



PORTLAND FOOD CO-OP

➡ Annual Report 2016



MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

By Board Members **TARYN HALLWEAVER, CHRIS STACEY,**
and **RACHELLE CURRAN APSE**

What a year 2016 was. In a year of extreme political turmoil, it's been gratifying to see so many people actively engaged in our community, perhaps more than ever before. This year also saw a severe drought in Maine, a clear indicator of the changing climate around us. Our farmers felt it. It underscored the urgency of our Co-op's role in re-regionalizing a food system that is sustainable and resilient.

Taking stock of all this, we're so proud of the Portland Food Co-op. We're a business that is collectively owned by thousands of people. We are democratically controlled. We're by definition mission-driven. In this era of individualistic consumer choices becoming increasingly available, easy, micro-targeted--even shipped for free within two days--belonging to the Co-op is something to feel really good about.

And there's much to celebrate from this past year. We are thrilled that we now have 4,000 Member-Owners! The Portland Food Co-op isn't just supported by you, the owners -- it literally could not exist without you. We are so appreciative for everything you have done to help make this your Co-op, whether you shopped regularly, voted for Board members (or maybe even ran for the Board yourself), filled out comment cards and surveys, or encouraged a friend to become a Member-Owner. Thank you.

Another exciting milestone was that in our second year as a startup business, we have started to see profitable months and are on our way towards financial sustainability. We are so grateful to our General Manager (GM) John Crane's leadership and the hard work of the store staff in getting us here. Their initiative has made the store an awesome and welcoming place, by working with over 280 farmers and producers so we can carry a huge variety of local products, and by launching Maine Harvest Bucks to make the Co-op more accessible to lower-income people.

At the same time, this past year was a humbling one, and we are clear-eyed about the challenges ahead of us. In the spirit of vulnerability and authenticity in this moment of noisy and forceful sound-bites, here are the tensions we're grappling with and welcome your feedback on:

First: the growing pains of getting bigger. Four thousand Member-Owners is really different from our scrappy, volunteer-run buying club of 150 people. While building our collective economic power is one of our core reasons for being, we as a Board need to keep adjusting how to hear feedback, honor a diversity of opinions and perspectives, and find common cause to make good decisions and drive our Co-op forward.

Second: inclusivity and accessibility. We love our home, at the intersection between Munjoy Hill and East Bayside. We love that people travel from afar to get to us. And our store staff is working on broadening our product line to make the Co-op more welcoming to more people by adding lower-priced everyday items.

Third: no margin, no mission. While we're pleased we made major steps towards profitability this year, we need to keep growing sales and building our long-term financial sustainability. Our GM John's strategy, which the Board fully supports, involves broadening our product line and customer base. We'll continue providing the wide diversity of local farmers and supporters that you're used to, and you'll also see more generic options for staples like peanut butter, pasta, and more. There isn't a prescription on how to strike this balance, and we appreciate John's approach to trying, tinkering, and adjusting as we go. The most important thing you as a Member-Owner can do to help expand the Co-op's mission is to shop regularly at the Co-op and consider buying more of your groceries there. Every dollar you spend at the Co-op builds a stronger local economy, supports more local jobs, more local farmers and producers, and builds a democratic society.

Although the road ahead looks to be bumpy for our country and our world, we are so glad that you have committed to being a part of the solution by being a Member-Owner of the Co-op. Thank you for all your support in 2016, and we look forward to learning and growing with you on the journey forward.

Contact the board by emailing board@portlandfood.coop

2016 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Julie Baroodly
Chris Burnham
Rachelle Curran Apse
Melissa Emerson
Taryn Hallweaver
Anna Kent
Carolyn May
Matt Peters
David Siegfried
Chris Stacey
Daniel Ungier

THANK YOU TO OUTGOING BOARD MEMBERS:

This month marks the end of Board terms for Anna Kent and Daniel Ungier, who are not re-running. Anna and Daniel have been involved with the Co-op since the earliest days and contributed greatly to the development of the organization. We will miss their presence on the Board and look forward to seeing them at the Co-op.

We also want to thank Chris Burnham and David "Sieg" Siegfried for stepping up to fill two Board positions that were vacated over the course of the year. Sieg previously served on the Board for over 10 years and we valued his experience in his return to the board.

Please join us in thanking them all for their service.



