

2017 Suggestions and I <3 ONF

1.3.2017

I <3 ONF Carrie: We still do 99% of our organic and specialty food shopping at ONF! Their prices are better than Whole Foods for items we buy + the benefits of ownership, plus supporting a local co-op.

Mike: Please know that every staff member hears each of these. Every "I Heart ONF" card is read in our daily meetings and at The Big Game on Tuesday afternoon. I speak for the entire staff when I say that we absolutely love to hear your compliments. Thank you so much for telling us what you like about your co-op.

Sarah: Shopping cart seat belts have been broken on many carts. Took 5 carts to get 1 cart today! Can the seatbelts and seats be checked?!

Rylee: Free hot cocoa on cold days! 😊

Ali: What a delicious idea, Rylee! Thanks for the suggestion. We do make yummy hot cocoa, maybe there will be some free samples one of these cold days. Be on the lookout!

Anna: Make a vegan/regular cookbook for all the wonderful food from the café. I'd buy that! The vegan food is great!

Heather: Hey Anna! Thanks for your suggestion on making a cookbook. That is a wonderful idea. We will definitely look into it. If there is a recipe in particular you are looking for, A la Carte will be more than happy to get it for ya!

Fran: Keep the bag savings donation box. Yes, I know it's costly (costing?) so make it be a refund for actually what the bag cost is instead of the 5 cents. That way it's direct—you buy your bag and you save x amount. You also save time, energy, etc. Don't like the raffle idea at all!

Mike: Why not reprogram the registers to deduct 5 cents per bag brought in?

Sara: Please bring back the nickels for bags because many people give them to the charity boxes and the stray kittens need them.

Anonymous: I see more and more products that are NO GMO but not organic. I think this undermines the organic standard of ONF and conditions lots of people to think they're buying organic when it is NOT.

William: To: Member Par Excellence, Thank you for your recent comment to Ozark Natural Foods Co-op regarding GMO foods. First, I appreciate that you are an engaged and aware owner who cares about what the store carries. It's important that owners engage in this conversation with the board and staff of the co-op. You have brought up a topic that is very important to me, personally, as well. It is also a complex topic for a co-op owned by nearly 10,000 members of the community. For clarification, here is ONF's current Standards of Quality:

"We evaluate every product that the Co-op sells with your health in mind. We stand behind the principle of not carrying Genetically Modified foods in the store.

All products sold at Ozark Natural Foods are free of

- artificial preservatives
- artificial colors
- artificial flavors
- artificial sweeteners
- chemical additives
- added monosodium glutamate (MSG)

And are

- non-irradiated
- organically grown and locally sourced whenever possible.
- *certain products contain naturally occurring MSG.

It just so happens that we are currently in the midst of re-writing these standards to make them clearer and stronger for our owners, and more accurate to what is available in the market place today. Now, to address your concerns directly:

To be clear, our Produce Department is 100% certified USDA Organic or Certified Naturally Grown. That hasn't and will not change. The Produce Department does NOT carry anything that is GMO.

Beyond the Produce Department, it gets significantly more complicated.

One reason you are seeing more products labeled as non-GMO is because more products are indeed actually being labeled that way. So, just as people first come into the co-op to shop and maybe buy gluten-free pasta and then, as they learn more about health, are maybe making their own pasta from scratch, so too we're seeing more manufacturers get into non-GMO ingredients and then move towards Organic, or farmer-direct, or Fair Trade later on.

This is something we in the Co-op world can be proud of because we have pushed for higher food standards for decades. And we will continue to push for improved ingredients.

A second reason you're seeing more non-GMO labels is an interesting dilemma for many manufacturers: they proudly proclaim that their products are Organic, but they have massive amounts of people contacting them asking if the products are also non-GMO. Those organic manufacturers have had to respond by outright paying for non-GMO certification also, on top of the Organic certification, even though Organic by definition includes non-GMO. So now their product labels have both the Organic seal and the Non-GMO Verified seal on them! Talk about confusing.

Rest assured that ONF is continually seeking out better quality products in every category. We always strive to have entry level products but still good quality to more costly but of the highest quality. Whenever we can get organic, we do so. If not, then our next best option is non-GMO.

I hope this addresses your concerns; if not, I invite you to continue the conversation with me in person. Thank you, William E. Beaver, Grocery Department Manager

1.9.17

I <3 ONF: Patti and Azaleah are always so sweet <3

Tanja: Patti and Azaleah are great co-operators! I feel lucky to have them on my teams. Thanks for giving them a shout out. I'll share the happy news with them. :) Tanja Ray, Front End Manager and Clean Team Manager

I <3 ONF Evelyn: They make the best scones ever!

Pauline: Thank you so much Evelyn! We are so glad that you enjoy them! Thanks for taking the time to give us that awesome compliment, very nice of you to do.

Anonymous: Wish margarine wasn't used so much in prepared foods (and canola/Vegenaise). I like the chicken salads but wish there weren't so many onions! Usually like the squashy root vegetable soup but today something is in it so strong I can hardly eat it. (But then, when I had it before, it wasn't all pureed together.)

Pauline: Dear Anonymous, we're happy to let you know that we don't have margarine in our foods! We use mayonnaise in the natural chicken salad and Vegenaise in the Bombay chicken salad, neither of which are a margarine product. For the onions, we have had several suggestions for mixed salads without onion and are still brainstorming some options for this, likely on our summer menu. I hope this information helps you and thank you for letting us know what you are looking for in our prepared foods selection.

Elizabeth: I buy Kalona whole milk every week. I notice we sell it here for \$6.69 and at Natural Grocers it's \$4.99. I wonder if there is any way you would consider lowering the price a little to be more competitive. I would hate to have to buy it there, but am considering it because the price is so much cheaper. Thank you for considering my request!

William: Hi Elizabeth, Thank you for your recent note regarding Kalona Whole Milk. I understand your concern that Natural Grocers is selling it for \$1.70 less than ONF. I can't explain how they do that, as their shelf price is about what we pay for the milk. Either they have it on a special sale right now, or they are using it as a loss-leader, meaning they price it very low and hope to make up the loss of money by selling other items for more.

We try to even out our prices rather than use such gimmicks. However, we do have certain items for sale at lower than usual margin, and we do that with the local milk and the Organic Valley milk, but we can't afford to do that with the Kalona.

May I suggest you try the local milk? Ozark Mountain Creamery is a local family-run dairy farm that raises their own cows and milk them themselves. Their milks are only \$3.69 per half gallon, they are batch pasteurized, which is the closest you can get to raw on grocery shelves, just like Kalona. And the pink top milk bottles are un-homogenized, just like Kalona. They deliver every Wednesday afternoon, and have regular, 2%, chocolate, and cream top.

Thank you.

I <3 ONF Susanna: The greens lately (hot bar) have been soft enough for me to eat! Kale especially has been hard for old teeth. Thank you so much!

Pauline: Hi Susanna, we're glad to hear that. I think it may also be in part because all of the greens we've been using on the hot bar have been local nearly all winter long. With the lack of intense or prolonged cold the greens at Lightner Farm have just kept going all winter. That and they now use row cover and are located in the River Valley. I've always thought over wintered greens were sweeter and softer. Anyways, thank you for letting us know, we appreciate it.

I <3 ONF: I can buy ear candles, skullcap, and gluten to make my own seitan.

Carrie: Thanks for the love! I'm delighted to hear we have what you're looking for. If there's ever anything else you're wanting and we don't have it in store we'd be happy to do a special order for you.

Anonymous: Often, the Organic Valley shredded cheese bags are overstocked and protrude out beyond the air shield fan and cooler. This is the current state. The bags in front are bloated and room temperature.

William: Thank you for bringing this to our attention. Sometimes what seems so obvious can be lost on those walking deep in the forest. We will take care of this. Again, thanks.

I <3 ONF Alissa: On Saturday the 7th of January I came in the and ladies working in the bakery were so helpful! I needed to make gluten-free cookies for a party and had no idea where to start. They pointed me towards the Pamela brand. I got the chocolate chip oatmeal. They were so good and a huge hit at the party! THANK YOU!

Pauline: Dear Anonymous, thank you so much for taking the time to compliment our bakers! And we're delighted to hear your cookies were a hit at the party. Glad we could help! Thank you.

1.16.17

Leslie: Signing up for Heather's workshops online needs to be more user friendly.

