

# FOOD *for* THOUGHT

**Marquette Food Co-op**  
Newsletter

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Summer 2015



## NOTE:

If you normally receive FOOD FOR THOUGHT via email, and are wondering why you are getting a printed copy, please note that this is only because we are including info about the preferred share offering that we want to make sure is sent to all owners in good standing in the state of Michigan. With the next issue of FOOD FOR THOUGHT we will resume sending you an email version.



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## Food for Thought

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*This newsletter is published in-house four times per year for owners and friends of the Marquette Food Co-op.*

## Marquette Food Co-op

906-225-0671 • open daily, 8am to 9pm  
info@marquettefood.coop  
www.marquettefood.coop

## Board of Directors

Tom McKenzie PRESIDENT  
Brian Brady VICE PRESIDENT  
Barbara Krause TREASURER  
Phil Britton SECRETARY  
Cori Ann Noordyk  
Mike Potts  
Janna Lies  
Emily Wright  
Bradley Jackson  
Matt Gougeon GENERAL MANAGER  
Emil Weddle BOARD RECORDER

Everyone is welcome to attend Board Meetings, held the third Tuesday monthly at 6pm in the Co-op's Community Classroom. For board member contact info:

[www.marquettefood.coop](http://www.marquettefood.coop)

## Disclaimer

The views within this publication are as diverse as the 3,800+ households sharing ownership of our Co-op, and thus do not represent the store, its Board of Directors, or staff. The Co-op does not prescribe health treatments or products. We offer the extensive knowledge of our staff, and encourage you to prescribe for yourself—every individual's right.

## Marquette Food Co-op Global Ends

The actions of the Marquette Food Co-op provide access to local, organic, and wholesome products, and the benefits of a healthy, diverse, educated, and sustainable community.

*These actions shall be guided by:*

- 1 Economic Vitality**  
MFC successfully uses the cooperative business model, primarily through a retail storefront, as a component of a robust local economy.
- 2 Outreach and Education**  
MFC uses multifaceted approaches to proactively engage our community and promote cooperative principles and support the operations of the store.
- 3 Owner Engagement**  
MFC maintains connection and relevance to its owners and encourages them to take an active role in order to sustain the cooperative.
- 4 Wellness**  
MFC promotes health and wellness in our community through the principles of eating good food, staying connected, being active, and rest.
- 5 Community Leadership**  
MFC takes a collaborative leadership approach to positively impact our community.
- 6 Local Emphasis**  
MFC gives preference to local products and services that align with operational principles.
- 7 Environmental Stewardship**  
MFC strives to conduct its operations in an environmentally conscious manner.
- 8 Model Workplace**  
MFC fosters a workplace in which there is a professional culture of mutual support and open communication, while balancing personal and organizational needs.
- 9 Food**  
The MFC provides access to local, organic, wholesome, and fairly-traded food and products.

## The Cooperative Principles

Voluntary and open ownership.  
Democratic owner control.  
Owners' economic participation.  
Autonomy and independence.  
Education, training, and information.  
Cooperation among co-ops.  
Concern for the community.



# Calendar

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## Board of Directors' Meetings

**August 18**

**September 15**

**October 20**

*(tues) 6pm*

## Wellness Days

**August 30**

**September 27**

**October 25**

*(sun)*

*5% off all body care items, bulk herbs, teas & spices, general merchandise*

## Getting To Know Your Co-op

**August 10**

**September 14**

**October 12**

*(mon) 6pm*

*rsvp 225-0671 x724*

## Acoustic Brunch at The Co-op

**August 2, 9, 16, 23, 30**

**September 6, 13, 20, 27**

**October 4, 11, 18, 25**

*(sun) Noon - 2pm*

*Every Sunday the Co-op Kitchen will feature hot breakfast food, tea, and coffee. Listen to musicians perform in the café while you dine*

## Snacking with the Spirits

**August 18**

**(tue) 6pm**

*@ Park Cemetery*

## Labor Day

**September 7**

*(mon) Co-op closed all day*

## Farm Tours

**September 13**

*(sun) 12-5pm*

*@ Seeds & Spores Family Farm / Rock River Perennial Garden / Reh-Morr Farm / Treasa's Treasures / MSU North Farm / Sleepy Hollow Farm*

