other fundamental aspects of healthy board stewardship.

In other words, we took a deep dive into thinking about ways in which we can cultivate the healthiest, strongest board possible in order to best serve our co-op and our greater Northwoods community.

Does all this good, meaningful work and beautiful, community-building cooperation sound interesting to you? If so, please consider joining our board! We are accepting applicants up to July 31 for our upcoming 2026 election. For more information on running for the board and what board service entails: wholefoods.coop/board.



Apply to Join the
**Whole Foods Co-op
Board of Directors!**

Applications due **July 31, 2026**

Learn more and apply: wholefoods.coop/board

Photo: Board members Susan Darley-Hill and Tristen Eberling connect with shoppers at a Denfeld event.

**LAST
CALL TO
APPLY!**

We Love Our Local Farmers

AN OPEN LETTER TO LOCAL GROWERS & PRODUCERS

At Whole Foods Co-op, 'local' is more than a buzzword. It represents a commitment to our neighbors.



We respect the physical, financial, and emotional investment our regional farmers pour into their work and we recognize how difficult but also how vital this work is, to not only feed the people in our region, but also to care for our land for the next generation.

Whole Foods Co-op staff meet annually with some of our local farmers to reflect on the previous year and plan for the year ahead.

This year, our Hillside Grocery Manager, Corrina, wrote a heartfelt letter to our farmers ahead of this meeting. The letter thoughtfully reflects how much everyone at the Co-op values the people doing the hard work that contributes to our regional food economy. We are grateful for her permission to share it with you.

An Open Letter to Our Local Farmers and Food Producers

To our local farmers and producers — thank you.

Thank you for the early mornings and the long days. Thank you for your care, your integrity, and your unwavering commitment to your land, your waters, your flocks and to this community. The dedication you bring to your products and your practices does not go unnoticed.

I continue to be amazed by this industry; by its resilience, innovation, perseverance, and heart. You manage changing markets, changing weather, changing regulations, equipment breakdowns, feed costs, fuel costs, and yet somehow still show up week after week with incredible products.

What you do isn't just work — it's a series of promises: a promise to steward land and water responsibly; a promise to feed families with food grown thoughtfully and ethically; a promise to strengthen the community that surrounds you.



What amazes me most isn't just the hard work, though there's plenty of that. It's your stewardship.

You're not just growing vegetables, harvesting seafood, or producing eggs. You're caring for land that was here long before us and protecting it for the people who will farm and fish it long after us. And that kind of long view is rare.

You make decisions today that won't just affect this season's yield, but the health of the soil and waters for years to come. You are always considering the sustainability of your operations for the next generation, whether that's your kids, someone else's kids, or young producers just getting started. We watch your patience, your tenacity, your respect for the land and water. You show what's possible, and you quietly set an example for that next generation of farmers, fishermen, and producers.

That's leadership. And it's something I deeply respect.

Because of you, we're able to offer food with a story, and that story is of food that's grown and gathered with transparency and intention. You don't just supply products, you build trust. You strengthen this community in ways that go far beyond what's on a plate.

There's a humility in this work that I really admire. You don't do it for applause. You do it because it matters. Because feeding people matters.

Stewarding land and water matters. Producing food with care and integrity matters. You are the connection, the resilience, and a driving force behind a thriving regional economy.

We don't take that lightly.

Through your work, this isn't just a food system that feeds us today — it's one that will feed the next generation. And that's something worth standing behind.

We are incredibly fortunate to partner with people who work as hard and care as much as you do. Thank you for the early mornings, the long seasons, the unpredictability, and for continuing to believe in local.

You're not just producing food — you're protecting a future. And we're proud to stand with you in that work.

So truly — thank you.



Corrina R.
Grocery Manager, Hillside

**Want to Learn More
About Our Farmers?
Join Us on a Farm Tour!**

Visit [our website](#) more info.



Nourishing a Neighborhood

THE POWER OF THE DULUTH CENTER FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S NOURISH PROGRAM



DCWC women prep and assemble Nourish Meal Kits. Photo by Molly Suzanne Creative.

It was 8:30am on a Monday, and a group of women were gathered over a dozen cans of diced tomatoes, two gigantic pots and a calculator, figuring out portions.

As the women bantered, everyone's eyes started watering from the whirling automatic onion dicer. As the UMD medical student tossed another onion into the machine, everyone good-humoredly razed her. Wearing the coveted onion goggles, she unapologetically smiled and shrugged.

The morning had started just 15 minutes earlier with a quick meeting. The diverse group of about 20 volunteers and employees had come together to prepare the week's meal kits for Nourish, a hyper-local meal delivery program for people living in and near the Duluth Hillside, one of several programs run by the Duluth Center for Women and Children.

