**CO-OP MONTH 2020**

***“Co-ops Commit: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion”***

**Sample Story for Newsletters, E-news, Blog Posts or Public Press Releases**

***Highlighted sections are for your food co-op to provide content quotes or other information.***

***For more resources, please visit*** [***www.nfca.coop/co-opmonth***](http://nfca.coop/co-opmonth) ***or e-mail*** [***info@nfca.coop***](mailto:info@nfca.coop)***.***

**Contacts:**

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| *Your Food Co-op’s Press Contact Name*  *Co-op Name*  *Phone*  *E-mail* | Erbin Crowell, Executive Director  Neighboring Food Co-op Association  Tel: 401-419-0381  E-mail: erbin@nfca.coop |

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – [Date], 2020:**

**[Your Food Co-op Name Here] Commits to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion**

***Joins in National Celebration of Co-op Month in October***

This October, [Your Food Co-op Name Here] is joining co-operatives and credit unions across the United States in celebrating Co-op Month, observed nationally since 1964. This year’s theme, “**Co-ops Commit: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion,**” was chosen by the National Cooperative Business Association (NCBA CLUSA) to promote how co-ops and their members are working together to build more inclusive businesses and more resilient communities.

Locally, [*Use this space to: Describe any events, activities or promotions you have planned for Co-op Month; Programs related to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion; Why your Startup’s founders came together and how your co-op will empower members of the community when it opens its doors; Educational initiatives or activities aimed at engaging youth; Or a quote from a staff or board member that communicates how members of your community came together to start your co-op and how it has committed to being more inclusive of the whole community*.]

Across the Northeast, people have used food co-ops to improve access to healthy, local, affordable food, and build stronger, more inclusive communities. Most of these grocery stores got their start during times of social and economic change, enabling people to access healthy food, support local producers, and provide good jobs. More recently, a new wave of startups has been growing, representing renewed interest in food security, and racial and economic justice. Today, the Neighboring Food Co-op Association (NFCA) includes 40 food co-ops and startups, jointly owned by more than 150,000 members and employing over 2,350 people. Together, these co-ops generate shared annual revenue of nearly $347 million, with local products representing close to a third of total sales.

“Our vision for a more inclusive economy is one of shared prosperity and well-being, of empowering people to work together to build a better future for themselves and their families,” said Erbin Crowell, NFCA executive director and chair of the NCBA CLUSA board of directors. “And as co-operatives, we have to acknowledge that this vision cannot be achieved without also confronting the racism, inequality, and injustice in our society and its institutions.”

Food co-ops are not alone in their contribution to more inclusive and resilient local communities. From farmer co-ops to worker co-ops, credit unions to mutual insurance, and housing co-ops to energy co-ops, co-operative businesses thrive across the U.S. economy, where 350 million people are co-op members. Nationwide, co-ops generate $514 billion in revenue and more than $25 billion in wages, according to NCBA CLUSA. And because they are member-owned, co-operatives are rooted in their communities and governed by the people who use them to meet their needs, rather than outside investors.

Stop in at your local food co-op during Co-op Month to learn more about what makes co-operatives different. And while you’re there, look for the “Go Co-op” signs on the shelves that identify products that were “co-op made”. You may be surprised by what you find, including dairy products from Cabot Creamery Co-op and Organic Valley, fresh produce from Deep Root Organic Co-op, fairly traded coffee, tea, and chocolate from Equal Exchange, beverages from Katalyst Kombucha and La Riojana wines, seeds and bulbs from FEDCO, naturally fermented vegetables from Real Pickles, Northeast Grown frozen fruits and vegetables from your Neighboring Food Co-ops — and many others. [While this list emphasizes some of our local co-op suppliers, you may want to edit this section to highlight some of the co-op products that you offer. Visit [www.nfca.coop/co-opproducts](http://www.nfca.coop/co-opproducts) for a more comprehensive list.]

To learn more, stop in at [YOUR FOOD CO-OP] or visit [www.nfca.coop](http://www.nfca.coop).

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