

RIVER MARKET

Community Co-op

www.rivermarket.coop

Currents

August–September 2014

What Does a 21st Century Co-op Look Like?

By Mead Stone, general manager and owner



Happy New Year! Our new fiscal year began July 1, 2014. By the time you read this the construction dust should be settling. I'm very proud of all

our customers, staff, and the construction crews who worked tirelessly and put up with a great deal to make this transition: Bringing our co-op into the 21st century. I was particularly pleased by how clean our construction company (Carlson LaVine) worked. One of the main reasons they were chosen was they had both grocery and hospital construction experience. They were great people to work with.

In any project this massive, we try our best to get it right the first time. Hopefully, we made several "great moves" with our remodel. Inevitably, not everything is perfect. To try to account for this, River Market will be conducting another Owner Survey about a year from now to get your feedback on the remodel. The ideas behind this remodel came from you through the last Owner Survey, Currents surveys, in store discussion (how most of you said, very clearly, you did not want River Market to change our location and move out of downtown). We had a market survey done whose recommendation was that if we didn't move (the first recommendation), River Market needed to capitalize on lunch and dinner trade—and we have



tried to do just that with this remodel.

I am amazed by the success of our owner investment drive. Because of your investments we were able to move forward on the most extensive remodel of our co-op in 36 years. I am going to ask for more from you: Besides offering a good investment now, in less than five years the River Market Community Co-op board will have to make some big decisions. By 2020, the River Market you know and support will be pretty maxed out in terms of capacity. We are projected to be doing over \$2,000 in sales per square foot which is to say it will be harder to shop and harder for our staff to get work done. It'll be very busy!

What are our choices? We could move to a new, larger location—maybe up by Cub and Target. But we could also consider a

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IMPORTANT DATES

AUGUST

Wellness Wednesday August 6

SEPTEMBER

Wellness WednesdaySept. 3

Annual Meeting: VOTE!Sept. 19

Owner Appreciation DaySept. 20

RIVER MARKET

Community Co-op
www.rivermarket.coop

Currents

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For change of address or to inquire about membership call 651-439-0366.

River Market Community Co-op
221 N. Main St.
Stillwater, MN 55082

For employment information visit our website or check postings on our entry doors.

All River Market Members are welcome to attend monthly board meetings. Meetings are generally held the second Tuesday of each month from 6:30–8:30 p.m. in the River Market Loft space across Main Street. The Board of Directors welcome members at the meetings.

River Market Board of Directors

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River Market Shopper Profile

By Elissa Cottle, River Market Board Secretary

If I were to generalize, I'd say we River Market owners love to eat, but we're picky about our food. We want it toxic-free and low- or unprocessed. But beyond the obvious, who are we?

River Market hired the University of Wisconsin at River Falls to do a shopper satisfaction survey in 2013 and a profile emerged about co-op owners. Out of the some 3,700 owners last year, 365 people responded. (Since then, I'm happy to say, our ownership has grown to 4,300.)

Regarding age, the largest group of responders (34 percent) were in the age bracket of 55 to 64, while the smallest group (1 percent) were young adults ages 18 to 24.

We're generally well educated. The largest group (36 percent) earned four-year degrees, and another 33 percent earned graduate degrees. No responders said they have less than a high school education and the smallest group (4 percent) said their formal education stopped after a high school degree. This differs significantly from the 2013 census, which showed 25 percent of the total population of Stillwater had no more than a high school education.

River Market owners typically are earning high incomes. The largest group responding to the survey regarding income (29 percent) reported earnings ranging from \$100,000 to \$149,900. Another 17 percent were earning at least \$150,000. The smallest group (3 percent) reported income of less than \$25,000. In the Stillwater census, the largest group (22 percent) was earning \$50,000 to \$74,900, and the smallest group (8 percent) was making \$25,000 to \$34,900.

Most River Market owners said they live in childless homes; 67 percent reported having no children at home. Twenty percent said they live alone.



