



# Menomonie Market Food Co-op 2017-18 Annual Report



# A Place for You

The more we grow, the more we can do. The loyalty and support of our steadfast owners, along with people giving us a try for the first time every day, means that MMFC is in a great position to expand our circle. What does this mean for the co-op? It was a big step to construct the words “EVERYONE WELCOME” above our door when we moved to our current location, and now we are working to put those words into action.

In the last year, MMFC has increased the average wage of our worker by \$1.50 per hour—a big accomplishment for one year. In the year to come, we will adjust our wage levels with the goal that every worker, regardless of employment level, is at the living wage for Dunn County within the first 90 days of employment—something rarely achieved in a grocery store in the United States. As we move toward offering more full-time employment, our contributions to health care and retirement on behalf of our staff are at an all-time high. A giant kudos to our hard working, creative, results-focused staff; their innovation and effectiveness on the clock is what pays for our improvements in staff compensation. We know that increasing our wages and benefits can help us achieve a diverse workforce that better reflects the community around us. We expand our circle through inclusion and diversity.

## Crystal Halvorson, General Manager

We posted the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights in our bathrooms, because although this document is widely accepted throughout our developed world, we seem to be struggling with some of its basic tenets in the United States today. At MMFC, we believe in the autonomy and safety of all people, and simply hanging the posters elicited support, conversation, and education on the topic. We expand our circle by showing care to others.

With your help, we celebrated our first year of awarding grants to small farms in our circle—this project was fun and impactful! Five producers in the area were able to do a bit more this year to make their business thrive, and we were able to help get their stories out with some great press on the project throughout the Chippewa Valley. We expand our circle by supporting vendors doing good by their land and their animals.

This year, we hosted voter registrations, Coffee with a Cop, Business Watch meetings, kids from schools, community groups, and educators. We expand our circle by empowering people to be educated and active.

*We love this work, and we love working for you!*

# A great place to work

Part of our mission here at MMFC is ensuring our employees enjoy “sustainable, equitable, and dignified employment,” but what, exactly, does that mean? It includes those basic things we all search for when looking for meaningful work- training, benefits, and a safe and welcoming work environment- but there is more to it.

When we ask folks why they want to work at the co-op, far and away the most common answer is “because of the people.” Some applicants say community, because that’s what we are all building together.

Our customers and vendors know our names. They ask about our days and make us laugh. We’ve even had customers sing or dance with us as they go through the checkout line! Part of what makes employment sustainable is having fun at work and knowing that our efforts impact our community in a positive way.

(Pictured: upper left, Jay and Gabbie of the Customer Services Team, bottom right, Allegra, Scanning Specialist, helping re-pot MANY of our store plants)

*The people who work here at MMFC are people I love to call my coworkers. I get to come to work and be surrounded by amazing people who are so kind and caring. They care about each other, about the customers we see every day, and about always making every experience the best it can be. I’m very thankful to be a part of such an incredible group of such wonderful people. Even though I haven’t been at MMFC long, I already feel like a part of the community and I hope every time you walk through our doors you feel that way too!*

- Madi, Customer Services Team



earn livable wages  
within year one



eligible for health  
benefits

# of full-time staff  
(30+ hours/week)

25

# of part-time staff  
(<30 hours/week)

10

total staff

35



# Growing together!

Rick Remington, President MMFC Board of Directors

Our cooperative has been in business for forty-five years. Our enterprise has grown from a small group of committed people looking for an alternative to mainstream food shopping to nearly 2,500 owners. We have grown from bins and buckets to a full-service grocery shopping experience. We have a professional staff that constantly strives for innovation and improvement. We give back to the community in ways mainstream grocers cannot in terms of education and support for our producers and patrons. And there's no doubt in my mind, we have set and reached the highest bar for customer service.

