

Hazzard Free

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PECATONICA, ILLINOIS 61063

To Whom It May Concern:

Since its inception, Chicago has been an industrious hub with a long history of agricultural trade from the cattle yards of yore to the CBOT. More recently Chicago continues to blaze agricultural trails and make a name for itself with the Chicago High School for Agricultural Science an explosion of farm markets, urban farming projects and farm to table restaurants. Chicago has led the way for hundreds of years and continues to lead the way.

I fully support Chicago Market's plan to open a full-service, community-owned cooperative grocery store on the North Side of Chicago/in **Uptown at the Wilson Red Line Stop on the CTA (the "Gerber Building")**.

What an iconic statement to make, to use a rare gem of a building inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright "The Prairie Architect" to house a Coop truly committed to carrying the torch of local agriculture. A bridge built from our past agricultural history to our future. Such a statement will not go unnoticed by others that follow in the footsteps of Chicago.

I have lent my support in my presence, time and money to other "local foods" projects, coops etc. in the Chicago region and have been disappointed in their commitment to real local producers. I have heard this from other farmers and consumers so it is not a rare occurrence to use local farmers to promote a project, pull on the heart strings of consumers raise lots of money and then it's back to business as usual leaving a wake of consumers, suppliers and farmers distrustful and disillusioned.

That said... it means a lot that I am writing this letter. I have been astounded by the commitment of Chicago Market Coop. Their attention to a business philosophy that truly serves the desires of the consumer and the needs of the suppliers and farmers is SECOND TO NONE.

My family has been farming in Northern Illinois since 1847 and in the past we shipped grain to Chicago via horse and wagon. It pleases me greatly to have bridged the gap and be the first farmer in my family in recent history to do so again. As a business owner and dedicated supporter of local, sustainable and organic foods and products as a means towards better health, a cleaner environment, and a sustainable local economy, I believe Chicago Market will connect consumers with their food production in a way that benefits both the community and our local economy. I, Andrea Hazzard and Hazzard Free Farm Grains is ready, willing and able to provide products to Chicago Market and I look forward to this opportunity to better serve my target consumers.

As a diversified farmer and miller, it is exceedingly difficult to balance time spent in food production with the need to connect to consumers through marketing to restaurants, farmers' markets, CSAs, and other forms of sales. By partnering with Chicago Market, I will gain a year-round venue to offer products to consumers. This will allow me to spend more time on the creation of my products and maintaining the health of my soil and less time competing for consumer attention in a marketplace rife with imported organic grains. In addition, the cooperative model that Chicago Market follows ensures producers like me are given consideration throughout the process, unlike in the traditional grocery model.

Chicago Market's mission is to provide as much of the breadth, depth and variety of Midwest food as is produced by the region's diverse farmers and local food producers. It will provide farm-to-table transparency; educate the community; and support sustainability and integrity in all areas, including environmental stewardship, fair labor practices and cooperative principles.

The mission of Chicago Market resonates with me deeply as I have and will continue to be a stalwart supporter of education, integrity and transparency. As it accomplishes its mission, Chicago Market will expose my brand to consumers who would have never known about it otherwise and who recognize the value in the production methods of small-scale producers like me.

I fully support Chicago Market. Chicago Market is a leader in the local-food movement. I know it will greatly benefit the community while providing companies like mine an opportunity to materially grow and increase our sales.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Andrea Hazzard". The signature is written in a dark ink and is positioned to the left of the printed name.

Andrea Hazzard
Hazzard Free Farm Grains & Beans
Pecatonica Illinois

Type of Products: Heirloom Cornmeal, Polenta, Grits, Rolled Oats, Wheat Berries, Wheat Flours and more.