

# The Co-operator

The monthly newsletter of the East End Food Co-op • Pittsburgh, PA



## 2014 Member Survey

by Heather Hackett, Marketing & Member Services Manager

In keeping with our ongoing bi-annual schedule, the East End Food Co-op recently worked with the Survey Research Center (SRC) of University of Wisconsin-River Falls to complete a Member Satisfaction Survey. I would like to cover some of the trends and highlights of the survey, as well as illuminate how the Co-op will use the results to inform our work in the future.

### Process

Our sample included 2,901 email addresses pulled from our member database. The questionnaire was adapted from the National Cooperative Grocers Customer Satisfaction Survey to meet our Co-op's specific needs. The amount of data collected is considered statistically significant, with a total of 402 usable responses completed in the data gathering period. All data was supplied to the Co-op from SRC anonymously.

Members who did not receive a survey have either not identified an email address to associate with their membership, or indicated at some point that they would prefer not to receive email communications from us. If you would like to be added to our database for inclusion in future surveys, please email [memberservices@eastendfood.coop](mailto:memberservices@eastendfood.coop) and we will update our records.

### Continuous Improvement

One trend that clearly emerged between the time of our 2012 survey and the current report is that the improvements we have been working hard on these past two years are appreciated by our members. With only

one exception (prices), store characteristics show increases from 2012 to 2014 in the percentage of members saying their needs are being met "very well." Overall satisfaction of our members has increased most significantly in the store departments of fresh fruits and vegetables, dairy, and meat.

### Concern for Community

This was another category that saw significant improvements. High proportions of our members believe that the Co-op promotes environmental stewardship, works to create a sense of community, is a positive influence on the community, can be relied upon to make ethical decisions, and is meaningful in their life. As far as causes that members believe the Co-op should champion, local, sustainable agriculture emerged by far as the clear priority. The only noteworthy runner up was addressing local hunger problems.

### Expansion

There is virtually no opposition to growing our Co-op and approximately eight in ten members are supportive, to some degree, of expanding the Co-op during the next three years. The options that are most preferred are expansion in our current location, or opening an additional store. Members indicate their hopes for expansion are that we sell more local and/or organic products, and that we have a greater variety of products available. As for design features, additional parking was of the most value.

### Room for Improvement

EEFC is the primary grocery store for only 32% of our members, which puts us in the

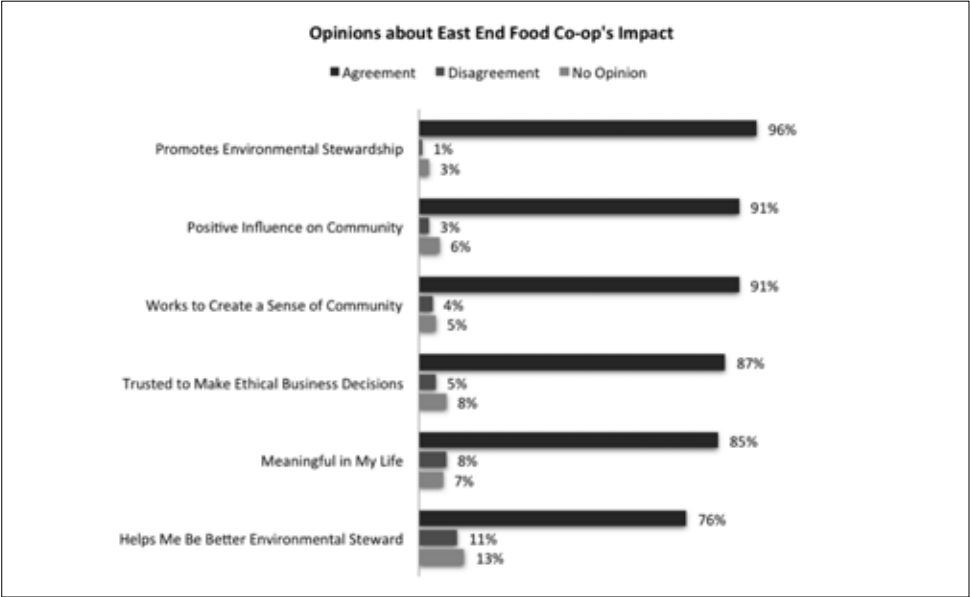
bottom half nationally compared to other co-ops. Relative to our peers, eight of nine departments rank in the bottom half of the national database in terms of the proportion of members saying they buy a majority of those products from our store. Our location, hours, and pricing also received less favorable responses than some of our national counterparts; however, the perception of these categories from 2012 to 2014 within our particular cooperative did not change significantly.

### What Now?

The goal of performing this survey is to help us better understand our members and improve services offered to members and customers alike. Each department manager will work with General Manager Justin Pizzella to decipher what areas we

are already performing well in, as well as identifying focus areas. Some actions have already been taken to address matters revealed by the survey; for instance, our donation evaluation process is now more heavily favoring requests from organizations oriented towards local, sustainable agriculture and addressing hunger issues.

We look forward to continuing to find ways to better serve our members, and extend our appreciation and gratitude to everyone who took a moment to share their feedback with us. Our next survey will take place in 2016, and we look forward to seeing how much we can accomplish in the interim. As always, if you have thoughts you'd like to share with your Co-op, you can stop by Customer Service to fill out a comment card, or email [memberservices@eastendfood.coop](mailto:memberservices@eastendfood.coop).



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### BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

The next meeting will take place on Monday, March 16th at 7 PM.

### NEW MEMBER ORIENTATIONS:

To register, call 412.242.3598 ext. 438 or email [memberservices@eastendfood.coop](mailto:memberservices@eastendfood.coop).

### MEMBERS ONLY:

Be sure to use your 10% quarterly discount by March 31st! The next quarter goes from April 1st - June 30th.

### E-NEWS:

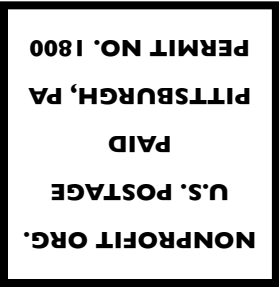
Would you prefer to receive *The Co-operator* online? Email [memberservices@eastendfood.coop](mailto:memberservices@eastendfood.coop) for details.