“ Every dollar you spend at the Co-op builds a stronger local economy, supports more local jobs, more local farmers and producers, and builds a democratic society. ”

◀ Local strawberries from Six River Farm

MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

JOHN CRANE

Back in the fall of 2012, I had just recently moved to Portland and signed up online to join a small buying club called the Portland Food Co-op. I ordered food online and came twice per month to pick up my order. Since I had previously worked in a co-op, I joined the business planning committee. After years of investigation and deliberation, the Co-op membership had just decided to move forward with opening a retail store. Those initial meetings were held in various donated locations and often our former warehouse space, where we huddled around a table with an electric space heater by our feet to keep us warm. We had less money in the bank than many individuals, and a big dream.

As I write to you today, I am one year and eight months into my tenure as General Manager of the Portland Food Co-op, the thriving retail store. While researching and writing for this 2016 Annual Report, I am filled with both amazement and pride about this incredible business that we are building together. So many dedicated people have contributed so much time and talent to make our Co-op a success. I think about all of the community members who volunteered hundreds upon hundreds of hours during the planning and startup phases. I think about all of the Member-Owners who, combined, lent us over \$800,000 when no institutional lender would. I think about the dedicated staff who created our store from an empty shell and come to work every day with dedication and passion.

I am aware of how fortunate I am to have joined this Co-op at such a pivotal moment in its evolution. I am thankful that I get to work in a wonderfully supportive community for a business that is truly making a difference in our local food system and economy.

I hope you find this Annual Report informative and meaningful. If you have any questions, please feel free to email me at gm@portlandfood.coop or ask for me in the Co-op.

OUR MISSION

The Portland Food Co-op brings local producers and consumers together in a member-owned marketplace to grow a healthier community and a more sustainable food system. We model cooperative values, operate with transparency, and foster trusting relationships with our customers, employees, and suppliers.



Local produce is now more affordable to SNAP/EBT (formerly known as “Food Stamps”) users thanks to Maine Harvest Bucks.

“ Local sales currently account for over 40% of all Co-op sales, which is far above the national average of 8% for grocery stores. ”

OUR GOALS

(ALSO KNOWN AS OUR ENDS)

If you have read articles or information about the Co-op’s structure, you might see the word “Ends” mentioned quite a bit. You may be wondering what this term means.

The Co-op was created with a mission in mind, and from this mission, the Board has created a set of more specific goals or “Ends”— written policies that outline the intended direction for the Co-op. The Board tasks the General Manager with interpreting these Ends, creating benchmarks for progress, and implementing them as resources allow. The General Manager regularly reports to the Board on his or her success. Over time, the Board and General Manager will review the Ends policies and update them as needed to reflect the changing environment and priorities of Member-Owners.

THE PFC’S ENDS FALL INTO FOUR MAIN CATEGORIES, AS DESCRIBED BELOW:

LOCAL ECONOMY Is the PFC helping to grow our local food system and providing fair working conditions?

EDUCATION Is the PFC a trusted and well-used source of information on food and cooperatives?

PRODUCTS AND FACILITIES Is the PFC providing an honest and welcoming shopping experience, meeting customer needs and preferences, and making strides in environmental sustainability?

CO-OP COMMUNITY Is the PFC engaging with its Member-Owners, community, and other cooperatives?

THE STORIES IN THIS ANNUAL REPORT SHOW SOME OF THE MANY WAYS THAT THE CO-OP HAS BEEN STRIVING TO MEET THESE GOALS.

Milkhouse Local Egnog Tasting 

LOCAL ECONOMY

About seven times a day, a local farmer or producer walks into the Co-op to drop off their wares: fragrant coffee beans, jewel-toned jams and jellies, still-warm loaves of bread, dewy heads of lettuce, and so much more. Since opening in 2014, the Co-op has prioritized delicious local products like these. We're incredibly proud that we now carry items from 283 local farmers and producers.

Local sales currently account for over 40% percent of all Co-op sales, which is far above the national average of 8% for grocery stores, and even exceeds the national average of for small to medium co-ops of 20% - 30%.

Some wonder why all stores don't have the same dedication to local food. The simple answer is that it is more expensive. Receiving and stocking products from a large distributor two to three times per week requires much less staffing than working with multiple small farmers and producers each and every day. We do this, however, because we are a Co-op with a mission: we are committed to strengthening our local food economy.

The Co-op has higher labor costs than average (up to 8% higher than national chains). This is partly because of our commitment to local purchasing. This is also due in part to having a higher starting wage (\$12.32/hour versus Portland's minimum wage of \$10.68/hour) than many other food retailers.