Every Monday, subscribers to the Nourish program receive a box prepared that morning, filled with fresh ingredients and sauces, and a recipe, to make a meal in 30 minutes or less. Half the participants pay for their weekly box. The other half, who have an identified need, receive theirs for free.

Aparna Katre, organizer for the Duluth Center for Women and Children and Interdisciplinary Studies Program Director at University of Minnesota Duluth, welcomed everyone and kicked off the day's project.

"Today's recipe is for jambalaya. We need 164 servings, 69 for kids," she said before pointing out the ingredients for the regular and vegetarian recipes. Then people dispersed to wash, measure, cut and cook ingredients.

The idea for Nourish, a sort of grassroots Hello Fresh, was born from an evidence-based approach out of UMD, where professors sought to make an impact on the Central Hillside through implementing social entrepreneurship. Dr. Molly Harney was working with a group of women around trauma and parenting who were primarily living in the Steve O'Neil Apartments. "During that process, she realized that women are isolated and disconnected," Aparna explained. "They need meaning and purpose. So, she had an idea to create a social enterprise."

The group, First Ladies of the Hillside, was formed with the tagline "Invisible No More" focused on giving purpose – and visibility – to women living on the Central Hillside who were feeling overlooked. The group later became The Duluth Center for Women and Children.

To create a social enterprise, first the group needed to identify a need that they could fill. That's when they connected with Aparna. "I was teaching an entrepreneurship class here at UMD," she explained. "I got students and the women together in a class for a semester and we did exploration. We didn't want to just do more of what is being done but [instead] find a gap that existed in the Central Hillside that we could fill."

The group identified food security, both access to whole fresh foods, as well as the skills and confidence to cook these foods, as a need they could meet and the idea for the meal kits was born. "It made sense for the community," Aparna said. "The meal kits could help households, over time, to transition to more healthy eating behaviors."



Nourish kits of fresh veggies being assembled; photo by Molly Suzanne Creative

The meal kits provide free fresh meals, including partially prepared components as well as some ingredients that still need to be cooked. A recipe is included, both to provide instructions on how to cook the remaining ingredients, as well as how to pull the entire meal together. This approach helps to build familiarity with specific ingredients that may not be familiar to everyone while building confidence in the kitchen, through practice.

UMD students worked with Aparna to collect information and data from the program participants to understand which parts of the program were working – and which parts weren't.

They sought to answer the questions: Are the people receiving the meal kits actually eating the meals? Are they throwing out some food? How happy are they? "As we introduce new tastes and new, healthier foods, we had to meet meal kit recipients where they were on in their food journey," Aparna said. "As we began to introduce newer foods, we looked at whether they were actually accepting those foods or not." The team was then able to implement their findings in real time, adjusting the program to continue to better fit the needs of the community they were working with.

"Here, you feel like a mission is being accomplished... when you leave, you leave feeling full."

– DCWC Staff Member

The nonprofit's partnership with UMD and work with students has added the capacity to gather valuable insights. But it has also created tangible, real-life learning opportunities for students. In addition, the program has brought important employment opportunities to a population that has fallen out of the workforce.

Staying true to the program's original intent of engaging women on the Central Hillside who are looking to improve their lives and their community, the program provides an opportunity for people experiencing mental health issues or other life circumstances to engage in a trauma-informed work environment.

By creating a flexible and compassionate employment model, they've helped to get women back on their feet. "We have had some employees move on to other things," Aparna explained. "They are now in full-time positions in other places."

Back in the kitchen, another benefit of the Nourish program is palpable.

At one table, a young woman meets a middle-aged woman, who together scoop and bag servings of rice. In the kitchen, a half-dozen college students chop a mountain of peppers. Two veteran volunteers wash the reusable glass jars that will soon be filled with all the diced vegetables. Meanwhile, calculations complete, the staff have moved on from the cans of tomatoes to cook at the stoves and coordinate all the moving pieces that will culminate in a box filled with reusable jars of diced vegetables, a jar of jambalaya base, a bag of uncooked rice, and some trail mix (a snack for the kids). The food will all then be personally delivered to the doorsteps of homes in neighborhoods in and around the Hillside.

In every corner, there's laughter and joy in doing good work for neighbors with neighbors. Person after person, when asked why they come back, share the sense of community they feel when working together.

"Here, you feel like a mission is being accomplished," commented one of the staff. "When you leave, you leave feeling full."

If you're looking to get involved through donating, volunteering, or subscribing to a Nourish meal kit, visit dcwcnourish.com.

