

Caledonia Food Co-op Newsletter

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Caledonia Food Co-op Update

One year ago, the Caledonia Food Co-op began holding outreach events to build the number of Founding Member-Owners. A year later, the Co-op finds itself in a strong and exciting position full of potential, even with the uncertainty of an election cycle and attempting to generate momentum during a pandemic:

- We received a market study that confirmed the co-op is viable
- We received back-to-back USDA grants, funding our initiatives to explore real estate and project financing
- We held a series of five virtual meetings in July with 30 new members joining us!

This coming year we will choose a site, develop financing and funding sources, and continue to recruit Founding Members.

In order to secure a site, we need more Founding Member-Owners:

- Our funding sources want to see wide-spread community support
- YOU can help us by sharing this newsletter, liking us on Facebook and Instagram, and sharing all our posts.

We so appreciate your commitment to this project.

Wishing you a happy, healthy, fall foliage season!

The Caledonia Food Coop Board
Eric Stovsted
David Hale
Richard Witt
Margaret Healey
Celia Jackmaugh
Scott Davis

Caledonia Food Co-op Receives Phase II Grant

delighted to announce that they have received a **USDA Rural Development Grant for \$50,300 (total project cost \$68,080)** through the Town of St. Johnsbury as fiscal agent. This brings the project into Phase II of Co-op development and provides the funding to proceed with critical next steps: finding a site and Founding OwnerMember recruitment.



“We are evaluating new construction as well as existing buildings in St. Johnsbury and will ultimately choose what is best suited to the Co-op’s needs and budget,” said Co-op Board Chair Eric Skovsted.

The funds allow the Co-op to hire professionals that bring expertise in marketing, financial analysis, real estate, grants, loans, and future funding identification. They will also work with [Columinate](#), a national food co-op consulting firm that will give the Board training in governance and project oversight.

This Phase II grant builds on the \$22,040 USDA grant awarded in 2019 (total project cost \$29,900), which focused on feasibility research, a pro forma financial forecast, and membership recruitment.

Rick Witt, Board member and lead on the Co-op’s financial research, said **“The Phase I market study showed that the St. Johnsbury area can support a food co-op and made recommendations about the essential store characteristics required to achieve optimum sales. The pro forma got us off to a great start with our financial modeling and analysis.”**

The investment of Founding Members is linked to a successful Co-op. In the case of this grant, every \$100 Founding Membership leverages more than \$800 in additional funding and in-kind services. The more Founding Members recruited, the more equity is available to leverage this and other future financing.

Strong community support demonstrates to potential financial partners that the area supports this project. **“Even if the numbers work out great on paper, we cannot open without the support of Founding Members. We are up to 261 Founding Members, our goal is to increase that number to 800 in the coming year,”** said Skovsted.

A Founding Membership or equity stake in the Caledonia Food Co-op is \$100. Membership applies to the entire household and ensures one vote at the annual meeting to elect Co-op Board members.

“I want to thank all of the volunteers who have worked so hard to bring us to this point. The Town of St. Johnsbury has been a fantastic partner throughout this process, and we are excited to feel the momentum building,” said Skovsted. “The process of starting a co-op takes 3-4 years with a lot of heavy lifting by our volunteer Board and Advisory members. We are now at the phase where our team and professional partners can hit the road running’ to locate a site, build up the number of Founding Members, and realize success.”

For information, visit www.caledoniafood.coop.

Local Food Promotes Community Health



Local food is an important component to the health and sustainability of our communities. With more people seeking out fresh produce, local options are being influenced by individual purchasing habits across the United States.

In recent years, with the proliferation of farmers' markets, community-supported agriculture, and farm-to-table restaurants, the support of local food systems is growing. Nationwide, new farmers market locations have increased from 2,000 in 1994 to 8,600 in 2019.

Read the article in Spade and Plow [HERE](#)

Free Pumpkin for Member-Owners at Joe's Brook Farm



Hailey, Madison, and Dominick Walsh of Barnet love their pumpkin from Joe's Brook Farm.

Thank you to Eric and Mary Skovsted from Joe's Brook Farm who are giving a free pumpkin to every Founding Owner-Member. Just stop by the farm between 10 am and 4 pm. While supplies last.

AND!

We would love to hear what motivated you to become a member with a picture of you and your pumpkin! Send your story and photo to office@caledoniafood.coop!

*"I love being a Founding Member of the Caledonia Food Co-op. I believe a co-op will make a difference to our town and to our Vermont farms - which are a gift to this world."-
Celia Jackmaugh, Co-op Board Member*

[Won't you join me and become a member?](#)

Spread the Word

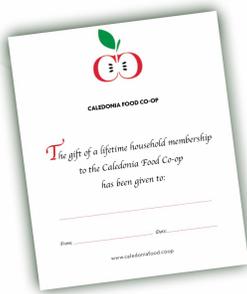
Please invite your friends and neighbors to join our community and share in our vision of creating the Caledonia Food Co-op in St Johnsbury. Thank you for your continued support and know the important role you play in generating momentum and engaging new member-owners.

Sign up to be Founding Member-Owners [HERE](#).

[The Caledonia Food Co-op](#)



Give the Gift of a Co-op



Membership-Ownership

Help the Caledonia Food Co-op gain momentum!

A Meaningful Present for Employees and Friends

A memorable and lasting gift for businesses looking to offer a perk to their employees, or for friends looking to introduce others to our Co-op.

It Never Expires

If you give the gift of a \$100 lifetime Co-op membership, you enable an entire household to join as founding members - forever. Your generosity will help make this dream a reality and bring others into the project.

If You Would Like to Give the Gift of a Co-op Member-Ownership:

- Fill out the online application [HERE](#) or print application [HERE](#).
- Go online and fill in your name and the name of your gift recipient in the “ship to” field.
- Contact office@caledoniafood.coop to receive an official Caledonia Food Co-op gift card to present to the recipient of your kindness.

[The Caledonia Food Co-op](#)

[Visit our Facebook Page](#)

[Visit our Instagram Page](#)

[Become a Founding Member HERE](#)

Help us build a Food Co-op in St. J.!

Your founding membership shows that you want to bring high-quality locally-produced food and beverages to St. Johnsbury and contribute to the economic development of the Northeast Kingdom.

The Caledonia Food Co-op will be a full service grocery store located in St. Johnsbury. It will feature an exceptional variety of local and international food and beverages. It will assist in the economic redevelopment of the region; provide a new market for local producers; expand access to natural and organic products; and advocate for healthy lifestyle choices.

You can view previous newsletters on our website [HERE](#).