



Bethlehem Food Co-Op: Volunteer Information Sheet (May 2024)

Mission Statement:

At the Bethlehem Food Co-Op, our mission is to provide access to healthy, locally sourced, and sustainable food options while fostering a strong sense of community ownership and environmental stewardship. We believe in promoting health, supporting local farmers and producers, and creating a more sustainable food system for future generations.

Who We Are: The Bethlehem Co-op Market

The **Bethlehem Co-op Market** is a **community-owned grocery store** committed to providing **fresh, locally sourced, and sustainable food options** to residents of Bethlehem and surrounding areas. The Bethlehem Food Co-Op was founded by passionate individuals in 2011, and in 2024 we will transition to Bethlehem Co-op Market to align with this next chapter in our organization.

We strive to build a vibrant and inclusive community around healthy food choices. We will celebrate the opening of our community-owned grocery store at 250 E. Broad St., Bethlehem in 2024.

The Elevator Pitch:

Bethlehem Co-op Market is a mission-driven grocery store owned and operated by its member-owners that has been advocating for equitable access to healthful food, supporting local food systems, protecting the environment, and strengthening our community since 2011. Everything BCM does is by the community, for the community.

What We Do:

- **Community Ownership:** We are owned and operated by our 1500+ members, who have a say in the organization.
- **Local Sourcing:** We prioritize sourcing products from local farmers and producers, supporting the local economy and reducing our carbon footprint. (See our Product Purchase Policy for more information on the tiered approach to sourcing)
- **Sustainability:** We are committed to environmental stewardship, implementing practices to reduce waste, conserve resources, and promote eco-friendly alternatives.
- **Education and Outreach:** We connect with our community, providing educational and social opportunities with a variety of different event types. Our MOVE Committee is open to everyone and focuses on Membership, Outreach, Volunteering, Education and Events to support the

Marketing & Membership Coordinator, spreading the word about our co-op and connecting with the community.

- **Accessible to all:** We are open to all shoppers, no membership required (however, our member-owners do get special perks)!
- **Increasing Food Access:** We will carry a variety of products and foods to meet the needs of our diverse communities. Additionally, we plan to accept SNAP benefits, Gold Plus (Lehigh University's dining dollars), and a Food for All program that subsidizes fresh food for those in need.

Our Environmental Impact:

At the Bethlehem Food Co-Op, we recognize the importance of minimizing our environmental footprint. Here are some ways we're making a difference:

- **Reducing Food Miles & Supporting Local Food Systems:** We strive to source as locally as we can, whether through local farmers and providers or mainline distributors close by. This helps support a robust local food system.
- **Reducing Waste:** We strive to minimize packaging waste by offering bulk options and encouraging reusable containers. We will be plastic bag free at checkout and implement other initiatives to minimize waste when it comes to food and packaging.
- **Energy Efficiency:** Our store is designed with energy-efficient appliances and lighting to reduce electricity consumption.
- **Alternative Transportation Friendly:** We are proudly accessible by walking, biking, driving, or taking public transportation. We have a crosswalk and bus stop directly in front of our building, a parking lot with EV chargers, and a bike rack.

Membership and Funding:

Membership: Currently, we have 1519+ members who have joined us in our mission to create a more sustainable and community-driven food system.

Funding: We have received generous support from various sources, including grants, donations, and member investments, to help fund the development of our community-owned grocery store.

- We received a \$2.9 million grant thanks to Congresswoman Susan Wild and Senator Bob Casey.
- Our members and donors also help contribute to the co-op financially.

Board of Directors:

Our Board of Directors consists of dedicated individuals who volunteer their time and expertise to guide the direction of the Bethlehem Food Co-Op:

Carol Ritter	Board Chair
Todd Mertz	Vice Chair, Elections Chair, DEI Chair
Domenic Breininger	Treasurer and Finance Chair
Deb Fritz	Board Secretary
Cindy Glick	Arts Chair
Heather Terrible	HR Chair
Justin Beaver	Sourcing Chair
Tony Marinho	Branding Chair
Carol Burns	MOVE Chair (membership, outreach, volunteers, events, and education)

General Manager:

Our General Manager oversees the day-to-day operations of the co-op, ensuring that our mission and values are upheld in every aspect of our business. Our General Manager is Eric Shamis.

Marketing Coordinator:

Our Marketing Coordinator is responsible for spreading awareness about the Bethlehem Food Co-Op and engaging with our community through various channels. Our current Marketing Coordinator is Cora Savage.