The survey showed 95 percent of responders were white (down from 97 percent in 2009), 1 percent Hispanic or Latino, 1 percent identifying as racially mixed, 0 percent Asian, African or Native American, and 2 percent as other.

And what about our lifestyles? Twenty-seven percent reported being politically or socially active; 70 percent said they are “proactive about health”; 56 percent exercised regularly.

As for our shopping habits, 56 percent said they spend more than \$100 a week on groceries and 43 percent said they spend less than \$100 a week. Twenty-five percent said they bought a majority of their groceries at River Market, an increase from 14 percent in the 2009 survey.

Four of 10 reported shopping at the co-op at least once a week. One-third reported spending most of their grocery money at Cub Foods.

A large majority said River Market meets their needs for local food, fresh

fruit and vegetables, bulk products and dairy. However, a majority said they shop elsewhere for meat and seafood, frozen food, coffee and tea, bread and bakery items, dairy, and packaged products.

We like organic but most of us like local better. Fifty-five percent said organic foods are important to them and their family, up from 42 percent in 2009. On the other hand, “When given a choice, shoppers overwhelmingly [78 percent] favor locally produced products (even if not organic) over non-local, organic ones.”

River Market prices was the one characteristic about the co-op for which there were relatively few (34 percent) who said the store meets their needs.

Overall, the survey stated that 67 percent reported the co-op is meeting their needs well, compared to 91 percent who said they are satisfied or extremely satisfied with the Co-op as a whole—a 24 percent gap. “The gap suggests that shoppers like the idea and philosophy of the Cooperative but, for one reason or another, find that River Market has satisfied their overall needs slightly less well,” stated the survey.

The way I see it, even if we find flaws in the co-op, we love it.

Elissa Cottle is in her second year on River Market’s Board of Directors and is a freelance writer and editor from Stillwater; elissa.gwen@gmail.com.

Remodel, from page 1

second location that would take some pressure off the Main Street location. Goodness knows where, but we could consider a second location in New Richmond, White Bear Lake, or Roseville. We could also consider acquiring another co-op or co-ops in our area, in a friendly, supportive manner. Doing such would actually benefit a smaller co-op by improving their cost of goods and make all the services of NCGA (National Cooperative Grocers Association) available to them. Also, River Market may be able to provide more opportunities for growth and stability than a smaller co-op may have experienced.

These are just my thoughts and I assure you none of these plans have been put in place, or are anything but my thoughts. But the true motivation for the thought is that if we continue to grow at our current rate, something will need to change in a few years. We have a short five years to put a plan in place and I think we have just the board to do it! (Because our future vision is so important, please carefully consider your board director ballot, inserted in this issue of Currents.

I keep coming back to River Market’s owners. I remember the excitement you had at last year’s annual meeting when we first announced the remodel project. I remember a handful of questions six to eight months ago: will



the project go through? What if we don’t get enough investment money? Then we started construction and everyone rose to the occasion—you folks continued to be amazingly supportive, encouraging, and maintained great spirits! That more than anything helped to keep our staff excited and up-beat. As each department underwent its transformation, department managers were left with a hundred odds and ends they had to deal with, solve, discard, or otherwise overcome. In many cases it was all new: new systems were needed to deal with things we never even had or used before. And through all of this (organized) chaos we heard hundreds of “It’s beautiful.” “It’s really coming along.” Or “What’s next?” One owner said to Andre, “This all looks like success!” There’s a real tradition bridging the co-op’s founding in 1978 to the present: make no mistake: it is because of you we are still successful.

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Eat Nuts, Live Well

By Anthony Orlando, marketing assistant

A late summer riddle: What's delicious, portable, nutrient dense, and (likely) grows in your own backyard? Nuts! From squirrels, raccoons, turkeys, deer and chipmunks to the early American Colonists and even generations before that to Native American tribes, humans and animals alike have relied upon nuts as a powerful source of sustenance. Between their high quality protein and healthy fat content and their ability to remain unspoiled through long winters, nuts were once a staple of the Native Minnesotan diet. But now we have convenient food co-ops where we can get great nutritious food all year, and while they make a great occasional snack, we no longer need nuts as a fundamental part of our diet. Right? Maybe not...

