

Never doubt that a  
small group of  
thoughtful, committed  
citizens can change  
the world.  
Indeed it's the  
only thing that  
ever has.

Margaret Mead



# General Manager Annual Report

FYE20: October 1, 2019 - September 30, 2020

our mission is to provide the residents of Isla Vista and neighboring communities of Santa Barbara County with reasonably priced foods, products and services that promote a healthier lifestyle and environment.





the  
virtuous  
cycle  
of our  
Food Co-op's  
Governance  
& economic  
impact.

# CONSUMER CO-OP MODEL

Money spent by the community gets reinvested to benefit local workers, co-op owners, and our community

our model!



Board of directors make decisions to steer the priorities of the co-op with a focus on social & environmental justice

owners run for or elect the board of directors, serve on committees, and vote on motions that affect the cooperative

In our virtuous cycle, our community owners determine our priorities (either via the Board of Directors or community engagement meetings). Our co-op operations Team (overseen by the General Manager) is tasked with bringing our Strategic Priorities to life through our day-to-day work in the store and community!

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## Community Engagement

Create opportunities for the greater community to participate in the cooperative, and for our co-op to participate in the greater community.

2020 Update: Encourage ownership and community connection through new pathways while physical distancing. Maintain timely and informative outreach on the IVFC's adaptation to the pandemic.



## Community Advocacy

Nourish and sustain a culture of inclusion for our diverse community.

2020 Update: Maintain a culture of inclusion and anti-discrimination through community conversation and supportive actions. Empower marginalized communities through partnerships and access to healthy food



## Local Food System Support

Be a leading resource to support farmers and other producers in our local food shed.

2020 Update: Encourage resilience in our local food system through ongoing support of local producers in the supply chain while promoting their health and safety during the pandemic.



## Economic Resilience

Strengthen our cooperative by ensuring fiscal security for the IVFC's future.

2020 Update: Strive to ensure fiscal security of the IVFC by monitoring and planning for the ongoing fiscal impact of the pandemic.



## Fair & Equitable Workplace

Foster a culture of diversity and empowerment. Be a model of excellence in all employment practices.

2020 Update: Strive to assure a safe work environment for all workers by serving as a model for worker pandemic safety in our community. Support the physical health and mental wellness of all workers



## Healthy Food For All

Increase the accessibility of nutritious, high-quality, affordable, and culturally-inclusive food for our community.

2020 Update: Strive to ensure an exemplary and safe shopping experience that provides healthy food in ways that meet the varying needs of our customers during the pandemic. Increase pathways for the IVFC to support safe healthy food access for our most vulnerable community members.



## Environmental Stewardship

Model environmental sustainability in our products and practices.

2020 Update: Adapt our environmental sustainability practices to meet health and safety requirements during the pandemic.



grow the visibility of our social impact & values

## Tell our story.

2020 Update: Raise awareness of the value of co-operatives to build resilience in our community and local food system





# Priority #1: Community Engagement

create opportunities for the greater community to participate in the cooperative, and for our co-op to participate in the greater community.

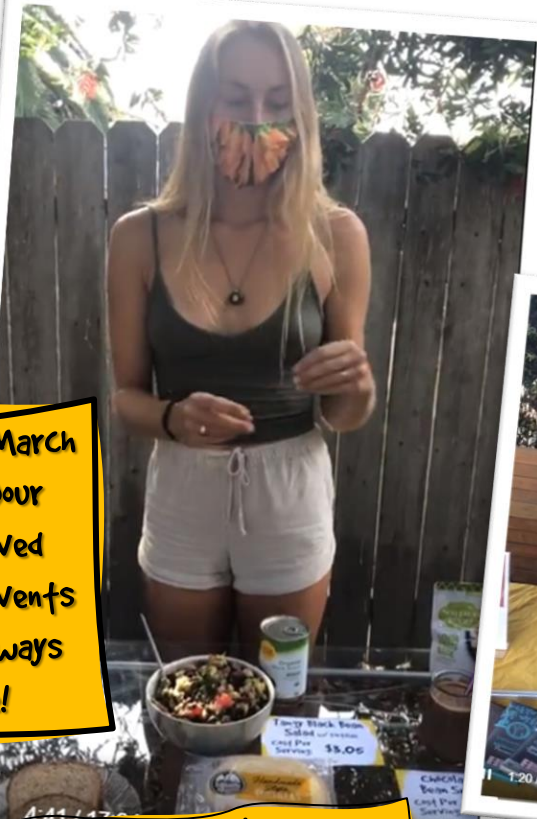
Meeting the moment → Encourage ownership and community connection through new pathways while physical distancing. Maintain timely and informative outreach on the IVFC's adaptation to the pandemic.

