



**MOON
CO-OP**

Miami/Oxford Organic Network
FOOD COOPERATIVE

grassroots newsletter

NEWS FROM THE BOARD

The Board is making steady progress toward the storefront. We are in the midst of an expanding membership drive. Over 250 letters have been sent out to people who have expressed an interest in the Co-op through our fund raising dinners, our monthly buyer's club and contacts with Board members. Another 196 letters are soon to be sent and another list is in the works. One of the best ways to build our membership is by talking to your friends and relatives about the co-op. People get really excited about the prospect of having a cooperatively owned natural foods grocery right here in our community! If you would like some of our brochures to give to your friends and to display at your work, please contact Joanne McQueen at joanne@mooncoop.com or 513-523-6653. The bank would like us to have at least 125 members before they lend us the money that we will need to open the store---We would love to see 200 member/owners and we're going after it!

The National Cooperative Bank has also recommended that we raise at least an additional \$50,000 in working capital to open the store. We're working with an attorney who is familiar with cooperative law, to develop a member loan program. Our cooperative is a member-owned and operated non-profit business. Member investment in the cooperative keeps control where it belongs---in the hands of the members. Historically, cooperatives have been undercapitalized and consequently unable to adequately fulfill member needs. Additional capital, in the form of member loans allows the co-op to provide all the goods and services needed by the members. In addition, the interest savings from member loans, compared to higher bank interest rates, will be a significant boost to the cooperative's bottom line. We're also working with a consultant from Cooperative Development Services to review our financial projections and provide coaching with the member loan program.

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Our Bylaws are (finally!) ready for approval by the membership. We have two Board member positions coming open this winter. If you would be interested in serving the Co-op as a Board member and/or if you would like to sign up for e-delivery of member mailings, please contact Debra Peter at debra@mooncoop.com

We'd like to see all of our members, their families and friends at the chili supper fund raiser on October 20. Take a much needed mid-week break and enjoy a casual evening meal among like-minded folks---see you there!

MOON Board of Directors



OXFORD'S FARMERS MARKETS

By: Barbara Hamilton

What was once a major source for food is now coming back in fashion. I'm talking about local, fresh produce. The number of farmers markets in the United States has grown dramatically, increasing 79 percent from 1994 to 2002. Currently, there are over 3,100 farmers markets operating in the United States¹. Oxford is no exception to this trend – we now have three farmers markets: the Oxford Farmers Market Uptown on Saturday and Tuesdays and the Saturday Talawanda Farmers Market.

The Oxford Farmers Market Uptown not only provides local food but also an abundance of organic produce, much of it sold by members of the Moon Coop. You'll find produce and flowers from Debra Peters (Ironweed Farm); vegetables and lettuce from Harv Roehling (Locust Run Farm); fruits and vegetables from Lucy and Eugene Goodman (Boulder Belt Organics); bread, eggs, plants, and vegetables from Brent and Suzie Marcum (Salem Road Farms); soaps, eggs, and plants from Karen Baldwin (Tapaahsia Farms); organic meats and grains from Dale Filbrun (Morning Sun Farms), and organic meats and vegetables from Robert Harris Farms. In addition to the organic produce and meats, shoppers will find conventional fruit and vegetables, baked goods, jams, and flowers.

Most people shop at the farmers market because of the freshness and quality of the food, the variety of produce, and the simple pleasure of the experience. Somehow purchasing food where you know (or at least recognize) the vendors and where you will likely run into friends and neighbors is much more satisfying than a trip to the local supermarket.

Many people may not need more incentive to support the Farmers Markets. For those who need more proof, there are many important reasons to buy local food whenever possible.

Currently the majority of Americans eat food that has traveled an average of 1300 miles from farm to their kitchen table². A food system based on shipping food great distances has had tremendous negative impacts. Transportation (mostly by truck) increases carbon dioxide emissions and requires increased packaging materials. Food that travels this far is often in transit for 3 to 14 days. The amount of time between harvest and sale means that produce is often picked before it is ripe and therefore is far less flavorful and often less nutritious than fresh, local food.

Transporting food great distances means that large producers favor fruit and vegetable varieties that withstand extended travel, not taste best. In just over 100 years we have lost a tremendous number of vegetable varieties. In a study of seed stock available in 1903 versus that available in 1983, the Rural Advancement Foundation International found that we have lost nearly 93% of lettuce varieties, over 96% of sweet corn, about 96% of field corn, more than 95% of tomato, and almost 98% of asparagus³.

Farmers Markets may be one of the last places to introduce freshness and variety back into our diets. Our own Oxford Farmers Market Uptown had 20 varieties of tomatoes available for sale on a single Saturday. Most of the produce is picked the night before market or in some cases early the same morning. Try finding that sort of choice and that level of freshness at the supermarket!

