

WHOLE FOODS CO-OP

garbanzo gazette

FALL 2026





Sarah Hannigan
General Manager

Getting to the Ends

It's been a bit more than a year since the Whole Foods Co-op Board of Directors restated the high-level aspirational direction for the work of our Co-op. In June 2025, they adopted a new Ends: With Whole Foods Co-op, our community is better connected, our food system is resilient, and our regional economy is thriving.

Over the last year, we've oriented the work of the Co-op toward this Ends, finding ways to deepen community connection, strengthen the local food system, and better contribute to the regional economy – all while aiming to successfully operate a consumer-owned grocery store during unprecedented times.

It's exciting to see – and share in these pages – some of the ways the Co-op is showing up beyond the aisles and making progress toward our Ends.

The Whole Foods Co-op Fresh Dollars program is a partnership with Essentia Health. It's modeled after the USDA Double Up Food Bucks nutrition assistance program, providing a dollar-for-dollar match for purchases of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Our recent Farm Tour is an example of the Co-op offering experiences for Owners outside the stores. A drizzly August day offered direct connection to our food through the people who tend the land and livestock, and the places where they do so. The affinity for a carrot grown in Wrenshall is only deeper after walking the fields, marveling at the first of the harvest in the root cellar, and experiencing the dedication of the farmers.

Progress toward the Ends also means carrying forward ongoing endeavors. Shopper round-up donations continue to support great things, like the chalet project at Chester Bowl. Be sure to vote in this year's Co-op election and choose organizations to receive GIVE! Community Support Program in 2027. And check out our blog in the months ahead to see how the Grow Local Food Fund – also supported by Co-op shopper round-up donations – is building capacity and resilience in the local food system.

The foundation for the aspirational work toward our Ends is our ability to operate financially stable grocery stores. The current landscape isn't without challenge, yet we're called to sail toward our Ends while keeping a careful hand on the tiller.

We invite you to the Annual Owner Meeting to learn more about where we've been and where we're headed. And too, join us to enjoy an evening of community connections at the Great Lakes Aquarium. 🥕

In cooperation,

Sarah Hannigan, General Manager
gm@wholefoods.coop



OUR ENDS

**With Whole Foods Co-op,
our community is better connected,
our food system is resilient,
and our regional economy is thriving.**



Maria Isley
Board of Directors

Reflections from Serving on the Whole Foods Co-op Board

Serving on the Whole Foods Co-op Board has been one of the most meaningful ways I've found to give back to my community. As my board service comes to an end this October, I've been reflecting on why this experience has mattered—not only to me, but to our co-op and the community it serves.

A cooperative is more than a grocery store. It is a community-owned business built on the belief that we are stronger when we invest in one another. Every Owner has a voice, and the Board has the responsibility of stewarding that shared vision for future generations. It's both humbling and inspiring to be part of the bigger picture.

Board service isn't about managing day-to-day operations or making individual decisions about what goes on the shelves. It is about governance, long-term thinking, and ensuring the Co-op remains true to its policies, values, owners, and the broader community it serves. It means asking thoughtful questions, listening to different perspectives, and making decisions that balance today's needs with tomorrow's opportunities.

What has made this experience especially meaningful are the people. I've had the privilege of serving alongside individuals who brought diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives to the table. We didn't always agree, but we shared a commitment to strengthening a business that belongs to all of us. Those conversations, sometimes challenging and often inspiring, are where some of the best decisions were made.

Serving on this Board has also reinforced something I have long believed: healthy communities don't happen by accident. They are built by people who choose to get involved. Whether through volunteering, serving on nonprofit boards, coaching youth, supporting local organizations, or participating in civic life, communities thrive when people are willing to contribute their time, talents, and perspectives.

Board service requires commitment, but it gives back far more than it asks. Serving on the Whole Foods Co-op Board provided an opportunity to learn, grow as a leader, better understand how decisions are made, and build relationships with people who care deeply about their community. Most importantly, it offers a firsthand look at how thoughtful governance can help shape an organization's future.