We are excited to partner with Forager, a Maine-based technology startup that makes it easier for businesses to source local food. Their platform allows us to save on some of our labor costs by bringing local farmers, food producers, and food retailers together in one online forum. As one of the first retail partners, we were able to participate in the development process and suggest what features and services would be the most meaningful for us. The development of this platform is great news for the Co-op, and the local food economy as a whole.

While Forager was helping us to navigate buying food from local farmers and producers, a program called Maine Harvest Bucks was making it easier for more community members to purchase local foods.

Maine Harvest Bucks gives SNAP/EBT ("Food Stamp") users a \$5 voucher for local fruits and vegetables for every \$10 spent on local foods. In 2016, we gave out over \$6,000 worth of vouchers for local fruits and vegetables through this program. Maine Harvest Bucks also benefits local farmers and producers by incentivizing the purchase of local products.

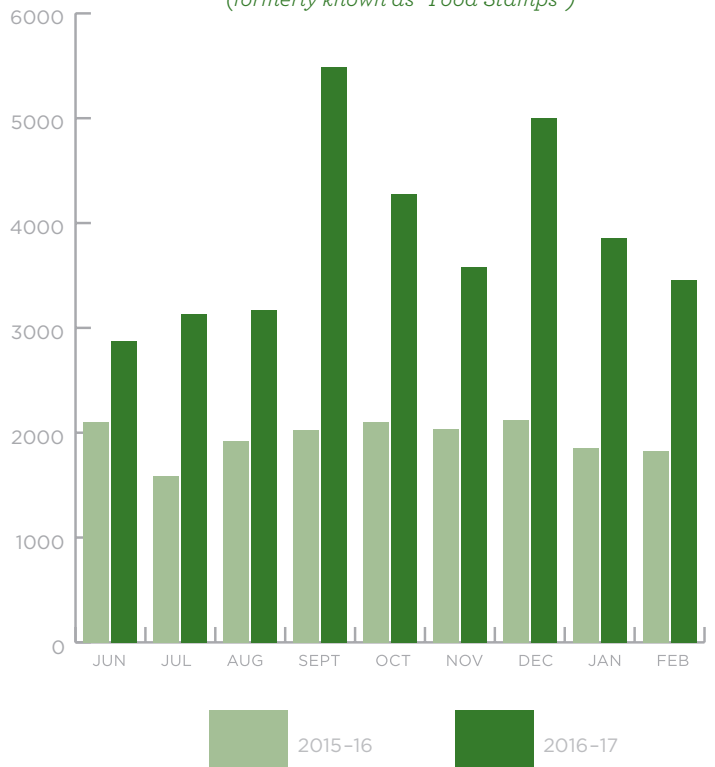
Participating in Maine Harvest Bucks and using Forager both help the Co-op better achieve its mission of connecting our community with local farmers and producers, and we look forward to their continued development.



OUR CO-OP'S LOCAL PURCHASING

	2015	2016	CHANGE
NUMBER OF LOCAL PRODUCERS	262	283	8% INCREASE
NUMBER OF UNIQUE LOCAL PRODUCTS	2229	2438	9.4% INCREASE
SALE OF LOCAL PRODUCTS	\$1,227,268	\$1,660,353	35% INCREASE

SNAP/EBT SALES OF LOCAL FOOD AT THE CO-OP
(formerly known as "Food Stamps")



EDUCATION

When serving a meal to 5,000 people, how much would you budget for the cost of the food? Could you make it work with zero dollars?

It might seem impossible, but we found out in 2016 that it absolutely can be done. The Co-op helped to organize “Feeding the 5,000: Portland, ME” (along with many other community organizations) in which we served thousands of free meals throughout Portland, all with food that otherwise would have gone to waste.

The purpose of the event was to raise awareness about food waste, encourage consumers to reduce wasted food in their homes, and develop connections within our community to reduce structural problems that create food waste.

Our Community Engagement Manager, Mary Alice, served as the volunteer coordinator for the event - which had hundreds of volunteers working together to harvest leftover veggies from the field, chop them up, turn them into soup, and serve them to folks in Monument Square.

While Feeding the 5,000 was certainly the biggest food waste-related event we worked on in 2016, it wasn't the only one. We started the year with a sold-out screening of “Just Eat It” at the Portland Public Library – a film about one couple's experience with eating only free food that would have gone to waste.

Why focus on food waste? Well, the U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that over 30% of food in the U.S. is wasted. Waste happens all the way down the food chain, from farms, to grocery stores, to restaurants, to your own refrigerator. Most of that waste ends up in landfills, where it rots and turns into methane - a dangerous greenhouse gas. At the same time, Maine is also one of the most food insecure states in the country. It doesn't seem right that many of our community members are not sure where their next meal is going to come from when there is so much good food going to waste.