East End Food Co-op • 7516 Meade St. Pittsburgh, PA 15208 • [www.eastendfood.coop](http://www.eastendfood.coop) • 412.242.3598 • Open to Everyone, Every Day 8 AM – 9 PM



DATED MATERIAL:  
DO NOT DELAY

East End Food Co-op  
7516 Meade St.  
Pittsburgh, PA 15208





Winterfest Recap

by Kate Safin, Assistant Marketing & Member Services Manager

The East End Food Co-op was pleased to present Winterfest once again this year! Our annual, seasonal celebration and fundraiser for the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank took place on Saturday, January 31, 2015 at the Hosanna House in Wilksburg. Nearly 500 people joined us for this family-friendly event.

Winterfest proceeds benefitted the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. The Co-op is thrilled that we were able to double our donation from last year, with a total contribution of \$3,473.95, a monetary sum that equates to providing 17,369 meals to hungry children throughout the region!

We'd like to thank all the vendors who helped make this event possible. Our own Co-op Café provided a delicious meal with soup, seasonal deli salads, plus vegan and gluten-free sweets. The Co-op's Cheese Buyer Caldwell Linker was on hand with cheese donated by Hidden Hills Creamery, Doe Run Farm, and Firefly Farms. Vegan cheeses were also donated by Treeline Cheese. Greek Gourmet Marketplace and Clarion River Organics also contributed to our spread, and Legume dazzled the crowd with a sundae bar complete with homemade ice cream and a variety of toppings. Locally-brewed craft beer was donated in-part by East End Brewing Company.

In addition to a delectable meal, Winterfest guests enjoyed plenty of entertainment, including a photo booth provided by ShutterBooth Pittsburgh and children's

activities that came compliments of Pittsburgh Toy Lending Library, the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh, and Assemble. The musical line-up was comprised of some of Pittsburgh's finest local entertainers including Union Rye, Shelf Life String Band, and DJ Selecta of WYEP's Grand Groove Radio.

Attendees were also able to participate in a Chance Auction with prizes donated by local businesses and arts organizations. We would like to thank the many organizations who generously contributed prizes to the auction, including: Body Harmony Massage Therapy, Changin' Time Laundry Service, Construction Junction, Cutitta Chiropractic, Health Horizons, Journeys of Life, Natural Stiches, Pittsburgh Center for Creative Reuse, Simply Helpful, Tula Organics, Wexford Automotive Repair, Andy Warhol Museum, Carnegie Museums of Art & Natural History, Children's Museum of Pittsburgh, Heinz History Center, Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, Inc., Pittsburgh Pirates, Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium, Quantum Theatre, and Una Biologicals. The raffle also featured a Co-op gift basket.

We would like to thank everyone who joined us at Winterfest this year! If you have suggestions or feedback about Winterfest that you'd like to offer, please email your thoughts to [memberservices@eastendfood.coop](mailto:memberservices@eastendfood.coop). We hope to see you again next year!



Board Corner

by Maria Bowman, EEFC Board Director

Two years ago I never thought much about who was helping my local food co-op to meet its Ends Statements. As a regular EEFC shopper with little other involvement, I was unaware of who was brainstorming the future of the store or helping the management team stay on track.

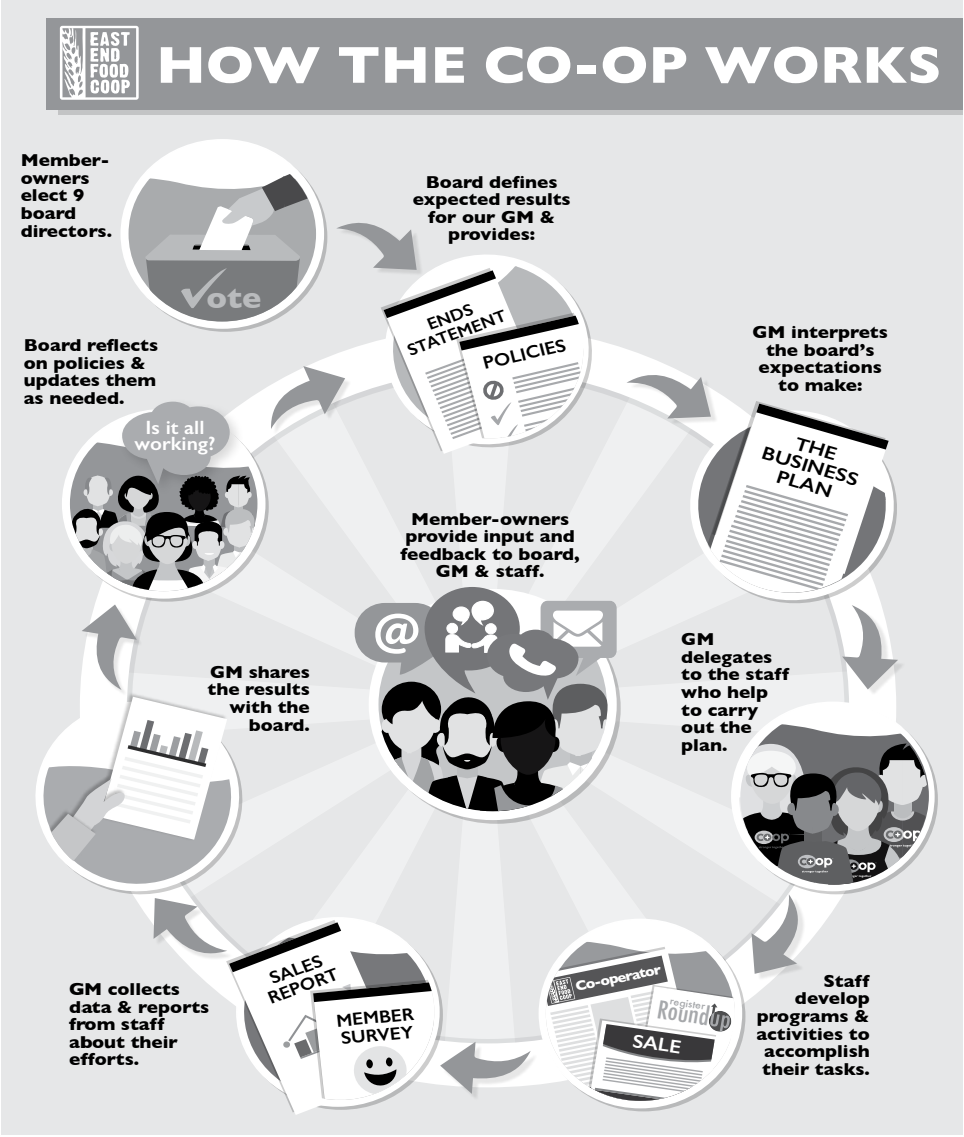
But since then I've come to learn it's the EEFC Board of Directors that does the important work I mentioned above—and plenty more. Once I began to understand the importance of the board, I was eager to run myself. Since becoming a director this past fall, I've learned even more about the role of the board within our Co-op. From this newcomer's perspective, I've discovered that they (now we) do a lot of the behind-the-scenes work that keeps the store vibrant, a reflection of members' needs, and operating within the cooperative model.