In 2025, Maria was awarded the Cooperative Board Service Award by the Consumer Cooperative Management Association for her contributions to the Board. Maria served three terms on the Co-op's Board, serving as President for two.

As I conclude this chapter, I leave with deep appreciation for board members, staff, Owners, and community members who make Whole Foods Co-op such a special place. I'm grateful to have been part of an organization that demonstrates every day that a business can be rooted in cooperation, shared ownership, and community well-being.

If you've ever considered serving on a board—whether at the Co-op or with another community organization—I encourage you to consider taking that step. Your experiences, ideas, and voice matter. Communities become stronger when people step forward, ask questions, listen well, and work together toward something larger than themselves.

Whole Foods Co-op has been fortunate to benefit from generations of community members willing to serve. I hope that tradition continues. And I hope others discover, as I have, that some of the most rewarding ways to make a difference begin simply by taking a seat at the table. 🌟

VOTE!

WHOLE FOODS CO-OP 2026 ELECTION SEPTEMBER 9 – OCTOBER 11

As an Owner, voting in our annual election is an opportunity to use your voice to help shape the future of Whole Foods Co-op!

In addition to approving meeting minutes from last year's Annual Owner Meeting and voting for next year's GIVE! nonprofit recipients, you'll be asked to vote for the next members of our Board of Directors. Find more information on candidates in our Election Guide and vote by October 11!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS CANDIDATES



Susan Darley-Hill
(incumbent)



Tristen Eberling
(incumbent)



Tyler Hamilton



Stacey Jutila



Chris Lee
(incumbent)



Sarah Stewart



View the Election Guide and vote by Sunday, Oct. 11 at wholefoods.coop/vote.

Those without internet access can request a paper guide and ballot at customer service or vote at a voting station at the 2026 Annual Owner Meeting.



HELP CHOOSE NEXT YEAR'S NONPROFIT RECIPIENTS

While you're voting for Board members, you'll also have the opportunity to weigh in on the nonprofits who will benefit from our monthly register round-up program in 2027. Beneficiaries are projected to receive between \$5,000 – \$6,000, so take a moment to show support for the local nonprofits nearest and dearest to you.

Forty nonprofits applied to be 2027 GIVE! Community Support recipients. Whole Foods Co-op staff participated in the first round of voting, narrowing the field to 22 finalists. As an Owner, it's now your chance to use your voice to support the 8 nonprofits you'd like to round up for in 2027.

The GIVE! Community Support Program supports local organizations dedicated to environmental stewardship, equity & diversity, food access, and the local food economy. Each month, donations are split 50/50 between the selected nonprofit and the Co-op's Grow Local Food Fund.



2027 GIVE! FINALISTS

Animal Allies Humane Society

animalallies.net

Divine Konnections divinekonnections.org

Duluth Children's Museum

duluthchildrensmuseum.org

Duluth Community School Collaborative

duluthcsc.org

Duluth Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE)

isd709.org/academics/early-childhood/ecfe

Friends of the Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve folsr.org

Great Lakes Aquarium glaquarium.org

Lake Superior Zoo lszoo.org

Lincoln Park Children and Families Collaborative

lpcfc.org

Make-A-Wish Foundation of Minnesota

mn.wish.org

Northern Expressions Arts Collective

northexp.org

Northwood Children Services Valley Youth Center

northwoodchildren.org

One Roof Community Housing

1roofhousing.org

Pawsitive Future pawsitivefuture.net

Project Joy projectjoynorthland.org

Prove Gallery provecollective.org

Recovery Alliance Duluth

recoveryallianceduluth.org

Tamarack Water Alliance

tamarackwateralliance.org

Twin Ports Roots Market

facebook.com/p/Twin-Ports-Roots-Market-61572036372699/

Vita Nova vitanovahousing.org

Western Lake Superior Habitat For Humanity

wlshabitat.org

YWCA Duluth ywcaduluth.org

A Fresh New Program

FRESH DOLLARS MATCHES PRODUCE PURCHASES

We are excited to announce the new Fresh Dollars program, a dollar-for-dollar matching program on all fresh produce!