Those two challenges – high levels of food insecurity and high levels of wasted food – present an opportunity for community organizations to work together. To that end, we co-organized a “Food for Thought” event at Frith Farm with Maine Farmland Trust around building community connections around these challenges. There, organizations like Maine Hunger Initiative, the Locker Project, and South Portland Food Cupboard, talked about the difficulties their organizations face and how they work to increase access to healthy food. Volunteers at the event “gleaned” 38 pounds of spinach, all of which was donated to the South Portland Food Cupboard. (Historically, gleaning meant harvesting crops from the field that were not going to be harvested, because of time constraints or quality concerns. Today, gleaning is used to mean “rescuing” any food that would otherwise go to waste.)

Also with Maine Farmland Trust, we co-organized a “Climate Change and Agriculture” panel at Maine College of Art in which a group of local farmers and agriculture experts discussed how farmers can take steps to combat climate change. One audience member said that it was the first time he felt hopeful about the possibility of reducing (or even reversing) some effects of climate change.

In addition to these larger community events, the Co-op organized over 20 classes in our store during 2016. Classes included workshops like kombucha making, container gardening, elderberry uses and preparations, creating solstice decorations, and improving natural digestive health.

As an organization, the PFC strives to create educational opportunities in our store as well as in the community. By partnering with community organizations, reaching out to individual instructors, and leveraging our combined networks, we are able to reach tens of thousands of people, and inform them about issues that are relevant to our mission.

Bagging spinach at Frith Farm after volunteers helped glean it from the fields



Feeding the 5,000
PHOTO: NINA CIFFOLILLO



“ We served thousands of free meals throughout Portland, all with food that otherwise would have gone to waste. ”



PRODUCTS AND FACILITIES

The Co-op recently conducted a survey to gauge how well we are meeting our Member-Owners and customer needs and preferences. When asked “How well is the Co-op meeting your needs?” in a variety of categories, the most favorable responses were for:

ATMOSPHERE / AMBIANCE
FRIENDLY / COURTEOUS STAFF
NATURAL / ORGANIC FOODS

QUALITY / FRESHNESS OF PRODUCTS
CLEANLINESS

We were thrilled to learn that, overall, we are doing well at providing a warm and inviting environment. Our Co-op is not just a place to shop for food, it is also a place where you can feel welcome and accepted — a space that encourages community building. This is something that sets us apart from other food stores, and is a trait that we will continue to improve upon.

In the spirit of transparency, we received some unfavorable responses for:

PRICE

PRODUCT SELECTION

The lower scores for price and product selection indicate that while the Co-op has made some progress over the past year in these categories, there is still much room for improvement. We also learned from the survey that many of our Member-Owners and customers shop regularly at other food stores, especially when they need to be budget conscious.

For us, it seems that price and product selection are actually very much tied together — the Co-op can sometimes feel inaccessible to those with a budget because too often we only have the “high end” option of any given item. We are working hard to bring in affordable options for each staple item so that more of our community can find products they enjoy at prices they can afford.

Continuing to increase our overall sales will also help to bring down prices. While it can be difficult for us to get the types of deals and discounts that the larger stores receive, our buyers are constantly negotiating to get deals and volume discounts whenever we can. The issue of price has come up many times in survey comments, and we have taken this feedback to heart. We hope you will continue to shop at the Co-op and give us feedback (via comments or via your spending habits) to help make our community owned market even stronger.



PRODUCTS AND FACILITIES *continued*

Outside of the survey, another key aspect of the Products and Facilities goal is that we are “providing choice and information about products, including balanced information about products subject to consumer boycotts, or having potentially objectionable characteristics.”

During 2016, the Co-op became aware of a brand in the store that was subject to a consumer boycott. Familias Unidas por La Justicia called for a boycott of Driscoll’s berries. The Co-op initially posted a sign about the boycott and continued to sell the berries. At the request of many Member-Owners, in the fall of 2016 the Co-op removed the berries from sale and honored the boycott.

Information transparency is especially important with products from small local producers whose labeling might not be as detailed as national brands. Eggs are an excellent example of this. The Co-op sells eggs from six different local farms but the characteristics of each farm are different, and not necessarily apparent on the label or through any other means. At the point of purchase, we have shelf tags with descriptions such as:

CAGE FREE
FREE RANGE

PASTURE RAISED
ORGANIC

NON-GMO FEED

Produce is another area where we have made improvements in transparency over the past year. Previously, the Co-op used a designation called “Integrated Pest Management” which has become prevalent in the produce industry. After receiving feedback from a Member-Owner, we determined that this designation was confusing since IPM certification allows for conventional pesticide use. IPM items are now classified as conventional in our produce case. We add further information to our signage whenever it is available. For other local farms that are not certified organic, we work with the farmer to create a farm description that is accurate and informative.