During my time on the board I've learned that co-ops are truly more fascinating and valuable than I previously knew. Below is my 'Cliff's Notes' version of the EEFC Board's role, to help members and shoppers who are curious about the board:

- The nine directors are EEFC members, elected by fellow members, who contribute their time and skills to help guide the Co-op.

- The official purpose of the board, according to our Policy Register, is "...to act as trustees for the members and to ensure that the cooperative accomplishes its Ends while avoiding undesirable situations. The board will specify its expectations through written governing policies." In other words: the board's job is to represent members well, meet our goals, and to steer the Co-op in the right direction, using an established rule system to guide us.
- The central emphasis of board work is overseeing our general manger, Justin Pizzella, by periodically reviewing the set expectations. For a visual description of how this, and many other processes work at our Co-op, please see the graphic below.
- Currently, the board is focusing on several topics. We're striving to find the best ways to engage our passionate membership. We're also considering the best options for expanding our Co-op to increase our ability to serve our members and our community.

I think I speak for all of the directors when I say that we serve in this capacity because we truly love our Co-op and our fellow members—which are really one in the same. I look forward to learning and growing cooperatively with you in the coming years.



Members Speak Out

submitted by Fred Kraybill, member since 2002

Solar power is expanding rapidly worldwide but you don't hear much about it in the news. A TreeHugger.com article from June 2014 tells the story: "Solar boom! From 5 GW in 2005 to almost 200 GW by the end of 2014, and this party is just starting!" To put that in perspective 200 Gigawatts is about 800 million solar panels. India wants to install 100 GW of solar by 2022. Here in the US we are at about 20 GW and analysts predict that there will be another 20 GW of solar installed in the US in the next 2 years. Of course many other nations are

increasing their use of solar also, including the European Union, China, and Japan.

Here in Point Breeze there are nine homeowners who have already gone solar. In Pennsylvania we have important policies to support solar and with the dropping solar prices and the federal tax credit till the end of 2016, it is a great time to go solar. Most people are not aware of how solar policies and tax credits work so there is a need to educate the public. That's the goal behind Solarize Allegheny, a new program in

Allegheny County to help communities in the county get more solar installed. Point Breeze is the first community in Pittsburgh to join this endeavor. You can learn more at this website: [www.solarizeallegheny.org](http://www.solarizeallegheny.org). As a community we can move to cleaner local energy and get away from dirty, polluting, centralized fossil fuel power plants. Through our solarize efforts we hope to double or triple solar installations in Point Breeze and be a leader for the rest of Pittsburgh.

**Interested in sharing your thoughts with other members?** Consider submitting content for our "Members Speak Out" column, featuring articles, updates, and notices from members in the Co-op community. Please email [memberservices@eastendfood.coop](mailto:memberservices@eastendfood.coop) to note your interest in making a submission and to request the guidelines.



ENDS POLICY STATEMENT

East End Food Co-op exists to enhance physical and social health in our community. To these ends, we will create:

- A sustainable member-owned business open to everyone
- An ethical and resilient food infrastructure
- A vibrant, dynamic community of happy, healthy people
- A creative vision to transform the future

STATEMENT OF COOPERATIVE IDENTITY

Definition

A cooperative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.

Values

Cooperatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, cooperative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility, and caring for others.

Principles

Most cooperatives around the world follow the core principles that were adopted by the International Co-operative Alliance in 1995. Cooperatives trace the roots of these principles to the first modern cooperative founded in Rochdale, England, in 1844. These principles are guidelines by which cooperatives put their values into practice.

1. Voluntary and Open Membership

Cooperatives are voluntary organizations, open to all people able to use its services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political, or religious discrimination.

2. Democratic Member Control

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members—those who buy the goods or use the services of the cooperative—who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions.

3. Member Economic Participation

Members contribute equally to, and democratically control, the capital of the cooperative. This benefits members in proportion to the business they conduct with the cooperative rather than on the capital invested.

4. Autonomy and Independence

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If the co-op enters into agreements with other organizations or raises capital from external sources, it does so based on terms that ensure democratic control by the members and maintains the cooperative’s autonomy.

5. Education, Training and Information

Cooperatives provide education and training for members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperative. Members also inform the general public about the nature and benefits of cooperatives.

6. Cooperation among Cooperatives

Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional, and international structures.

7. Concern for Community

While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of communities through policies and programs accepted by the members.

Customer Comments

Could you keep measuring cups in the bulk aisle? It would really help me buy the correct amount of beans etc. for recipes.

There is a cross-contamination factor with measuring cups. I suggest you use our plastic containers (8, 16, and 32 oz.) as a guide for measurements as well as our scale located on the sink in the bulk area.  
-Jim, Bulk

Amy’s Southwestern Soup is not on the shelf. It was the most in demand soup... often not on shelf.

We apologize for the inconvenience. We will make a greater effort to not run out of this in the future. It can also be special ordered by members who purchase this product with regularity; there are 12 cans per case.  
-Ian, Grocery

Please widen herbs and teas lane.

We appreciate the feedback. This is not something we are able to address with our current floor plan, but this topic of better space for shopping is one of many reasons why we continue to move in the direction of store expansion.  
-Maura, Grocery

I wish my receipt printed out which charity I donated to this week. Thank you!