When eligible participants in Fresh Dollars buy fresh fruits and vegetables at either Whole Foods Co-op store on Tuesdays, they will receive a voucher for a matching amount up to \$10 that can be used on fresh fruits and vegetables any day of the week in the next 28 days at either Whole Foods Co-op store.

We are thrilled to be able to roll this program out in partnership with Essentia Health to improve access to fresh produce in our community.

For more information, including a list of qualifying programs and FAQ, visit wholefoods.coop/freshdollars.



1 Sign Up for Free

2 Buy Fresh Produce on Tuesdays

3 Receive ^{up to} \$10

in Matching Fresh Dollars to Get More Fresh Produce ANY Day!

2026 Farm Tour

HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR VISIT TO WRENSHALL

A little rain couldn't stop us from having a great time on our first Farm Tour at the end of August. Thank you to the wonderful owners of Food Farm, Northern Harvest Farm, and Y-ker Acres for sharing your farms and knowledge, and thank you to all the Owners and shoppers who joined us on this adventure and enjoyed a great day with us!

Top: We followed Janaki Fisher-Merritt on a tour of Food Farm; We heard from Rick Dalen of Northern Harvest Farm.

Bottom: Attendees had the chance to harvest a few carrots at Northern Harvest Farm; We enjoyed a Co-op made box lunch at Food Farm while talking to Joshua and Alison Stamper of Y-ker Acres.



Easy Homemade Bread Recipes

As the days get shorter and the weather gets chilly, there's something extra comforting about a warm, fresh loaf of bread. Keep things classic with a hearty Irish Soda Bread, or let Slow Cooker Whole Wheat Bread do most of the work for you while you go about your day. Grab the butter and happy baking!

Slow Cooker Whole Wheat Bread

Servings: 10 slices/1 loaf. Prep time: 3.5 hours; 20 minutes active

- 1 ½ cup lukewarm water
- ½ tsp. instant dry yeast
- 1 tbsp. honey
- 2 cups whole wheat flour
- 2 cups unbleached flour
- 1 tsp. salt



1. Place a piece of parchment paper in the cooker, covering the bottom and at least part way up the sides.
2. In a large bowl, stir the water, yeast and honey. Let the yeast bubble a bit; it should be foamy in about 5 minutes. Add the flours and salt and stir with a wooden spoon until the dough is stiff, then switch to kneading with your hand. In the bowl or on a lightly floured counter, knead the dough for about 5 minutes.
3. Form the dough into a round ball and place in the slow cooker on the parchment paper. Cover and let stand for 1 hour to rise.
4. Turn the cooker on high and cook for 2 hours. Use an instant-read thermometer to test the temperature of the middle of the loaf; it will be baked through at 180-200°F. If the loaf hasn't reached that temperature, cover and cook for another 15 minutes, until it reaches 180°F.
5. Use the parchment to lift the finished loaf out of the cooker, and cool on a rack.



Irish Soda Bread

Servings: 12 slices/1 loaf. Prep time: 1 hour; 20 minutes active.

- 1 ½ cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup whole wheat pastry flour
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- ½ tsp. salt
- 1 tbsp. caraway seeds
- 6 tbsp. cold butter
- ¾ cup buttermilk, plus 2 Tbsp. to brush top
- ¼ cup honey
- ½ cup raisins or currants

1. Heat oven to 375°F. Mix flour, baking soda, salt and caraway seeds in large bowl. Use the large holes of a grater to grate the cold butter into the dry mixture, then toss until it resembles coarse crumbs.
2. Add ¾ cup buttermilk and honey to flour mixture; stir to make soft dough. Press the dough together; it will be dense like biscuit dough. If some of the mixture is too dry to incorporate into the dough, sprinkle in an extra tablespoon or so of buttermilk just to moisten loose flour. Stir in raisins.
3. Shape into rounded disk about 8 inches across and place on greased cookie sheet. Brush top with the reserved buttermilk. If desired, cut an "X" in the top with a sharp knife. Bake for 40 to 50 minutes, until golden brown and crusty. Keeps tightly wrapped at room temperature for three or four days.

