

the Localist

CHICO NATURAL FOODS COOPERATIVE / QUARTERLY PUBLICATION

CANOPY FARMS SURVEY RESULTS ROUND UP ELECTION RESULTS & MORE



WINTER
— 2017 —
ISSUE 3

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CHICO NATURAL FOODS
COOPERATIVE**

MESSAGE FROM THE GM



Liza Tedesco
GM

The world of retail grocery is changing faster than ever before. People have so many choices as to where they'll buy their favorite food products. Organic options, which were once only available in stores like the Co-op, are now so ubiquitous that you can find them on the shelves of gas stations and convenience stores. It's more important than ever for us to identify the things that make the Co-op relevant in the local food system and vital to our community. Our financial success makes it evident that our community understands the benefits that we offer. Our shoppers and owners appreciate that we serve a more noble purpose that has impacts far beyond what other stores even consider they might accomplish.

In this season's edition of The Localist, you'll learn about the ways that the Co-op is more than just a grocery store. We review the Round Up program, through which YOU raised over \$30,000 for local non-profits in 2017. Our Produce Department profiles Canopy Farms, a local farm that grows delicious fruits, veggies, and micro-greens. We also share the results of the Owner Survey we conducted online and at last year's Annual meeting. Our community giving, our special relationship with local farmers, and our active engagement with our owners are just a few of the ways that the Co-op stands out from the pack of Chico grocery stores.

We know you make a choice each time you fill your basket at The Co-op. You have many options, and we're honored you return to us again and again. Hopefully not just for the made-from-scratch deli dishes or the local, organic produce, but because you've found in us a like-minded community, where you feel welcomed, heard and fully nourished.

Thank you,
Liza



CO-OP HOT BAR

Don't have time to prepare a whole meal from scratch? Pick up a pre-made dinner from the Co-op Hot Bar! Delicious food at a great price.

OPEN
— **FOR** —
BREAKFAST
7AM
— **NEW** —
STORE —
HOURS
7AM-9PM



CANOPY FARMS

**One of the best things about
Canopy Farms is the dirt.**

“I’m in love with this soil right here,” Benji Vander Mollen confessed when the Co-op came out to visit early last autumn. The rich loam on which Canopy Farms is founded retains moisture, which is essential during Chico’s long, dry summers, and preserves nutrients, which makes for healthy, delicious plants. Benji and his partner, Auburn Johnson, have been

tending to three acres of this unbeatable soil since early 2013, though they’ve both been farming for much longer than that.

Prior to California, both Auburn and Benji had farmed in the Midwest. Auburn had been farming for years in Wisconsin, and Benji boasts that “I’ve been growing tomatoes since I was 10 years old”. Their experience and love for the practice and life of farming shows in everything they do. They’ve built an amazing farm in the few brief years that they’ve been on the land.

**“We’ve only put organic
everything into this property.”**



The proof of their dedication, talent, and abilities is in the amazing produce that grows from their beloved soil. Loads of peppers, sweet melons, nutritious little micro-greens and giant, gourmet leaves. Especially stunning are their exotic tomatoes: sweet cherry- and “blueberry-“ tomatoes, and the beautiful and complex Cosmic Eclipse tomatoes that glimmer like little galaxies on the vine. 🌌



SURVEY RESULTS

At our most recent Annual Owner Meeting, the Co-op’s Board of Directors presented our owners with a brief questionnaire regarding how they use the Co-op’s various services and programs.

We followed the in-person survey with an online form to engage with folks who couldn’t make it to our Annual Meeting. The full results of the survey are on the following pages, but below are some interesting highlights.