Pre-COVID our monthly Events calendars were the most filled yet! Kid's clubs, food distros, fastings, more fastings, our open Mic, bake-off, and more!



Starting in March FYEZO (y)our co-op moved fastings, events and giveaways online!

We Fancy-Upped Beans on Del Playa Drive! over 400 People watched, and 85 saved our posted recipes!



Fun 2020 fact: our in-person events draw an average of 20-50 people, but virtual events have averaged over 400!



We chocolate tasted at home together, but from a safe distance

## COVID-19 Update

From your General Manager

To our valued Co-op Community:  
Thank you for supporting us during these uncertain times. As a mission and values-driven community-owner entity, we value transparency and information sharing on the highest level.

Please see our news feed for this important full post.

As COVID progressed and operations kept changing, our GM offered regular posted updates for our shoppers to stay informed.





# Priority #2: Community Advocacy

Nourish and sustain a culture of inclusion for our diverse community.

Meeting the moment → Maintain a culture of inclusion and anti-discrimination through community conversation and supportive actions. Empower marginalized communities through partnerships and access to healthy food



- UCSB partnered with the Co-op for over \$85,000 in COVID grocery crisis gift cards to support low-income students, also to include those not Cal-Fresh (food stamp) eligible.
- FYE20 weekly Kosher/Halal food bags grew as COVID needs grew. We've sourced for 35+ people (including families) weekly since last year, over 1,000 bags strong!
- In-kind support (donations, workshops, etc) to local organizations like SB Student Housing Co-op, Food not Bombs, IV Rec & Park Children's Programs, El Centro SB, the IV Youth Projects Healthy School Pantry (and more) continue as a core part of our advocacy work.
- Co-op workers have formed a Workers for Racial Justice Committee to support specific worker-determined advocacy opportunities in our BIPOC community.



our partnership with AS Food Bank finally came to life, after 5 years of planning! Weekly purchases average \$900 including produce and grocery items.

The UCSB Kosher & Halal weekly grocery program was created to ensure that low-income Muslim & Jewish students have regular access to culturally appropriate food items. Weekly purchases average \$1,000+



# Priority #3: Local Food System Support

Be a leading resource to support farmers and other producers in our local food shed.

Meeting the moment → Encourage resilience in our local food system through ongoing support of local producers in the supply chain, while promoting their health and safety during the pandemic.

In FYE20, (y)our Co-op purchased directly from **55 local growers**, including all flower purchases. Our produce manager prioritized the smallest local/direct growers. We added 8 new small growers this year! \*\* does not include local distributor Berry Man\*\*



Ariana Rose is our primary flower provider, she's been bringing her beautiful flowers & succulents weekly all through COVID!

Around 30% of our total money spent on produce went directly to our local farmers:

**\$114,765**

Meeting the moment:

**COVID Delivery Protocol Change:** All farmers are calling ahead and leaving their deliveries on our walkway. This is to support less population in the Co-op, as well mitigate possible exposure for farmers coming into the store.

We Love Local!  
We've been offering double points on all locally produced products since June in order to grow visibility and encourage more local product support!  
We've had **565** transactions connect to this promotion!

Goleta coffee company's incredible all-local GF toast!



### Featured Brands:

- California Coast Naturals olives and oils
- Figueroa Farms olive oils, Boffles and bulk
- 24 Blackbirds chocolate
- ocean Ranch organics granolas packaged and bulk
- Sean's organic miseli munch
- Lompoc Tortilla Chips
- Casa de comer salsa
- Santa Barbara Popcorn Company
- Pacific Pickleworks
- Char-Man hot sauces
- Lori's Lemonade
- San Marcos honey (bulk only)
- Blue ridge honey boffles
- I Loveff body care
- Hive and Body soaps
- Buffalo Land Trust Persimmon Vinegar
- Santa Barbara Pistachio
- La Tolteca tortillas and chips
- Santa Barbara cookie company

our Business-to-Business Program offers wholesale pricing for ingredients or resale. We're excited to support many local businesses & partners. FYE20 B2B moved **\$177,000** in wholesale goods through the Co-op to our local community and UCSB crisis partners.