Recipes reprinted with permission from grocery.coop

A New Chalet

TO HOST THE NEXT GENERATION OF CHESTER BOWL FAMILIES

It was a perfect summer day at Chester Bowl, and yet the location that would be usually hosting dozens of laughing, active kids sat empty. The park, with the signature ski slope at its center, was waiting.

This year the Chester Bowl Improvement Club, a nonprofit that partners with the City of Duluth to provide year-round programming at Chester, is overseeing the rebuilding of a brand new chalet, right in the heart of the park. During construction, the summer camps that usually keep this site bubbling with fun have been moved to neighboring parks with the hope that the chalet will open in time to welcome the first snow and excited skiers and snowboarders.

"The new building is about serving the community and serving it well," said Dave Schaeffer, Executive Director of the Chester Bowl Improvement Club. The new chalet will be a tool for the nonprofit to continue to serve as many families as possible, both through facilitating winter sports on the ski hill, as well as through their popular summer camps. Larger, more accessible, and better laid out for their current needs, the new chalet will create a more welcoming atmosphere for the entire community.

And from the moment the chalet opens later this fall, it will be brimming with activity as the nonprofit implements its core winter programming.



A sketch of the new chalet, scheduled to open later this fall.



Original Chester Bowl chalet from the top of the ski hill.

Starting in late October, people can come in for a fitting night to rent skis or snowboards for the year, which they can also use at other alpine hills. Families can get season rentals after the hill has opened for the winter. Rentals for this equipment are popular, particularly with people interested in skiing but are not ready to invest in their own gear, as well as for families with growing kids. And, for those who can't afford passes and/or gear, limited scholarships are available.

This program creates a sense of identity for "Chester Park families" who spend a good portion of their winter on the hill, skiing and snowboarding, and also volunteering. Volunteers are integral to the success of every season, helping to build a sense of community while keeping operating costs down and allowing donations to go directly towards scholarships.

"The new building is all about serving the community and serving it well."

– Dave Schaeffer, Chester Bowl Improvement Club Executive Director



Left: A 1982 Olympic mural featuring Chester Bowl alums was fully revealed during demolition of the previous building. Efforts are being made to preserve the mural for the new building. **Right:** Aerial view of the new chalet's construction; photo by Northern Huddle Photography

"Chester Bowl was one of the foundations that helped me, as a single mom, raise my three daughters," shared Amy Kranig, former Chester Bowl Improvement Club board member, who's also currently serving on their finance committee and on the new chalet's capital campaign. "I would not have been able to afford any of it for just one kid, let alone three. But that was never an issue," she shared. "All three girls skied, two of them learned during ski camp, while my oldest was a cadet."

The cadet program is just one of the ways kids have the opportunity to "Grow up Chester", as some of them call it. After learning to ski, youth are given an opportunity to volunteer in a first 'job' to help out on the hill and teach younger kids to learn how to ski. There's also a sister cadet program for their summer camps. Chester becomes a safe third place for youth to build community and independence in a safe space.



A Peace in the Parks guidepost reads "Peace has Power."

This is a reflection of the leadership's commitment to how these activities are run. "I've always said that what we do, skiing, snowboarding, playing games at summer camp, is less important than how we do it," said Dave.

And the literal guidepost for how they approach their work is through their Peace in the Parks pledge, which begins with: *Chester Bowl should be a safe place for everyone. To help that happen, I promise to be kind and caring to others.*

It's within this ethos that people engage in Chester Bowl to have fun outside but also build community. And, with the new chalet and a fresh blanket of snow, the waiting will finally be over, and the hill will once again fill with Chester Bowl families, both returning and new.

You can help bring more people to this community-focused hill. "We know that there are still more families that want to join us, including those that can't afford full program fees," said Dave. Scholarships to participate in both winter and summer programming are primarily funded by direct donations from the community. People can give directly to the Chester Bowl Improvement Club and can also round up at the register for the nonprofit this November at the Co-op. 🍎

GIVE!