Ali: Hi Leslie, I received your suggestion form with the feedback that signing up for our classes online needs to be more user friendly.

There are definitely a few steps to get through to be able to RSVP through the website. Adding the ticket to your cart, creating an account, and "checking out". This process sends Heather and I both an email that lets us know your name, email address, phone number, and how many seats you would like for us to reserve in the class.

Your contact information here is only used to save your spot and to get in touch with you in the event that a class is cancelled for some reason.

On the page of each event my email address is also listed, ali@onf.coop, and you are always more than welcome to send me an email directly with what class you would like me to sign you up for. Another option is to call the store at 521-7558 and the Owner Services Desk will be more than happy to get you registered as well.

I hope this information is helpful. Please let me know if you have any other questions.

I <3 ONF Gerry: Your people are very helpful and friendly.

Mike: Please know that every staff member hears each of these. Every "I Heart ONF" card is read in our daily meetings and at The Big Game on Tuesday afternoon. I speak for the entire staff when I say that we absolutely love to hear your compliments. Thank you so much for telling us what you like about your co-op.

Lisa: Good membership incentive program—the iPad pro! Please consider having fully vested owner drawing—we have supported ONF for many years!! See it as another reward! Thanks.

1.23.17

M.: Bring back the \$.05 for using our own bags!!

Bonny: No offense to anyone, but I don't like the new BYO bag reward system. It's too time-consuming to fill out a ticket.

Ali: Hi Bonny! I received your suggestion form regarding the new reward system for bringing in reusable bags. I'm sorry to hear that you dislike the new program, please know that you are in no way required to fill out the ticket and participate and I hope that's not the impression that's

been given. My goal with the new system is to not completely remove any reward for bringing reusable bags to the store.

When the nickel back program was implemented the idea was to promote more reusable bags being brought to the store and fewer paper bags being used. Unfortunately this wasn't actually the result we saw. We are looking very closely at all expenditures right now, the nickel program costs the co-op roughly \$400 a month and at this time just isn't a sustainable option for us. I hope that you understand our position, we appreciate your patronage of the co-op and your feedback is always welcomed.

I <3 ONF Peggy: Demetrius was incredibly helpful Saturday morning. He was patient, pleasant, and willing to go the extra mile. I was extremely impressed.

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T: **STOP asking me for donations. Your prices are too high as it is.**

Tanja: Howdy! If you don't want to be asked for donations I can let my staff know that! The New Leaf program has been super cool because it is helping local producers and farmers grow. We love local here and try to support it every way we can. But we understand donation programs can be annoying for some customers. Next time you're in please feel free to ask for me by name. If we get to know your face and know you don't want to participate we can skip asking you in the future! Also, make sure to check out the Co-op Basics, Co-op Deals, Owner Bonus Buys and Field Day items in the store. They are great deals with low prices. :)

I <3 ONF Barbara: Just an enthusiastic endorsement of the new hand dryers in the restrooms—fast and efficient!

Tanja: Thanks for sharing your thoughts Barbara! I am super excited about the hand dryers because they are better for the environment and they reduce expenses for the co-op at the same time. I'm glad you're enjoying them! :)

I <3 ONF Barbara: Every staff member I spoke to today had a smile and friendly response. Thank you!

Mike: Please know that every staff member hears each of these. Every "I Heart ONF" card is read in our daily meetings and at The Big Game on Tuesday afternoon. I speak for the entire staff when I say that we absolutely love to hear your compliments. Thank you so much for telling us what you like about your co-op.

I <3 ONF: I will thank Pauline for being so kind. You all are so kind. I love ONF, not simply as a shopping place but as a source of very positive energy from loving, kind people. Just walking into the door brings joy into my life. Thanks to all of you who work there.

Mike: Please know that every staff member hears each of these. Every "I Heart ONF" card is read in our daily meetings and at The Big Game on Tuesday afternoon. I speak for the entire staff when I say that we absolutely love to hear your compliments. Thank you so much for telling us what you like about your co-op.

Anonymous: Sometimes the music is great, other times feels like generic Wal-Mart.

Andrew: Thanks so much for your comment. Our intent is to play a wide variety of music that hopefully appeals to everyone who shops here, but this is quite difficult given ONF's diverse customer base. We need to consider everyone from ages 1-101, and we try to play music that reflects that. Unfortunately, this sometimes leads to the situation you just described, but we're glad that we're playing music you enjoy at least part of the time.

2.6.2017

Anonymous: I was shocked to see a recipe featured by Heather Artripe that included maraschino cherries. It was in the February 2017 Nutshell. Maraschino cherries are not cherries! They are a manufactured thing! Super unhealthy! Heather needs to read about mc's in Amy Stewart's book, "The Drunken Botanist!" Amy tells the history of the totally artificial "cherry!"

Heather: Hey there! I totally understand your concerns over Maraschino cherries. Most of them are made in a nightmarish way! That is why when we found a brand that made them the correct way and brought them in I was so excited! We currently sell two varieties of maraschino cherries in the Co-op that meet our standards of quality. The brand we carry is Tillen Farms, they are located in Washington State. This particular brand is free of corn syrup and preservatives as well as artificial colors, flavors, and dyes. There are only 5 ingredients which includes cherries, water, sugar, vegetable and fruit concentrate (for the color), and natural flavor! Thank you for writing to us with your concerns!

Callie: I would love it if I could grab a cold "Maine Root" root beer from the front cooler 😊

William: Per your request, we have moved the Maine Root soda to the front cooler.

Liz: Hot food on hot bar not hot!

Pauline: Hi Liz, we have heard this from folks before and identified why this experience happens and have a tip for you. As our seating area is located up front and across the store from where our hot food is available, it can, depending on the time it might take to go through the register, cool down from its serving temperature of 140. We did move the plates to a warmer location though do suggest that you try using the to-go cartons we offer as they provide a lid then for transporting food across the store. In the long term we do want to change the way our food is served to ultimately address that, though I cannot tell you when exactly that will be. I hope this information is useful and thank you for taking the time to write us.

Jayne: Would like for all owners who request free coffee to get it! Really! Think about it!

Pauline: Hi Jayne, we did discuss this and really what we want to do is provide our owners with products that meet our standards of quality, which for the deli is that we only use natural, organic, and local ingredients and make everything from scratch. For us to provide free coffee, like what you sometimes see at a bank or auto shop, we would have to bring in conventional, cheap coffee, instead of the Organic, high quality, farmer cooperative owned, and locally roasted coffees that we offer. That said, our coffee is very affordable for the quality of product, both the sizes we offer are priced under \$2.00 and if you get a re-fill or bring in your own mug

it's only \$0.99. I hope this information is helpful to you and thank you for taking the time to write us.

Wynne: You only have bone meal powder—same as now offered by all supplement shops. I want capsulated form.

Linda: Regarding bulk salt—could we put the Guisto's sea salt #485 in an upper bin? Currently it frequently has brown tiny globs of who knows what—looks like honey or molasses leaked in. Bin is near floor.

Hi Linda, Thank you for your recent comment you wrote for Ozark Natural Foods. More than likely what you are seeing is the light brown sugar from the bin above. This is one of the challenges of the bulk department: keeping products pure from cross-contamination. You really see it with the Guisto's because it is so white, so anything else will be noticeable.

Because of this potential for cross-contamination, we are always very clear to people that are gluten-free to never buy anything from the Bulk Department. What happens is when someone is scooping from an upper bin, some particles may fall out of the scoop and land on the lid of a lower bin. Then, when someone opens that lower lid, the particles will slide down through the hinge crack and end up in that product.

This is very nearly impossible for us to stop with our current bin styles. As we look to do a full store re-set, this is one of the areas we are looking at very closely. We would love to improve the whole department's design.

I appreciate your proposed solution. Upon further discussion with my Bulk Buyer, however, I realize that we cannot move the bin up. We have organic items above it that are required to stay above non-organic items, for this reason of potential cross-contamination.

Meanwhile, what we can do for you with the salt is offer to bag you some from the full bag in the back. You can either call ahead of time and we'll bag some up for you, or when you arrive, you can ask the bulk person to bag some. We hope this solution can take care of the sea salt concern.

Please let me know if there's anything else I can do for you. Thank you.

2.13.17

Kimber: Cheese making class would be awesome!

Ali: Hi Kimber, I received your suggestion about holding a cheese making class at the co-op and I'm excited to let you know that this is in the works!

