

NEBRASKA



FOOD COOPERATIVE

Members Newsletter

January 2010

HELLO COOP MEMBERS,

The Nebraska Food Cooperative reached a major milestone at the end of 2009 by crossing the 500 membership level. We are now 500 strong! With less than four years of activity, this is quite exciting for us! Without you, none of it would be possible. Thank you to all of you for your support and dedication towards building a stronger network for local foods. Every dollar you spend on the local food economy keeps a small family farm surviving. Each dollar is a vote for how we want our agricultural landscape to function and look like.

These times are trying times as the population continues to grow and technology advances efforts such as vaccination for E:Coli contamination and irradiation of foods. Such advances will work towards keeping meat and dairy production at unsafe levels, but the consumer always has the ultimate power. By reaching out to our neighbors, meeting our farmers and growers, we can transition our agriculture into a different picture. By growing food in spaces around our homes and supporting the farmers that surround our communities, we can and will create a local food system that expresses concern for our environment and focuses on the freshness, diversity and quality of our food.

In 2009, the Nebraska Food Cooperative, purchased a refrigerated trailer and truck, initiating a local transport and delivery system helping our farmers and growers living West and North of the metropolitan areas with deliveries to our hub sites in Lincoln and Omaha. As a result, we doubled the number of our produce suppliers. Overall, fifteen new producer members joined the cooperative in 2009.

NFC also offered bi-monthly distribution from July through October, adding four more cycles to our annual ordering calendar. Volunteers helped expand pick-up sites in six new locations. In November, we raised our fees to 20% as this was necessary to help the Cooperative maintain operation and transportation costs.

Each month, our delivery driver, Roy, travels a round trip of 300 plus miles picking up food from on average ten or more producers in various communities. He collects the food and in less than 24 hours, this food is assembled and distributed from our hub sites to customers around this same 300 mile radius. Producers pick the eggs and produce the day before or day of. The meat is prepared fresh monthly or bimonthly by local processors and freezer packed for your storage.



Owning and operating our own truck requires maintenance and costs, but it's the communities within the three hundred mile radius that feel the economic stimulus resulting from our operation. All producer members receive direct payment for their sales. By helping our local farmers and growers sell and distribute their products, we help multiple communities around the state bringing incentive to their local economy. The local food products we transport don't travel long distances or sit on shelves waiting for purchase. Therefore, it is not necessary for these products to be treated with preservatives or chemicals to ensure their shelf life. This equates to a healthier food product for all.

It's true, in a local food system, we are taking ownership and taking responsibility for ourselves and others. With that we must also be mindful of what we give in return. We give our communities a healthier option. We give our children a sense of purpose, not convenience. We give our farmers and growers a joyful existence, not a burden.

Please continue to help the Nebraska Food Cooperative in this effort towards creating a viable local food system! Your support keeps farmers growing! We look forward to another great year in 2010.

Libby Broekemeier
President
Nebraska Food Cooperative

JOIN US AND GET INVOLVED IN THE LOCAL FOOD MOVEMENT!

There are many organizations around the Nebraska community working hard to help grow the local food economy. Please take some time to learn about these various groups and their initiatives in Nebraska. Many of our members are also members of these groups as well. Check out the upcoming events in February that Nebraska Food Cooperative will be attending. These events will highlight the activities and education surrounding local food and sustainable agricultural practice in Nebraska.

DID YOU KNOW ABOUT?

Buy Fresh Buy Local Campaign-Nebraska	www.buylocalnebraska.org
Nebraska Sustainable Agriculture Society	www.nebsusag.org
Slow Food Nebraska	www.slowfoodnebraska.org
Center for Rural Affairs	www.cfra.org
Community Crops	www.communitycrops.org
City Sprouts	www.omahasprouts.org
BIG Gardens	www.gardenbig.org
Tomato Tomato	www.tomatotomato.org
Nebraska Local Foods Network	http://ruralinitiative.nebraska.edu/nebraska_foods/index.html
Nebraska Environmental Action Coalition	www.neac.us



UPCOMING EVENTS

February 5th and 6th, 2010

Nebraska Sustainable Agriculture Society, Rural Advantage/Healthy Farms Conference: Lincoln