Project Updates:

Store Development: We're making progress towards opening our community-owned grocery store at 250 E. Broad St. Bethlehem, PA. Find us at the corner of Broad and Linden Streets.

- Construction is set to begin soon. We are currently just waiting for our permits.
- We recently held a Construction Kickoff event to commemorate the beginning of construction.
- We will open in 2024. Stay tuned for more information about our Grand Opening!

New Branding:

Why?

- **Brings clarity:** Communicating who we are and what we believe in— that our store is open to all shoppers regardless of membership status and is a place to shop for food.

- **Realistic:** It exemplifies our journey from humble beginnings to the incredible things we are accomplishing today. It's symbolic for our dream we had in 2011 becoming a reality in 2024.

But it's important to know...

- Despite these changes, we are not just another grocery store, but a community. Our visual branding may change, but our ethos remains intact: one that promises to remain authentic, transparent, and continue striving for the vision that all started with a red pepper.

Membership Drives: Learn about opportunities to become a member-owner of the Bethlehem Food Co-Op and join our growing community.

- About Membership: <https://www.bethlehemfood.coop/join/>

Events and Outreach: Discover upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, and community outreach initiatives where you can get involved and make a difference.

- Find our event calendar at: <https://www.bethlehemfood.coop/whats-cookin/#events>
- Volunteer with us by signing up on Sign-up Genius:



- Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, or LinkedIn for the latest updates: @bethlehemfoodcoop
- Join us at a MOVE Committee Meeting, open to everyone on the first Monday of every month (check our events calendar for updates on when we meet).

All About Membership:

Here are just a few of the many benefits of joining:

- **Being a Part of Something Bigger:** Join with others who share similar values, and who also want to help create a more vibrant community.
- **Sustainable Investment:** Members experience the satisfaction of investing in an organization that supports local business, local farmers, organic production, fair trade, human cooperation, and healthy living.
- **Join and You Own the Place:** You have equal ownership in the co-op with other invested members.

- **Democratic Governance:** Each member has a say in how the co-op is governed by voting at our Annual Meeting in October. Members elect the Board, and any member can serve on the Board.
- **Discounts:** Use your membership now at local participating businesses included in our Member Benefits Program.
- **The Privilege of Participation:** Members (and friends) are welcomed and encouraged to get involved! Our committees, work teams, and other volunteer opportunities are open to all. If you can't make it but have ideas to share, please contact us at move@bethlehemfood.coop.

When the Store Opens:

As a member, you'll enjoy...

- Special prices on certain products
- Member discount days
- You may earn a percentage of the store profits via patronage dividends.
- Continue to get discounts at local participating businesses.

The Investment:

The one-time cost of equity share membership for a household or business is \$300. These funds help us with the expenses associated with building our organization and our brick-and-mortar store.

You Have These Options:

- Make a single equity-share purchase of \$300 (check, credit card [via free PayPal account] or cash)
- Choose 12 monthly payments of \$25
- 30 monthly payments of \$10
- Our "Pay What You Can" program provides membership scholarships for those who request them; and are reviewed for approval. Check the details and complete the short application form to apply. Or contact us at info@bethlehemfood.coop for more details.

Join US:

Online: bethlehemfood.coop/join

Snail Mail: Print and mail application and payment to us.

You will receive confirmation at the email address you enter, followed by an introductory packet (including your membership card) in the mail!

JOIN US!



Member Benefits Partners & Member Benefits Program

All members have access to exclusive discounts at participating local businesses. This includes restaurants, shops, health services and more! Here are a few of the businesses currently involved in our program, but the list is always growing:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Action Wheels Bike Shop• Apple Ridge Farm• The Barber Pill• The Bayou• Christopher R. Amato, D.C.• Clusters Handcrafted Popcorn• Crooked Row Farm Market• Deja Brew Coffeehouse & Deli• Edge Restaurant & Lounge• Flourish of Life Medicine• Green Pond Packaging• Handcut Crystal• Hippie Momma Soap• homebase610.com• Insight Counseling & Wellness, LLC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keystone Farms Cheese• Lehigh Valley Printing• Lit Roastery and Bakeshop• Monocacy Coffee• Moravian History Store• Motherbaby Naturals• Musselman Jewelers• The Old Library Bookstore• Shine Studio Pottery• SteelCore Studio• Therapeutic Arts Group• UB Well Center for Holistic Health• Verde Bethlehem – Sustainable Living Shop
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Learn More about the Member Benefits Program:

MBP PROGRAM



Thank you for volunteering with us! Together, we're building a better, healthier future for Bethlehem.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Cora at marketing@bethlehemfood.coop