Jessica with Sweet Freedom Creamery recently taught a butter making class for us and we are working on plans for her to come back and do a cheese making class next.

We'll post the class on our website under News and Events, in the store, and in our weekly email once we have a date set. I'm also happy to make a note and let you know when we have it scheduled!

Thank you for writing to us, we always love to hear new ideas!

I <3 ONF: You guys have same-sex Valentine's Day cards. You. Are. The. Best! Loyal forever!

Kelsey: Thank you! You. Are. The. Best! We are proud to support all of our owners and guests!

Ann: We need a "Heather's Corner" for the gadgets Heather uses in her classes so we can buy them!

Ali: Hi Ann, I received your suggestion form about putting up a corner with the gadgets we sell that Heather uses for her classes and I think that is such a fun idea! I'm going to bring your idea to our next Cross Promo Committee meeting where we discuss and plan different ways to cross promote products from the store and set up fun displays.

Thank you for writing to us!

Paula: I'm so glad you have vegan options. HOWEVER, my favorite one never is! VEGAN CHOCOLATE CHIP AND LAVENDER!!! <3

Pauline: Hi Paula, we added that to our spring menu! You can enjoy that scone on Fridays!

Thanks for writing us to tell us what you like in our store.

Anonymous: I'd love to see gluten-free brownies in the bakery! 😊

Pauline: Dear Anonymous, we're happy to let you know that our raspberry brownies are in fact made with alternative grains. We hope this info gets to you and thank you for writing us about what you are looking for at your coop.

Anne: You have employees wash hands and then they have to unlock bathroom door and pull door handle with bare hands—no paper towels. Yuck

Pauline: Hi Anne, I'm happy to let you know that the staff does have paper towels at all of our designated handwashing sinks in the back for staff to dry their hands after washing and before returning to work. I hope this information helps you and thank you for taking the time to write us about your concern. Glad to alleviate it. Thank you.

2/20/17

Sharon: I eat at ONF often. Today all the hot foods, even the mac and cheese were spicy. Cayenne is too hot for me!

Pauline: Hi Sharon, after checking to see the menu on the day you wrote your suggestion, which was on a Monday and features an Indian menu along with the same day options, I'm happy to let you know that there isn't cayenne in any of the dishes! We do however have curry in several of our menu options that day and this could be what was unpalatable to you. We did at one point have it in the mac-n-cheese and removed it from the dish because of people's preference for heat levels. We really welcome all feedback and do make menu changes based on what we hear. I hope this information is helpful for you and we're glad to hear that you eat with us often. Thank you for taking the time to write us.

Christy: Need more options/education asked for KETO acceptable food suggestions. No one knew what it was. Low/no carb, high fat, high protein.

William: Hi Christy, Thank you for your recent note regarding the KETO diet. As a reminder, you asked that we have more options and education for the staff on the diet.

I'm sorry that your recent experience here found no one who knew anything about this diet. We strive very hard to stay on top of the latest trends and food-related issues. There are many, as you may imagine. I remember several years back, when Gluten-Free was first becoming a fad and before it became a regular part of many people's diets, we were able to get

some very valuable info from our owners/customers who were at the cutting edge of that diet. With that in mind, I'm wondering if you have an interest in helping to educate our staff?

Our Grocery Department has a monthly meeting, and part of that meeting is used to educate the staff about a particular topic. Would you like to come give us a training on the KETO diet? We reserve 15 minutes for this in our 1 hour meeting, so it would not take a lot of your time. If you're unable, perhaps you could give me a credible website and/or organizations to go for educational material I can use for the staff?

As I mentioned above, it was our customers who were first able to help us with the Gluten-Free diet, and it looks like we can use some guidance on the KETO one as well. Thank you.

Keith: Was told that you will not have Lakewood fresh pressed juices. Please offer another brand to replace it.

Hi Keith, Thank you for your recent note regarding Lakewood juices. I may need some help from you to understand what you are referring to. Lakewood is a juice brand we carry, but they are a national brand and so do not offer fresh-pressed juices. We have Native Nectar, Berry Naturals, and our own in-house fresh-pressed juices in the Produce section.

If indeed you're referring to the Lakewood Pure juices, the good news is that I not only kept the ones we were carrying but also brought in three new ones: Black Cherry, Prune, and Pomegranate. Also, the Knudsen brand has a line of Just Juices. I hope this addresses your concerns; if not, please let me know so I can help you better. Thank you.

I <3 ONF Rachel and Donovan: Because we can get so many of our necessary household goods and lots of LOCAL produce and other products here. <3 AND Because of the yummy food bar options and VEGAN DESSERT options! Also, the friendly folks in the deli and up front!

Pauline: Hi Rachel and Donovan. Thanks for the compliments! Being farmers for us yourselves that means a lot and we are just as appreciative as you about the local options. Thanks for your notes of support for our local producers, our staff, food options, and your co-op.

2.27.2017

Donna: Start requiring folks to bring own BAGS—Like Aldi's or Natural Grocers. Supply boxes for us who forget!

Budhi: Please stop providing bags—we will soon...is our forgetfulness. This reminder—a simple step we can all take.

Dylan: Get the A la Carte pizza process in order. I tried ordering the curry pizza multiple times only to be told no pizza orders are taken after 6 (@ 6:02), they were no longer making pizza that day (@ 5:30) and the last time I tried to order I was told they need a 24 hour notice in order to prepare the curry sauce. 24 hour notice for a pizza! I love you guys, but you've turned me toward ordering pizza from Whole Foods because of how difficult you've made it to simply order pizza. Please reconsider your present course of action.

Pauline: Hi Dylan, first my apologies about your experience. I understand that you simply want to order pizza. That's great and something we want to do. We have definitely had some issues in doing this and changed several aspects to the way we provide this service. We now take pizza orders up till 7pm, every day of the week. We also added 3 types of Take-n-Bake pizza

offering available throughout the day in our grab n go case. We changed the way that dough is rolled out and set aside. Finally, we also upped our production of Cheese Take-n-Bakes so that if we are backed up with orders we can easily add the desired toppings to an already prepared pizza and bake it off. That said, I would like to take this opportunity that it is first come first serve as we can literally only make up to 12 pizzas/hour due to equipment layout and our standards. We make everything from scratch in our kitchen, including our pizza sauce and dough, and we only use organic, natural, and local ingredients. No other grocery store in town offers this service with those standards and as it's gotten more popular we've, as I said, definitely had some issues figuring this out.

Also I need to apologize for a miscommunication on our part about the response you got about the curry pizza and why the staff asked for a 24 hour notice, the reason for that is we do not currently offer the curry pizza on our winter or spring menus. We rotate the pizza menu seasonally, which largely doesn't affect the typical offerings though does affect the specialty ones, like the taco pizza on the spring menu, the chili pizza on our winter menu, and the curry pizza you mentioned, which we first tried out a couple of menu rotations ago. We are happy though to make that for you though as it's off menu currently that makes it a catering order, as we don't have the house made curry pizza sauce on hand. Again, totally fine, we just need to run it through our catering program. Which as a side note, is very user friendly for customers. Out of 379 caterings last year there were only 2 mistakes made and both got remedied. To place a catering simply call us and we'll take your order. The next bit of information that I'd like to correct is that we ask for a 48 hour, not 24 hour, notice for caterings.

Now, all of that said, I'd like to offer you a free pizza for your troubles. There is a \$15 gift card with your name on it set aside at the Owner's Service Desk. Whenever you would like you are free to claim it and use it to purchase your pizza. I hope all of this information helps and that we've won you over for a chance to stand out with this offering. Thank you for taking the time to write us. We're the better for it. Thank you.

Dorothy: Not a suggestion, but praise: your hot bar and deli are so much tastier than those at Whole Foods that it's staggering.

Pauline: Hi Dorothy! Thank you so much and we completely agree with you. There are two big differences between our prepared offerings versus those of Whole Foods. First, we only use organic, all-natural, and local ingredients and second, we make everything here in our kitchen from scratch. Whole Foods does not make anything on site and now doesn't even own the company that produces the hot foods that they serve because their own distribution warehouse was shut down for repeated health code violations. They currently largely purchase their hot foods frozen from a third party, ship them to their store and then follow what is referred to as the 'dump and cook' serving method. Being the complete opposite of that, we do think, like you, our food is tastier. Thank you again for taking the time to let us know!