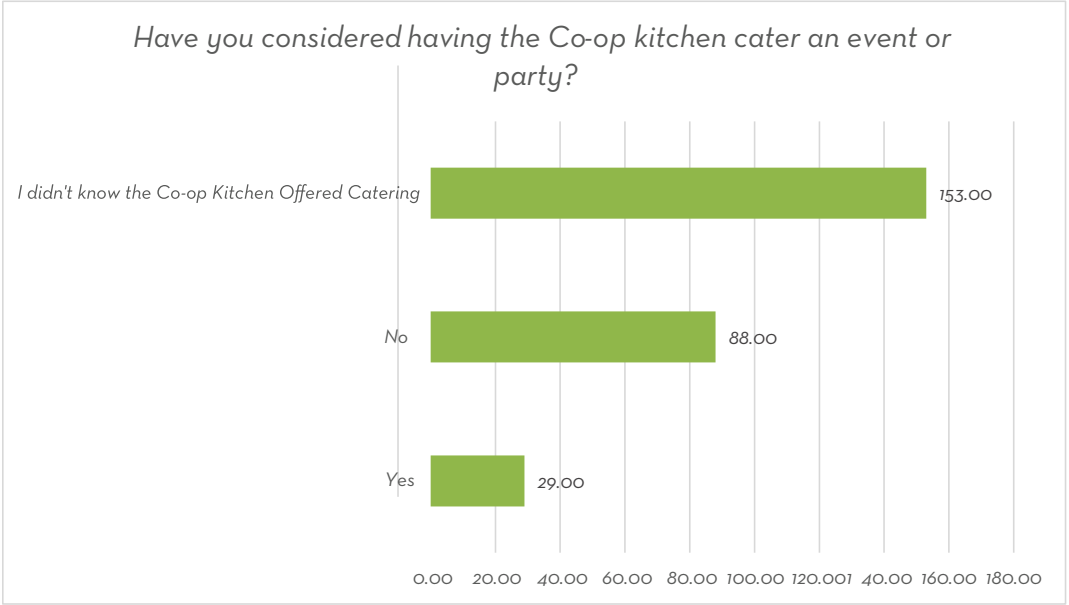
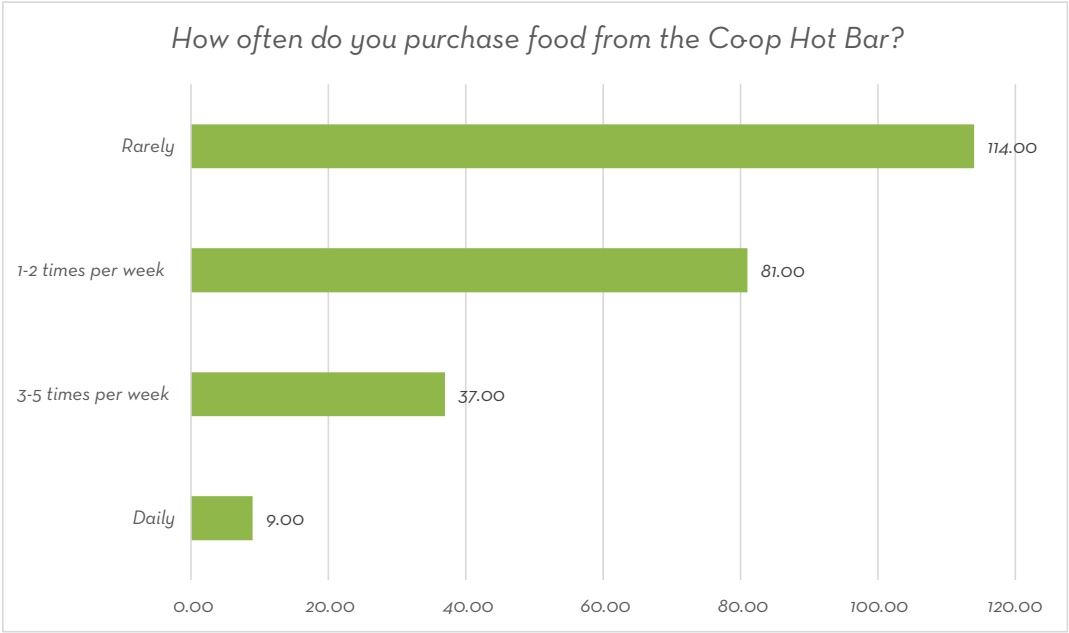
HIGHLIGHTS