Round up at the register this fall!
Donations are split 50/50 between the
Grow Local Food Fund and each month's
Community Support Program recipient.

Learn more at wholefoods.coop/give



The Grow Local Food Fund is a grant that provides funding for projects that build the resiliency of our local food system. Half of round-up donations support this grant.



Half of each month's donations go to the following nonprofits, selected by our Owners during last year's election.

OCTOBER

Safe Haven

Funds will help provide food, bedding, and essentials for Crisis Shelter residents and support advocacy services at the Resource Center, helping over 2,000 survivors annually.

NOVEMBER

Chester Bowl Improvement Club

Funds will support Chester Bowl's scholarship programs for winter recreation and summer camps, helping more children and families ski, snowboard, and enjoy the outdoors year-round.

DECEMBER

Lake Superior YMCA

Funds will be used to support the YMCA's Food Access Program, providing healthy snacks and meals to children in after-school and summer programs, and supply meal kits to families in need.

All Owners are Invited!

2026 ANNUAL OWNER MEETING

Wednesday, October 7 • 5:30 – 8:30 pm

📍 **Great Lakes Aquarium • 353 Harbor Dr., Duluth**

We're excited to bring Whole Foods Co-op Owners together for our 2026 Annual Owner Meeting at the Great Lakes Aquarium! Enjoy delicious food from local food trucks and ice cream from Love Creamery. Hear great local music, meet the local vendors behind some of your favorite Co-op products, connect with fellow Owners, and enter to win great prizes—all while exploring the Aquarium!

Tickets are \$5 per person and include one drink and one ice cream ticket per person, plus one food ticket and one \$5 Whole Foods Co-op coupon per Owner account. Additional food and beverages will be available for purchase. Those wishing to attend only the Business Meeting may attend for free, but are still asked to register.

We can't wait to see you there!



Visit the otters, seadragons, moon jellies and more at the Great Lakes Aquarium!



Register by October 1 at wholefoods.coop/2026AnnualMeeting

Registrations also accepted at Customer Service or by phone at 218.728.0884.

CO-OP CLASSES + EVENTS

Coffee at the Co-op

Third Friday of the Month
7:30– 8:30 am
📍 Hillside Brewery Creek Overlook

Start your morning with a warm drink and a friendly conversation at Coffee at the Co-op, a relaxed community coffee meetup.

The Art of Everyday Applesauce: Master the Basics of Safe Home Preservation

October 13 • 5–7 pm • \$5*
📍 Hillside Classroom



Join University of Minnesota St. Louis County Extension Educator Freya Thurmer to learn the basics of home food preservation, including water bath canning and food safety. Make your own apple sauce and take a pint jar home!

Co-op Crafts: Personalized Cards with Apple Stamps

October 24 • 9–11 am
📍 Hillside Brewery Creek Overlook



Make personalized stationery with apples and other produce. This is a fun activity for kids (or the young at heart)! While supplies last; kids must be accompanied by an adult.

Co-op Crafts: DIY Reusable Holiday Tote Bags

December 5 • 9–11 am
📍 Hillside Brewery Creek Overlook

Join us as we create one-of-a-kind designs on reusable canvas bags, perfect for the holidays! Materials provided; while supplies last; kids must be accompanied by an adult.

P7 Volunteer Squad at Bentleyville

December 8 • 4–9 pm
📍 Bayfront Festival Park



Join the Co-op P7 Volunteer Squad at Bentleyville to serve coffee, hot cocoa and cookies to visitors! Sign up to volunteer from 4-6:30 or 6:30-9 by November 23. We'll provide a free t-shirt to wear while volunteering!