## Farm to Table Dinner

**September 13**

*(sun) 6:30pm*

*@ Belsolda Farm*

*488 Mangum Road, Marquette*

*\$35 per person. Buy your tickets in advance at [www.marquettefood.coop](http://www.marquettefood.coop).*

## Cooking Classes

**August 4 or 11: Raw Foods**

**September 16 or 22 : Thai Street Food**

**October 13 or 20 : Sweet & Savory Pie Making**

*6pm*

*in the Co-op Classroom*

*register @ [www.marquettefood.coop](http://www.marquettefood.coop)*

*or call 225-0671 x723*

## October is Co-op Month

Events throughout the month TBA

## Harvest Pot Luck

**October 2**

*(fri)*

*@ the Masonic Building*

*Details TBA*

## Seed Swap

**October 15**

*(sat) 1pm*

*@ Graveraet Hoop House*

Visit [www.marquettefood.coop](http://www.marquettefood.coop) for full event details.

# From the General Manager



**M**ore than a year after opening, we are pleased that this community has embraced the new Marquette Food Co-op so fully. We have surpassed our expectations for expansion and are on the path toward financial solvency at an accelerated pace. We are settled in to refining systems, training staff, building internal efficiencies, and paying off debt from the expansion—all while providing the exceptional customer service you have come to expect of your Co-op.

Underpinning all this activity is a bigger reward: expanding access to good food. More people than ever before are joining our Co-op to get closer to local, organic, and wholesome products. Our larger store does provide more, including another opportunity for member investment through a share offering.

This Preferred Share Offering is an investment opportunity with real benefits for our Co-op community. Each dollar invested in shares by members who are able, will be applied directly to MFC debt. Member investment is part and parcel of what we are: a cooperative business.

**Yes, more than a year after expansion I am talking about and thinking about the future for our Co-op.**

The cooperative business model relies on member investment as a tenet of the cooperative principles, in the creation of community wealth, and as the foundation for a business built around adapting to community needs.

Currently, 21% of our business is financed by member dollars, through both the sale of equity shares and preferred shares. This is typical for many cooperatives, but reaching the 30% mark would make us even stronger. The expanded store has stretched the opportunity for our Co-op toward the future. Now is the time for member dollars to “catch up” and close in on that opportunity that awaits us in the form of new services and improved operations.

As members purchase additional shares and we pay down debt from the expansion, we will get double the value on our balance sheet—increased equity and decreased debt. Cancelling debt will more quickly return us to paying out Patronage Dividend to members as we become profitable again. Paying off debt with member dollars also saves the Co-op cash each month because we trade a high interest rate on loans for a lesser dividend rate to members—a



dividend rate that, at 4%, is mighty attractive to an investor.

This offering also marks the beginning of exploring member need more fully. The Board of Directors is taking a more engaged role with the membership now that the expansion project is over and our financial trend is moving in the right direction. Having an invested membership will hasten and improve communication between members, your Board, and operations, keeping the MFC relevant to our larger community, open to new members, and further strengthen our place in this community.

Yes, barely a year after expansion, I am talking and thinking about the future for our Co-op. We operate in an increasingly competitive market for organic and natural foods, even here in the U.P.! I aim to keep us relevant by listening to you both directly and through our Board. It takes all of us to make this cooperative work. Our time,



energy, patronage, and dollars are all needed to keep community wealth and health growing at the Marquette Food Co-op. Consider investing some of yours. The return on that investment is rooted deeply, right here.

### **Matt Gougeon** **General Manager**

906-225-0671 x710 / gm@marquettefood.coop



# Preferred Shares Information



**T**he Marquette Food Co-op is once again offering preferred shares to its members! This is an opportunity to invest directly into the business you own.

In 2013 members of the MFC invested nearly \$400,000.00 through the purchase of preferred shares to help fund the expansion of our store. This next offering is intended for additional member investment in the now completed expansion. All proceeds from the sale of preferred shares in this offering will be applied directly to debt incurred to build the new store. This share offering is open to members of the MFC, including those members who purchased shares in the first offering. This share offering is structured the same way as the first offering—except that new state rules limit a maximum purchase to ten shares.