Thanks for this suggestion! We will consider this option when we next upgrade our receipt and software capabilities. In the meantime, if you would like information about your donations (i.e. who, when), just let us know! There are also signs at the register and on the display screen each month, as well as in our other communication platforms (newsletter, website, social media, E-News).  
-eric, Front End

Have a thought that you’d like to share?

Fill out and submit a comment card at customer service during your next visit!

March’s Round Up Recipient: Jubilee Soup Kitchen

register  
RoundUp



Jubilee Soup Kitchen  
People Helping People

The mission of Jubilee Soup Kitchen is to ensure food security through their kitchen and pantry. Since opening its doors in 1979, Jubilee Soup Kitchen has provided hot meals to anyone in need 365 days a year. Jubilee grew into an association that also operates a food club, health clinic, clothing room, a child care center, and offers employment services. They do all of this with help from hundreds of volunteers. They act as a conduit between those who are able to give and those who are in need.

The Jubilee Soup Kitchen feeds approximately 125 guests every day of the year, and their Polish Hill food pantry gives groceries to 175 people twice a month, and delivers 80 bags of goods to those who are homebound. Jubilee does not accept government money, and supports a majority of its yearly budget through private donations. They believe in the empowerment model, and even employ former kitchen guests, offering them a living wage and benefits.

The Jubilee Soup Kitchen creates a community rooted in service where those in need can receive assistance without discrimination. For more information about this organization and how you can get involved, please visit their website or call 412-261-5417. And if you want to support them in their mission to feed the homeless and disadvantaged, and ensure that everyone in our city can get at least one hot meal a day, be sure to tell your Co-op cashier to Round Up your total this month!

Your spare change can result in positive change!

www.jubileesoupkitchen.org

CO-OP CAFÉ ARTWORK

Each month, East End Food Co-op partners with a local school or community organization to beautify the Co-op’s Café seating area with artwork created by area youths. This provides an opportunity to highlight the importance of art education in the Pittsburgh community while strengthening our partnerships with local educators, many of whom use the Co-op to help teach young folks about nutrition and local food. Be sure to check out this month’s art exhibit created by:

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EVERY MONDAY/AFTER 4:00 PM  
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# COMMUNITY IMPACT

**OUR CO-OP GREW BY**



**65**

**NEW MEMBERS**

**OUR OUTREACH REPRESENTATIVES REACHED**



**1,177**


**PEOPLE AT EVENTS**

**OUR CO-OP RAISED**



**\$3,451.53**

**THROUGH THE REGISTER ROUND UP FOR**



**TRADE INSTITUTE of PITTSBURGH**

**LOCAL PRODUCTS MADE UP**



**22%**

**OF TOTAL STORE SALES**

**OF OUR PURCHASES**



**14%**

**WERE FROM LOCAL SUPPLIERS**

DATA COLLECTED DURING JANUARY 2015

## Featured Community Partner: East End Brewing Company

Your Co-op is pleased to partner with the East End Brewing Company. The Community Partners Program aims to provide Co-op members great benefits and, at the same time, to promote local businesses. Because we are committed to supporting our community, we truly value the partnerships we build through this program.



Photo Credit: Brian Meyer, PghCraftBeers.com

The East End Brewing Company has been specializing in fresh, locally-brewed beer since 2004. Largely a draft-only operation, filling kegs and growlers at their brewery in East Liberty, they also offer some small-batch hand-bottled specialty beers, and are now serving pints in a new brewpub atmosphere!

Beyond making great beer, the brewery is also committed to sustainability. They reclaim most of the heat, water, and waste produced in the brewing process, operating as a near-zero solid waste facility. By providing spent grain for cattle feed, spent hops and trub for compost, and yeast for baking and future brewing, as well as dedicated recycling, solid waste is nearly completely eliminated. Energy is provided by natural gas, and heated water at the end of the cycle is reused for cleaning or future brewing. By buying local ingredients, purchasing used equipment, and operating in a reclaimed industrial warehouse, East End Brewing Company is able to cut down significantly on the environmental impact of brewing. In addition, all of East End's beers

are unfiltered, saving even more energy.

Beer from the East End Brewing Company can be found at many locations throughout Western PA, but for the freshest selection stop by the brewery located just a short distance from the Co-op or at their Growler Shop in the Strip District. You can also sign up for a Grains-to-Glass brewery tour. More information can be found by visiting [www.eastendbrewing.com](http://www.eastendbrewing.com). Co-op members receive \$1 off of new growler purchases. To take advantage of this discount, fully paid Co-op members must be sure to present their green plastic membership card at the time of payment. If you have any questions about the Community Partners Program, contact [memberservices@eastendfood.coop](mailto:memberservices@eastendfood.coop) or call 412-242-3598 ext. 438. You can check out the full listing of your Co-op's partners on our website at [www.eastendfood.coop/co-op/community/community-partners-program](http://www.eastendfood.coop/co-op/community/community-partners-program).

## Classifieds:

**SCHOOLHOUSE YOGA** has classes for everybody: Gentle, Prenatal, Mommy & me, Kundalini, Ashtanga, Yin, Yoga levels 1,2,3. Strip District, Squirrel Hill, North Hills.

**IMAGINE YOURSELF HERE!** Classified ads available in *The Co-operator* for only \$35/month. Member and contract discounts available. For more info contact [memberservices@eastendfood.coop](mailto:memberservices@eastendfood.coop) or call 412-242-3598 ext. 103.

## Did you know...

...all members are invited to a Co-op orientation?

The Member Services Coordinator invites all members to attend an orientation and learn more about our Co-op. Whether you're completely new to the store, a long-time shopper that finally joined, or even a long-term member that never attended an orientation before, this is an opportunity to ask questions, look deeper, and take your knowledge of our Co-op to another level.


- Buying guidelines & product sourcing
- Special diet offerings
- Benefits of membership
- Ways to participate in our Co-op
- Cooperatives as an economic and social model
- History & mission of our Co-op
- Cooperative principles in action
- Community & sustainability initiatives

From big questions, like, "What does it mean to be member-owned?"... To practical concerns such as "How do I place a special order?"... A member orientation can help you feel more comfortable owning, using, serving, and belonging at your Co-op.