# Priority #4: Economic Resilience

Strengthen our cooperative by ensuring fiscal security for the IVFC's future.

Meeting the moment → Ensure fiscal security of the IVFC by monitoring and planning for the ongoing fiscal impact of the pandemic.

**Fiscal Year 2020:**  
10/1/20-9/30/20

One of the most successful years in our Co-op's history!

Our draft income is well in line with our debt-service requirements for our mortgage loan.

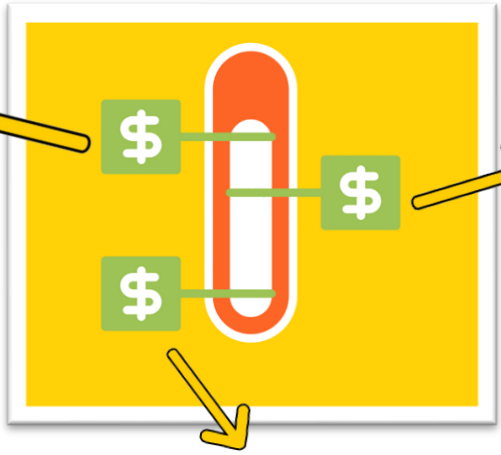
Pre-COVID we were experiencing record breaking sales growth, customer counts and community engagement via our partners!

When COVID hit, Panic shopping led to our single largest sales week, over \$115,000!

Our average basket grew to \$20.00 (usually \$15.00), and customer counts stayed consistent until late March.



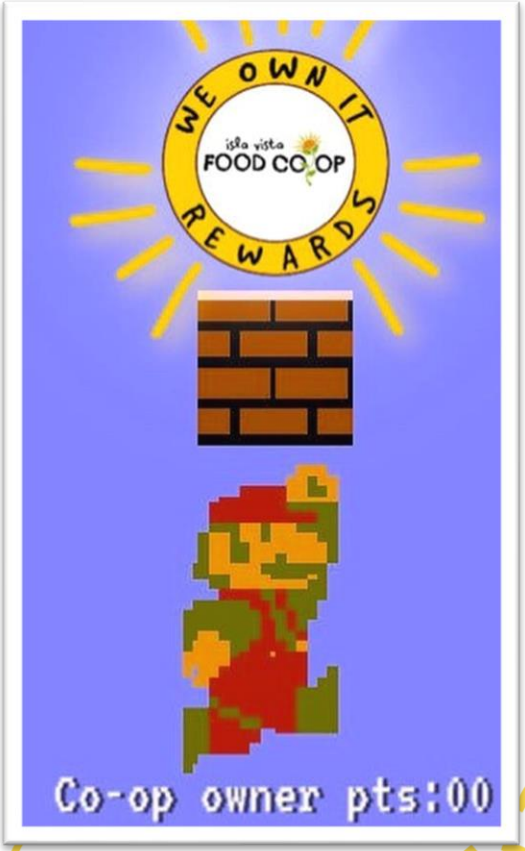
## calendar Year 2020



Sales started to decline year over year once UCSB closed. Our customer count dropped 60%, and our 3Q sales declined after panic shopping subsided. Our summer sales were flat and slightly under the year prior, holding at a 60% customer loss (but only a 5% sales decline). **We received our PPP loan in order to ensure long-term payroll cash protection.**

**FYE21 (starting October 1st 2020)**

The Co-op is experiencing sales decline between 15-20% from last year. Customer count is still down by 60%. Our PPP loan is allowing us to maintain hazard pay and a cash cushion as we buckle down for a very thin year of profit (if any).



Total New Owners: 565  
Reinvested Owners: 259  
Total Points Awarded: 1,300,208  
We reached our 1-millionth point redeemed in October!  
Total FYE20 Owner discounts (including points) - \$47,880



Meeting the Moment → Our PPP loan is part of our long-term cash maintenance strategy to continually support our workers as the pandemic continues. We anticipate full forgiveness. Our UCSB Crisis Partnership continues to add \$2k per week in wholesale margin. Our focus until UCSB returns: finding new pathways to grow sales while retaining our workers at Hazard Pay, and investing into the Co-op as we're able to.



# Priority #5: Fair & Equitable Work Place

Foster a culture of diversity and empowerment. Be a model of excellence in all employment practices.

Meeting the Moment → Strive to assure a safe work environment for all workers by serving as a model for worker pandemic safety in our community. Support the physical health and mental wellness of all workers.