More Information and Registration

Visit our online calendar for detailed descriptions and to register:
wholefoods.coop/classes

**Attendees will receive a \$5 Whole Foods Co-op gift card upon completion of the class. Must be present to receive.*

Abandoned Equity

In compliance with its policy on the Abandoned Equity Process and in acknowledgment that in Fiscal Year 2026 Whole Foods Co-op achieved growth in new Owners, in new equity, and in earnings, the Board approved returning approximately \$7,500 net after any indebtedness owed to Whole Foods Co-op, of the oldest abandoned equity. Equity is considered abandoned when there is no current address on file and/or the Owner is more than one year behind schedule in the purchase of required equity. The balance of unclaimed abandoned equity will be donated to local nonprofits.

The process to return abandoned equity is to publish the names of these Owners in the *Garbanzo Gazette* and allow at least sixty (60) days (by November 30, 2026) for them to provide a current address for an equity refund or to complete their purchase of required equity.

Amdahl, Gary
Bockman, Michele
Boeselager, Karen
Boll, Roberta
Branning, Grace
Brims, Debra Jean
Burgess, Emily
Campbell, Nancy
Cerkvenik, Nancy
Cline, Jem M
Cody, Shawn
Courville, Xan F
Dorfman, Carolyn
Eckstine, Mary
Engberg, Charista
Faust, Shelly
Favell, John J
Flaherty, Patrick S

Gantz, Meagan R
Gonser, Josie
Grotte, Matt
Grow-Vidito, Angela
Guildford, Stephanie
Gustafson, Alison
Hakes, Leann M
Hjelle, Johnathon N
Homola, Elizabeth
Horabik, Emily
Howard, Annetta
Humes, Leslie
James, Jennifer
Jensen, Gwen
Johnson, Lynn Marie
Johnson, Michael Leon
Johnson, Pamela
Johnson, Titus

Karsky, Margaret
Keeshan, Margaret
Klein, Sandra
Koehler, Stephanie
Koskela, Angela
Krause, Kay
Kuchenbaker, Susan
Kultala, James C
Leister, Maryn K
Levin, Ilene F
Lippert, Charles
MacArthur, Allie
Mack, Sharon
Marker, Jennefer
McNaughton, Deloris
Metsa, John-Paul
Meyer, Julie
Nordberg, John

O Malley, Jan Marie
O'Brien, Elizabeth M
Olsen, Michael
Olson, Lisa
Owens, Mary J
Owens, Robert R
Park, Lylan
Patterson, Diana
Piper, Robin
Pirnie, Patricia
Plantenberg, Kort M
Powell, Darin M
Prosser, Helen
Rietz, Daniel E
Salisbury, Mary E
Samuelson, Victoria
Sidman, Pamela
Skoog, Britta C

Smith, Cameron S
Smith, Connor C
Snickers, Toni D
Spellerberg, Sally
Spencer, Sue
Stewart, Aaron K
Streitz, Patricia
Sullivan, Thomas
Swenson, Sandra
Thompson, Tanya M
Tokkesdal, Zoe
Viken, Kevin
Wedan, Gary
Wolf, William M
Zeisler, Karen
Zeppa, Alan
Zierden, Jill L

WHOLE FOODS CO-OP

HILLSIDE

610 East 4th Street
Duluth, MN 55805

DENFELD

4426 Grand Avenue
Duluth, MN 55807

wholefoods.coop
218.728.0884

OPEN DAILY • 7 am – 9 pm

Upcoming Holiday Hours

Thanksgiving: 7 am – 2 pm
Christmas Eve: 7 am – 5 pm
Christmas Day: Closed
New Year's Eve: 7 am – 7 pm
New Year's Day: 9 am – 9 pm



Owned by YOU and

14,879

of your neighbors!

**VOTER LOGIN
INFORMATION:**

wholefoods.coop/vote

Questions? Give us a call!

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Ace Sushi at the Co-op

Whole Foods Co-op has partnered with ACE Sushi to bring sushi to both the Hillside and Denfeld stores. Made onsite at Denfeld, it's a great choice for a quick meal or snack. Find ACE Sushi with our other grab 'n go favorites.

Plus, stop in on Wednesdays for a special selection of ACE Sushi for just \$6!