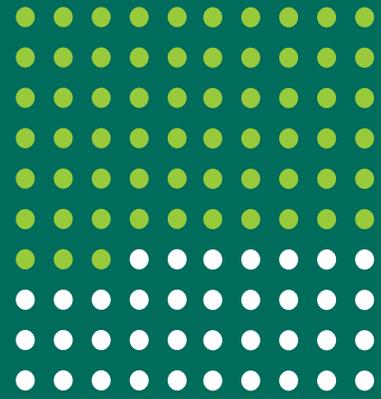
For reasons noted, the Menomonie Market Board of Directors is proud of where we are today. As your elected representatives, we hope that pride is a reflection of the pride shared by all our owners. The Board does not make operational decisions, but instead steers the big ship that is our co-op in the direction we feel is in the best interest of our owners. We spend a great deal of time overseeing the financial condition of our co-op, and in overseeing how well we achieve our Ends – to be central to a thriving healthy community. We continue to discuss ways in which

the Board can advocate for our co-op in order to increase the community's investment and patronage so necessary for return to profitability following our recent expansion.

Every Menomonie Market owner owns an equal share in our cooperative. That means an equal share in our successes and challenges, and an equal share in planning the future of our co-op. Menomonie Market was built by you, for you. Consider the ways in which you can advocate for our co-op, spread the word, and bring to life the co-op difference. Imagine what the next forty-five years can be.

## Highlighted Board Initiatives

- Determine ways that the board of directors can help MMFC be a better community member.
- Connect with owners to help grow the co-op together.
- Increasing food access in our community through co-op programs like Round up for Good.



**63%**  
of sales come from  
**owners**

**37%**  
of sales come from  
**other shoppers**

“We belong to an organization of people who own a grocery store, and we are looking forward to growing the co-op together.”

Back row L to R: Rick Remington, Wendy MacDougall, Steve Hanson, Gary Johnson,  
Front row L to R: Barb Button, Chris Hayden, Mariann Holm



## Building bridges

Cooperative principle 7 is “Concern for Community” an important part of what makes us more than just a grocery store. We connect with the community through attendance at events like Meet Menomonie, through presentations to local groups and organizations, and by offering store tours to a variety of groups and classes.

Last year we were invited by 18 organizations to provide learning opportunities, spread the word about cooperatives, and support organizations we love. We presented to 3rd graders about recycling; 6th graders about composting and sustainability; and to the retired community about the benefits of turmeric.

(Pictured: Outreach & Education Coordinator, Becca Kleist with international UW-Stout students following a tour.)

*“The ability to meet community members outside of the co-op, share knowledge, and build relationships, is an invaluable piece of the work I am privileged to do at MMFC.”*

— Becca Kleist, Outreach & Education Coordinator



# 18

**Total number of external  
educational events participated  
in 2017-18.**

## A place to learn & grow

Cooperatives provide education to owners, community members, staff, and board members. MMFC owners continue to ask for more learning opportunities from us and we are proud to be expanding the classroom calendar each year.

Cooking classes, eating well, herbalism, art, yoga, and meditation are some of the topics we shared with the community this past year. You kept our classroom busy learning new skills, sharing your knowledge, and enjoying new things with your friends and families.

Classes provide educational opportunities for our community, staff, and owners, and also allows us to support local people doing what they love. Many of our instructors own small businesses and are passionate about sharing what they know with all of you.

Have an idea for a class you'd like to teach or a topic you'd like to learn about? Please connect with our Outreach and Education Coordinator, Becca Kleist.

(Pictured: Ben and Megan attending a Co+op Explorers art class in 2018)

# 709

people participated in

# 102

co-op classes and events in 2017-18



# A thriving healthy community

Menomonie Market will be central to a thriving healthy community, so begins our Ends Statement. How do we measure or determine whether our co-op is bringing these ends to life? We know that widening the experience we create inside the store is critical but so is the experience the co-op helps create outward into the community. We constantly use our ends objectives as the foundation of the work we do—on all levels.

We support the health and growth of many local farmers, vendors, and small food producers through our sales of their products—offering shelf space for products that would normally not be found on grocery store shelves. Almost 40% of co-op sales are from these local products, meaning hundreds of thousands of dollars stay local and reverberate outward into the wider community by way of these farmers and vendors utilizing goods and services locally as well.