## Par Value

\$1,000 par value per share

## Minimum/Maximum Investment

1 share / \$1,000 Maximum: 10 shares/ \$10,000

## Number of Shares Authorized

730 (\$730,000 total offering amount)

## Investor requirements

Must be Michigan residents and paid in full members/owners of Marquette Food Cooperative

## Dividends

- Cumulative – estimated to be paid beginning five (5) years after issuance
- Rate: 4%
- The owner may elect to have dividend income paid to a third party; however, dividends must be reported on a Form 1099-DIV as income paid to the owner of record.

## Redemption

Investors will have a put option, exercisable after five (5) years:

- Exercise of a put option and the corresponding redemption of preferred shares would be deferred if the Co-op does not have adequate cash on hand to redeem the shares without undue interference with business operations.
- Exercise of a put option and the corresponding redemption of preferred shares would be restricted if doing so would result in a violation of loan covenants with the Co-op's secured creditors.
- Exercise of put options would be redeemed in the order received.

## Limited Ability to Transfer

Owner's preferred shares are only transferable to persons that meet the investor requirements: must be Michigan residents and paid in full members/owners of the Marquette Food Cooperative.



Again, all proceeds from the sale of shares will be used to pay down long term debt. Currently we are paying 7.5% interest on \$730,000.00 of debt. It makes good sense for us to pay a 4% dividend to members rather than expensive interest to lenders. Exchanging debt for equity on our balance sheet in this way creates a win, win, win situation. Our lenders get paid back, members earn a dividend on their investment, and our balance sheet improves making the MFC a stronger company.

The MFC is recovering from the cost of expansion faster than anticipated. Continued member investment supports the cooperative business model, keeps more money right here at home, and ensures that the MFC remains in a strong position to continue to serve you.

### Here's how you invest

Call or email General Manager Matt Gougeon and request a copy of the Marquette Food Co-op Disclosure Document. You may also pick one up from the Customer Service Desk in the store. The Disclosure provides information about the MFC, post expansion, and describes the company, its history and value, and the uses of the funds raised through the sale of preferred shares. It also includes a business plan for a look at the MFC currently and where we're headed.

After determining your interest in investing, call or email General Manager Matt Gougeon at 906-225-0671, ext. 710; gm@marquettefood.coop to set up an appointment to purchase your Series A Preferred Shares of the Marquette Food Co-op.

At that appointment, please bring your driver's license as proof of residency. Please understand that preferred shares may only be purchased by paid in full members of the MFC who are residents of the State of Michigan. Further, shares may only be held by the person who is the primary name on your member equity application—not by a spouse or roommate.

Shares may only be purchased with a personal or cashier's check. Cash and credit or debit cards WILL NOT be accepted. Make your checks payable to Range Bank. All funds will be held in escrow at Range Bank.

### Matt Gougeon General Manager

906-225-0671 x710 / gm@marquettefood.coop

# A Decade of Farm Tours



**C**urious about where your food comes from and how it is raised? We have been for a while, now! For ten years, the Marquette Food Co-op has been coordinating tours of local farms to offer everyone the opportunity to connect with local food. In that span of time, the food landscape in the U.P. has changed to reflect an increasing interest in supporting local economies, the growth of farmers markets, and more people focused on the connections between food, health, and healthy communities. The farms are the backbone of this movement, because it is their risk, their hard work and ingenuity – and their food – that has been driving our local food revolution.

“The farms tours were created to encourage people to learn more about where their food comes from and give the farmers an opportunity to showcase what they do best—provide healthy, delicious food to their communities,” says Outreach Director Natasha Lantz, who initiated

the tours in 2006. And many farmers look forward to the tours as a direct connection to the people who want to learn the story behind their food. Elise Bunce, who grows herbs and plant starts at Rock River Perennial Garden and Greenhouse,

has been on the tours since the first year. She says, “People come all the way out to see us. People want to know, they want to learn and they really care.” In fact, over 2,000 people have visited 26 farms in the central U.P. since 2006, with assistance from more than a dozen community volunteers and co-op employees.

