**CO-OP MONTH 2021**

***“Build Back for IMPACT”***

**Sample Story for Newsletters, E-news, Blog Posts or 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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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – [Date], 2021:**

**[Your Food Co-op Name Here] Celebrates Co-ops and Community**

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

This October, [Your Food Co-op Name Here] is joining over 65,000 co-operatives and credit unions across the United States in celebrating Co-op Month, observed nationally since 1964. This year’s theme, “**Build Back for IMPACT,**” was chosen by the National Cooperative Business Association (NCBA CLUSA) to promote how co-ops and their members are working together to build stronger, more inclusive and resilient communities in the wake of the pandemic.

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 co-op come together to build resiliency and sustainability*.]

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 start-ups, locally owned by more than 164,000 members and employing over 2,460 people. Together, these co-ops generate shared annual revenue of over $382 million, with local products representing close to a third of total sales.

“Despite the challenges of the past year, food co-ops across our region continued to grow in 2020, sustaining local producers, providing good jobs, and working to keep shoppers healthy and safe, during the pandemic,” said Erbin Crowell, NFCA Executive Director. For example, NFCA member co-ops grew their revenue by 10% over the previous year, with sales of local products topping $100 million. “And as we look forward, our co-ops are building on this foundation to build more resilient communities, a more sustainable food system, and a more inclusive economy that works for everyone,” added Crowell.

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 1 in three people are co-op members. Around the world, around 1 billion people are members of about 3 million co-operatives, and 10% of the world’s population, or around 280 million people, are employed by co-ops. 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.

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 co-op made products. 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. [This list emphasizes some of our local co-op suppliers. For a list of additional co-op products that your co-op may offer, visit [www.nfca.coop/co-opproducts](http://www.nfca.coop/co-opproducts).]

To find food co-ops all over the Northeast, and for more examples of how co-ops are building back for impact, please visit [www.nfca.coop](http://www.nfca.coop).

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