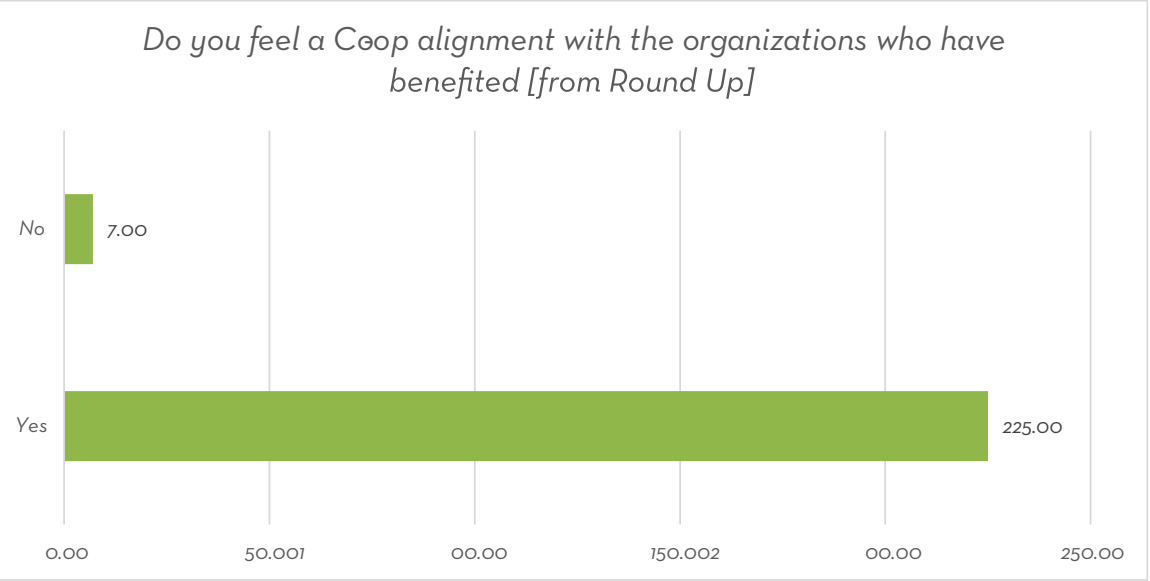
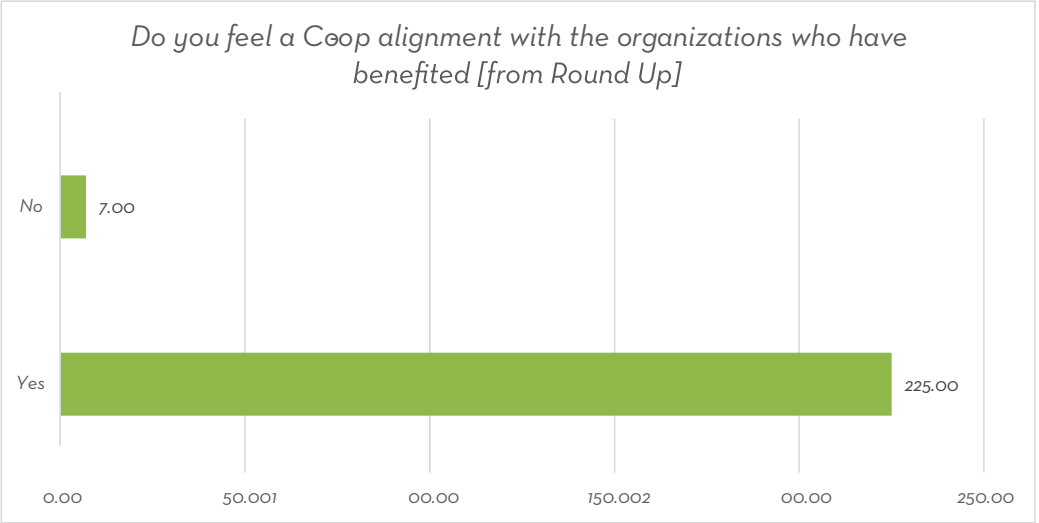
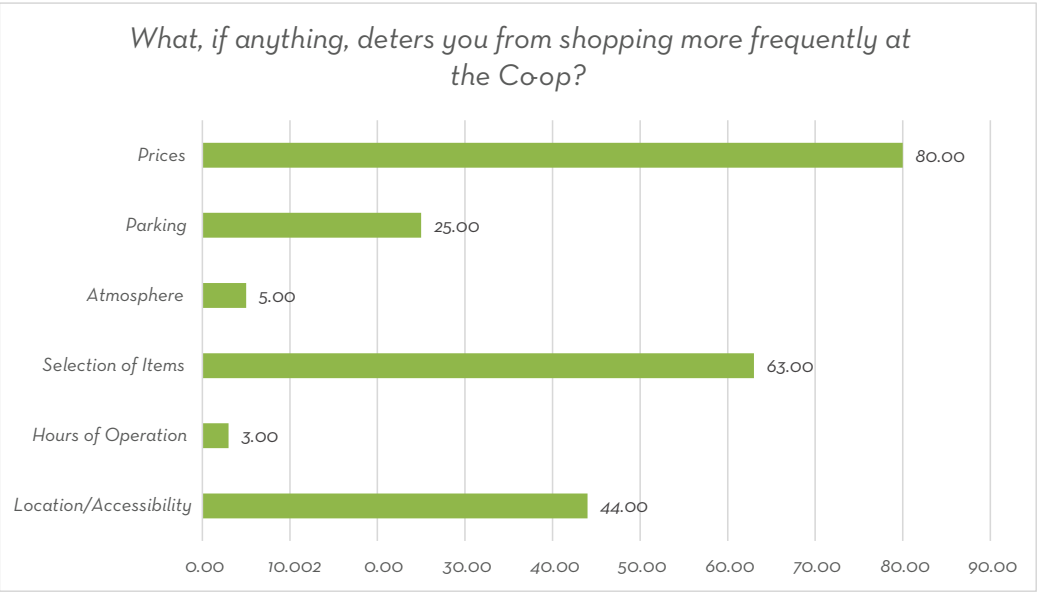
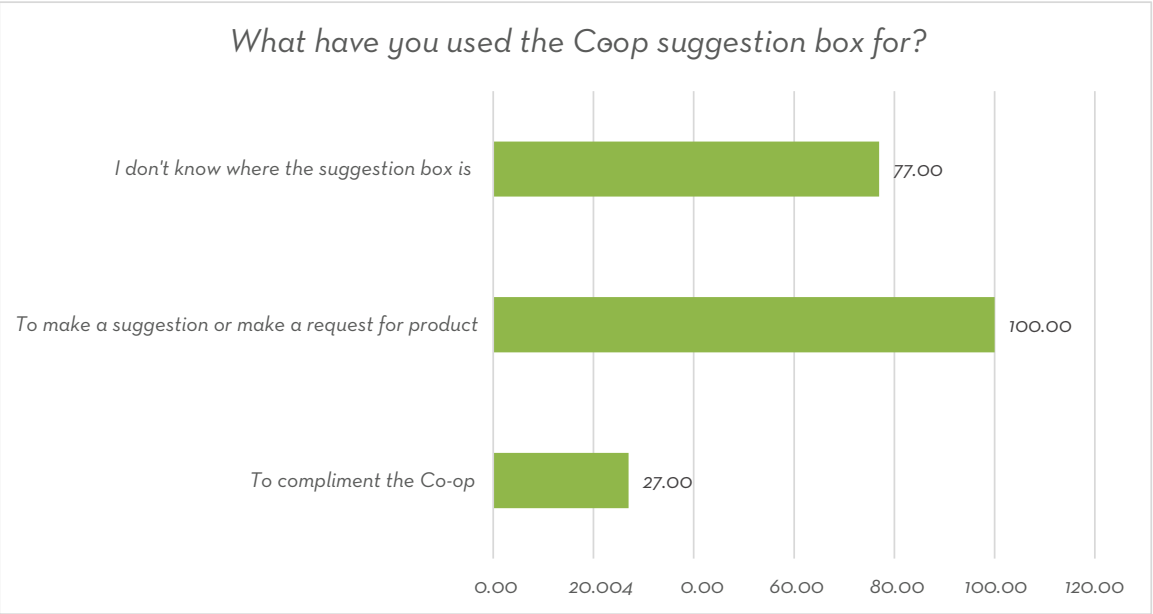