The Mayo clinic recommends regular nut consumption as part of a heart-healthy diet, citing the high levels of things like unsaturated fats, omega-3s, fiber, vitamin



E, and magnesium found in most nuts as helpful in lowering LDL blood cholesterol levels and reducing the risk of blood clots. A recent study published in the *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition* indicated that people who added 1.5oz of almonds to their diet each day felt more satisfied from meals and were less likely to snack on unhealthy foods; curbing both weight gain and risk of diabetes. And if that's not enough to get you squirreling away for the winter, a study published last year in the *New England Journal of Medicine* found a strong inverse relationship between nut consumption and death due to heart disease, cancer, and respiratory disease. The study also indicated that people who

regularly consume peanuts and tree nuts are significantly more likely to live into their 70s, and lived longer in general.

So what are you waiting for? Get foraging! While you can find plenty of nuts growing natively in MN (such as black walnut, butternut, hickory nuts, and hazelnuts), if the task of gathering, shelling, and roasting enough nuts for the recommended 1.5 oz per day (about 34 lbs per year) seems a little daunting, there's always the great variety to be found in the co-ops new and improved bulk department; from our famous curried cashews to maple glazed walnuts to Bary's cinnamon-sugar, cocoa and cayenne coated almond Naughties (my personal favorite). And whether you choose to eat them raw, roasted, cocoa dusted, sprinkled on a salad or over yogurt, in an age of ever growing confusion about what you should and shouldn't eat, it's nice to know that in this case the evidence is pretty conclusive: nuts are good for you.

River Market's 2014 Annual Meeting will be held Friday, Sept. 19 at Our Community Kitchen (OCK) in Ascension Episcopal Church.

The wonderful folks at OCK will be preparing a "breakfast for dinner" meal using ingredients from your co-op. River Market's Annual Meeting will be a zero-waste event.

The meal will begin at 6:30 p.m., and the business portion will follow at 7:30 p.m. We are selling tickets to the dinner and due to limited seating, have to limit tickets sold to 96. For that reason we will try to limit two tickets per owner number to allow as many owners as possible to attend the meal.

The business meeting is open to any owners to attend, and no ticket is necessary—just show up at 7:30 p.m. All the money from ticket sales will be donated directly to OCK, tickets will be available starting August 1.

Ann DeLaverne will be the speaker at the meeting. River Market has supported Ann's vital work in our community, specifically her work with community gardens. Ann helped start a garden at Cimarron and founded a youth CSA there that offers jobs to young people, empowering them as they learn how to grow, harvest and distribute food.

Childcare will be available during the meeting, so if you plan to bring a child to the meeting, there will be a staffed room with snacks and some form of entertainment for them.

We are looking for several volunteers to help out in the kitchen on Thursday, September 18 and at the meeting on Friday, September 19—please email info@rivermarket.coop if you're interested!

Don't forget to vote to help elect your Board of Directors. This is an exciting opportunity for co-op owners to help shape the future of our business. Principle 2 of the 7 cooperative principles is: Democratic

Member Control—cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. The elected representatives are accountable to the membership.

Our Community Kitchen serves donation-based breakfasts on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 8:00–10 a.m. at Ascension Episcopal Church. If you need a breakfast, they have one for you—if you can afford a breakfast, why not pay for a friend you haven't met yet!

Annual Meeting

News



Anyone can enter—bring in a small bowl of your salsa by 12:45 p.m., judging begins at 1:00 p.m. Prizes will be awarded to the top three salsas.

Wellness Special

River Market brand vitamins, 10% off in September.