In the past, the tours have been held throughout the summer. This year, all tours will be held on Sunday, September 13th from 12-5 at participating farms. Tours are designed so that you can stop by the farm within that time frame to take a tour, meet the farmers, and even purchase fresh produce, flowers, and other goods right there on the farm. As always,

the tours are free and open to the public. Like farming, the tours go forward rain or shine. Please dress appropriately for the weather. Stop

## 2015 **FARM TOURS** Sunday September 13 12-5pm

*Seeds & Spores Family Farm /  
Rock River Perennial Garden/  
Reh-Morr Farm / Treasa's  
Treasures / MSU North Farm /  
Sleepy Hollow Farm*

## **FARM TO TABLE DINNER**

**6:30pm**  
*Belsolda Farm*  
488 Mangum Rd, Marquette



in at the Co-op or visit [www.marquettefood.coop](http://www.marquettefood.coop) for directions and more information about each farm.

And here's something new: we're celebrating a decade of tours with a farm to table dinner. Enjoy a healthy, fresh approach to Middle Eastern cuisine with a menu by Sarah Monte, Education Coordinator and host of Co-op cooking classes. The dinner will be at Belsolda Farm in Chocoley Township the same day as the tours: Sunday, September 13th at 6:30. Tickets are \$35. Proceeds from this meal, which will feature food purchased from farms that supply the co-op, will support the MFC Tool Library. Buy your tickets in advance at [www.marquettefood.coop](http://www.marquettefood.coop).

**Abbey Palmer**  
**Special Projects Coordinator**

906-225-0671 x725 / [apalmer@marquettefood.coop](mailto:apalmer@marquettefood.coop)

# Menu

## Mezze

- BABA GANOUI V / GF
- BEET YOGURT Veg / GF
- CARROT HARISSA SPREAD V / GF
- PITA CHIPS & GF CRACKER
- OLIVES
- CRUDITE

## Salad

- SHIRAZI SALAD V / GF  
*Iranian tomato salad with fresh herbs and lime juice*

## Mains

- SPICED LAMB PITAS
- ZA'ATAR POTATOES roasted with oregano, sumac, cumin, and sesame seeds V / GF
- RICE SALAD with green beans, dill, parsley, mint, basil, and lemon V / GF
- PICKLED BEETS & TURNIPS V / GF

## Dessert (served with Turkish coffee)

- RASPBERRY-MAPLE BAKLAVA V
- FRUIT with cardamom/rosewater simple syrup and sprinkle of cracked pepper V / GF

V = vegan Veg=vegetarian GF = gluten-free

**DO YOU KNOW THESE FARMS?**

According to posters in our archive from years past, these are the farms that have participated in the MFC Farm Tours – or will for the first time this year. **The farms in bold letters will be on the tours this year.** This isn't a list of all the farms that have supplied the Co-op. Thanks to all of you who have been growing food for our community!

- Badger Creek Farm
- Beaver Grove Bison
- Blueberry Knoll Cattle Company
- Catnip Creek Greenhouse
- Dancing Crane Farm
- Dukes Farm
- Everyyielding Acres
- Grand Bees
- Guindon Farms
- Hannah's Garden
- Honeydale Farm
- Hyer Farm
- Krause Farms
- Marjaymik's Acres
- MSU North Farm**
- NMU Hoop House
- Reh-Morr Farm**
- Rock River Farm
- Rock River Perennial Garden**
- Seeds and Spores Family Farm**
- Shady Grove Farm
- Sleepy Hollow Farm**
- Smiling Dog Flower Farm
- Treasa's Treasures**
- Virgin Earth Farm
- Wixtrom Natural Farms

# New Monthly Board Surveys



**H**i there! I wanted to take up a few square inches of this newsletter and let you know about an upcoming series of survey questions about our global ends policies. The primary purpose of the board of directors is to “create and act as the link between the members and the cooperative business they own.” This manifests itself in several activities, such as the Annual Meeting, public comment periods at our monthly meetings, board members bagging groceries and meandering the store in our “Board Member” shirts, and outreach reports from the store. But a really valuable tool to gauge what our members think about the direction of the co-op is through actually asking via survey.

