History

The Moscow Food Co-op was established in 1973. We now serve 7,400 owners and welcome anyone to shop in our store. We are governed by a democratically elected seven-member Board.

Both the story of our Co-op's past and our Co-op's future are rooted in the cooperative values and principles as expressed through the International Cooperative Alliance. For over 40 years we have promoted our cooperative identity by being good stewards of the earth and each other. Through providing healthy food, we have created a healthier planet and a stronger, healthier community. We have built our cooperative community based on the recognition that we are stronger together.

In 2008 our Board of Directors worked with management and our owners to create a Strategic Plan outlining a vision for the future of our Co-op. Over the last two years, we have evaluated our progress and redefined our strategic priorities. It is or Board's intent to build on our past, support our mission, and lead us into the future. This strategic planning process and resulting goals and priorities will help us create a prosperous and healthy future for our Co-op.

The strategic priorities outlined here provide a roadmap for the Co-op's future. They reflect the diversity of our Co-op while celebrating our common needs and values. These strategic priorities renew our commitment to working together to strengthen our Co-op.

THE CO-OP'S MISSION

Working together to nourish and nurture our community

The Co-op's mission underlies all that we do. It's the foundation for Board-established Ends policies that define our intended purpose and impacts – what we do and for whose benefit. Our current Ends arose from the strategic planning process and encompass the Co-op's priorities for the next five years.

The Strategic Plan is a vital expression of the Board's relationship with our owners and our employees. This relationship is guided by a framework called "policy governance." Through this approach, the Board represents our owners and works with them to establish the vision for our cooperative. Board translates this vision into a Strategic Plan and creates policies that put this vision into guidelines for action by the General Manager and staff.

The Board does not use policy to determine which brands of milk we sell, but a Board policy about focusing on the local, organic and sustainable foods economy does influence what our buyers put on the shelves. The Board monitors the GM's compliance with policy at its monthly meetings (which are open to all owners). Through this monitoring, the Board ensures we're on track with meeting owners' priorities and fulfilling our mission of working together to nourish and nurture our community.

For more information about the Strategic Plan, our Ends and policy governance, please email board@moscowfood.coop.

121 East 5th Street in Moscow
www.moscowfood.coop

Strategic Plan

2015-2020

Working together to nourish and nurture our community.

MOSCOW FOOD CO+OP SINCE 1973

CO-OPERATIVE
Identity, Values & Principles

The following cooperative definitions and principles were adopted in Manchester (UK) by the General Assembly of the International Cooperative Alliance in 1995. The process involved thousands of cooperatives around the world.

Definition

A co-operative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise.

Values

All co-ops, including the Moscow Food Co-op, are based on the values of **self-help**, **self-responsibility**, **democracy**, **equality**, **equity** and **solidarity**. In the tradition of our founders, we believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

Seven Principles

These seven co-operative principles are guidelines by which we put our cooperative values into practice.

1. Voluntary and Open Membership
2. Democratic Member Control
3. Member Economic Participation
4. Autonomy and Independence
5. Education, Training and Information
6. Co-operation among Co-operatives
7. Concern for Community

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Local Food & Goods

Co-op stakeholders have a continued and increased interest in local food and supporting local growers and producers. The Co-op will increase the amount of local food and goods sold in the store.

- Educate customers and build demand
- Facilitate development and capacity of local producers
- Establish baseline and set reasonable targets to demonstrate prioritization of local purchasing

End: The Moscow Food Co-op promotes the local, sustainable, and organic foods economy.

Workplace of Choice

Recent surveys show a high level of satisfaction with the Co-op as a place of employment and with employees' knowledge, friendliness, and professionalism. At the same time, we want to focus on where we can improve.

- Continuously improve workplace culture and communication
- Offer robust staff development programs
- Provide pay and benefits that are in line with the Co-op's mission and goals

End: The Moscow Food Co-op is a workplace of choice for all employees.

Community Accessibility

Recognizing that our community extends beyond our current owners, the Co-op will direct energy and resources towards increasing accessibility for a broader spectrum of the community. We also will build the owner base in numbers, involvement and loyalty while maintaining an atmosphere where non-members feel equally welcome.

- Increase accessibility and welcome new shoppers and owners
- Expand Co-op community beyond current base

End: The Moscow Food Co-op increases economic and cultural accessibility for all community members.

Community Engagement

The Co-op is proud of its role as a community hub, or third place, and will increase education emphasizing food and wellness.

- Grow in-store and beyond-store education about food and wellness
- Increase the Co-op's presence and influence in regional food-systems conversations
- Expand "Co-op consciousness"

End: The Moscow Food Co-op educates our owners, customers, and the wider community about food and food systems.

Environmental Sustainability

Concern for the environment remains a core value for many Co-op owners. We will continue to improve our sustainable business practices.

- Maintain a permanent, active sustainability committee.
- Involve sustainability considerations in store operations and investigate sustainability certification options and standards.
- Provide sustainability education for staff and community members.

End: The Moscow Food Co-op models environmental sustainability through our activities, facilities, products, and services.

Grow & Expand

Given the Co-op's current trajectory of growth, the question of store growth has changed from "Should we grow?" to "*How* should we grow?" The Co-op believes that responsible business growth that fits within our mission is good for our owners and the larger community.

- Develop criteria for growth and growth scenarios
- Educate Co-op community about growth
- Engage in growth opportunities

End: The Moscow Food Co-op grows and expands to further our mission.