Doris: Suggest ONF should do something to honor the original members/owners.

Pat: Please consider combining the café and the serving area ("as it used to be"). Thanks.

Pauline: Hi Pat. We have considered that and have long term plans to renovate both of those areas though I can't tell you when that will be. Another manager and I are also wanting to use some more of the space next door to our farm and garden/pet store. She is wanting to put in a

tap room and I would like to serve plated food there, again, I can't say for certain when that might happen. Just letting you know as we've had this suggestion over the years and used that particular piece of feedback in some of our long term planning for the building. Thanks for adding your voice to that and taking the time to let us know. Thank you.

Robert: Coffee rewards program.

Pauline: Hi Robert, I'm happy to let you know that we do have a version of this at our store. Our organic drip coffee is \$1.69 for a 12oz and \$1.99 though if you are getting a refill or bring your own mug it's only \$0.99. I hope this information is helpful for you and thank you for your suggestion.

Rylee: Different options of paper for kids.

Andrew: Hi Rylee, thanks so much for your suggestion that we have different Co-op Kids activities. Right now we don't have the space to display two different Co-op Kids activity sheets, but the next time you are in the store, feel free to ask for me and I would be more than happy to provide you with a different activity sheet!

I <3 ONF anonymous: The guy in the feed and seed store is great—helpful and polite.

Mike: Please know that every staff member hears each of these. Every "I Heart ONF" card is read in our daily meetings and at The Big Game on Tuesday afternoon. I speak for the entire staff when I say that we absolutely love to hear your compliments. Thank you so much for telling us what you like about your co-op.

I <3 ONF Rea: They have yummy fruits and veggies!!

Pauline: We agree!!! Glad you enjoy fruits and veggies too. Thanks for letting us know.

I <3 ONF Gabriel: Coffee!

Pauline: Yes. Coffee!! Thanks for telling us what you enjoy at our store!

I <3 ONF Laura: The worker Ali is really nice.

Tanja: Thanks for sharing that Laura! Ali *is* really nice and we are happy to have her here in the front end! :)

Scott: The café used to serve Onyx coffee—it tastes much better than the replacement. Thanks.

Pauline: Hi Scott, happy to let you know that we were running a special promotion on the organic Pachamama coffee that is currently occupying the urn where the Onyx was. We did that because they are also a cooperatively owned company and wanted to highlight the fact that we had this new product in our store by serving one of the varieties at our coffee bar. We liked it so much that we are going to keep offering it though we are also fond of the Onyx roast and plan on returning it this coming Sunday, 3.26.17. I hope this info is helpful for you and thanks for telling us what you enjoy at our store.

3.6.2017

I <3 ONF Anonymous: Because of Heather's Indian cooking class—she is great!

Mike: Please know that every staff member hears each of these. Every "I Heart ONF" card is read in our daily meetings and at The Big Game on Tuesday afternoon. I speak for the entire staff when I say that we absolutely love to hear your compliments. Thank you so much for telling us what you like about your co-op.

I <3 ONF Alyssa: Because the deli food is mega-dope. Can't get enough of that kale salad! :D wow!

Pauline: Dear Alyssa, word up. We think so too, and kale yeah!!!

Alyssa: Any salsa with fruit in it (e.g. peach, pineapple, mango) would be stellar!

Pauline: Dear Alyssa, we will save your suggestion for when we begin planning our summer menu, which will likely roll out early June. Thanks for taking the time to let us know what you are looking for in our prepared foods mix. In grocery though I do really recommend trying fruit inspired salsas from 2 local companies, Helen's Table and My Brother's Salsa. There is a cranberry orange and cucumber tomato from Helen's Table and a peach tomato from My Brother's Salsa and all three are excellent. Thank you again for your suggestion.

Chloe: I would love it if I could come here and pick up food from the hot bar for dinner!

Pauline: Dear Chloe, you were the second person in the same week to make this suggestion so we discussed this with our prepared foods staff as currently we only run a breakfast and extended lunch hot bar. And we're going to do it! Look for it in early June when we roll out our summer menu and thanks for letting us know what you are looking for in our store.

I <3 ONF Kathie: When I checked out today, I was next in line for Rachel Garcia to check me out and I saw her kindly handle a bit of a fussy customer. The lady was complaining about the prices getting too high and that she might have to go somewhere else. Rachel was kind and when the lady told her she needed to let someone know about it, Rachel said she would. Rachel was sweet throughout. Just wanted to let you know. Hope you have a good day!

Tanja: Thanks for sharing your observations Kathie! Rachel is a sweetheart and we feel very lucky to have her here at the Co-op! I'll make sure to share what you wrote with her so she can know customers are thinking about her. :)

3.13.17

Cynthia: Hey! I dare not go to Whole Foods here (not a traitor) but was recently in OKC where I went to a Whole Foods. I know (I really do) your managers review the competition. But I wonder if you take away this: Whole Foods knows their brand isn't just their logo and messaging on a flyer. It says, "You're special and deserve luxury." Their brand is present in the bathroom fixtures and in the people who seem to be at constant beck and call. I know you're rebranding and I hope you find a consultant who understands the scope of what brand means. It's something every employee is aware of and communicating.

Mike: Cynthia and I spoke on the phone. We agree. Wholefoods does an amazing job with their brand. Everywhere in the store, the message is simple, "we're saving the world and by buying these products, you are too." Obviously, they have a huge budget and roll out their message nationally. On the other hand, our brand has been cobbled together and handed down from

generation to generation, changing due to staff turnover and high profile events at the coop. In the end, our brand is muddled.

Our Marketing Manager, Ali, is currently in discussions with several ad agencies with the intention of hiring help to move us forward. The intention is to find someone who can help us create a new logo, redesign our store and our signs, and mainly to teach how to identify and articulate who we are and what we believe. We hope that this step is going to be a new beginning for the coop, to help our owners and the community recognize what we truly offer our community that differs from large corporate chains.

Great comment. Thanks Cynthia.

Scotland: There is too much rice in the bean, rice, and cheese, and the bean and rice burritos.

Pauline: Dear Scotland, what we think happened is that the wrong size scoop got used during that batch of burritos so we went back and reviewed your comment with the team to make sure that everyone is on the same page. Thank you for taking the time to point that out to us.

Leigh: Dog food needs to be in the co-op—not everyone wants garden shoved down their throat. And moving the bread is annoying. Not my fault no one buys Serenity and it needs to be frozen. Driving your customers across the store—I guess it drives sales but I doubt it.

I <3 ONF Customer: *because* you will restock the good French feta cheese.

Pauline: Dear customer—yes, we will! It did not come in on our last order, which just arrived the week of March 20th. We will purchase this again with our next order. And we agree with you—it is a good cheese! Thanks for taking the time to let us know you enjoy that product.

3.20.2017

I <3 ONF Anonymous: Ali and Debbie make being in the store a truly happy experience. One always walks back to the car feeling more confident in the middle of the world's happenings. Another 24 hours? OK.

Tanja: Thanks for your kind words! Ali and Debbie are great at offering world class customer service. I'll make sure to share your thoughts with them. :)

I <3 ONF Vegan Customer (you have a lot of us.): Because you'll stop selling baby chicks—or I'll take the many thousands I spend here online and to Whole Foods.

Mike: Dear Vegan Customer, Thank you so much for your suggestion and for your concern for the baby chicks.

I certainly understand your conscientious choice to be vegan. Please understand that it is our responsibility to meet the needs of all of our owners. A portion of many of these diets include eggs, meat, and dairy products. That being said, we do also feel that it is our responsibility to teach our owners where their food comes from and to understand ethical and sustainable farming practices. Part of that process is encouraging our owners to own backyard chickens, collect their own eggs and have a living relationship with their food. We do not just sell baby chicks; rather we have several classes on raising backyard chickens prior to this yearly sale in order to teach proper care.

I would also like to point out that there are many reasons for raising chickens (other than eating) including pest and weed control, free fertilizer for your backyard garden, cutting down on a family's food waste, as well as being a very therapeutic hobby.

I hope that you can see that having this yearly sale is an embodiment of our commitment to our standards of quality and our vision and mission statements; and that by educating our owners about food issues is an integral part of developing a healthier community.

I <3 ONF Mackenzie: Because of the awesome truffles!

Mike: Please know that every staff member hears each of these. Every "I Heart ONF" card is read in our daily meetings and at The Big Game on Tuesday afternoon. I speak for the entire staff when I say that we absolutely love to hear your compliments. Thank you so much for telling us what you like about your co-op.

