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Member-labor Work Requirement Temporarily Suspended

As of Monday, March 23, the Coop member-labor work requirement is suspended until further notice. This protocol will be updated as needed so please go to foodcoop.com for the latest information.

Please do not come to your work shift beginning on March 23.

Thank you for continuing to support your Coop! As an essential service, the Park Slope Food Coop remains open to shoppers and ready to serve our community.

Workslot Requirement Temporarily SUSPENDED as of Monday, March 23

For the first time in our 47-year history, the Coop will temporarily suspend its member-labor work requirement as of Monday, March 23, starting at 5:00 a.m. This action is being taken in response to Governor Cuomo's "New York State on PAUSE" executive order. Until further notice, members will no longer work their shifts at the Coop and the member-labor work requirement is suspended. Please do NOT come to your work shift. We will continue to sell goods to our members, but Coop operations will be staffed exclusively by the paid staff and a small group of temporary, part-time staff we hire.

It is with great sadness that the Coop decided to institute this dramatic change in our participatory Coop model. The General Coordinators weighed carefully the concerns of staff and members, listened to the strongly-worded directives of our Governor

and Mayor, and considered the advice from Coop members active in the medical and public health fields before making our decision.

It is immensely clear that in order to stem the spread of COVID-19 we all must severely limit the number of people we come in contact with. Continuing to allow a few hundred member-workers to enter the building daily does not follow the spirit of the Governor's executive order and exposes the paid staff to many, many people every day. Keeping our doors open for members to shop will still expose the employees but at a much lower rate.

We cannot predict how long we will operate with only paid staff, but rest assured, the Coop will invite members back to help run the Coop as soon as we evaluate we can do that in a safe manner. Our vibrant Coop community was built on member-labor and is the heart of our successful participatory food coop model. We are a resilient community that will survive and emerge stronger from this horrific public health crisis.

Coop Shopping Hours as of Monday, March 23

The Coop will be open for shopping starting on Monday, March 23, from 10:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. The Coop will continue to control entry to shoppers, and members will need to wait on line outside. Depending upon the number of shoppers in line and how quickly members shop, we reserve the right to cut off the outside line at any time before 7:00 p.m.

Our guidelines and practices around social dis-

tancing will be enforced. We will limit the number of shoppers allowed in the building to facilitate social distancing of at least six feet as required by the Governor's executive order. This order applies to members in the building and those waiting on the outside line. While we realize that this will affect sales, our priority remains the health and safety of our paid staff and shopping members.

Do your part to help the Coop provide a safe shopping environment for our community. Stay six feet apart. Social distancing will save New Yorkers' lives. Please honor the shopping protocols we have put into place. See <https://www.foodcoop.com/coronavirus/> for our shopping protocols.

As the Coop staff learns how it will manage to operate the Coop without member labor, we plan to expand the shopping hours. Our goal is to be open longer but until we reset and reorganize our staff we don't know how many hours of shopping we can manage. Please check daily the website and @foodcoop on Instagram or Twitter for updates to our hours.

Appreciation

We have received many emails, DMs, calls, and notes praising Coop staff and expressing appreciation for the actions we have taken so far to fulfill our social responsibility to both feed our community and help mitigate further spread of COVID-19. These messages of support are especially appreciated and encouraging in these challenging times. Thank you for your kind words! ■

Shopping and Facility Update

Update as of Thursday, March 25. This information will be updated as needed so please go to foodcoop.com for the latest information.

Shopping Hours: 10:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m

Members must be on the line outside by 7:00 p.m. at the latest. The Coop reserves the right to make the deadline for getting in line earlier than 7:00 p.m. if the wait time on the outside line exceeds the ability to get everyone in the Coop by closing.

Wait times can vary greatly depending upon the conditions in the Coop. Plan ahead by getting in line early. Line information will be updated on @foodcoop on Instagram or Twitter.

We urge all members to Read more below for access to complete information about changes to Coop policies and guidance to the Coop community. All posted policies and practices are subject to change in response to the conditions at the Coop. Follow @food-

coop on Instagram or Twitter for the most current information, and check-in before visiting the Coop.