GIVE! COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

Round Up at the Register in July for Duluth Center for Women & Children!

Funds raised will help compensate the women who plan, procure, and assemble DCWC's Nourish meal kits. Round-up donations will be split 50/50 with the Grow Local Food Fund.

An Eventful Summer!

We're looking forward to a summer full of events that will take us out into our surrounding neighborhoods, as well as welcome our neighbors into our stores!

In the Community



From beating the heat at Duluth Parks and Recreation's three Splash Pad events, to meeting up at Harrison Park for the first year of the Twin Ports Roots Market, to tabling during the Spirit Valley Days Craft Show, and Duluth Superior Pride, we're looking forward to engaging in the community in new ways this summer!

We're also excited to rejoin our partners at community gatherings at Hillside's National Night Out and the YMCA Block Party, as well as celebrating the fall season at Unity in the Community and Lake Superior Harvest Festival. If you're out and about this summer, we hope that you'll look for our bright orange tent, pop over and say 'hi!'

ANNOUNCING:

Whole Foods Co-op P7 Volunteer Squad



Our Owners and shoppers have expressed an interest in engaging further with one another, as well as the local nonprofits that serve our community. This called to mind **Cooperative Principle #7: Concern for Community** – and the P7 Volunteer Squad was born!

Every few months, Whole Foods Co-op will host a P7 volunteer event for our Owners and shoppers to come together, give back, and learn more about the organizations supporting our neighbors. We hope you'll join us throughout the year!

Find more about the program and upcoming volunteer opportunities at wholefoods.coop/Principle7.

September P7 Volunteer Squad Opportunity

Wednesday, September 2 • 5:30–7:30 pm
Second Harvest Northland

We'll pack bags for Second Harvest Northland's BackPack program, which provides a supplemental supply of weekend food to local children in need.

Register by August 26: wholefoods.coop/Principle7

In Our Stores – and Beyond!



Coffee at the Co-op

Third Friday of each month • 7:30–8:30 am
Whole Foods Co-op Hillside
Brewery Creek Overlook

Join us for a free coffee (or tea!) and a chat about what's going on in the community and at the Co-op. Connect with old friends or meet new ones!



Co-op Crafts: DIY Tie-Dye Tote Bags

Wednesday, July 15 • 3:00–5:00 pm
Whole Foods Co-op Denfeld

Tie dye your new favorite reusable canvas bag at this free event! While supplies last.

Whole Foods Co-op Farm Tour

Saturday, August 29 • 9:00 am–2:15 pm
\$25/Owner • \$35/non-Owner

Tour three of our local farms with Whole Foods Co-op! Meet the farmers, learn about how they farm, why it matters, and how local food moves from field to shelf in Northern Minnesota. We'll take a motorcoach to tour three farms in Wrenshall – Food Farm, Northern Harvest, and Y-ker Acres – then head to Chambers Grove Park for a picnic with boxed lunches from the Co-op. Farm tour is rain or shine.

Learn More and Sign Up: wholefoods.coop/FarmTour



Photo: Janaki Fisher-Merritt leads a Co-op tour at Food Farm in 2025.

JonnyPops: Kindness is Golden

BUILDING A BETTER WORLD, ONE POP AT A TIME



JonnyPops stands out in a crowded freezer aisle because of its simple, clear mission: kindness. The Minnesota company carries out their mission in a myriad of ways—from a commitment to no artificial dyes, to their sticks, which have a kind deed printed on every one, as well as through their commitment to giving back to the community.



JonnyPops®


The idea for the natural popsicle company originally came from Jonathan "Jonny" Jeffrey, a cousin of a St. Olaf College student, Erik Brust. In 2010, Jonny passed away, but Erik decided to carry his idea forward. In 2011, he formed a business with fellow students focused on making delicious popsicles with local ingredients whenever possible.

As the company grew, JonnyPops expanded production and eventually made its way into grocery stores across the United States, though it continues to produce its frozen treats in Elk River, MN. "Minnesota is a state that prides itself on showing up, being dependable, and taking care of your neighbors," said Michael Meriggoli, JonnyPops' Associate Manager of Customer Marketing. "That is aligned with how we operate. We are built around real relationships with retail partners, community engagement, and products made with simple ingredients."

While many companies talk about their values, JonnyPops brings kindness into everyday life. Each pop stick includes a simple "kind deed," encouraging small, meaningful moments. And, through its "Kindness is Golden" program, people can complete the kind deeds, collect their popsicle sticks, and trade them in for rewards. This transforms a frozen treat into an experience, encouraging positive action.