Orientations are scheduled on an individual basis and you must register in advance. Standing timeslots include Sundays and Mondays at 10:00 AM, 11:00 AM, and 1:30 PM. Requests for other days and times are welcome and will be scheduled on a case-by-case basis. We are also exploring the possibility of a monthly standing orientation open to walk-ins each month. The scheduling of this will coincide with our monthly Members' Open Forums, and the first trial run will be held on Thursday, March 12 at 6:00 PM. To attend an orientation, call Member Services Coordinator Erica Peiffer at 412-242-3598 ext. 438 or send an email to [memberservices@eastendfood.coop](mailto:memberservices@eastendfood.coop).

Orientations generally last around 30 minutes and involve a guided stroll through the store. The talk can be tailored to each member's specific interests and questions, but some examples of general topics include:

- Store orientation & highlights for each department



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## Local is the New Organic?

by Evan Diamond, Produce Manager

As produce manager of our Co-op, I believe the most compelling thing about my department is our commitment to featuring our local farms during the growing season. Each year, the opportunity to attend Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture’s *Farming for the Future* Conference provides me with a unique chance to network with local growers and show appreciation for the great work happening in sustainable agriculture.

You can read a more general recap about the conference on page 6. What I’d like to share with readers are my thoughts about one particular session: “Interpreting National Food Trends for Value-Added Profit,” which was led by Heather Mikulas, who is a program manager at Penn State University, as well as a chair of The Pittsburgh Food Policy Council. Although I anticipated walking away from this workshop with an understanding of what fruits or vegetables were expected to be “hot” for the upcoming growing season, it was something else entirely that grabbed my attention.

Heather’s co-speaker, Penn State Extension Program Assistant Brian Moyer, introduced the notion that “local is the new organic” during his analysis of trends related to farming. This idea raises some interesting questions, which those of us in the session explored as a group, such as: “Will this lead to a national local certification?” and “Is local food inherently more sustainable than organic food?”

Defining “local” as a nation is an interesting proposition. Currently any company can independently define the word local, which allows large chains with regional distribution centers to consider a product “local” even if it is coming from five different surrounding states, whereas a smaller business may consider local products to be those coming from within a two hour drive. Certainly these two approaches are not equal, and creating some sort of national language could potentially be beneficial.

But who gets to define local? How would different geographies around the country be considered? Similar questions were raised around the certification of organic as well,

but for more than a decade our country has allowed the United States Department of Agriculture to define and control what it means to be a Certified Organic business. No matter what your position is on the effectiveness of this program, it certainly launched a national debate around what it means to be organic, and has raised consumer awareness of the ways in which food is produced. So perhaps the next logical step *is* to look at how we define local.

There is also the question of whether local food, regardless of how it is grown or produced, is more sustainable than organic food being produced in California, Mexico, Chile, or elsewhere, and shipped to markets all around the world. On the one hand, travel distance has a measurable carbon footprint. There are also arguments around whether a giant monocultural farm that is Certified Organic is really sustainable in the truest sense of the word. On the other hand, there are medium-sized family farms using herbicides and insecticides that deplete soil health and potentially have a negative impact on consumer health, and yet these operations retain money in their local economic system by paying state and county business taxes and employing local workforce, in addition to other immeasurable contributions to the local economy.

This qualification of what model is more sustainable is an unanswerable question that ultimately leads me to my conclusion: Whether or not our country chooses to create a Certified Local program, it will still remain for individual businesses to choose how they wish to serve their communities. With that in mind, here at the East End Food Co-op we define local as 250 miles from the store, extending to the entire state of Pennsylvania and excluding Canada. The average time it takes for produce to travel to the store is an hour, and our buying principles dictate that we purchase produce that is both local and Certified Organic before anything else. We believe that meeting both of these criteria is the most sustainable manner of food production possible, and we will always prioritize these options when they are viable and available.

## Know Your Farmer: Jubilee Hilltop Ranch

by Kate Safin, Assistant Marketing & Member Services Manager

Jubilee Hilltop Ranch is a 90-acre family-operated farm located in Osterburg, PA, in Bedford County that produces natural, pasture-raised, grass-fed beef and free-range eggs. The farm was established by the Salyards family in 2012 and is a member of the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA), the Buy Fresh Buy Local program, and is a Bedford Conservation participant.

Jubilee Hilltop Ranch raises their livestock to organic standards, using rotational grazing and growing grass hydroponically to ensure their cows can feed on grass all year-round. You can find Jubilee fresh and frozen beef, snack sticks and jerky, and eggs at the East End Food Co-op. To learn more about Jubilee Hilltop Ranch, find them on Facebook, visit their website at [www.jubileehilltopranch.com](http://www.jubileehilltopranch.com), or email [jubileehilltopranch@gmail.com](mailto:jubileehilltopranch@gmail.com).

**EEFC: How did you get into farming and what inspired you to start in this business?**  
Cheryl Salyards (CS): My husband Neal is a livestock nutritionist and we have always wanted to have a family business. We purchased the farm as a way to provide products for our community while involving our kids, learning together, and enjoying creation.

**EEFC: What is the biggest challenge of being a farmer?**  
CS: Easy—weather!



Photo Credit: Jubilee Hilltop Ranch



Photo Credit: Jubilee Hilltop Ranch

**EEFC: What is a typical day on your farm like?**  
CS: Our son works the day-to-day, rising early to let the chickens out of the coop and making sure they are fed and watered, then collecting the eggs. After the egg collection, he is off to check the cows to make sure pasture is fine (as we use rotational grazing and they may need to move to the next paddock). He returns in the evening to collect additional eggs and close the chickens in for the night. He also fills his day with chores and repairs, as well as reseeding the growth in the hydroponics room. His wife and the rest of us clean and process the eggs while my husband and I process orders and do the bookkeeping.

**EEFC: What is your hope for the future of your farm?**  
CS: We would hope to continue to grow and expand our products—possibly into hogs, herbs, flowers, and who knows! We also would like to be able to more steadily host college students, interns, and other interested people to learn more about sustainable agriculture and its day-to-day workings.

**EEFC: What is the most important thing for customers to know about your products?**  
CS: We as a family put our heart and soul into producing and supplying the community with reliable products, all the while sharing in the process with others.