- Pre-COVID transition toward collective management was halted by COVID operations requirements, but leadership team has retained Teams structure to continue supporting shared decision-making and transparent communications.
- HR Concierge is our new 3<sup>rd</sup> party legal HR compliance support, including anonymous tip-line and ongoing senior manager support to maintain CA labor law and benefit compliance.
- Full transition to remote work for managers with higher-risk COVID needs (office 365).
- Co-op sponsored EAP (Employee Assistance Program) continues to be an important worker-support resource (\$2,400 annually)
- Co-op workers are reimbursed for any non-insurance covered COVID tests (\$141 each)
- Co-op paid for free therapy for the summer to support a rise in mental health needs for our workers through early COVID. (over \$3,000 for 3 months)
- 8 hours of “emergency PTO” added for all workers, including part-time. (\$5,000 annual expense)
- PTO Donation program added at workers request to ensure that even non-full-time workers could receive additional paid time off if needed.
- Workers received self-care kits and a VISA bonus gift card to support ongoing burn-out. (\$2,200 one-time expense)
- Workers receive up to \$50 in mask repayment, and the Co-op has also been offering free masks for workers since March.
- Workers for Racial Justice committee formed (of, by, and for workers) to offer ongoing support for BIPOC workers and community members.

The Co-op currently spends just over 27 cents of every dollar we sell on our workers (27% of total sales). Conventional grocers average 11-14%.



**Hazard Pay:** COVID remains an undue stress on our work-force in our small store. We chose to continue paying this \$2/hour premium pay (FYE21 added impact of approximately \$20,000) in order to support our workers during this very stressful time. This also prepares the Co-op for our 2022 move to \$15 minimum

All workers have started at \$15/hour since March, average (non-manager) wage is now over \$16/hour.

Manager starting wage has increased to \$20-\$22/hour to help keep a spread from \$15/hr entry starting wages..



We identify pronouns and languages so our workers can be in best service to each other and you!

# Priority #6: Healthy Food for All

Increase the accessibility of nutritious, high quality, affordable and culturally inclusive food for our community.

Meeting the moment → Ensure an exemplary and safe shopping experience that provides healthy food in ways that meet the varying needs of our customers during the pandemic. Increase pathways for the IVFC to support safe, healthy food access for our most vulnerable community members.

- Pre-COVID / 8 full years of partner support for the Healthy School Pantry food distribution w/ IV Youth Project!
- Hosted over 40 Cal-Fresh sign-up and/or education events with UCSB student Food for All advocates (even during COVID!)  
→ Our total Cal-Fresh redemption was \$375,000 (10% of total store sales). This is very important to note, as our customer count dropped by 60% in April when UCSB closed.
- Our UCSB Food Security & Basic Needs partnership blossomed as we became the Crisis Grocery Partner for UCSB:  
→ Includes Kosher & Halal program, imminent-need grocery gift cards, AS Food Bank weekly purchases, Grocery Crisis Bags for quarantining students, No Cooks bags for houseless students, quarterly pantry & produce pop-ups.
- Our Food, Nutrition, Basic Skills partnership expanded into UCSB Cooks as a grocery partnership (including through the FNBS incredible online program)
- Co-op hosted a free food distribution in July and gave out hundreds of pounds of excess food to our community after Food on Wheels pulled their bin.
- Co-op Curbside Shopping! Over 675 contactless grocery orders filled so far.
- Food not Bombs prepared food partnership → Over 150 wholesale-priced sandwiches weekly for our houseless community, between June and July.
- Increase in ready-to-eat food items in our Deli (Cal-Fresh eligible) and ongoing increases of Co+op Basic items through center store and produce. Currently 265 active items on Co+op Basics (bulk not included due to closure).



Meeting the Moment:  
Food Not Bombs partnered with the Co-op for COVID wholesale sandwich support during Spring/Summer daily meal distro.



Meeting the Moment:  
Co-op curbside rolled out in 3/30 with a full online shopping cart and contactless grocery pickups. We've picked over 675 orders!