MIX & Co-op Deals Flyers

This is a reminder that the MIX publication has been discontinued. In September, when you would have received your Co-op Deals flyers with the MIX, please remember to pick copies of the flyer up at the store, or view it on our website: www.rivermarket.coop/specials.

Our Much-Loved Salsa Contest

Don't miss the Salsa Contest, Saturday, Sept. 20, on the same day as our Owner Appreciation Day.

Owner Appreciation Day

We did it together! Our remodel project was a celebration of the cooperative spirit: owners, staff, community members, our Board of Directors, all worked together to make this exciting project a reality.

And now we get to celebrate—join us at the store Saturday, September 20 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. for an Owner Appreciation Day!

We invited local farmers and producers to come celebrate with us, we'll have drawings for fun prizes throughout the day, our Salsa Contest begins at 1:00 p.m. and please enjoy an additional 5% discount to be used one time between 9/20 and 9/26. This is in addition to the regular 5% discount for September, but cannot be combined with it.

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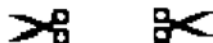
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September OWNER COUPON

One coupon per owner number per month

5% DISCOUNT

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Date used _____ to 9/30/14

Cashier's Initials _____ PLU 85

Whistling Well Farm

When you buy local apples at River Market this fall, chances are they came from Whistling Well Farm, just down the road in Hastings, Minnesota. Charlie Johnson has been growing apples there for decades, and he's great at what he does—one of the reasons he was named Washington Conservation District's 2013 Outstanding Conservationist and currently serves as President of the Minnesota Apple Growers Association.

His many conservationist efforts include working with the Washington Conservation District to create a sediment basin to keep pollution out of the St. Croix River and reduce erosion to gullies downstream. Runoff from 77 acres of land is treated in this basin, capturing almost 98 tons of soil that would erode downstream into the river.

After making your way down Charlie's long gravel drive, one of the first things you'll notice once you reach the farm are the many beehives scattered among the groves of apple trees. Charlie works with a local beekeeper by housing the bees on his farm in exchange for the ecological benefits and, of course, honey. On top of pollinating Charlie's trees and producing delicious apple blossom honey, the healthy bee population at Whistling Well speaks to the sustainable way Charlie farms, and is a living reminder of the symbiotic relationship between ourselves and these vital pollinators.

Throughout the year, the majority of all the work on the farm is done by three sets of hands; Charlie, one of his sons, and a high school intern (and one set of paws; Emmy the Springer Spaniel and official farm mascot) When it's time to harvest, a group of local workers are recruited to help hand-pick the thousands of apple trees on the property and prepare much of the fruit to be shipped across the highway to the River Market, currently the sole wholesaler of Charlie's apples. Whistling Well Farm also partners with



APPLES AT RIVER MARKET

Apples from Whistling Well Farm should start arriving at River Market early in September.

Usually Zestar shows up first, SweetTango and others appearing later.



the University of Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station to test out new apple breeds for things like size, flavor and hardiness in our Minnesota climate. A successful example is the SweetTango, a cross between Honeycrisp and Zestar apples (both of which are also products of the expert apple breeders at the U of M) and can be found growing abundantly on Charlie's farm.

Charlie uses a sustainable method called Integrated Pest Management (IPM). The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization defines it as “the careful consideration of all available pest control techniques and subsequent integration of appropriate measures that discourage the development of pest populations and keep pesticides and other interventions to levels that are economically justified and reduce or minimize risks to human health and the environment. IPM emphasizes the growth of a healthy crop with the least possible disruption to agro-ecosystems and encourages natural pest control mechanisms.”

River Market is proud to support a wonderful farmer and steward of the land like Charlie, and is gracious for the opportunity to play such a significant role in our local food system. But if you'd rather taste for yourself, all you have to do is take a bite of a SweetTango to know your co-op is helping give you the most Minnesotan apple eating experience possible.