Environmental sustainability was a key factor in many equipment decisions made during the opening of the Co-op. Except for our produce cases, all refrigerated cases have doors. All overhead lighting is LED. As of the writing of this Report, the Co-op has yet to replace one LED bulb. All back room and office lighting is controlled by motion sensors. These lights shut off after 5 minutes of inactivity. Compressors

for the Co-op’s refrigeration and freezer units are located inside the building, instead of outside which is a more common practice. Heat from these units is reclaimed to heat our water.

The Co-op’s Grab-and-Go case uses compostable containers whenever they are available and suitable. A new source for paper composite containers was recently identified to replace some of the recyclable but non-compostable plastics.

Cardboard boxes from all deliveries are stored at the front of the store for customer use. This prevents the need for the Co-op to recycle them and provides customers with an alternative to paper bags. The Co-op also maintains a reusable bag lending tree to further reduce the need for disposable bags. Reusable bags are given to all new Member-Owners and sold at the registers for a reduced price.

The seating area contains receptacles for returnable bottles, recycling, and composting. These receptacles are also present in the back room. Our recycling and composting are so effective that the Co-op does not require a trash dumpster, which is a staple at many retail stores. We have two trash cans which are sufficient for the waste we generate each week. Much of our food that is past its “sell by” date, but still perfectly edible, is donated to the Preble Street Resource Center. In 2016, we donated over 600 crates of food to Preble Street (roughly estimated to be worth about \$30,000). We engage the services of Garbage to Garden for composting of the remainder of our food waste (which includes not just expired food but also scraps and trim from our produce department and deli). In 2016, we composted roughly 3,200 gallons of food waste (15,000 lbs.) which would have otherwise gone into the waste stream.

While a few other businesses in our area have bulk departments, our Co-op puts special emphasis on the use of reusable containers. We sell reusable containers at a low cost. We also encourage the use of containers from home. Staff members are trained to assist customers with tare weights and the entire bulk purchasing process. In 2016, we had our first bulk department sale that was specific to folks bringing in their own containers. This was a success and will be continued.



“ By identifying needs in our community, developing strong relationships with community partners, and working with similar organizations to address those needs, we can work toward building a healthier, more sustainable food system. ”

◀ Co-op volunteers at a work day, helping Cultivating Community to build the community gardens on the Eastern Prom.

CO-OP COMMUNITY

In 2016, we also began developing deeper ties to other like-minded organizations, from Portland and across the Northeast.

The Co-op is now a member of the Portland Food Council — an association that officially launched in 2017, but we assisted with planning processes during 2016. Anyone can attend these quarterly meetings and help foster a healthy community.

Statewide, we worked closely with other Maine food co-ops, farm stores, and non-profits in launching the “Maine Harvest Bucks” program which allows SNAP/EBT users to earn \$5 vouchers for local fruits and vegetables. (Read more about that program in the “Local economy” section.)

We also joined the Neighboring Food Co-op Association, an organization made up of 35 food co-ops across New England. This allows us to work together with other co-ops to develop strategies for increasing local purchasing, sharing best practices, networking, promoting cooperatives, and much more. Our General Manager, John Crane, recently joined the board of the NFCA.

In October (National Co-op Month) we achieved the following:

+ Fed people thousands of free servings of food at Feeding the 5,000: Portland, ME (see “Education” for more info)

+ Hosted a “Co-op School” to discuss different models of cooperatives with Cooperative Design Lab and Local Sprouts

+ Held a successful Member-Owner drive to increase Member-Ownership in our Co-op

We continuously seek to engage with our Member-Ownership creating volunteer opportunities within the community and by soliciting feedback. Over the past two years, the Co-op has conducted three Member-Owner and customer surveys. We always include comment sections in all surveys, ensuring that Member-Owners are given a full opportunity to voice their opinions. These are considered a vital part of feedback and play a significant role in decision making.

By identifying needs in our community, developing strong relationships with community partners, and working with similar organizations to address those needs, we can work toward building a healthier, more sustainable food system.

