

# Oshkosh Food Co-op

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## NEED TO KNOW NEWS: Here's what's going on with the Co-op!



1. Plan to attend and remind your guests: **Co-op Grow-Op** is May 15<sup>th</sup> and you won't want to miss it! We have had over 100+ Members recruit guests for this event! That means lots of new folks coming to learn more about the Co-op! If you've had a change in RSVP status (a

guest who can no longer attend or guests who tell you they forgot to RSVP), please email [oshkoshfoodcoop@gmail.com](mailto:oshkoshfoodcoop@gmail.com) and let us know!

## 2. WE MADE THE FRONT PAGE!

We are very proud of the progress we've made to bring a community-owned grocery store to Oshkosh and LOVED getting many new members after this article was published!

**#Momentum**



## 3. Board meeting

**times will change starting in June.** Starting on June 7<sup>th</sup>, we will be meeting from 6:30 – 8:30PM. Our usual location is 817 Waugoo Ave, in

Oshkosh, which is the home of the Board President, Kelly Matthews. All are welcome to observe a meeting; member comments are solicited at the beginning of each meeting [3 minute limit per member].

## Upcoming 2017 Board Meetings

### May 24

OFC Board Meeting [7:30-9:30]  
Location: 817 Waugoo Ave, Oshkosh

### June 7

OFC Board Meeting [6:30-8:30]  
Location: 817 Waugoo Ave, Oshkosh

### June 21

OFC Board Meeting [6:30-8:30]  
Location: 817 Waugoo Ave, Oshkosh

## Sneak Peek: Our Speaker for Grow Op!

**Margaret Mittelstadt**



Margaret is the Director of Community Relations for Outpost Natural Foods Cooperative. Her work centers around connecting the co-op and its owners and public shoppers with local businesses, government and non-profit organizations in order to further the co-op's mission for a healthy, diverse and sustainable community.

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## We keep growing!

We've had a number of new members join – some because of our front page news article with the Northwestern. Some because they wanted to be part of the Flash Campaign and win \$10 in Planet Perk dollars. Any ways you slice it, we're growing and we couldn't be happier! Thanks & welcome!

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The Oshkosh Food Co-op  
has over



Member-Owners!

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## What has your board been working on this month? Q&A inspired from our Annual Meeting

At our Annual Meeting, we asked for questions from our Member-Owners and shared that we would answer them in our next Letter from the Board, so all our Member-Owners could get the information. Our newsletter is a little longer than usual so we could accommodate all the questions. You can also find more Frequently Asked Questions (and Answers) on our website!

### So, here are your Q's and our A's!

**Q: Are all members who join BEFORE the co-op opens considered Founding Members?**

*A: The Oshkosh Food Co-op launched the Founding Members initiative to establish the funds needed to conduct a feasibility study to determine the success of a co-op, size of our store, and an estimate on how much we could expect to generate in sales each year. Founding Members are, roughly, the first 100 members that joined the Oshkosh Food Co-op. ALL members who join before the opening of the store will be recognized in some fashion as critically important for the success of this project.*

**Q: Do people who join BEFORE the co-op opens get any additional benefits? (besides pride & a store open sooner)**

*A: Yes! In fact, we have had several benefits for members already! Titan Gold offered a steep discount on compost to members this past Fall. We have held Member Monday events where our members could get together and local establishments offered a discount on food/drinks and opened their businesses during special times just for our members. Area producers have offered*

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## In the Community

### Summer Farmers Market

The Oshkosh Farmers Market starts up again on June 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**The Oshkosh Food Co-op will have a table at the Market on June 10<sup>th</sup>.**

**Did you know you can sign up to be a Member-Owner at our table at the Farmers Market? Bring your friends to stop by!**

If you bring your checkbook, you can fill out a brochure, leave a check, and leave the Market an Owner of the Co-op!

If credit cards are more your speed, you can access our payment plan (\$11/month or pay in full via our website).

discounts to Oshkosh Food Co-op members, such as Good Earth's annual CSA (Consumer Supported Agriculture) discount. If you have thoughts on benefits that you would like to see, let us know!

**Q: Do all members need to work in the store?**

A: Many food cooperatives started back in the 1960-70s got their start by using volunteer time to keep their stores running. Some modern co-ops on the East Coast keep this tradition alive as an option for members. Most food co-ops these days have taken pride in offering a living wage to employees that are hired from the residents in the communities they serve. The Oshkosh Food Co-op plans to hire a General Manager (GM) that will be in charge of hiring and training staff for our store.

**Q: What has the growth in membership per year been?**

A: 2013: 50      2014: 77      2015: 118      2016: 104      2017: 37 (to date)

**Q: How will we address the high rate of turnover in food service and retail positions? Will we be paying a fair wage, where employees can afford to shop at the co-op?**

Great question! Yes, food cooperatives across the nation offer higher wages and better benefits compared to regular grocery stores. As a values-driven organization, we are committed to supporting our employees by offering a livable wage and strong benefits. Turnover is generally lower when livable wages are offered, which also saves on employee recruitment and training costs.

**Q: Are there plans for a café or coffee shop inside the co-op?**

A: Yes, we plan to offer hot coffee inside the co-op! Inclusion of a café or coffee shop will be determined during our store design phase, which comes after we secure our location.

**Q: Will someone from our co-op be visiting farms to ensure they are farming sustainably AND growing what they say they are?**

A: Food cooperatives work to offer transparency in where products are sourced and information about producers so all customers can make purchasing decisions that are best for them (local, organic, conventional, etc.).

**If you've got questions, we've got answers! (Or we will research and get you the answer!) Co-ops are built on communication and transparency and we want you to have the information you need as you talk about the Co-op with others in your circles. I can't wait to see many of you and your guests at the Co-op Grow Op event, where once again, I think we just might make Co-op Start-up history! You won't want to miss it!**

On behalf of the OFC Board,  
Kelly Matthews, OFC President