Finally, supporting the Farmers Market means that you are supporting the local community and the local economy. Farmers in 2002 earned their lowest real net cash income since 1940. Meanwhile corporate agribusiness profits have nearly doubled since 1990⁴. The farmers that sell at our Farmers market are small, family farmers. Purchasing from them means that you are helping them stay in business. Keeping farming viable is an important way to keep land in agriculture rather than development.

If you haven't been to the Farmers Markets you still have time. The Oxford Farmers Market Uptown operates until the first week in November. On Saturdays you'll find them in the parking lot at Church Street and Main Street in Uptown Oxford from 7:30 am – 11:30 a.m. On Tuesdays, vendors are located in the lawn of the uptown park at Main Street and High Street from 4:00 PM - dusk.

Community members are invited to financially support the market by becoming a Friend of the Market. As a Friend you'll receive a handsome canvas bag with the market logo. To become a Friend of the Market stop by the information booth at the market on Saturdays. The Oxford Farmers Market Uptown is managed by a group of vendor and consumer volunteers. If you are interested in participating in the Farmers Market Council or have any other market questions please contact Barbara Hamilton at 523-6542.

1 <http://www.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets/facts.htm>

2 Localharvest.org

3 Kimbrell, Andrew; *The Fatal Harvest Reader*, 2002

4 (USDA, 2002) from foodroutes.org

MOON COOPERATIVE SERVICES, INC.

A Nonprofit Cooperative Association announces the public sale of membership certificates in the MOON Cooperative, Inc. Upon completion of our membership and financial goals - we plan to open a retail grocery store offering a full line of natural foods and products for simple living, with an emphasis on fresh local produce and farm products.

It's easy to become a MOON member—the purchase of one certificate at \$150 will get you the entire bundle of member benefits—we also offer an easy payment plan to spread out your investment (contact susan@mooncoop.com). But in order for our cooperative to truly become a reality, we will need our members to purchase as many additional certificates as they can to help fund the necessary start-up costs.

All member certificates are fully refundable at member request in accordance with our Bylaws. Think of it as an investment in your good health and the health of your community.

As a member you'll enjoy the following benefits:

- *A monthly member newsletter mailed to your home with sale items and a Wild Card! Coupon good for a discount on your entire purchase one day a month.
- *free ads for members in the newsletter
- *member-only sale items available all month
- *special order case discount
- *the possibility of a yearly patronage refund if the co-op makes money
- *the opportunity to vote and run for the Board of Directors
- *the opportunity to improve your store with comments, suggestions & recommendations
- *the opportunity to become part of a community of like-minded souls
- *discounts on classes and workshops sponsored by the co-op
- *the opportunity to invest your money in your community
- *the opportunity to buy fresh and local food every day all year round
- *outstanding customer service and selection with the earth in mind

For more information about the MOON Food Cooperative---visit our website at www.mooncoop.com
Please join us in developing a sustainable community food system.

To become a charter member of the MOON Cooperative Food Store, fill out the following information and mail this form with your check for the number of membership certificates that you would like to purchase to:

MOON Coop c/o Amy Pace
100 Beechpoint Dr.
Oxford, OH 45056

Name.....

Address.....
.....

Phone.....

E-mail.....

Certificate price \$ 150

Times number purchased X.....

Total amount

Make your check payable to MOON Cooperative Services, Inc.
Your membership certificates and membership information will be mailed to you soon!

CALENDER OF EVENTS

Weekly MOON Board meetings (to be announced) -
contact a MOON Co-Op Board member for details.

Weekly MOON Members Loan Committee meetings (to be announced).

Oct. 12 - Buyers Club order pick-up at Hopewell Church.

Oct. 20 - Chili Supper at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, 25 E. Walnut St. from 5:00 - 8:00pm.

Oct. 25 - MOON ED/OEFFA (Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association): Meeting with students
Miami University in Boyd Hall at 7:00pm. A video discussion "A Farmer/Student Connection"

Oct. 26 - Buyers Club Order due!

MOON COOPERATIVE SERVICES, INC. *Mission Statement*

Our goal is to empower the members of our community to live a more sustainable lifestyle. We hope to accomplish this by:

- 1. Providing a retail outlet for products that are produced in ecologically acceptable ways*
- 2. Utilizing local and regional producers to strengthen the local economy and reduce transportation costs*
- 3. Educating consumers and producers about sustainable principles and choices*
- 4. Informing consumers about where their food comes from and how it is produced*
- 5. Providing a place for the sharing of diverse foods and cultures*

Our world view incorporates all living things and the earth as members of our community. Issues such as the ethical treatment of animals, respect for ecological health, fostering social equality, celebrating diversity, and ultimately, ensuring a sustainable world for future generations, depends on the choices we make today. As a food cooperative, we hope to enable our community members to make locally sustainable choices in recognition of our larger global responsibilities.

Grassroots Newsletter
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