This focus on kindness extends beyond their popsicle sticks. JonnyPops has developed programs for schools and communities, giving students simple ways

to practice kindness both in and out of the classroom. "When schools need support, we don't just ship product," said Michael. "We send Kindness Toolkits with posters and stickers so educators can bring the mission into their classrooms."

- Thank a coach or mentor 
- Hold the door for someone 
- Volunteer to help! 

JonnyPops continues to grow while staying connected to its purpose. And reaching more homes means sharing their message with more people. As Michael put it, "The more homes we reach, the more kind deeds are shared." 🌱

Look for a variety of JonnyPops treats at both Whole Foods Co-op stores!



Picnic Perfect

STAFF PICKS FOR SUMMER SNACKING

Our staff are experts at making the most of a Duluth summer—including what snacks to bring on outdoor adventures! Stop by the Co-op to pick up some of their favorite picks for hikes, picnics, paddles, and backyard get-togethers.



"Smoked mozzarella bowtie pasta salad is a summery snack that you can eat cold."

-Brandon, Grocery

"Chips and a local dip! It's a classic tasty food, and so easy to prepare."

-Charlotte, Front End



"A turkey and cheddar sandwich from the grab-and-go case is convenient and delicious!"

-Olivia, Marketing

Shareable Snacks



Field Day Peanut Butter Pretzels

-Jenna, Marketing



Ferndale Cranberry Turkey Sticks

-Jen, Store Manager

"I like to pick some fancy local cheeses and meats to make cracker sandwiches!"

-Dylan, Front End



Bulk Favorites



Dried mango

-Megan, Produce



"Malted milk balls have a thick layer of chocolatey goodness."

-Mabel, Front End

Yogurt-covered pretzels

-André, Marketing



Fizzy & Fresh



"Wildwonder drinks are prebiotic, caffeine-free and yummy."

-Corey, IT

Northern Soda Co. Root Beer

-Elyse, Front End



Reed's Ginger Beer, Extra Ginger Brew

-Robert, Finance

Fresh Picks



"Seasonal fruits, like blueberries and peaches, are fresh and nutritious!"

-Liam, Produce



Fresh snap peas and baby carrots

-Cheyenne, Grocery



Chips with salsa and guacamole

-Violet, Front End



Summer Sippers

Try these refreshing drink recipes to cool off on a hot summer day!

Rose Petal Lemonade

Serves 6. Total time: 20 minutes; 10 minutes active.

- 4 cups water
- ¼ cup rose petals, dried
- 1 ¼ cups honey
- 1 ½ cups lemon juice
- Ice cubes

1. In a 2-quart pot, bring water to a boil. Remove from heat and add rose petals. Stir to submerge the petals. Let steep for 10 minutes.
2. Pour the honey into a pitcher or 2-quart jar. Place a wire mesh strainer on top. Strain the hot rose infusion into the honey. Stir until dissolved. Stir in lemon juice and chill until cold.
3. Serve over ice.

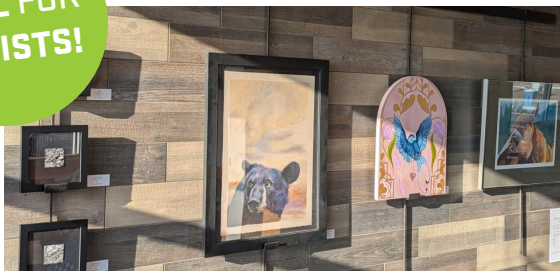
Berry Shrub

Serves 10. Total time: 24 hours; 30 minutes active.

- 6 oz. fresh raspberries, blueberries, or blackberries
- ¾ cup sugar
- ½ cup apple cider vinegar
- Ice and club soda, to serve

1. In a 2-cup storage container with a lid, mash the berries with a wooden spoon. Stir in sugar and vinegar. Cover and refrigerate for 24 hours.
2. Place a fine-mesh strainer over a bowl and strain the fruit, pressing with a spoon to extract all the liquids. Store the liquid in the refrigerator for up to a week, tightly covered, before serving.
3. To serve, place 2 tbsp. of shrub in a glass, fill with ice, and add club soda to top it off. Stir and serve.

Recipes reprinted with permission from grocery.coop



Owner artwork displayed at Hillside, October 2025

CO-OP OWNER ART SHOW

This October, we invite you to join our creative community of Owners in displaying your work at Whole Foods Co-op. We welcome visual artists of all ages and skill levels! If you're interested, please fill out an application by September 1, 2026.

Visit wholefoods.coop/art to apply. Paper forms are available at the Customer Service counter.