I <3 ONF Anonymous: Because everything!

Mike: Please know that every staff member hears each of these. Every "I Heart ONF" card is read in our daily meetings and at The Big Game on Tuesday afternoon. I speak for the entire staff when I say that we absolutely love to hear your compliments. Thank you so much for telling us what you like about your co-op.

Donna: I hate walking the entire store to get bread in a narrower space. I still have to request bread I prefer.

William: Thank you for your comment. Here are the reasons we moved the bread: to stock more regularly and to have all bread together in both frozen and fresh. We're still adjusting to and improving our procedures from the move.

I <3 ONF Anonymous: Because you are all wonderful! A little while ago, a couple of us old ladies commented on how the kale in the deli was good, but too tough for us to chew with our compromised teeth. (It happens!) (That is, one does get old!) And lately, you have had kale and chard and other greens that are not too spicy (we commented on that too, we're mild-spicy but not too spicy) but also soft enough for us to chew—and also delicious! Thank you so much!

Pauline: Hi Ladies, thanks for that. We did also discover that our greens recipe was incorrect after investigating from your other suggestions, so thanks again for helping us out. Definite win-win. We really appreciate you taking the time to thank us.

Anonymous: Please put out crackers again with our soup.

Pauline: We can certainly ask the grocery department if they would like to cross stock some crackers by the soup other than their location in aisle 2. For something complimentary, we do offer a piece of our house made baguette bread with the purchase of soup, which we hope you will enjoy. Thank you for writing us.

Isis: I appreciate you are trying to improve the store but is inconvenient to have to walk to the next door to get my dog's food or treats and have to do 2 different transactions. Thanks.

Dennis: **5th request for this:** When will the new community bulletin board be placed on the wall in the entry area? (The “services and products for sale” bulletin board in the eating area is just fine where it is. I’m talking about the new bulletin board to announce events of community interest. Real co-ops educate the people. Thank you.

Heather: Look for a bulletin board in the vestibule within a few weeks.

Ginny: **ONE OF THE CO-OP PRINCIPLES IS TO PROVIDE COST EFFECTIVE FOOD FOR THE CUSTOMERS. I’D LIKE TO SEE MORE EFFORT.**

Mike: Hi Ginny, I read your suggestion and appreciate the question.

You are right, our mission is not just to bring natural and organic food and products to our community, but also to do it at a reasonable price. Since the beginning of the coop, this has always been a struggle. We are, after all a single coop in the middle of a state that has no other food coops. We are on our own. Even though that has created an enormous challenge, we have recently made some great strides.

The first being that we have incrementally lowered our margin 3 times over the past 5 years. We currently have one of the lowest margins in the NCG (National Coop Grocers, which is a network of about 300 food coops in the country.) It is the function of the NCG to negotiate with UNFI (United Natural Foods Inc; the largest natural food distribution service in the country) who we use to source more than 90% of all if the food sold at our coop.

NCG has also been negotiating on our behalf to bring in a variety of food at deeply discounted sales prices. These products are called Coop Deals and are indicated with green tags throughout the store. These deals change from week to week and offer products in nearly every category in the store. The number of Coop Deals varies from week to week, usually in the range of 500 to over 1000 Coop Deals at a time. Right now, there are 721 Coop Deals on our shelves.

Additionally, they are negotiating with manufactures willing to split the difference on margin, if we agree to sell their products below margin. These products are sold as Coop Basic and are identified by purple signs on the shelves. Essentially, they take a hit on their margin and we take the same hit on our margin in order to have regular low prices. These are not sales. These are high quality products that are priced on the shelf well below their regular margin. We currently have 287 Coop Basic on the shelves. NCG is all-in on this program. They plan to continue to aggressively expand this program in order to bring as many low-priced options to our owners as possible.

Finally, we recently built a pallet room. We can occasionally negotiate directly with manufacturers to purchase whole pallets at a discount rate. We have never been able to take advantage of this due to a lack of storage space. Now, with the new pallet room, we can bring in whole pallets, cut the price and pass the savings on to our owners.

I very much appreciate the suggestion and I hope this info helps.

In cooperation, Mike.

Rebecca: **Paper straws. I’ve recently had a lot of dental work that requires me to drink meals.**

Carrie: We have paper straws available to us and can order them in a variety of colors. 50 straws for \$5.99.

I <3 ONF Keira: It is (mostly) all organic and about everything is non-GMO and all the staff are super nice!! 😊

Mike: Please know that every staff member hears each of these. Every “I Heart ONF” card is read in our daily meetings and at The Big Game on Tuesday afternoon. I speak for the entire staff when I say that we absolutely love to hear your compliments. Thank you so much for telling us what you like about your co-op.

3.27.17

I <3 ONF Anonymous: I am here with my staff/friends almost every day—please have a choice of 2 different pizzas every day—I didn’t buy a slice today because there were 2 Mexican pizzas with lettuce and beans on them—I like pizza with cheese and regular ingredients like tomato sauce and veggies, and other toppings like pepperoni. But mostly veggies—but not lettuce!

Pauline: Dear Anonymous, we have had this suggestion before and on all of our other menus we did switch to what you are suggesting. We did though make this one exception to that on the spring menu and only on Tuesdays for the Mexican pizza because of the prep for the make station and we got a ton of compliments on that offering. Understanding that not everyone likes lettuce on their pizza, we’ll go 100% back to offering a traditional option with a specialty pizza when our summer menu rolls out in early June. We hope in the meantime that there are other items you can enjoy on Tuesdays during this time and we are glad to hear that you enjoy coming here regularly with your friends and staff. We’re very happy to have all our options available to you for lunch. Thank you for taking the time to tell us what you are looking for here at your coop.

Arden: Re: onions on salad bar—slices need to be done—chunks are not easy to eat on a salad. Will appreciate attention to this matter.

Pauline: Hi Arden, done. Thanks for the note!

Tiffany: Would like if we carried Rudi’s cinnamon raisin bagels.

4.3.17

Anonymous: I’d have completed the survey if “income” were not required. Should be optional.

Ali: Dear Anonymous, Thank you for your feedback on this year’s owner survey. I am compiling all outside comments and suggestions so that we can discuss and continue to improve our future surveys.

Lenee: Do you guys ever consider price-matching other health food stores?

Barbara: P-l-e-a-s-e let Steve/produce consult on what’s in the “raw” section. It is just OK. Now I have to go to other stores to get what I want. I am interested in quality at a fair price and above all TASTY. Also, so disappointed Punk Rawk Labs cheeses have left. People interested in health are willing to pay a fair price for high quality food. Appreciate your strong consideration on this.

Pauline: Hi Barbara, I’m Pauline, the Fresh Foods Manager and am responding to the second half of your suggestion. While Steve is a produce worker (and yes, super knowledgeable about raw foods), William our Grocery Manager, can speak to our raw foods selection.

For the Punk Rawk cheeses, we do unfortunately have to drop them over the summer time. Being a fermented nutmilk product that is shipped from Minnesota, they cannot be transported that far through heat to us without spoiling before arrival. Despite being on dry ice, we were just crediting them every delivery and didn't want to continue to have an awesome company keep shipping us product that we couldn't pay for, again due to spoilage before arrival. We did also hold off on bringing them back in over the last winter after we discovered that because of this transportation process and the quality of the product we would have to charge closer to \$20 for the same size package. I like you believe in paying a fair price for food though we thought in this instance it was more affordable for our customers to make their own fermented nut milk cheeses. I've done this myself when I was a raw foodist and vegan and found it more economical, even if it did take some days to prepare. You can do this with the nuts in our bulk foods section with a Mason jar and cheesecloth from our Homestead store next door. For an example of a simple technique that I learned while following those diets check out this website: <http://fermentedvegancheese.blogspot.com/p/basic-cheese.html>. It's a technique focused recipe that you can alter with other herbs and seasonings for added flavors and of course there is a wealth of good recipes on the internet. My favorite ones used almonds, sunflower seeds, or cashews, like the Punk Rawk Labs vegan cheese. Finally though, we do have a new cheese buyer, Kaitlyn, and I'll pass on your request to her while she evaluates our product offerings in that department. It sounds like it's worth a phone call to Punk Rawk Labs to see if they can figure out their transportation issues and see if we pick that product up again. I hope this information is all helpful and really appreciate you taking the time to let us know what products you are looking for in our store. Thank you.