Shopping and Operational Updates

ALL CURRENT COOP MEMBERS MAY SHOP, EVEN IF SUSPENDED

During this unprecedented period, rules limiting shopping privileges for members who are suspended and have exceeded their grace period have been lifted. Until further notice, all current Coop members are eligible to shop regardless of their Coop "status."

Going forward you will be able to shop even if as of 3/01/2020 or after you were/are "suspended" because for one of these reasons: work, member payments, training, orientation, or documentation owed for a work exemption (such as Parental or Disability). As a result, there is currently no need to contact the Coop in regard to any aspect of your member work

history or your work slot requirement at the Coop. Please just come to shop with the full confidence that if you were a Coop member on 3/1/2020 and have not since taken a temporary or permanent leave of absence from the Coop, you will be able to shop.

MEMBERSHIP OFFICE: The Office is closed until further notice. We urgently request your understanding in asking that you DO NOT CALL or VISIT the Membership Office at this time. Closing is necessary to allow the Coop paid staff to focus on the shopping floor.

EVERYONE: If you feel ill, anyone in your household is ill, or you have been directed to self-monitor and -quarantine, please stay home. We are asking you not to enter the building to protect our Coop community. Follow the guidance of NYC Dept of Health or the CDC found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html> or <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/imm/stop-the-spread-poster.pdf>

Only members who are shopping should be in the building. We request specifically that you do not bring non-member visitors/guests to the Coop at this time. Do not use the Coop's common spaces for any other purpose at this time. We appreciate your consideration of the well-being and safety of the Coop staff.

CONTROLLED ENTRY: The Coop is controlling entry into the Coop for all shopping members. The maximum number of shoppers is 35 plus up to 10 shoppers checking out. Members will be allowed to enter to shop at the pace that keeps us in line with the maximum number. The length of time could vary widely given the shopping conditions in the Coop.

Members need to maintain at least 6 feet of space between themselves and others in the waiting line outside. Take care of each other and make room.

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Read the *Gazette* while you're standing on line OR online at www.foodcoop.com

Shopping Update

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Please dress appropriately for standing outside in whatever weather.

ELDERS: To assist our senior Coop members we are putting in place the following system to operate until further notice.

If you are an older Coop member and want to shop at the Coop, please do the following:

1. Get in the line waiting outside to enter the Coop.

2. Identify yourself to the members around you in line and ask them to hold your place.

3. Proceed to the front of the line and tell the outside line manager that you need a place to sit while waiting for your place in line to be called in to shop.

4. You will be provided a chair to sit in while waiting. You might still be waiting outside the Coop so dress appropriately for the weather. We have limited space in the Coop for members to sit while waiting and also maintain the sufficient physical distance from one another. If there is space inside to wait, a Coop paid staff person will let you know.

5. If you are in a high-risk category and absolutely cannot wait, even while seated, please to speak to a member of the Coop paid staff for assistance.

We acknowledge that many will feel this system does not go far enough to help our seniors, and we apologize in advance to any member who feels this doesn't meet their needs. We are doing our best to meet the needs of all the members who want to shop while also providing a safe working space for our paid staff.

SHOPPING PROTOCOLS:

- Maximum number of shoppers in Coop is 35 plus up to 10 shoppers checking out.

- Keep 6 feet of distance between yourself and other shoppers and staff.

- Limit of 4 people per regular aisle and 8 people in produce (including paid staff working in those aisles).

- Only the following stations will be open: 1-2 express and 5-6 regular checkout lanes, 1 cashier, one entrance desk.

- Only shopping members should be in the building. Please limit your time in the building to those activities. We request specifically that you do not bring visitors/guests to the Coop at this time.

- Spread yourself out across the Coop shopping floor. Don't head to the produce aisle first if everyone else is going that way!

- Do not hand your card/slip to the checkout worker. Scan your card on the front-facing reader or across the scale.

- Please unload your groceries onto the counter and step away from the checkout to protect the worker. The worker can step away when you are packing your groceries.

- If paying with cash, set your cash on the counter and let the cashier pick it up. Try to avoid hand contact with the cashier.

- No personal carts in the Coop shopping area. You will be asked to store your personal cart at the front of the building near the cashier stations.