Our Hill O’Beans program collected 15,700 beans in FY 17-18. Donations from this program go to local organizations, each doing important work to make our community a healthier and more vibrant place. 15,700 beans also represents 15,700 bags,

disposable cups, or containers kept out of circulation due to your use of reusable options. This number reflects that of our average 471 transactions per day, only 43 people are bringing in their own bags or containers. What can you do to help us increase this number next year?

(Pictured: upper right, the Schneider family of Together Farms, producers of grass-fed beef, lamb and pork. Bottom left, equipment used by Amish farmers that are a part of Wisconsin Growers Cooperative that supplies organic produce to MMFC.)

## Definition of Local

Menomonie Market defines local as any product produced or grown within the five state area of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, and Michigan. With our many seasons, this wider area allows us to carry more locally produced products like grains and wine, in addition to produce, meat and eggs.

## Sales from local products:

**\$1.4**  
million dollars in revenue

**37%**  
of total sales



Local Giving

**>\$20,000**

Food Donated

**>20,000lbs**

Beans  
Collected

**>15,700**

# Fund our Foodshed

In April 2018 we launched the Fund our Foodshed Grant Program. We implemented this program to further the co-op's mission of creating a thriving and healthy foodshed, supporting the growth of regional farming, food processing, and product development in the Chippewa Valley.

Customers rounded up over 6,000 times in April, raising over \$3,250 in individual contributions and a donation by the co-op. In early May, the MMFC grant committee (comprised of two co-op board members, two staff members, and two MMFC owners) reviewed twelve applications and made selections for five local projects. Award recipients were selected based on a variety of criteria; most importantly the potential positive impact on the agricultural economy of the Chippewa Valley.

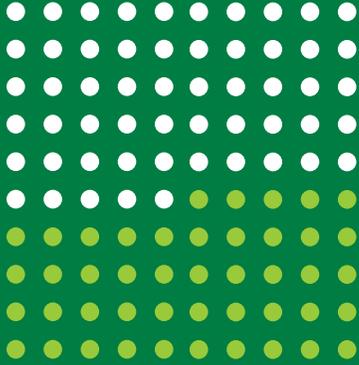
The grants directly impact small, sustainably-focused, local farming operations. When we support the viability of small farms we support strengthening our community and economy. Supporting small also means access to a wider diversity of food and products grown and produced in the Chippewa Valley.

Congratulations to our 2018 Fund our Foodshed Recipients: Mary Dirty Face Farm, Bifrost Farm, Deutsch Family Farm, EB Ranch, and Baruk Yah.

*“To be able to look around and see that the shoppers in the community decided that it’s worth it to support local farms is huge.”*

*- Rachel Henderson, Mary Dirty Face Farm, 2018 Grant Recipient*





**45¢**

the average amount  
donated each time  
you rounded up.



number of grant  
dollars given to  
Fund our Foodshed  
grant recipients

**\$3,250**

# What's next for MMFC?

The 2018-19 fiscal year brings many exciting changes and new programs for MMFC and our community of shoppers and owners. You've asked for affordable meal options and more ways to support community organizations through the co-op and we heard you.

**\$4 Dinners:** Will occur each Wednesday, 4:30-7:30pm, and will be a different entree every week. This served meal will be a balanced plate of protein, grains, and veggies. Whether you're on the go or looking to sit down and enjoy a meal with someone you love, these dinners are for you.

**Round up for Good:** Many owners requested the ability to round up their purchases all year. We're excited to announce that this is happening. In addition to Fund our Foodshed local farming grants, we will soon be able to offer double dollars to WI Foodshare users on fresh fruits and vegetables. Round up for Good will fund both the Fund our Foodshed grant program and the Double Dollars match in 2018-19.

For more information about these programs, please contact General Manager, Crystal Halvorson.



## annual sales in millions





**To our owners, board, staff,  
and partners – thank you!  
Together we make MMFC  
a place for all.**

