

First Alternative NATURAL FOODS CO-OP

Fresh, local, organic groceries for everyone

North Store: 2855 NW Grant Ave • South Store: 1007 SE 3rd St

The SCOOP

February 2023



From the Board of Directors

Rob May

Board Treasurer

Welcome to an exciting February for the Co-op! Almost exactly two years ago, on January 29th, 2021 the old Annex and Commissary Kitchen

and Bakery at the South Store was totally destroyed by fire. The time since that event has been quite a journey for all of us. Our Owners and customers have had a limited selection of some of our favorite fresh products. Our management, staff, and Board have spent countless hours on the many implementation and financial details of a quite complex capital project.

And of course, we are so appreciative of the tremendous efforts of our amazing Commissary team throughout this time. Their working world literally disappeared overnight in the fire. Immediately afterward they set about the task of finding a way to continue operations in the face of this huge loss. The past two years have been a constant rollercoaster for them, as they dealt with rented kitchen space, unfamiliar equipment, supply chain issues, pandemic-fueled staffing shortages, and a host of other challenges. Through all of this adversity



they persevered and were able to find creative and effective ways to provide products to the community despite the limits of their temporary space.

Now in February 2023, we are finally celebrating the opening of our rebuilt Annex and brand-new, top-quality commercial kitchen! The new building was declared ready for occupancy in late January, and the staff is ramping up kitchen production over the coming months. We on the Board were fortunate to be able to tour the facility during construction, and are very excited to see it finally in full swing. (Check out some pictures on the next page.)

In addition to the new kitchen operation, there are other areas of the annex that will provide much-needed office, staff, and support spaces as they are finished in the future. The new structure is truly a great asset for the Co-op and our customers for many years to come.

With the new Commissary in operation you can expect to see a much more expanded and varied menu of in-house goods in both stores as the months

Continued on next page...

February Board of Directors Committee Meetings

Owner Relations Committee:

The conduit for communication between Owners and the Board.

Monday, February 13, 5:30 pm

Board Recruitment & Elections

Committee: Working to recruit qualified Board candidates.

Tuesday, February 14, 6 pm

Finance Committee: Reviews, analyzes, and makes recommendations on financial matters.

Wednesday, February 15, 4:30 pm

Board of Directors:

Elected Owners putting cooperative principles into action.

Tuesday, February 28, 6 pm

Owners interested in virtual attendance can contact BREC@firstalt.coop for details.

ANYONE CAN SHOP

**Open daily
7 am - 9 pm**

*Interested in joining the Co-op
Board of Directors? See inside!*



From the Board of Directors

Rob May

Board Treasurer

Continued from previous page...

progress. We welcome your ideas for new (and old favorite) goodies you'd like to see coming out of the new commissary. Just fill out a customer comment card in either store on your next visit, or go to our Contact Us page on the web at firstalt.coop/contact-us. I've already put in my personal request for the return of the yummy cinnamon scones from years past!

February also brings our first look at the overall 2022 financial performance of the Co-op. While the current numbers are preliminary, we had a strong year from a sales perspective—ahead of our expectations entering the year.

Of course some of that increase was driven by the high inflation of the past year; and so our cost of goods also increased accordingly. And while we had

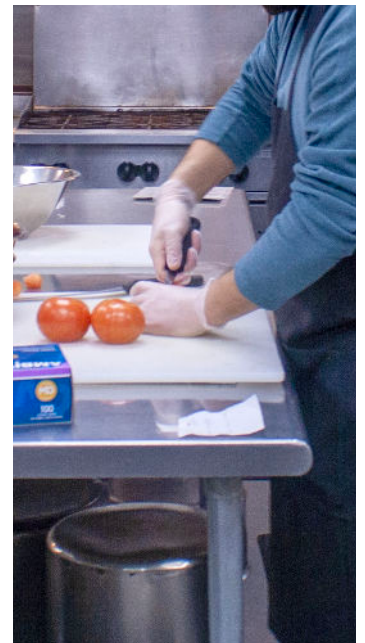


good sales growth over 2021, our customer counts across the stores are still below where they were pre-pandemic (2019). This drop has, fortunately, been offset by higher “basket sizes,” meaning each shopper is spending more per visit than in 2019, resulting in an overall positive effect on our sales. The staff is focusing on creative ways to bring customers back into the stores throughout the coming year.

As we look to 2024, we see many potential challenges ahead—inflation, recession, turmoil on many levels. We are fortunate to be in a solid financial situation as we navigate through the current environment. The Board is actively focusing on how we can continue to keep the Co-op strong and thriving, both now and in the future. We are having thoughtful conversations about how best to use our cash and resources, evaluating the benefits of savings/investment vs debt retirement vs capital spending vs expansion. It is personally invigorating to have such a wide range of options available to discuss in a reasoned and proactive manner.

A strong and thriving Co-op needs a strong and thriving Board. If these crucial decisions about our future interest you, please consider running for a seat on the Board to represent your fellow Owners. Find more information on the next page and application packets at firstalt.coop/governance.

Thank you all for your continued support and patronage of our Co-op! Please reach out to the Board at any time with questions or comments via email: faboard@firstalt.coop.





It's your Co-op.
Own it.



Save • Earn • Support • Vote

To get all the details and become an Owner visit
firstalt.coop/ownership

Interested in Serving on the First Alternative Co-op Board?

**Collaboratively guide the Co-op's vision,
mission, and goals into the future**

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Work with other community members

.....

**Contribute professional skills to a local
cooperative business**

.....

Learn more about First Alternative Co-op

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Represent the interests of Co-op Owners

.....

15% Discount

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Owners interested in candidacy should contact the Chair of the Board Recruitment and Elections Committee at BREC@firstalt.coop. Board application packets are available on our website, www.firstalt.coop. Applications are due by March 31.

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Elections will be held June 1-15.

BEANS 4 BAGS

Bean Tokens are Back! Take a token for each reusable bag or box used on your shopping trip, and use it to vote for your preferred charitable organization!

**Donation recipients for Q1
(January, February & March):**

- Coastal Range Food Bank,
- Community Outreach Inc.,
- Philomath Community Gleaners,
- Vina Moses

Egg Shortage Info

Some of you egg-loving shoppers may have noticed fewer eggs available at the Co-op recently.

This is due to a combination of national (and global) factors, from the increasing cost of feed and fuel to the avian flu outbreak.

Egg suppliers across the country are struggling to meet consumer demand, including many of our typical suppliers.

To fill the gap, we're currently on the look out for more options. We've brought in eggs from some new midwest-based suppliers, and are looking for more local options.

Thanks for your patience and understanding as we nav-egg-ate this shortage, Cooperators!



WINE SALE

Fri. Feb. 10-
Tue. Feb. 14

20% OFF

all regularly
priced wines
(while supply lasts)





Citrus Spree

First Alternative
NATURAL FOODS CO-OP

**Coming soon! Stay
tuned for more details
in-store and online.**



Guide the Future of your Co-op



Owners, take your community involvement to the next level and help guide your Co-op as a member of our Board of Directors.
Elections Held June 1-15

See inside for more details!

Follow First Alternative Co-op on social media

*For up-to-the-minute news,
giveaways, recipes, special offers,
and tons of cooperative fun.*

@firstaltcoop     

Facebook • Instagram • TikTok • Twitter • YouTube

The Co-op welcomed

26

new Owners in
December 2022

Subscribe to our Email Newsletter



Scan this QR Code with
your smart phone to join
our email list. *Subscribers
receive twice-monthly emails
plus occasional special offers,
coupons & announcements.*