Billy: I would like us to have a bar that serves alcohol.

Raina: Is it possible to keep raw milk cheese on special price for owners' weekend?

I <3 ONF Jasmine: Because this place has so much food. But with your food my mom makes good meals.

Mike: Please know that every staff member hears each of these. Every "I Heart ONF" card is read in our daily meetings and at The Big Game on Tuesday afternoon. I speak for the entire staff when I say that we absolutely love to hear your compliments. Thank you so much for telling us what you like about your co-op.

I <3 ONF Jackson: Because the coffee is so good.

Mike: Please know that every staff member hears each of these. Every "I Heart ONF" card is read in our daily meetings and at The Big Game on Tuesday afternoon. I speak for the entire staff when I say that we absolutely love to hear your compliments. Thank you so much for telling us what you like about your co-op.

I <3 ONF Grace: Because everything is natural and organic and (mostly <3) healthy! It tastes amazing too! Thanks!

Mike: Please know that every staff member hears each of these. Every "I Heart ONF" card is read in our daily meetings and at The Big Game on Tuesday afternoon. I speak for the entire staff when I say that we absolutely love to hear your compliments. Thank you so much for telling us what you like about your co-op.

I <3 ONF Layla: Because your coffee is so good, you have the perfect food, that is why I love ONF so much.

Mike: Please know that every staff member hears each of these. Every "I Heart ONF" card is read in our daily meetings and at The Big Game on Tuesday afternoon. I speak for the entire staff when I say that we absolutely love to hear your compliments. Thank you so much for telling us what you like about your co-op.

I <3 ONF Carl: I noticed a fresher, freer feeling here with better prices and friendliness from staff etc. Good work.

Anne: Dear cook, kindly let us add salt if we desire. Every entrée and veggie I see is salted! Would have liked to get some food.

Pauline: Hi Anne, you are right, we do have salt in the majority of our food offerings, mostly really because it is such a mainstay of American cooking. To bring out the flavor just a touch we do use very low amounts of salt in our recipes. We do this intentionally realizing that we aren't going to be able to hit everyone's palate for salt and do provide salt shakers for those folks who like a higher level. I hope this information is helpful to you and please feel free to ask us for a sample, we certainly would like for you to enjoy our food. I'll also take your comment to our next production meeting when we are recipe planning and see if we could knock it out of a couple offerings. We've done this with onions, red pepper, and cayenne in the past per customer suggestions. Thank you for taking the time to let us know what you are looking for in our prepared food options.

I <3 ONF Michael: Casey radiates positive, welcoming energy and generally exemplifies what the co-op means to me. I've seen him do great things for others and me. Thanks y'all!

Tanja: Howdy Michael. Thanks for sharing such kind words about our cashier, Casey. I'll make sure to share your shout-out with him. Casey is a blast to have in the department and he does a great job connecting with our shoppers and owners. :)

Ann: Just give me my \$.05 per bag. Filling out ticket is time-consuming and misses the point.

Tanja: Howdy Ann. After doing the bag nickel program for several years we realized that it hadn't accomplished our goal of increasing the amount of reusable bags that our customers use. Our marketing department developed the idea of a large monthly gift card prize as a new way to encourage more customers to reuse bags. Please stop in and chat with me some time if you want. I'd be happy to hear more about your ideas. :)

Ann: Your survey asked for my yearly worth! Rude

Ali: Thank you for your feedback on this year's owner survey. I am compiling all outside comments and suggestions so that we can discuss and continue to improve our future surveys. Please know that this survey is being conducted by an external firm that is independent of the co-op and your feedback is handled with 100% anonymity and confidentiality. These types of questions are common on surveys and are used to gather and provide a full view into the economics of our core customer in relation to responses on questions regarding products, services, and preferences. These details are never connected to your name or owner number but help co-op leadership in shaping long-term strategies as well as marketing efforts. The co-

op aims to best serve all of our owners and shoppers and our bi-annual surveys help us to accomplish this goal. I appreciate you taking the time to fill out the survey.

A customer called to compliment Trent on his excellent customer service. She was going on a road trip and desperately wanted a Rebel drink but they weren't in stock on the sales floor. She said he spent 10 minutes talking to people and hunting them down, and eventually found the drinks in the basement and brought them to her. She said most stores wouldn't have staff willing to go that far for a customer, and that it made her day. She also said Patti was wonderful as a cashier.

Anonymous: I tried to fill out owner survey—but last questions were not necessary, invasive, offensive, and none of anyone's business. My education, income, age, sex—the co-op is supposed to be about providing healthy food and life choices; as an owner I resent having to answer questions that have nothing to do with all that—you ought to make them optional—**not mandatory!**

Ali: Thank you for your feedback on this year's owner survey. I am compiling all outside comments and suggestions so that we can discuss and continue to improve our future surveys. Please know that this survey is being conducted by an external firm that is independent of the co-op and your feedback is handled with 100% anonymity and confidentiality. These types of questions are common on survey's and are used to gather and provide a full view into the economics of our core customer in relation to responses on regarding products, services, and preferences. They are purposefully asked in ranges so as to further ensure we are not asking for identifiable details such as exact age, income, etc. These details are never connected to your name or owner number but help co-op leadership in shaping long-term strategies as well as marketing efforts. The co-op aims to best serve all of our owners and shoppers and our bi-annual survey's help us to accomplish this goal.

I <3 ONF Carl: I noticed a fresher free'er feeling here with better prices and friendliness from staff, etc. Good works.

4.10.17

Pat: Please move bread back to front of store. I forget to buy it (where it is!)

William: We moved the bread for various reasons, including to maintain its freshness.

Anja: Grow Organic Bananas from Costa Rica have really good growing practices and are not a big corporation like Chiquita is.

Pauline: Hi Anja. I went to go look at the company GROW and yes, it seems they do have really good practices and values though unfortunately they also state that: GROW bananas are available exclusively to retailers from Organics Unlimited. Furthermore, Organics Unlimited, is a partner company of Chiquita and sell all their bananas under either the Chiquita label or their private labels, like GROW. (For a quick read: <http://www.thepacker.com/fruit-vegetable-news/Chiquita-Organics-Unlimited-partner-on-bananas-204703871.html>) I would love to directly support small banana farmers, like we are able to do with coffee and chocolate for

example, though the high perishability, storing and transportation practices, and the price, quantity, and regularity that Americans expect that commodity, make it highly unlikely that we, as a coop and as a nation, will be able to work out direct buying organic bananas.

Bananas are the number one consistent best seller in produce departments all across America and of that crop some 4.2% is exported from this country while some 87% is exported from Central America. (For reference see, <http://www.worldstopexports.com/bananas-exports-country/> and <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fe901>) They are highly perishable, from being a fruit, and because of the ripening process. Bananas are largely not picked ripe, again to avoid bruising and being overripe on arrival. To ripen that fruit, they are stored in large ripening chambers. Because this is a forced process, it also leads to high spoilage as frequently the fruit ripen incorrectly and turn grey before they ever turn yellow. Finally, because they are so widely consumed year round by some many, they became a highly competitive market and what we call a lost leader, meaning they are priced well below what they should retail for to reflect the cost and waste of that item.

Being the number one fruit in demand, not just in America but in the whole world, these facts about bananas have led to the consolidation of the companies that own the growing fields and transportation methods. For the world that is ChiquitaFyffees. The two largest banana companies merged a few years ago and control over 1 third of the banana export market. (For reference see <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2014/03/big-merger-creates-worlds-largest-banana-company/359003/>) About a year and a half ago, the majority of organic bananas exported to the United States, regardless of the label, are in some way now affiliated, either in partnership or in outright ownership, by Chiquita.

Again, I would love to change that and appreciate you offering me something to check out to that end. Here at the coop we spend an enormous amount of time working with direct vendors, farmers and food producers. Last year we worked with 130 small, local, and cooperatively owned producers to source just over \$1 million in product. For us it is easy to do in sourcing food that is able to be grown here and for international goods that transport well, like coffee beans and chocolate, we work with small groups of farmer cooperatives who have a real say in how their company is run, how the workers are treated, how the environment is impacted, and the quality of the product they ship. In other words, it is much easier to know the growing practices and values behind a product when you have a connection to the source of it. We work to make that connection possible in as many of our products as possible and in this instance I'm not sure that it is possible. I do hope you enjoy the access to the products and services we are able to work with who meet the values you mentioned in your inquiry and hope that this information better helps you do that. I appreciate you taking the time to let us know what is important to you and thank you for writing us.