### Spicy Banana Habanero Salsa

**Ingredients**

2 tablespoons vegetable oil  
2 tablespoons lime juice  
2 tablespoons brown sugar  
1 tablespoon fresh ginger, peeled and minced  
2 large firm bananas, peeled and diced (about 2 cups)  
1/2 cup yellow bell pepper, diced  
1/2 cup green pepper, diced  
1/2 cup red onion, diced  
3 tablespoons fresh minced cilantro  
1 teaspoon fresh habanero pepper, seeded and minced (1 pepper)

**Preparation**

In a medium-sized bowl, whisk together the oil, lime juice, brown sugar and fresh ginger. Add the bananas, peppers, onion and cilantro and mix well.

**Serving Suggestion**

Perfect for Fair Trade Banana Month, this Carribean inspired salsa’s sweet-hot flavor adds zest to a simply prepared meal of fish or poultry, and tops a morning omelet or breakfast sandwich with tropical flair. Add chunks of ripe mango or pineapple if you like!

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### New In The Aisles

**BROWNIE BUTTER** - Balm

**OHIO CITY PASTA** - Cremini Fontina Ravioli

**OVERSEAS CONNECTION** - African Market Baskets

**LAWLESS JERKY** - Sweet Sriracha, Pho, and Japanese Curry

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Get Growing with Garden Dreams: Inside ECHO Farm’s Duck Pond

by Bob Madden, Garden Dreams Urban Farm & Nursery

In the January issue I discussed the incredible work that is being done at ECHO’s Farms in Ft. Myers, Florida. They are building, experimenting with, and teaching low-tech solutions for small scale food and energy production to help people in need all over the world. As part of ECHO’s mission to create sustainable food solutions, they have developed an amazing pond system that I did not have enough space to write about last time.

ECHO started by digging a pond, filling it with water, and adding tilapia. That part is nothing revolutionary; often farms and communities build ponds to have more reliable and affordable access to water and to harvest the protein from fish. What is noteworthy, though, is the addition of ducks, and the interrelationships created at the pond. ECHO built a special little house for the ducks that hangs over the edge of the pond. The floor is a grate so that the ducks’ droppings can fall into the water while they are in the house. This simple method not only saves the farmer time shoveling droppings, but is even more importantly an integral part of the pond’s nutrient cycle. The ducks are also regularly laying eggs, providing sustainable protein to the ECHO team.

A day in the life of the ECHO ducks

They wake in the morning. An apprentice comes and opens the door that protects them from night predators. The ducks waddle down to the pond to nibble on the lush greenery along the edge and filter out some algae and other microorganisms from the water. They are also regularly fed garden waste and undesirable vegetables and fruits from the farm. Throughout the day the ducks are pooping in the pond and at night the droppings from the house fall down into the water.

Why is all this pooping so great? Because the droppings feed the algae and the plants in the pond. Normally excess animal droppings would cause problematic algae blooms, but tilapia love algae. Tilapia can live exclusively on algae and plants, so in a sense the ducks are providing the food for them to live on. Therefore the owners don’t need to worry about buying expensive fish feed! At the end of the day the caretakers

put some supplemental duck food in the house to prompt them to waddle home.

The power of interconnectedness

There are two beautiful overlapping benefits in the relationships that the pond’s planners established. First of all, this is very close to a “closed loop system” where inputs from outside, off-site, are only needed on a limited basis compared to the input-intensive systems of modern aquaculture which require a ton of expensive electricity (for pumps and aerators) and unsustainable commercial feeds. Secondly, while it takes time to harvest the fish and the eggs, compared to modern aquaculture this system does not require much time or effort. The fish and ducks are fed through their interrelationships with the algae and the pond plants.

This may seem simple, and it is. It mirrors natural systems. Compared to a highly managed and high-input tilapia farm, the ECHO pond has a lower output of fish, but since it requires almost no regular time, attention, or power other than sunlight, it is a method valuable beyond words. An added aerator would allow a farmer to double the number of fish, but isn’t a requirement. In places where food is scarce, a steady flow of eggs and fish could meet the protein needs of a community or family farm and bring in supplemental income.

The duck pond was by far my favorite part of the ECHO visit. It led me to excitedly imagine similar set-ups in northern climates with a cold-hardy fish. I was completely blown away, and I hope I’ve spread my enthusiasm. If you’d like to learn more about the work they’re doing at ECHO, visit [www.echonet.org](http://www.echonet.org).

*Bob Madden is the Outreach Manager at Garden Dreams Urban Farm & Nursery. Located in Wilksburg, Garden Dreams is a small, community-oriented business committed to providing strong vegetable, herb, and flower starts to home gardeners, community gardens, nonprofits, schools, and retail markets (including the East End Food Co-op). You can learn more about them at [www.mygardendreams.com](http://www.mygardendreams.com).*

Farming for the Future Conference

by Erin Kelly, Outreach & Education Coordinator

This year’s Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA) *Farming for the Future* Conference was a great success! With over 2,000 people attending more than a hundred sessions, the conference continues to grow and exceed expectations. As in past years, our Co-op supported the event as a Guardian Level Sponsor. Many of our members and staff were in attendance, learning, networking, and sharing information about our Co-op.

On the first full day of the conference, Frances Moore Lappé gave a keynote address based on her groundbreaking and extensive work as an internationally renowned author and advocate combating hunger, poverty, and environmental issues. Saying that Moore Lappé’s work changed the universal conversation around food and nutrition is an understatement, and many in attendance were excited for the opportunity to hear her speak. Carrying the momentum through the second day, Ray Archuleta, otherwise known as “the soil guy,” delivered an address on the importance of national resource conservation.

Each day was rounded out with presentations and demonstrations on various topics meant to inspire, encourage, and inform Pennsylvania farmers, retailers, and consumers. Our Co-op’s staff left the conference with a deeper understanding of our region’s agricultural and food policy climate after attending several valuable sessions including: “Labels, Labels, Labels: What They Do & Don’t Mean,” “Interpreting National Food Trends for Value-Added Profit,” “#fileroom: Reporting & Mapping Water Complaints from Fracking,” “Describing Products for Market: How to Write for Readers & Customers,” “The Food Safety Modernization Act: Past, Present & the Road Ahead,” and many others. The information and ideas gleaned by both our members and staff will be invaluable as we continue to work toward our Co-op’s Ends.