# Priority #7: Environmental Stewardship

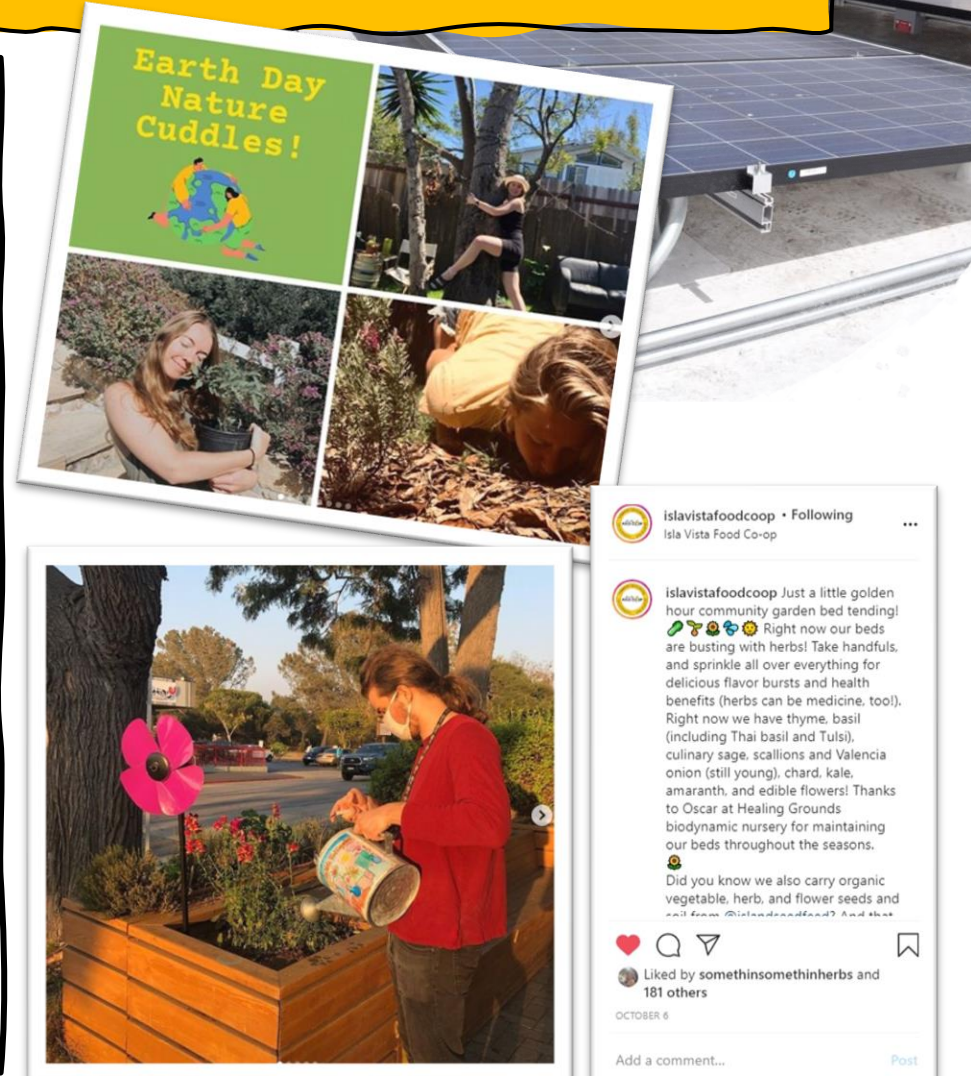
Model environmental sustainability in our products and practices

Meeting the Moment → Adapt our environmental sustainability practices to meet health and safety requirements during the pandemic.

- Our County/Marborg sponsored Community Compost Program is celebrating 3 years of full-bin pickups, now twice per week! We have opened our bins to the IV Compost Collective in order to grow their drop options while we're quieter through COVID.
- Pre-COVID (fall quarter) we held our regular free Healing Grounds Garden Workshop and a composting workshop with the Dept of Public Worms. This is a quarterly hands-on offering that will return post COVID!
- Our Re-volv solar panels have finished 3 full years of renewal energy.
  - System life-to-date: We produced **114,520 kWh of energy**, or about 1/3 of our total use (all of our three-door coolers run off this solar power!)
  - **We offset just about 180,000 miles driven by car, or the equivalent of planting 58 acres of forest. We avoided 176,727lbs of CO2 emissions 😊**
- Grow Your Own: our Healing Grounds tended planter boxes include all edible native flowers and plants, and are here for shoppers to pick and take home.
- Bill Palmisano hauled over 2,000 pounds of organic food waste to his worms to eat for vermi-compost! Bill has hauled our scraps for over 25 years

COVID specific →

- Customer and worker hand sanitizer & gel from Mount Royal is all plant-based and without synthetic fragrances. Look for wholesale priced gallons on our shelf starting end of November!
- At-home sprouting section was added in Spring 2020 to support customers wanting more affordable fresh food access without garden space, while sheltering in.
- Our Earth Day giveaway and Tree Hug Photo follow up was our most entered giveaway in history!