Cindy: Have others expressed desire to have hot/cold bar open 1 hour longer? Close at 7pm instead of 6pm.

Pauline: Hi Cindy, yes, others have. We discussed this as a team and I'm happy to tell you that we are going to try out serving food until 9pm beginning with our Summer menu, which should roll out the first or second week of June. Thanks for adding your voice to the others that have requested this. We appreciate you taking the time to let us know what products you are looking for in our store.

I <3 ONF Patricia: The live music is GREAT! Your female vocalist was amazing. Bring them back every owner's weekend! Really really enjoyable. Thank you!

Ali: Thank you so much for letting us know how much you loved the music last weekend! Jake and Emily are very talented and play with another local singer, Candy Lee, in a group called Melody Pond. I passed along your comments to them and they were so happy to hear that their music was well received. I'm glad you enjoyed a little live music during your shopping and I'll happily invite them to come play again.

Rania: Please put a sign on case to the left of sprouting seeds. Two employees told me the alfalfa seeds were now in gardening store. Supplements employee said a sign would be...

I <3 ONF Karen & Ted: Because of the quality of products, the friendly staff (who know a thing or two!), the community outreach and participation, etc. (all I don't remember.)

Ali: Karen and Ted, Thank you so much for writing, you two sure know how to make us feel warm and fuzzy! We read every "I <3 ONF" form in our Big Game on Tuesdays and it's always such a treat to hear what our shoppers love about their co-op. We like you quite a bit too.

Anonymous: It seems like local produce would be more cost effective for consumer as well as for you?

Pauline: Dear Anonymous, there are several different ways to address this inquiry and at a base level I agree with you. Local produce is more cost effective for the community, including the coop and our owners, and for the environment. The way that I look at it is the more that we support our local farmers the more their business grows and stabilizes assuring them long term success and in turn ensuring that we as a community have a secure access to food. This is certainly more cost effective when considering things like the current weather related issues in California. For example, right now broccoli with stems is completely unavailable to us and the bag broccoli and broccoli with crowns that is available is sky high in pricing. This is because the southern growing region had a mild winter, higher than normal temperatures in spring caused the crop to bolt while concurrently rains in the northern growing region are preventing planting. Hence the gap. For us though, we had access to broccoli from Lightner Farm from February through early April because they invested in row cover and planted a crop in the fall for over wintering. They were able to invest in that infrastructure because we invest in their farm in sourcing product from them for almost 30 years and you as a consumer invest in them every time you choose to buy local. Plus of course the transportation cost is much less coming from 70 miles away as opposed to across the country. This is a long term cost effective investment for our community.

Long term cost effective investment also happens for the environment when we participate in buying, supporting, and strengthening local. For us, we only source produce that is grown according to standards for organics. Certified Organic and Certified Naturally Grown growing practices do not just focus on what is not allowed (synthetic chemicals, pesticides, fungicides, gmos, etc.), they also focus on what is improved through these sustainable practices. Soil health is improved, topsoil is retained, water is used less wastefully, habitats are sustained for insects and wildlife, and a diversity of plant species are propagated. We work with 47 local farms who all follow this set of farming practices adding to the health and resiliency of our region.

One other way I interpreted your comment was that you might be referring to the shelf price and the price that we pay our farmers. Though following organic farming practices is more cost effective, here for the environment and for long term reducing costs by lowering the amount of inputs needed to build up a local farm in Arkansas, local produce and organic farming practices are not more cost effective when considering labor. For example, we have an issue with vine boars that destroy squash and similar crops. They burrow into the vine of the plant and in eating it can decimate an entire planting within a week, often much sooner. As synthetic pesticides aren't allowed most of our farmers deal with this by removing the bugs by hand, working early on transplants, washing the plants, removing the whole crop, trying out planting trap crops, or simply not growing that crop for a season or at all. Many of these options are very time consuming and some really hit the bottom line hard, for example with total crop loss. We are seeing more and more loss also from the increasing unpredictability of our seasonal weather patterns and rain flow. These are examples of the challenges of growing local and organic, especially in Arkansas where we have very poor quality soil and topsoil and it takes years of investment to change that aspect of a farm here.

One of the seven cooperative principles is Concern for Community. We as a coop believe in having affordable food, resources, and services for our community. We source high quality food, local food, and naturally and organically grown food. We also pay living wages and benefits to our staff and pay a fair price to farmers and food producers to support their living as well. To that last point, I work out all the pricing for local produce for our store directly with the farmers to ensure that we have found the middle ground in area between what they need to provide the crop, support their family and business, and what is affordable, or cost effective, to our owners. Again, I there were several ways that I thought about your suggestion and I hope that at least one of my interpretations you considered responsive to your writing. I welcome any and every opportunity to discuss our local foods system. Thank you for giving me that opportunity today in writing us.

Anonymous: Please mark down your leftover soups.

Pauline: Dear Anonymous, there are two reasons why we don't do this. One is that we sell soup until we close so there is no time that the store is open after our soups start going out for the day that we could sell them marked down. The other reason, and the real reason, is that we want to provide our community with a high quality product, which in this instance is our house made soup. We only want to serve folks food that is fresh and not leftover. With the soup we make a fresh large batch, cool and refrigerate and warm up in small batches as needed so that you are getting a premium product. And the soup, like all of our food, is made only with organic, natural and local ingredients, adding to its premium while still being affordable at \$2.99/8oz and \$3.69/12oz, each size offered with a free piece of our house made baguette bread. That is the type of service that we are providing. I hope this clarifies things and that this information is helpful to you. I also want to thank you for taking the time to write us.

Lon: For a long time you had a very bright light working front desk. She knew everyone. Very efficient. Black hair. She knew the business. Since she left, not so much. Please put her back, no one comes close.

Tanja: Hi Lon, Thanks for your kind words about Rachel! She was an excellent coordinator at the Owner Service Desk and I miss having her there. Sometimes staff choose to step away from

positions and that is what happened in this case. We always encourage our staff to try new things and we work to accommodate them when they ask for this. You will now see Rachel all around the store sharing her bright personality with many different departments in lots of different roles. I'm happy to still have her in the front end, and to share her with these other departments too. Rachel is a great employee and I'm sure she will continue to do wonderful things at the co-op as she tries on new and exciting roles.

Anonymous: To whom it may concern, I found your survey to be rather rude and against what I believed the co-op to stand for. Asking questions regarding age, gender, and income level was unnecessary. I doubt even the offering of \$200 gift cards will draw the response you desire as most people would find those questions offensive and quit the survey.

Secondly, I was pleasantly surprised to see that the former Fresh Market Manager works at ONF. Whoever hired him needs to be congratulated. I used to shop that store every week, however, since he left it has deteriorated and I have stopped going there. I would say he is in the wrong position though...he should be running ONF...he ran an absolutely outstanding store and understands customer service completely.

Tanja: Hi Anonymous. I understand your perspective on the survey questions. We ask those questions so we can ensure we are meeting the needs of owners from many different demographics.

Thank you for your kind words about Matt! He truly is a superstar. I am the lucky one who got to hire him in to the Co-op and I have been very happy to have him on my team. Matt has amazing customer service and he is so good at connecting with people. He's also been helping our store create more innovative merchandising displays and he is going to be rolling out an easy meal solutions program soon that I am very excited about. I'm sure Matt will continue to create wonderful changes in our co-op that help us meet the needs of our owners and customers. :)

Connie: Please move forward on the proposal to grow sprouts on site. I am so-o-o enthused to soon be able to buy local sprouts again!

Pauline: Hey Connie!!! I got all your notes about the sprouts and yes, what you've heard is accurate. I am actively working with Troy to start this business here in our basement. The process is not going to be easy though, head's up. There are a different set of regulations concerning sprouts since the last time that Troy was able to provide that product and we are working diligently with the health department to make sure we meet all requirements as we build a new space here at our coop. We are excited to provide this product though as there is no other grower for sprouts in the state currently and agree with you, we could do with a local source! We'll keep you posted and thanks for letting us know what produce you're looking for in our store. Thanks again Connie.

Connie: I have heard that a place may be provided for Troy Case to grow sprouts here...Please know that I am excited to think I could buy his sprouts again!