As exceptional as the conference programming proved to be, having the chance to meet with farmers, sustainable food advocates, and fellow cooperators was definitely the highlight of this event.



We are proud to prioritize local products in our store and had a great time catching up with growers we work with currently and welcomed the opportunity to meet others whose products may find its way to our shelves in the future. Producers from all over Pennsylvania sought out our staff and took copies of our Local Grower’s Packet to learn about the process and benefits of working with a cooperative like ours. Many also shared their expectations with us and discussed some of the challenges they face.

Conference attendees were drawn to our table for more than just great conversation; we were awarded the exclusive distinction of being dubbed “the table with the best snacks” by Noah, one of the youngest conference goers. Our strategy: we sampled four varieties of NuGo bars as examples of some of our Co-op’s many local products. We also supplied Equal Exchange Flame Raisins, dried pineapple, and Dark Chocolate Minis, which afforded us the chance to talk about our commitment to Fair Trade policies and the positive impact Equal Exchange has on small farmer cooperatives around the world.

Our Co-op is always eager to support the work of farmers in our region and was proud to be able to once again sponsor this year’s PASA conference. Visit their official website to learn more about the *Farming for the Future* Conference and their mission more generally: [www.PASAFarming.org](http://www.PASAFarming.org).

Pittsburgh Schweitzer Fellows Program Collaborates with Digital Salad

by Kari Morehouse, Pittsburgh Schweitzer Fellows Program

For the past 18 years, the Pittsburgh Schweitzer Fellows Program (PSFP) of the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship® has focused on improving health and well-being, developing leaders in service, and creating positive change. The PSFP class of 2014-2015 is carrying out projects in collaboration with local agencies to improve the health and well-being of underserved people and communities in our region.

Five years ago, we noticed that Fellows were talking a lot about environmental

challenges impacting community health, such as lack of access to parks and recreational facilities and indoor air quality asthma triggers. “Vacant properties and blight were creating situations where children could not play outside safely, and we were finding out about various environmental issues that more affluent neighborhoods were not grappling with,” Executive Director Joan Haley recalls. PSFP received special funding through local foundations to create the Environmental Fellows Initiative, which highlights how the environment impacts

health. Our goal is to increase environmental knowledge and encourage positive behavioral change. This can take many forms, from addressing the connection between obesity and the lack of grocery stores and nutritious foods in a neighborhood to teaching teens about urban land use and stormwater issues.

Several Environmental Fellows were focusing on food and nutrition as part of their projects, so I approached Heather

Mallak, the artist behind Digital Salad, to see if a collaboration was possible. Digital Salad mixes art-making, technology, and farm education to create experiential and interactive learning experiences for all ages. Mallak and farmer Tara Rockacy of Churchview Farm, an organic farmette south of Pittsburgh, visited several PSFP project sites and brought in a variety of heirloom vegetables and hand-preserved foods, along with scanners, art supplies, plates, and canvases, to taste and create with the populations PSFP serves. In total, more than 150 participants in PSFP’s Environmental Fellows Initiative created Digital Salad collages and enjoyed sampling fruits and veggies. The projects took place in the Hill District, Garfield, Homewood, and Wilksburg.

On display in March in the Co-op Café are some of the pieces of art that were created during our hands-on collaboration. We hope that you will stop by and enjoy the pieces these youths created!



Photo Credit: Heather Mallak

*Environmental Coordinator Kari Morehouse is a biologist working with the Pittsburgh Schweitzer Fellows Program to increase environmental knowledge and assist with mentoring Fellows in their endeavors to make the connection between health, well-being, and the environment. For more information about the Pittsburgh Schweitzer Fellows Program, visit [www.schweitzerfellowship.org/chapters/pittsburgh](http://www.schweitzerfellowship.org/chapters/pittsburgh). For more information on Digital Salad, visit [www.digitalsalad.org](http://www.digitalsalad.org).*



Photo Credit: Heather Mallak

# STAFF NEWS

## THE CO-OP

The East End Food Co-op is Pittsburgh's only member-owned natural and organic food market, serving the community since 1980. We offer the finest in certified organic produce and herbs, bulk foods, vitamins and supplements, cruelty-free health and beauty aids, organic and natural packaged and perishable goods and hard-to-find items for special dietary needs.

Our award-winning Vegetarian Café and Juice Bar offers a daily array of fresh, wholesome, hot entrées, soups, salads, and vegan dishes.

The Co-op is open to the public and membership is not required to make purchases, but members do receive better prices, have access to the Federal Credit Union, and can vote and serve on the board of directors.

7516 Meade St. Pittsburgh, PA 15208  
www.eastendfood.coop

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**Café:** Amber Pertz  
**Front End:** eric cressley  
**Produce:** Evan Diamond

## THE CO-OPERATOR

**Editor:** Heather Hackett  
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**Design & Layout :** Molly Masood  
**Printed By:** Indiana Printing & Publishing

*The Co-operator* is a monthly publication mailed to East End Food Co-op members. Additional copies are available in the store's foyer, and at outreach events. *The Co-operator* is also available online at [www.eastendfood.coop](http://www.eastendfood.coop).

Opinions expressed are the writers' own and do not necessarily reflect Co-op policy. The East End Food Co-op does not endorse the views or products of the advertisers in this newsletter.

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## EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

Congratulations to **tara kudlac** who was chosen as the Co-op staff pick for Employee of the Month. tara has been a member since 1992, and has been working here in the Front End since 2011. Hired as a cashier, she is now the Assistant Front End Manager.

**Q.** What's your favorite thing about the Co-op in general?

**A.** The Co-op has great training opportunities for employees to expand their knowledge. I have been lucky enough to attend trainings on customer service, natural foods leadership, and conflict resolution; all of which have been beneficial to the roles that I have held in the Front End!

**Q.** What's your favorite product here?

**A.** I'm enjoying the assortment of fresh dates that can be found in the Produce Department, but the coconut rolled dates from Bulk will always have a special place in my heart.

**Q.** What do you like to do when you're not at the Co-op?

**A.** I collect records, and I like to travel to other states and countries to buy more records. I also enjoy spending time with my handsome rabbit, Ben, and October 2014's Employee of the Month, Wes.