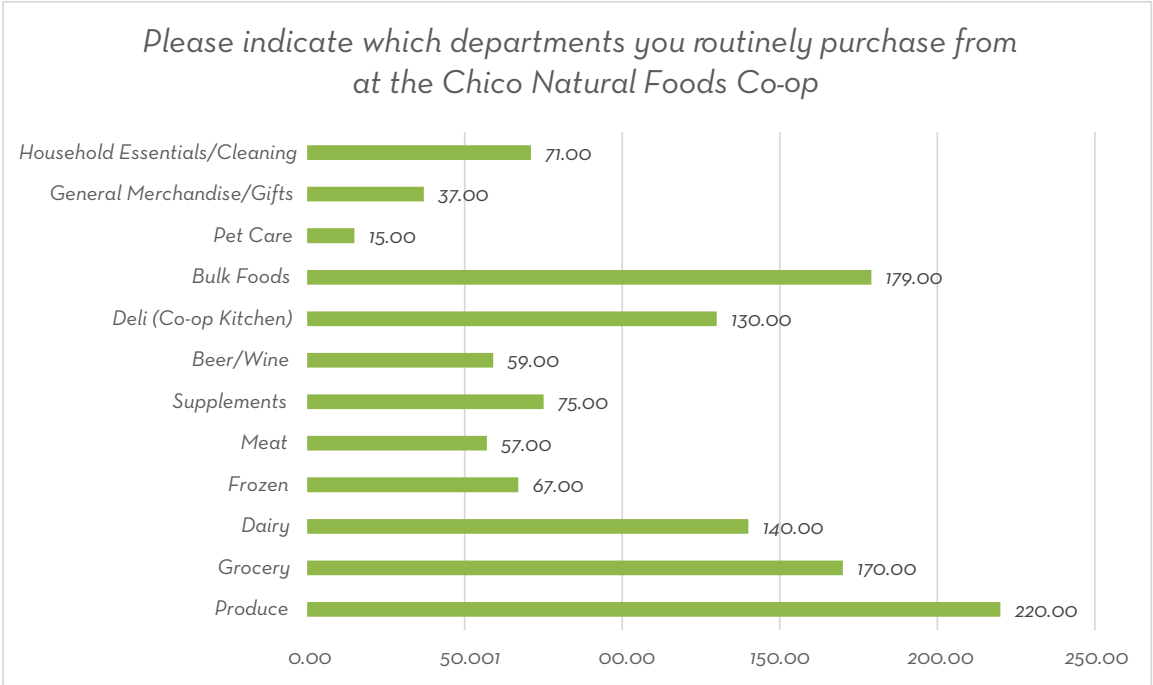
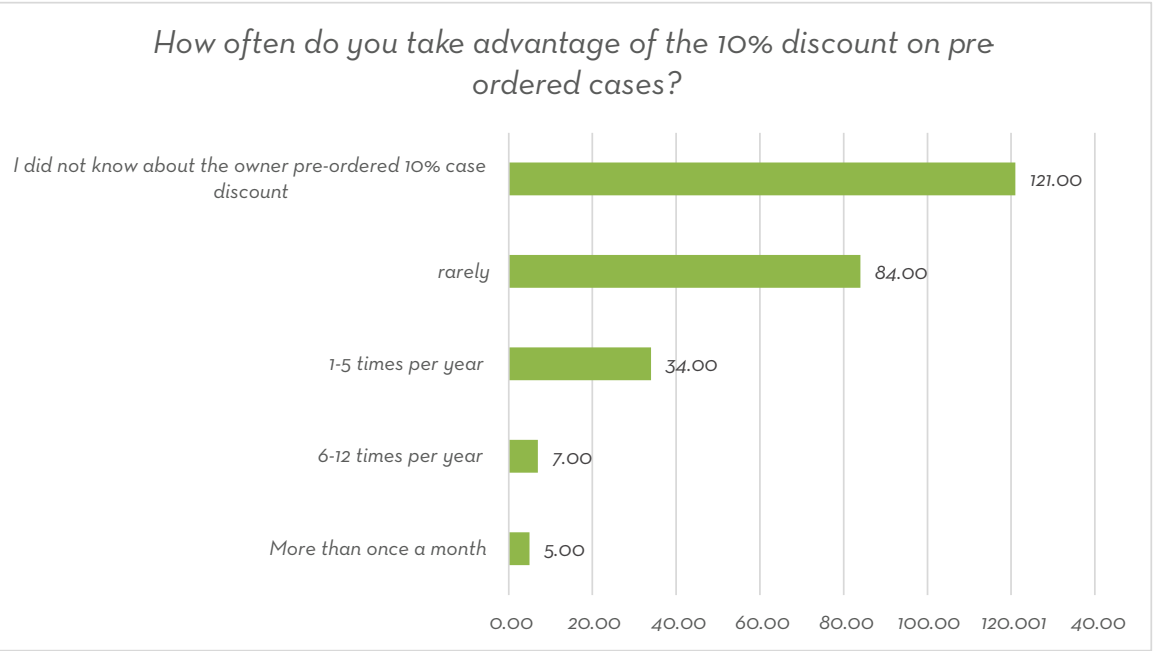
56% of respondents **didn’t know that the Co-op offers party platter options!** Our Kitchen can prepare fruit, veggie, meat, and cheese plates fit for any occasion or dietary preference. Place an order by calling the Kitchen Manager, SaraJean, at 530-891-1713 ext. 129.