Pauline: Hey Connie!!! I got all your notes about the sprouts and yes, what you've heard is accurate. I am actively working with Troy to start this business here in our basement. The process is not going to be easy though, head's up. There are a different set of regulations concerning sprouts since the last time that Troy was able to provide that product and we are working diligently with the health department to make sure we meet all requirements as we build a new space here at our coop. We are excited to provide this product though as there is no other grower for sprouts in the state currently and agree with you, we could do with a local source! We'll keep you posted and thanks for letting us know what produce you're looking for in our store. Thanks again Connie.

4.17.18

Connie: What happened to the JB coconut wraps that were scheduled to reappear in February?? Please advise!

William: They are not available wholesale, yet. They are available direct to consumer on their website. We're watching for the chance to bring them in. Meanwhile, another option is Siete, made with cassava and coconut flour in the tortilla case.

Mark: Stuffed crust pizza.

Pauline: Hi Mark. I discussed this with some of our cooks, including our assistant and our main pizza cook, and happy to let you know this is something that we can provide through our catering service. There are a lot of operational reasons that we don't offer this through our regular menus though the underlying reason is that we have a full service deli to address the needs of our owners and providing the range of options that we do offer again has a lot of operational factors involved (that I can go into further detail, if you are interested). Here it also means that we don't feel, with our set up, that we can offer this product on a consistent and timely basis, which is why it is not on a regular menu. I do have two options that I'd like to offer you. One is the catering option, though we do please ask for at least 48 hrs notice for all catering orders and are more than happy to make off menu creations. The second is that we also sell our pizza dough, made from scratch and, like all of our food, only with natural, organic, and local ingredients. It is available by asking at the deli counter and sold at \$3.39/lb. It comes ready for you to roll out, top and bake, or in this case, stuff the crust! I hope this information is helpful to you and also want to thank you for taking the time to write us about what you are looking for in our prepared foods options.

I <3 ONF The ONF Lover: Because it is the healthiest store and I LOVE your kombucha.

Mike: Please know that every staff member hears each of these. Every "I Heart ONF" card is read in our daily meetings and at The Big Game on Tuesday afternoon. I speak for the entire staff when I say that we absolutely love to hear your compliments. Thank you so much for telling us what you like about your co-op.

I <3 ONF Anonymous: THEY'RE AMAZING

Mike: Please know that every staff member hears each of these. Every "I Heart ONF" card is read in our daily meetings and at The Big Game on Tuesday afternoon. I speak for the entire staff when I say that we absolutely love to hear your compliments. Thank you so much for telling us what you like about your co-op.

I <3 ONF The Awesome Unicorn: They have good healthy stuff

Mike: Please know that every staff member hears each of these. Every "I Heart ONF" card is read in our daily meetings and at The Big Game on Tuesday afternoon. I speak for the entire staff when I say that we absolutely love to hear your compliments. Thank you so much for telling us what you like about your co-op.

I <3 ONF Kimberlee: I love Crista, she is so lovely! She has helped me every time I come in! She truly is an awesome person. Very satisfied and she makes my day!

Arden: Have onion sliced appropriately for a salad—also check the supply of what’s left after 1:00—e.g. eggs were out today.

Anonymous: Produce needs help in places—yellow and brown not good in leafy veggies.

4.24.17

Anonymous: Would you kindly add paleo-friendly soup to the A la Carte bar?

Anonymous: I miss Matt.

Ali E: Just an FYI: Got a call with a customer letting us know that Whole Foods recycle #5 bottles and that it may take business from us because we don’t.

Sadie: Please bring in “Bitchin’ Sauce”. It’s amazing (kinda like almond hummus)

Eryn: Good morning, I am the Assistant Grocery Manager here at Ozark Natural Foods. I received your product suggestion for Bitchin' Sauce. I looked into the product and while I think this would be a great fit for our store it looks like it is not yet available in our region. I looked into their distribution and I will keep an eye out to see if they become available for us to order in the future. I will also reach out to the company directly and see if I can get an update from them on their distribution and if they have any plans to expand their business in our area. Thank you for your suggestion and we hope to see you again soon.

Jayme: Bring BACK the sani-wipes at the front of the store. Germs on the basket/cart handles are a NO NO!!! Signed, Immune Compromised Patron! I have been on chemo for 22 months!

Tanja: Hi Jayme. I'm glad we got to speak in person about your suggestion. We have been working hard to balance our budget in the past year. We are going line by line right now, examining areas that can be reduced. Our goal is to lift our wage freeze and be able to offer patronage checks to our owners in 2018. To that end we did decide to eliminate the EO hand wipes at the front of the store. Those hand wipes may seem like a small service for a business to provide to their customers and owners, but they had a hefty price tag of \$6,000 a year. We do have a wonderful selection of personal sized hand wipes and sanitizer sprays in our wellness department if you are interested in keeping some handy for yourself. The EO lavender wipes are the lovely naturally scented ones you have used before and they are available in a travel pack size. We also have a great purse-sized natural sanitizing spray from local P6 company Roots in Bloom that I personally recommend. If you have any more thoughts or questions on the topic, please ask for me at the Owner Service Desk. :)

5.1.17

David: Open the “Homestead” into the main store and close its front so that it can be one stop shopping and one checkout.

Crista: Hi David, Thank you so much for your suggestion about connecting the Homestead to the main store. We would love to be able to do that but our community room is right in the middle of the two stores. If it would be more convenient for you, we would be happy to bring your items to the service desk in the main store for you to grab and pay for when you do the

rest of your shopping. Just give us a call before you head our way and we will have them ready for you. If there is any other way we can help make your shopping trip more enjoyable, just let us know!

Jayme: Where is my almond milk? Can you order the 5X the protein almond milk? Co-op used to carry it in the refrigerated and in the nut milk aisle.

Cecilia: 2 rows of Get Real 16.9 alkalized water because it is empty in the morning at 9am.

Eryn: Good morning, I am the Assistant Grocery Manager here at Ozark Natural Foods. I got your suggestion for us to increase the shelf space for the Real Water 16.9oz size due to our shelves being empty when you come in to do your morning shopping. I should let you know that we have been experiencing some out of stocks from our supplier the last few weeks on this particular item, but we do have it back in now and I ordered back up cases for us to keep on hand. I am in direct contact with the company as well and I relayed the out of stock issue to them so they can help us keep it on our shelves. I also looked at our shelf spacing and while I cannot make two full rows of the product at this time I can increase the space it has by a little bit in an attempt to keep the shelf fuller longer. Over the next few weeks I will personally check our shelf in the morning and I will continue to do everything I can to make sure you have what you need when you shop with us. Please let me know if there is anything else we can do for you, we appreciate your business and look forward to seeing you again soon. I hope you have a wonderful week and thank you for reaching out to us about this issue.

Lee: Re: coupon book you send out—coupons are on shelf—no need for book. I would rather have sale alerts via email.

Magdalene: A button we could push during someone's transaction to enter them in the gift card drawing instead of filling out a ticket each time.

5.8.17

Sylvia: Would love to see King Arthur gluten-free pancake mix on the shelf. Thanks.

Phyllis: It is a good idea to raffle a \$71 gift card for the monthly drawing. BUT—for pete's sake, make it a little more fun and offer the drawing once a week. It's only \$71 a week. Thanks.

Leigh: Whole Foods makes an organic bread—Seeduction—that I wish our deli would make. The seeds they use do not get stuck as much as Stonemill's Woodstock.

Vicki: Put a recycle bin for excess in store co-op...bags. I have 40 I keep forgetting my bag!

Anonymous: Kitchen: You haven't quite mastered cooking BASMATI RICE. It should be light and fluffy, not hard and barely edible. I don't know if you need to use more water or what the problem is, but if it doesn't improve soon I'll stop wasting money on it. (goes good with the dahl—when it's done right.)

I <3 ONF and Homestead Anonymous: Because all-natural foods—products super great!

Marilyn: Farmers market all year. No, it won't take away from the one downtown.

I love ONF Erica: (This comment came after Heather provided excellent customer service over social media) Wow. You did that just for me? I'm speechless! I knew I loved your store, but this is just another reason why I will go out of my way to give you more business. I am just completely taken! Thank you so very much for this info, and I truly appreciate the time you took out of your busy schedule to relay this info! I have some ceramic knives that are chipped. Thank you!!