



FAQS

Our Mission: “The Mission of the Deerfield Grocery Cooperative is to bring the community together through access to and dialogue about healthy, affordable, local food.” What does this mean? In addition to opening a community-owned grocery store we will sponsor other activities, such as the Deerfield Farmer’s Market, that promote local, affordable, healthy eating.

Why should I become an owner now? DGC’s doors are not yet open. A site has not been chosen, although we have several downtown locations in mind. However, the co-op is incorporated and is selling owner shares. Individuals, families, businesses and organizations can become owners now. We currently have about 70 owners, including several businesses and the Deerfield Chamber of Commerce. With every owner share sold, we are one step closer to opening a retail store. Prior to the store opening, every owner share sold helps us to attract more grant funds and needed sources of start-up financial support. Before we can successfully launch an investor and major donor campaign, we need 200-300 owners. In order to open the doors, and to keep them open in the long term, we need 500-600 owners. That is about one-third of the 1,500 households that live in the town and village of Deerfield. The start-up process is progressing in phases as we reach owner number milestones; it will only continue to progress if enough community members make a commitment early on to be owners.

What does an owner share cost? DGC will be owned by the local residents who shop there. An owner share costs \$200 for a household, business or organization. Owners can pay the entire amount at once or spread out their payments, at \$100 per year over two years or \$40 per year over five years. Ownership earns a household, organization or business one vote on major co-op issues and the satisfaction of knowing that you helped bring a grocery store back to Deerfield. And while anyone will be able to shop at the retail store, owners will get a discount on purchases.

What happens to my owner share payment if the doors never open? Until the doors open, all owner share payments are being held in a Bank of Deerfield trust fund. This money will remain in a segregated account and will be returned if efforts to open a retail store are abandoned. Just before the doors open, owners will vote to release the trust fund money to purchase store equipment and to stock the shelves.

What will be on the shelves? DGC will be a neighborhood grocery store that everyone can afford to shop at; it will not be a pricey, exclusive specialty shop. We envision affordable, everyday grocery staples; local produce, meat and other food items; some natural, bulk and organic items; and coffee, fresh bakery, ice cream and a hot deli. Owners will have final say on how to stock the shelves; before the doors open, they will vote on the mix of products to sell.

How will the retail store be managed? DGC will be run like most other grocery stores, with a paid general manager and employees. However, there will be a volunteer board of directors and major decisions will be made by a vote of the owners. The purpose will be to serve the community, not to make money beyond what is needed to sustain the store. Proceeds will be reinvested in the business and in the broader Deerfield community.

What is happening right now? On May 20, 2013 DGC incorporated as a business in the state of Wisconsin. Since then, we have continued to raise funds for a feasibility study, through grants and ongoing small and major fund-raising. The village of Deerfield’s Business Improvement District and the Wisconsin Farmer’s Union have granted DGC a total of \$3,000 toward a feasibility study. In late 2013, DGC joined the Deerfield Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber granted \$300 to help us write a business plan. Work on the business plan is progressing this winter. DGC’s major 2014 fundraiser will be a chili cook-off and kickball tournament, tentatively set for Saturday, Sept. 27. In 2014, we are also considering sponsoring a spring run/walk and a summer breakfast on the farm. DGC has taken over coordination of the weekly summer Deerfield Farmer’s Market. We are working with the Deerfield Food Pantry to create a voucher program that would allow low-income pantry users to purchase Farmer’s Market produce. In the past year, DGC has also sponsored soccer and basketball concessions stands, created an online Deerfield-area Farmer and Producer Directory, held a major bike ride fund-raiser and hosted a holiday cookie exchange. In June 2014, co-op board members plan to attend the Consumer Cooperative Management Association (CCMA) national conference in Madison. Their attendance is being funded in part by a 2012 grant from the Food Co-op Initiative. Board members will attend workshops and gain the knowledge they need to successfully steer DGC toward the opening of a store.

Who is behind this effort? A Board of Directors was elected at DGC’s first annual meeting on Nov. 9, 2013. Board members are Karyn Saemann, President; Jennifer Rivers, Vice President; Jennifer Stevens, Secretary/Treasurer; Cheryl Lemke and Andy Grosvold. Patricia Geishirt is our accountant and Finance Committee chair.

How can I get involved? The Board of Directors meets twice a month. Committees meet periodically. Meetings are open to all. Agendas and minutes are on our website, www.deerfieldgrocerycoop.com, on Facebook and are distributed via e-mail: deerfieldgrocerycoop@gmail.com. We have a monthly e-mail newsletter. You can reach us by mail at Deerfield Grocery Co-op, P.O. Box 185, Deerfield, WI 53531.