FINANCIAL REPORT

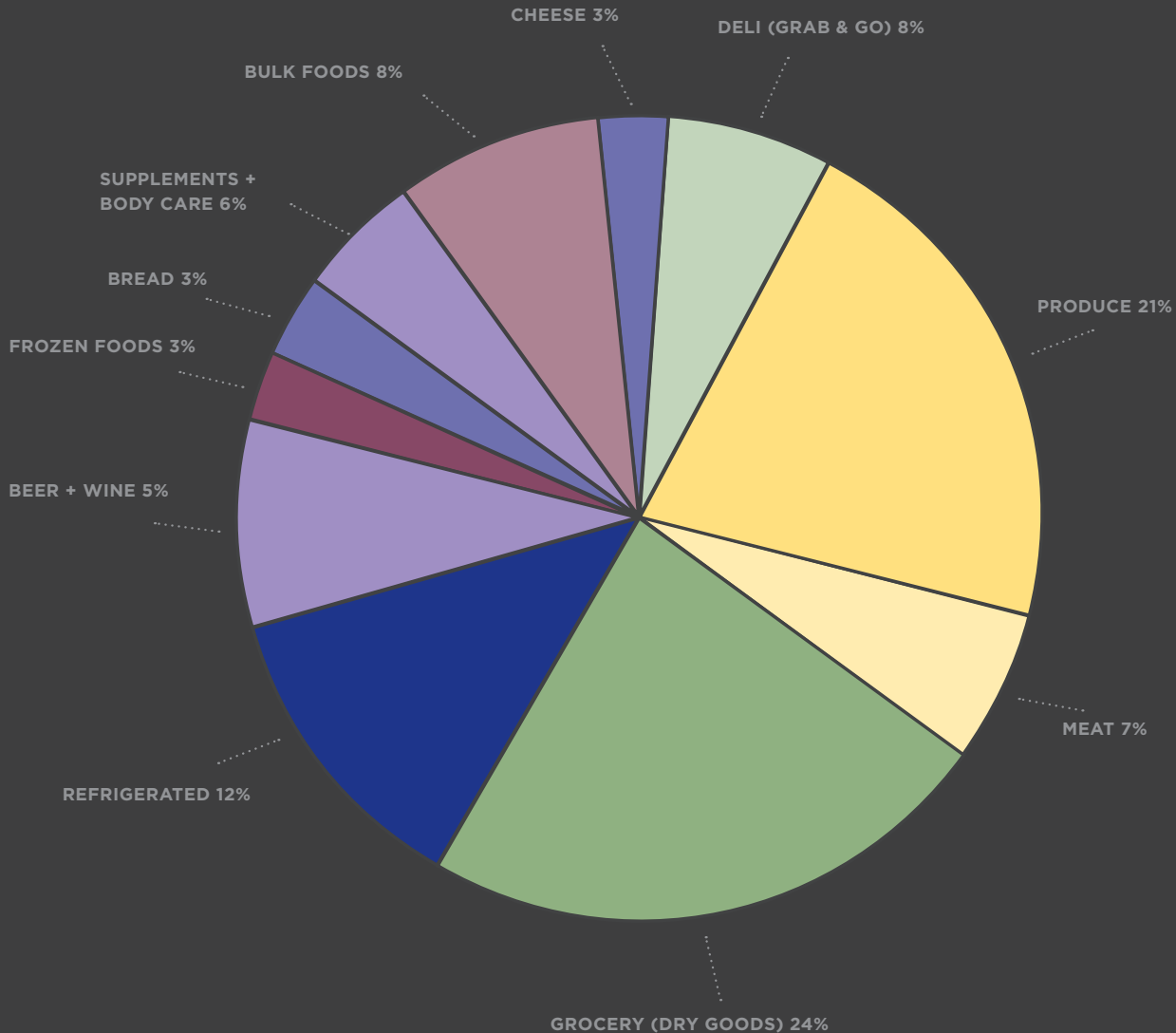
We ended 2016 with sales of \$3,756,773 which is a 14.84% increase over our 2015 sales of \$3,271,357. This is especially significant because across the nation, many food co-ops are struggling with very low or even negative sales growth. Part of this increase is possibly the result of us being a new Co-op that is still growing into its market. Another reason, however, is surely the enthusiastic support that we have received from our Member-Owners and our community. Our average daily customer count has risen 11.64% from 335 per day in 2015 to 374 in 2016.

Sales in 2016 continued to be exceedingly strong.