Classes at River Market

Learn Lifesaving First Aid/CPR Skills

Saturday, Aug. 9, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

Become certified in CPR and First Aid at River Market. The class will include: first aid basics, medical emergencies, like choking, heart attack, stroke, seizure, shock, injury emergencies, and CPR two-year American Heart Association Certification. The class fee is \$60 for any co-op owners and \$65 for non-owners.

Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, Aug. 12, 6:00–9:00 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 9, 6:00–9:00 p.m.

Board of Directors meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month and member-owners are welcome to attend. Call 651-439-0366 or email info@rivermarket.coop if you are planning to attend.

Seed Saving 101

Saturday, Aug. 16

11:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Your favorite lettuce, the most succulent tomato, super-producing peas—you don't have to buy those seeds ever again! Join Sara Morrison, owner of The Backyard Grocery, for a hands-on class about saving seeds from your garden. You will learn the best ways to select, separate and store seeds from your favorite crops. Other topics will include "wet" and "dry" seeds, discussion about the difference between heirloom and hybrid, and the secrets of why things "bolt." The class is free for any co-op owners and \$5 for non-owners.

Late Season Veggie Gardening

Saturday, Aug. 16, 1:00–2:30 p.m.

Learn how to get the most out of your garden by planting all the great veggies that love the cool Fall weather. We will talk about which crops perform best and how to time your plantings to harvest the most by snowfall. Presented by Heidi and Jonathan Heubner of Bluebird Hill Homestead. The class is free for any co-op owners and \$5 for non-owners.

Growing Garlic 101

Thursday, Aug. 28, 6:00–8:30 p.m.

Garlic is really easy to grow and if you plant it now, you'll be rewarded with spring garlic, garlic scapes and garlic cloves throughout next summer. Learn about soil preparation, garlic growing season, harvesting, curing and storing garlic. You will also learn the difference between hardneck and softneck varieties. Presented by Don Slinger who has been growing garlic for many years and presently grows about 40 varieties. The class is free for any co-op owners and \$5 for non-owners.

Raw Eating

Thursday, Sept. 4, 6:00–8:00 p.m.

An introductory class to raw eating that doesn't require any expensive blenders, dehydrators or food processors. Learn how to make (and get to eat!) delicious and nutritious Massaged Kale, Caesar Salad with a briny dressing, hemp seeds and avocado, Raw Marinated Vegetable Lasagna with Basil- Hemp Pesto &

Cashew Nacho Cheese, and a super-simple, delicious Chocolate Pudding for dessert. The class fee is \$15 for member-owners and \$20 for non-owners. The class is held at Valley Outreach Teaching Kitchen, 1901 Curve Crest Blvd. W, Stillwater. Call 430-2739 for directions. Seating is limited, sign up early.

How to Train a Cat: The Evolution of the Human Animal

Saturday, Sept. 6,

10:00–11:30 a.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 30, 7:00–8:30 p.m.

In an informal, idiosyncratic personal journey with lots of pictures, Ken Moses will talk about how the development of animal society led directly into human society, evolution, and his personal coping with autism. Along the way he'll make side trips to visit Darwin and Temple Grandin, reproduction and childbirth, the rodeo and the circus, and several other areas. His face-to-face experiences with animals often differ from the "conventional wisdom" of anthropologists, psychologists, and religionists, but are supported by recent sociobiological research. Free presentation.

Authentic Mexican Cooking: Salsa

Saturday, Sept. 13

11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

Enjoy the heat of summer with these quick and easy salsas. Susana Perez will share her family recipes for making salsa verde and two kinds of salsa roja. Susana will also

demonstrate how to make taquitos—small rolled up tortillas with meat or potato filling—traditionally served with salsa. The class fee is \$5 for member-owners and \$10 for non-owners.

Putting Your Veggie Garden to Bed for Winter

Saturday, Sept. 20

11:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Learn the essentials of fall clean up so your garden is ready to plant as soon as the snow melts next spring. We will talk about how to dispose of any diseased or invested plants, as well as enriching your soil to ensure an abundant crop next season. Presented by Heidi and Jonathan Heubner of Bluebird Hill Homestead. The class is free for any co-op owners and \$5 for non-owners.