47% of respondents indicated that they **need a reminder to use their 10% off discounts.** The primary owner of an account can take 10% off of two entire transactions of their choice each year (excluding alcohol and owner share purchases). We’ll do our best to work on ways to unobtrusively remind you of your discount throughout the year, so you can maximize your savings at the Co-op!

37% of respondents **didn’t know where our customer comment box is.** We have a suggestion box right next to the front door of the Co-op, above our information and sample table. We encourage you to submit any questions, concerns, comments, requests, or congratulations to us; we want to know what you, the owners of the Co-op, think. If you prefer typing to writing, check out our online suggestion box at www.chiconaturalfoods.coop/suggestion-box . We will direct all your messages to the appropriate person in-store, and they will write, e-mail, or call you back with a response.

48% of respondents **didn’t know about the 10% case discount for owners.** That’s right, whenever an owner special orders a case of a product, they save 10% off the retail cost! Whether you’re ordering a big bag of bulk popcorn, a case of yerba mate, or a bunch of refried beans, you can save money by ordering ahead.





If you have any questions about the benefits and rights that you have as a Co-op owner, please contact our Ownership and Outreach Coordinator, Joey, at 530-891-1713 ext.110 or via email at jhaney@chiconaturalfoods.coop. 10



ROUND UP

DONATIONS PROGRAM

In February of last year, CNFC introduced the Round Up at the Register program. We had been inspired by how other cooperatives had utilized similar systems around the country—especially the SEED Program at Minneapolis’s Seward Community Co-op. We had some trepidation about how successful Round Up might be: after all, shoppers are already asked so many questions when out shopping, did we really want to add one more? Would our shoppers be interested in donating to local organizations at the register? Would everyone miss our wooden bag tokens? We guessed that we would raise a few hundred dollars a month from Round Up, which would, at least, be more than we raised with the bag tokens.