The new MFC website now has a short survey on three new sections of our Global Ends policy. The purpose of these questions is not to assess the performance of the store – that takes place at our monthly meetings (which are open to everyone!). These questions are meant to look at how the direction of the Board filters through operations to you, the people who own our co-op.

A quick note on what I mean by “ends” and “policy”: the board of directors operates according to Policy Governance. This means that we’ve established a set of policies that clearly define roles and responsibilities between the

Board and the General Manager. These policies also place emphasis on the Board providing outward vision and strategic leadership rather than operational detail. This vision is expressed in our Global Ends policy. If you want to know more, google Policy Governance on a rainy day.

When it comes to the Board’s purpose, we want to ensure that we are using every tool in our belt in making that link to our owners as vibrant as it can be. The feedback received from the survey will be reviewed monthly and at the Board’s annual retreat in October. Our current thinking is that this will evolve into an annual January – September (one policy per month) ongoing survey, providing a channel for feedback from owners to the board. Each ends survey will also be accompanied by a brief blog post from a board member sharing his or her thoughts. So this summer, as you sample the wonderful local food banquet our region has to offer, take 90 seconds to let us sample the wonderful local input you have to offer. Thanks!

**Phil Britton**  
**Board Secretary**

Visit **[www.marquettefood.coop](http://www.marquettefood.coop)**  
each month to share your thoughts!

# GroupGAP Pilot Study

**F**ood safety has become more important than ever to farmers, food hubs, and food buyers in the past few years as federal regulations change in response to foodborne illness outbreaks. Can small farms comply with the same standards that large-scale farming operations employ to protect the food supply without getting forced out of business?

In order to better understand how food safety certification would look for small farms, and to offer practical best practices and expert advice, a group of ten farms in the Upper Peninsula underwent food safety certification last year as part of an ongoing pilot project. The U.P. Food Exchange, a partnership between the Marquette Food Co-op and MSU Extension with support from the Western Upper Peninsula Health Department, participated in a federal-level group food safety certification pilot project. This project was sponsored by USDA and The Wallace Center at Winrock International and funded by Michigan Food & Farming Systems (MIFFS) through a USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant program (administered by MDARD) and the U.P. Food Exchange.

The aim of the project is to study how small farms fit into USDA's established Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) food safety certification program, which was designed for large scale farming operations. The project goal is to test how small farms might benefit by certifying as a group. Projected benefits might include, but are not limited to, sharing the expense of inspection, farmer-to-farmer learning and support, as well as in-depth food safety and documentation training.

The newly released case study, *Small Farmers Can Make Food Safety Work: The GroupGAP Pilot in Michigan's Upper Peninsula*, published by the MSU Center for Regional Food Systems, provides an overview of the process, challenges, benefits, and lessons learned from the Group Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) pilot project. Funding for the publication was provided by the MSU Center for Regional Food Systems and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.



"We all want to have safe food, and we also want small farmers to continue to have access to a variety of direct and intermediated food markets," says Rich Pirog, Senior Associate Director of the MSU Center for Regional Food Systems. Preparing small farms to compete in a changing food safety landscape increases the likelihood that they can maintain relationships with institutional purchasers like grocery stores and even expand their businesses.

**You can read the study, here:**

[http://foodsystems.msu.edu/resources/group\\_gap\\_pilot\\_upper\\_peninsula](http://foodsystems.msu.edu/resources/group_gap_pilot_upper_peninsula)

U. P. Farms Participating in the Group GAP Pilot Study

**Ski Country Farm / Blueberry Pier /**

**Hannah's Garden / Reh-Morr Farm / Rock**

**River Perennial Garden & Greenhouse /**

**Slagle's Family Farm / Sleepy Hollow**

**Farm / Treasa's Treasures / Anya Farms /**

**Wintergreen Farms**

**Marquette Food Co-op**  
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Marquette, MI 49855

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