Collecting Mushrooms 101

Saturday, Sept. 27

10:00 a.m.–Noon

Join Kelley Hagenbuch, D.C., M.H., a Master Herbalist from Taylor's Falls for an introduction to mushroom hunting. Kelley will cover safety issues, identification details, collection procedures and present pictures of 10 different varieties that are common to this area. Please bring any mushroom books you own to the class. The class fee is \$15 for member-owners and \$20 for non-owners.

Classes are held at the Loft, unless otherwise specified. The Loft is located at 218 North Main Street, on the second floor above Images of the Past and Present, directly across Main St. from River Market. Entrance is located on the south side of the building. The Loft has a room capacity of 21 people. Parking is not allowed in the space next to the building; please use street parking or the River Market parking lot.

Please pre-register in-store at River Market, phone (651) 439-0366 or email Ola Schmelig at education@rivermarket.coop. Sign up early to reserve a seat and help ensure the class is held. **Payment due at registration.** We accept all major credit cards. If you need to cancel, please notify us at least 3 days in advance for a full refund. *Note: River Market does not necessarily agree with the ideas, opinions or materials given during the presentations and classes.*

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Restoring Your Health Naturally

Polish Cooperatives, an Introduction

By Ola Grabeus-Schmelig

During my last trip to Poland, my home country, I had the opportunity of meeting with the representatives of the Warsaw grocery cooperative, Kooperatywa “Dobrze” (“dobrze” means good). They started as a group of people interested in affordable, healthy food produced with respect towards the environment and people’s labor. They meet once a week to distribute the products bought from trusted vegetable and fruit growers just outside Warsaw or from a wholesale farmers’ market. They also organize educational and integrative meetings. The Kooperatywa “Dobrze” was officially formed only a year ago but this year it will become the first cooperative grocery in Warsaw to have a physical store. Other grocery cooperatives exist in Warsaw and other cities in Poland, but the others are more informal gatherings of individuals, without a brick-and-mortar store.

The cooperative movement has a long and complicated tradition in Poland. The first cooperatives started in the mid nineteenth century as a response to the economic exploitation and injustices of early capitalism. Three social groups: artisans, small merchants and peasants with no economic means to defend themselves from competition united under the principles of mutual help and solidarity.

The cooperatives flourished in Poland during the first three decades of the 20th century with almost 16,000 cooperatives: banking and credit unions, housing, insurance, agricultural, dairy, and grocery. Some scholars estimate that one in every five Poles was a member of at least one cooperative in the 1930s. The cooperative movement was cut short in 1939 and virtually disappeared for five years under the Nazi and Russian occupation of Poland. After the war, the communist government subordinated those co-op sectors able to be used for the communist ideological aims and abolished sectors which could exist only in a free-market economy. In time, Polish cooperatives lost their voluntary character, and could no longer be distinguished from the state enterprises.

The 21st century brought a revival of the cooperative movement, and now there are about 10 grocery cooperatives in Poland, mostly in big cities like Warsaw, Cracow, Poznan. They attract mainly young people for whom the term “co-operative” does not carry the old communist notion. For many of them, cooperatives represent a socio-political act.

If you ever happen to be traveling in Poland, visit Kooperatywa “Dobrze” in Warsaw and tell them I say “Cześć” (“hello,” in Polish, of course!)



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Member Survey #36

Last time we asked you why you decided to join the co-op, and you gave a whole spectrum of answers:

- To support a community business
- For money saving discounts
- “Believe in the philosophy of a community, member-owned business”
- “Joined in 1991, it was the only place to find organics”

New survey: “What does a 21st century co-op look like?”

Please return this survey to any River Market cashier with your member number and receive \$1 off your order. Expires 8/31/2014; limit one survey for each member number. PLU: 222 Owner Number: _____