The Torres Shelter came by to celebrate the very first month of Round Up.



Joe Picard from the Hungry Wildcat Food Pantry presents Co-op Staff with a “Thank You” plaque.

IN 2017 WE RAISED MORE THAN \$30,000

You exceeded our wildest expectations! Amazing local charities, including the Torres Shelter, the Hungry Wildcat Food Pantry, and From the Ground Up Farms have received thousands of dollars which will enable them to do even more good work improving our community. Every donation, even if it’s just a few cents, contributed to the final sum we raised. Simply amazing.

We’re looking forward to improving the Round Up program in 2018, so that our fantastic co-op community can play an even bigger role in building up the amazing organizations that help make Chico such an incredible place to live. We thank each and every shopper at the Co-op for helping make the Co-op a vital, giving, and positive influence in downtown, in Chico, and in the world. 🌱

If you are affiliated with an organization that you think would be a great partner for the Co-op’s Round Up program, apply online at www.chiconaturalfoods.coop/round-up-program.

SPECIAL ELECTION

RESULTS:

At our Annual Owner Meeting in October, the Board of Directors announced a special referendum to extend Directors' terms for four months, to sync up with our new election schedule. For two weeks, the ballot box was at the front of the Co-op, gathering your votes. In a historic first for the Co-op, we also had an online voting option! You made your voice heard last month, both in person and on the Internet.



In the end, our owners overwhelmingly supported the proposed Bylaws Amendment.

*A whopping **93% of voters** approved the change in question.*

As a result, the Directors whose terms would otherwise have expired at the end of the year will instead remain on the Board until April of 2018, when we hold our next election.

We want to thank all our owners for being engaged in the Co-op's democratic process. We rely on you to lead the way and keep us true to your vision of what a vibrant, community-focused organization is. Elections are one way that we stay true to the Second Cooperative Principle: Democratic Owner Control. 🗳️



BAKERY

VEGAN & GLUTEN-FREE TREATS



LETTER FROM THE BOARD



Lauren Kennedy
Board Member

My Board term for CNFC began last year by joining 60 other people from 5 different co-ops at “Co-op Café.” I’ll skip most of the details, including swooning over Sacramento’s new store, the inclusive atmosphere (like spaces for pronouns on our nametags), and the ridiculously good food and company, and get to the message at the heart of the day: Impacts of cooperatives.

We easily named those impacts: food to nourish on multiple levels, raising the bar for best practices, incubating local businesses, education, right livelihood, spreading wealth back to the community, modeling governance, and providing a hub for people to interact. This was a juicy exercise for all of us - a time to celebrate the good we do.

One particular story stayed with me. During the Oroville Dam crisis, the emergency shelter in Nevada County had a problem- elderly, ill, and other medically vulnerable shelter guests could not eat the donated food supplies, and the requirements for donated food allowed into the Red Cross shelter were extremely rigorous. Some people had not eaten for 24 hours. They approached Briar Patch co-op, and within hours, had an abundance of nourishing, specialized food, prepared to the required high safety standards. This was not a heroic feat for a co-op, this was business as usual. This caliber of trust and service is why I am a lifelong supporter of co-ops.

CNFC continues to be a success, but it’s a tough market for food co-ops. Much of our own work to educate has caused mainstream businesses to offer more of the things that were once unique to cooperatives. The message I carried from that day was this: the best way to compete is not to become more like the mainstream, but to keep leveraging the impacts we know, love and trust.

Can you think of impacts that the Co-op has had on our community that I forgot to mention? We’d love it if you shared them with us through our comment box in-store, or via e-mail at bod@chiconaturalfoods.coop.

Thank you,
Lauren

UPCOMING

CHICO NATURAL FOODS COOPERATIVE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ELECTION

2018

VOTING

April 13th - 27th

WINNERS

— ANNOUNCED —

Apr 30th



the
Localist

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COOPERATIVE**

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