2016 PROFIT & LOSS STATEMENT WITH PREVIOUS YEAR COMPARISON (UNAUDITED)

	Jan - Dec '16	Jan - Dec '15	\$ Change	% Change
Sales	3,756,773.06	3,271,357.77	485,415.29	14.84%
Cost of Goods	2,556,012.16	2,286,645.24	269,366.92	11.78%
Gross Profit	1,200,760.90	984,712.53	216,048.37	21.94%
Payroll Expenses	836,345.35	749,377.43	86,967.92	11.61%
Occupancy Expenses (rent, utilities)	146,909.05	143,210.64	3,698.41	4.69%
Operations Expenses (licenses, business fees, equipment purchases & maintenance, supplies, credit card processing fees)	91,806.58	132,786.30	-40,979.72	-30.86%
All Other Expenses (insurances, interest on debt, professional services, marketing, education & outreach)	118,760.57	134,020.76	-15,260.19	-11.39%
Depreciation	93,990.00	86,898.59	7,091.41	1.08%
Total Expenses	1,287,811.55	1,246,293.72	41,517.83	3.33%
Net Income	-87,050.65	-261,581.19	174,530.54	66.72%

WHAT CUSTOMERS ARE BUYING

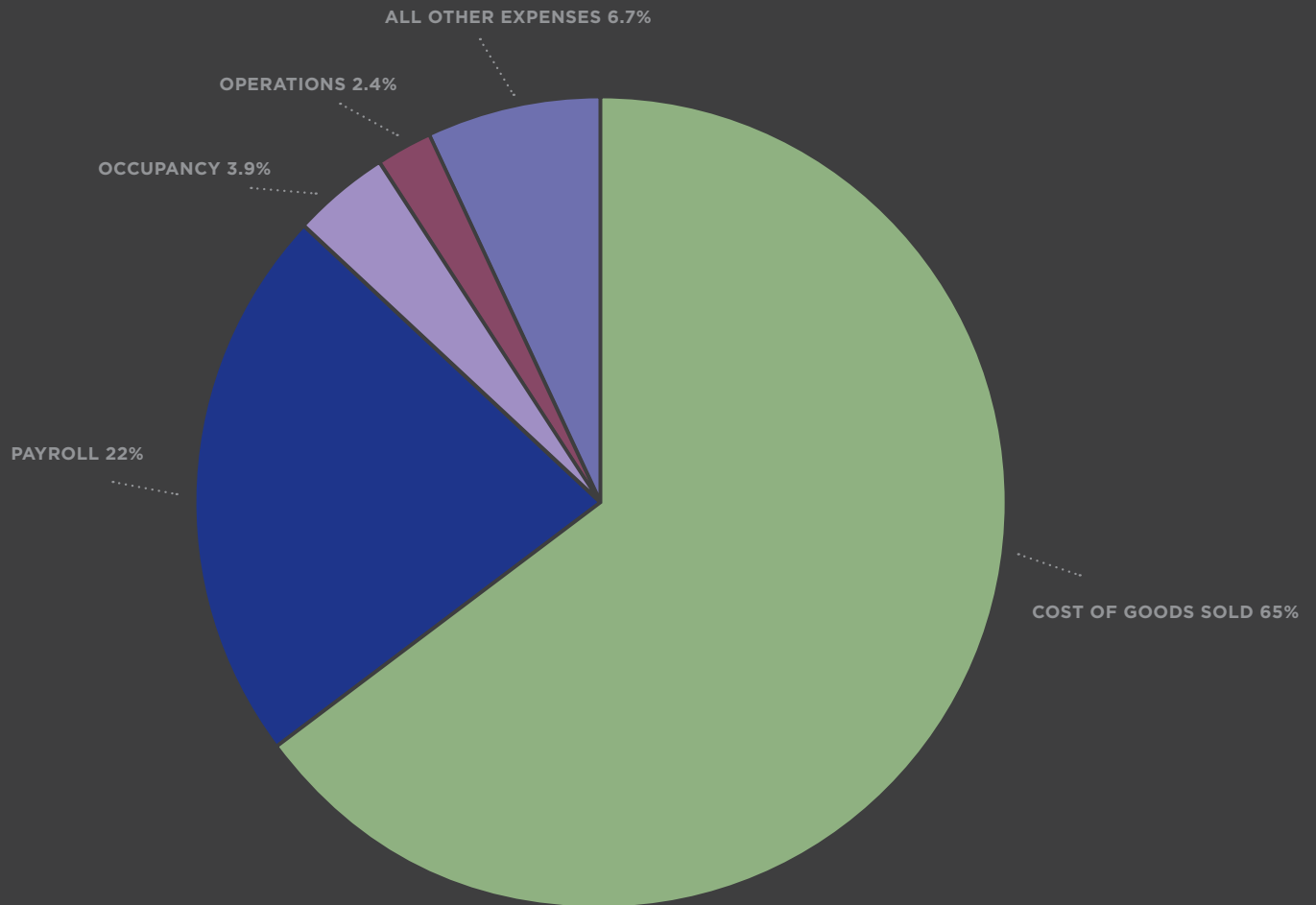


While we were not yet profitable in 2016, we have made great strides over our 2015 performance. This was anticipated in our pre-store financial planning as very few businesses are profitable in their first couple of years. We are well on our way to a fully profitable 2017.