**Q.** How did you feel when you found out you were the Employee of the Month?

**A.** I was flattered and felt appreciated by my co-workers, who are a pretty amazing group of people.

## NEW FACES

**Alicia Franken, Front End**

Alicia is pursuing her Master's Degree at Chatham University's Food Studies program. She is also a member of the Seward Co-op in Minneapolis, MN, and enjoys supporting local communities through food choices. Alicia's favorite products here are the produce, bulk food and spices, and kombucha.

**Megan Moffitt, Front End**

Megan has been in customer service and sales for more than fifteen years, and is interested in natural foods with respect to conscious supply chains. She studies accounting and also world languages, specifically Spanish and Scots Gaelic. Megan is also interested in the social responsibility of co-ops.

**March 27, 28, 29, 2015**  
**Westin Convention Center**  
**Pittsburgh**

**Pittsburgh**  
**Knit & Crochet Festival**

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Café Specials • March 2015

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 Chef's Choice	2 Lemon Thyme Mac 'n' Goat Cheese	3 Broccoli Dal	4 Indian Kitchen	5 Spicy Peanut Tempeh	6 Pizza: Vegan & Dairy	7 Quiche Lorraine
8 Chef's Choice	9 Ginger Cilantro Tofu and Kale	10 Roasted Vegetable Orzo	11 Mediterranean Kitchen	12 Cajun Wild Rice	13 Burrito Bar	14 Sweet 'n' Spicy Tempeh with Quinoa
15 Chef's Choice	16 Honey BBQ Tofu	17 Irish Stew	18 African Kitchen	19 Indonesian Satay	20 Pizza: Vegan & Dairy	21 Vegetable Lo Mein
22 Chef's Choice	23 Mushroom & Roasted Red Pepper Lasagna	24 Buffalo Seitan "Wings"	25 Country Kitchen	26 Quinoa Stir Fry	27 Burrito Bar	28 Yam & Black Bean Quesadilla
29 Chef's Choice	30 Eggplant Parmesan Casserole	31 Gumbo				

STORE HOURS:

Open Daily: 8 AM - 9 PM

Café HOURS:

Juice & Coffee Bar: 8 AM - 7 PM

Soup & Salad Bar: 8 AM - 7 PM

Hot Food Bar: 11 AM - 7 PM

Weekend Brunch: 9 AM - 1 PM

March Co-op Events

REDUCE, REUSE, UPCYCLE! <i>Jenna Gallant, Assemble</i>	WOMEN'S (CHEESE) DAY <i>Caldwell Linker, East End Food Co-op</i>	EVERY DROP COUNTS <i>StormWorks team members</i>	COLD WEATHER VEGETABLES & HERBS <i>Bob Madden, Garden Dreams Urban Farm &amp; Nursery</i>
<b>WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4TH, 6:30 PM</b> <i>Gemini Children's Theater</i>  Assemble unites artists, makers, and technologists with Pittsburghers of all demographics by providing a platform for experiential learning, opening creative processes, and building confidence through making. Assemble hosts classes, interactive gallery shows, and learning parties at their Penn Avenue space and elsewhere in Pittsburgh. We're excited to host Assemble for an upcycling workshop where attendees will create one-of-a-kind pieces out of old, used, or discarded items.	<b>WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11TH, 6:30 PM</b> <i>Gemini Children's Theater</i>  March 8th is International Women's Day! People around the world will celebrate the social, economic, and political feats women have achieved over the past century. Our Co-op plans to extend the observance of this deserved day of recognition well into the week by exploring the contributions of female fromagères (cheese makers) to our store's selection. Our Co-op's cheese buyer and resident cheese expert, will guide us through an exploration of cheeses developed, produced, or sold by women.	<b>WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18TH, 6:30 PM</b> <i>Gemini Children's Theater</i>  Pittsburgh has struggled to address storm water management for years. StormWorks, a division of the Nine Mile Run Watershed Association, specializes in rain water mitigation strategies and wants to share their expertise with us. We will learn about the role rain gardens play in controlling runoff and discuss examples of plants common to rain gardens in our region. These experts will also show examples of rain barrels and will help homeowners identify the best methods of water management for their property.	<b>WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25TH, 6:30 PM</b> <i>Carnegie Library of Homewood</i>  Spring is officially here, which means it's time to get out and garden! Bob Madden of Garden Dreams will arm you with all of the information you'll need to start your garden with confidence—no prior experience required! Although it may still be chilly out, these colder spring months in Western Pennsylvania are a great time to grow hardy vegetable and herb varieties. This workshop will introduce various methods of season extension to help you time your planting efforts to yield the largest and healthiest possible harvest.

These events are FREE; just call 412-242-3598 to reserve your spot!

Look for your Co-op at these upcoming events:

**Friday, March 27th, 1 PM:** Our Co-op is participating in a **24-hour Deli** hosted by the University of Pittsburgh's FeelGood chapter. FeelGood is a national organization empowering students to take action against global poverty and hunger by selling grilled cheese to raise awareness and funds for select organizations committed to sustainable global development. Stop by Pitt's Student Union for a sandwich and information about how we can end hunger and poverty. For more information: [www.feelgood.org](http://www.feelgood.org).

**Saturday, March 28th, 10 AM - 5 PM:** Our Co-op will join the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture at their table for this year's **Farm to Table Conference** in the David L. Lawrence Convention Center. The conference celebrates our region's local food system, emphasizing health and sustainability. We look forward to getting the word out about what our Co-op does to promote an ethical and resilient local food infrastructure! For more information and registration: [www.farmtotablepa.com](http://www.farmtotablepa.com).

**Monday, March 30th, 11 AM - 3 PM:** Our Co-op will help celebrate the University of Pittsburgh's **Real Food Challenge Kick-off** hosted by Pitt's Fair Food Cooperative. The Real Food Challenge calls on students and food service providers to demand food that is certified Fair Trade, Humanely Raised, Organic, and/or local. We invite students to stop by our table in the William Pitt Union Ballroom to talk about what we are doing here at the Co-op to address these issues and more!

**MEMBERS' OPEN FORUM**

A chance to meet and share your ideas with other members!

**Thursday, March 12th, 2015**  
**7PM - Café Seating Area**

This event is free, but please call 412.242.3598 to reserve your spot.

More information is available at [www.eastendfood.coop/co-op/membership](http://www.eastendfood.coop/co-op/membership).