# Priority #8: Grow the Visibility of Our Social Impact & Values **Tell our Story.**

**Meeting the Moment → Raise awareness of the value of cooperatives to build resilience in our community and local food system.**

- (pre COVID) Our General Manager taught for UCSB's Anthropology of Food Class, sharing our story and a lens of regenerative food justice in 2020.
- We were featured in several Daily Nexus articles, both pre and post COVID. These articles noted our business model as well the benefit of having a cooperative in our community!
- January - The Co-op won a Grocery Story Oasis Award, for being a food beacon in our community. Ranked with over 125 other food co-ops in North America.
- February - SB Independent filmed a 3-minute Co-op video that was viewed over 3,000 times!
- May - SB Independent also wrote a short Co-op story "Isla Vista Food Co-op Thrives"
- June - KEYT news featured the Co-op in a COVID news story - "Small But Significant"
- October - Food Tank featured our Co-op in a powerful article sharing 20 food Co-ops from around the world who are helping to build resilient communities through their work.



Community Partners make us stronger! Thank you to

our key 2020 partners:

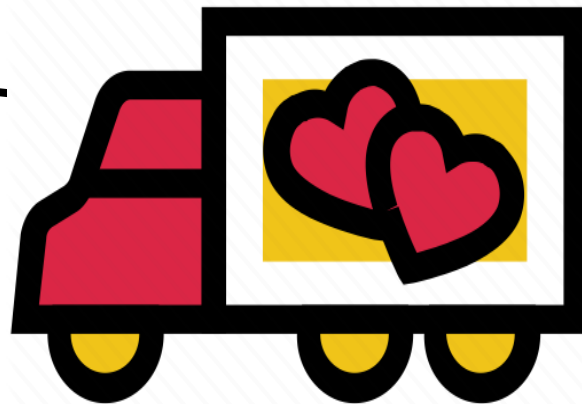
- UCSB Food Security & Basic Needs TaskForce
- AS Food Bank
- UCSB Health & Wellness
- UCSB Food for All/THRIVE
- UCSB Associated Students
- Isla Vista Food Not Bombs
- Isla Vista Recreation & Parks
- Isla Vista Community Services District
- IV Community Network
- Isla Vista Youth Project
- Lucidity Festivals





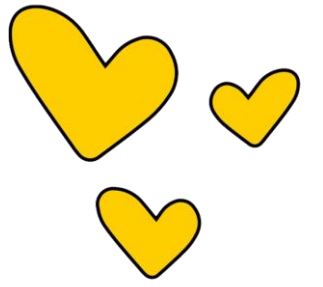
# Upcoming Projects and Plans:

- Our new Produce Cooler! This project is a long-time coming, and we're excited to grow our offerings with more space to place produce! Customer impact from 12/11-12/17, new unit running on 12/17. We will be sharing the story as it unfolds, starting with the demo of our old unit for recycling on 12/11.
  - Customer Impact → construction in the Co-op. Produce will be available, either farmer's market style and/or on tables in the Co-op.
- Pilot Program: Home Delivery → this is a COVID response project, we're aiming to roll out a small version in December.
- COVID response → bulk bins plan of action (TBD)
- New 6-door deli cooler to increase all perishable offerings (not official, TBD based on sales and cash)



Follow us on Facebook & Instagram for stories, giveaways, events, store updates, Co-op community updates and more! @islavistafoodcoop

# Thank you!



- **To our partners,** for continued opportunities to build bridges and grow our ability to be a resource for the widest community.
- **To our owners,** for your loyalty and support, kind words and appreciations, through an unprecedented year running the co-op.
- **To our Board,** for your service, support and tenacity to continue governing on a high-level, even while moving everything to remote communications and having to forgo a lot of the in-person work behind Board-work, but still carry on and accomplish.
- **To our Managers,** for your ongoing determination to reclaim our collaborative processes even through remote work, and for your incredible capacity to shift and change and shift and change to keep the co-op relevant and running, even while being so tired.
- **And to our workers,** for your incredible capacity to keep going and growing, as COVID and so many changes to our business operations have required your dedication and ability to trust us, work with us, and continue to be on the front-lines through something (hopefully) once-in-a-lifetime. You are essential, and you are helping to keep our community seen, held, and fed.