When we first opened our Co-op, we had to guess, to some degree, about the products our Member-Owners and customers wanted to purchase here. We knew we needed to focus on local foods and that has proven to be a key driver in our success. Over 40% of our sales are for local products! Which products to carry, both locally and from away, however, was something with which we had to experiment. We have

altered our inventory significantly over the past two years in response to what people were purchasing and what was requested. Over the past year, we have discounted and donated a fair amount of our slow-moving inventory to make way for new offerings. The decrease in expenses in 2016 is because we are no longer purchasing start-up related equipment and supplies. Now, we are able to purchase only what is necessary for ongoing operations. We also reduced our need to hire outside consultants, which led to a reduction in expenses in 2016. The combination of decreased expenses and improved product selection resulted in increased profitability.

AN AVERAGE DAY AT THE CO-OP WHERE YOUR DOLLARS GO



The only significant increase we have seen in our expenses over the previous year is in payroll. A busier Co-op requires more staff members. We now have 28 people employed at the Co-op, which is something we should all be proud of. We have also dedicated ourselves, over the past year, to increasing the amount of money we are paying our staff. We have an incredibly talented and dedicated team and are committed to treating them the best that we can. Payroll is by far our largest expense, accounting for 70% of our gross profit.

Outside of payroll, we have made every effort to minimize our expenses and will continue this into the future. The decrease in our "Fixed Assets" is the drop in value of our equipment, due to depreciation. The three keys necessary to our continued success are: minimizing expenses, continuing to increase sales, and ensuring that we are only bringing in products that Member-Owners and customers will purchase.

2016 BALANCE SHEET WITH PREVIOUS YEAR COMPARISON (UNAUDITED)

	Dec 31, 2016	Dec 31, 2015	\$ Change	% Change
ASSETS				
Current Assets				
Checking/Savings	212,013.51	211,038.61	974.90	0.46%
Other Current Assets	222,231.90	219,977.47	2,254.43	1.03%
Total Current Assets	434,245.41	431,016.08	3,229.33	0.75%
Fixed Assets	865,749.65	959,739.65	93,990.00	-9.79%
Other Assets	121,374.72	121,374.72	0.00	0.0%
TOTAL ASSETS	1,421,369.78	1,512,130.45	90,760.67	-6.0%
LIABILITIES & EQUITY				
Liabilities				
Current Liabilities	175,677.49	167,927.09	7,750.40	4.62%
Long Term Liabilities	1,169,673.88	1,217,842.16	-48,168.28	-3.96%
Total Liabilities	1,345,351.37	1,385,769.25	-40,417.88	-2.92%
Equity	76,018.41	126,361.20	50,342.79	-39.84%
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	1,421,369.78	1,512,130.45	90,760.67	-6.0%

“ The three keys necessary to our continued success are: minimizing expenses, continuing to increase sales, and ensuring that we are only bringing in products that Member-Owners and customers will purchase. ”



YOU OWN IT. NOW WHAT?

The last year has seen continued growth of Member-Ownership, sales, and community programming at the Co-op. If you're inspired by the work we are doing, and will continue to do, we ask you to take one or more of the action steps listed to the right. Each one of them helps the Co-op achieve our mission of bringing together local farmers and producers to grow a healthier community and more sustainable food system.


 "COOPS BUILD COMMUNITY" at last year's Annual Meeting.


 Produce Manager Michael Shepard
 Photo by Greta Rybus

- + **Shop** at the Co-op and encourage your friends to do the same.
- + **Give us feedback.** We always want to know how we can improve.
- + **Attend and share information** about our classes and events.
- + **Volunteer.** We are often looking for help with events and special projects.
- + **Consider a leadership role.** We will be recruiting Board candidates for 2018.
- + **Tell everyone that you are a Member-Owner** of this strong and vibrant community owned cooperative.

“ The Co-op’s success is built on the relationships and community we share. ”