February 5-6, 2010 in Lincoln, Nebraska at the Holiday Inn-Downtown. Deadline for early bird registration rate and family rates is January 25th. Deadline for exhibitors for inclusion in conference materials is January 10th (We will accept exhibitor applications until all spots are filled) The conference is headlined Congressman Jeff Fortenberry with a capstone luncheon by John Ikerd. Several sessions are being lead by NSAS members including Kevin Fulton, Paul Rohrbaugh, Ralph Tate, Dave Welsch, and Kevin and Charuth Loth to name a few. There is a full slate of youth programming as well so bring the entire family. To register visit, <http://go.unl.edu/healthyfarmsconference>. For exhibitorship and sponsorships email me at healthyfarms@gmail.com. We are also looking for any food items to be donated for the All-Nebraska Dinner. For a count we need to know as soon as possible what you have available, please also email me at healthyfarms@gmail.com.
<http://go.unl.edu/healthyfarmsconference>

February 18th - 21st, 2010

Omaha Home and Garden Expo at Qwest Center in Omaha

Check us out at the Fresh and Local Showcase during this year's event. The Nebraska Food Cooperative along with Buy Fresh Buy Local and Metro Community College Culinary Institute will be promoting local foods! If you are interested in volunteering for this event. We will need lots of help manning our table and passing information along to visitors.

Please let the volunteer coordinator know what days and times you are available to help! Days are Thursday evening, Friday evening, Saturday and Sunday all day.

volunteer@nebraskafood.org

February 24th, 2010

Marketplace Conference in Kearney

The Marketplace Conference is an event focused on energizing small businesses and rural communities. The conference features strong, hands-on learning opportunities for potential and existing business owners including on and off farm/ranch, store front or home based, women and Hispanic owned businesses; community leaders; and youth interested in entrepreneurship. Numerous sectors of businesses and organizations regularly attend.

Nebraska Food Cooperative will be at this event!

COME JOIN US AND WORK WITH US ON DELIVERY DAY - JANUARY 14TH, 2010

Don't forget work credits are available to all volunteers that help on Delivery Days! Redeem your work credits on the next order cycle and get your groceries paid for. **Sweat equity = FRESH FOOD.**

January 14th, 2010

Please select a shift that works for you and reply to Libby at volunteer@nebraskafood.org or call 402-980-3757. **Multiple or combined shifts are appreciated too!**

Also, please note delivery day schedules stay the same for upcoming delivery days!
(See the next page for volunteer shifts.)



VOLUNTEER SHIFTS

**Omaha Hub Site -Jane's Benson Health Market on 6103 Maple St, (402-980-3757).
Coordinator: Libby Broekemeier**

9:00 AM - 1:00 PM	Producer Check-In	(Need 3-4 volunteers)
12:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Route Drivers Check-In & Loading	(Need 3-4 volunteers)
4:30 PM - 7:00 PM	Customer Pick-Up	(Need 5-6 volunteers)

**Lincoln Hub Site -ShadowBrook Farm's Marketstore at 2201 W. Denton Road, (402-304-7883).
Coordinator: Cindy Elder**

7:00 AM - 9:30 AM	Producer Check-In	(Need 3 - 4 volunteers)
4:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Customer Pick-Up	(Need 2 - 3 volunteers)

**Gretna Pick-up - Resurrection Lutheran Church at 153 S. McKenna Ave, Gretna (402-658-1080).
Coordinator: Shelly Grimm**

4:30 PM - 6:30 PM	Customer Pick-Up	(Need 1-2 volunteers)
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**West Omaha Pick-Up - Tomato Tomato, 2634 S. 156th Circle, Omaha, (402-926-6732).
Coordinator: Stephanie Kennedy**

5:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Customer Pick-Up	(Need 1-2 volunteers)
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**Bellevue Pick-Up - Thanksgiving Lutheran Church, 3702 370th Plz, Bellevue (402-709-6936).
Coordinator: Brigid Christenson**

4:00 PM - 6:30 PM	Customer Pick-Up	(Need 1-2 volunteers)
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SIGN UP FOR ANY VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY WITH NFC VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR,
Sincerely,
Libby Broekemeier
Volunteer Coordinator
volunteer@nebraskafood.org
402-980-3757

PS: If you would like to volunteer in another way, please don't hesitate to contact us. We are open to all the help we can receive!

N E B R A S K A



F O O D C O O P E R A T I V E

