

Dear Co-op Friends,

We wanted to take a moment to acknowledge the concerns around COVID-19 and its impact on our community. We take the health and safety of our Co-op community seriously, and want to assure you, our Members and customers that we are taking every step to ensure the safety of our community during this time. We are monitoring the current COVID-19 outbreak and following the recommendations of the CDC, FDA, and Vermont Department of Health. Below is a general overview of how we are ensuring best practices across our stores. We will keep this page updated as new information arises.

Co-op Preparedness

The health and safety of our community is our number one priority at the Co-op. Our existing practices focus heavily on sanitation and food safety and we have increased our use of sanitizing agents across the store, including implementing more frequent sanitation of check-out areas, baskets and carts, and door handles. We have also worked with our distributors to increase our standard orders of shelf stable items to ensure that we are able to best meet the needs of our community as they prepare for a variety of situations. That said, we have experienced minimal supply chain interruptions and may continue to see this as demand increases across the areas that our distributors service. We will do our best to keep our community informed of any out of stock items and will actively seek alternatives when possible.

Food Safety at the Co-op

Food safety is of the utmost importance at the Co-op. Our employees must follow a strict set of procedures when handling a wide variety of products from prepared foods to fresh items, and even packaged items across our different departments.

Employee Wellness

We understand that ensuring the health and wellness of our Co-op staff is integral to ensuring the health and wellness of our broader community. That said, in addition to reminding our staff of proper sanitation and handwashing techniques, as well as continuously updating communication around COVID-19, we offer generous Paid Time Off (PTO), and encourage employees to err on the side of caution should any concern over well-being arise.

Resources

We understand that there is a lot of uncertainty during this time and encourage our community members to review the resources below for the most up to date and comprehensive information available.

- [CDC](#)
- [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#)
- [Vermont Department of Health](#)

As always, we are happy to field questions or provide further clarity about our practices and appreciate your understanding as we navigate this evolving reality. Please reach out to our Marketing, Education and Membership Manager, Karin Mott at karinmott@middlebury.coop with your thoughts. You can also reach us at 802-388-7276.