- Don't place your personal shopping bag on the deck of the checkout counter. Keep your bags in your cart and pack into the bags in the cart.

- Only touch items that you want to buy!

- Shop alone if possible to facilitate allowing more members to shop. Let your spouse, partner, or household member wait outside the Coop while you shop.

LET'S MAKE SPACE: Our top consideration is providing for a more spacious working and shopping environment in the Coop. The Coop is try-

ing to follow the guidance of physical distancing as much as possible. While waiting in line outside or shopping in the Coop, please take care to provide at least 6 feet of space between yourself and other Coop members and staff. We have taped off the floor in aisles 3, 4, 6 and 7 with yellow markings to help people better understand what 6 feet of distance looks like when they are waiting on line.

SANITIZING/HYGIENE: Members must use hand sanitizer when entering the building. Shopping members should wipe the handles of the basket or cart with sanitizing wipes. Sanitizing foam dispensers are installed around the shopping floor. The Coop will make sure that the sanitizing wipe dispensers and foaming dispensers are full and available for use. The Coop is thoroughly cleaning and sanitizing the common surfaces and spaces every night.

MEMBER SERVICES: Members interested in receiving text or email notifications from the Coop should sign up for Member Services. Follow this link to register: <https://members.foodcoop.com/services/login/?next=/services/>

AUTHORIZED SHOPPER: The requirements to have an Authorized Shopper have been relaxed as a response to COVID-19. Our goal is to make the authorized shopper program more easily available to our members who identify that they are in a high-risk category and need to limit social contact or self-isolate.

What is an Authorized Shopper? An authorized shopper is a non-member who is allowed to shop for a current Coop member without the Coop member being present.

The Coop is not requiring at this time that:

- you are on a work-exempt committee (for example, temporary disability or parental leave) to have an Authorized Shopper

- your Authorized Shopper does not need to provide the Coop with a separate proof of address. Your Authorized Shopper will need to provide the Coop with a photo ID that displays their address.

- you do not need to sign the Authorized Shopper form. A staff member can confirm by phone your request to have an Authorized Shopper.

These changes will be in effect until further notice and may be subject to modification if the guidance from public health agencies/officials changes. All other guidelines of the Authorized Shopper program remain in effect.

NYS BOTTLE REDEMPTION: Until further notice, the Coop will not accept bottle or can return under the New York State Redemption program. New York State has suspended the program during the ongoing COVID-19 response efforts.

SODASTREAM RETURNS: Please wash thoroughly your SodaStream canister before returning to the Coop. If possible, return your clean canister in a plastic bag for the safety of the Coop paid staff.

GENERAL MEETING: The March 31 and April 28 General Meetings are canceled to follow the guidelines of the CDC and NYC regarding events and gatherings.

CHILDCARE: The Childcare Room is closed for the foreseeable future.

ORIENTATION AND ALL EVENTS: Canceled until further notice.

TERRACYCLE: TerraCycle collections are suspended indefinitely.

VISITORS: The Coop strongly recommends that members do not bring visitors at this time in consideration of our Coop community. Due to our social distancing guidelines, we do not have room for visitors to be on the shopping floor with members at this time. ■

Playbook for a Plant-Rich Diet: How to Eat Less Meat and More Plants

By John B. Thomas

The phrase “plant-rich diet” has been gaining traction in the past several years as we seek solutions to curb the greenhouse gas emissions from the food system that are contributing to global climate change.

The production of animal-based food, especially beef and dairy, contributes a huge portion of the world's greenhouse gas emissions—nearly 20%. If cows were their own country, they would be the third largest greenhouse gas emitter after China and the U.S. (Project Drawdown).

“The food system must undergo significant changes to ensure a future that can adequately feed a growing population while avoiding the worst impacts of climate change,” according to the

World Resources Institute, an environmental think tank that recently came out with a study—“Playbook for Guiding Diners Toward Plant-Rich Dishes in Food Service.”

Put simply, a plant-rich diet is not vegetarian or vegan but seeks to limit the consumption of animal-based food in favor of adding more fruits and vegetables, beans, grains, legumes, mushrooms, nuts and seeds, plant oils, herbs, and spices.

Americans consume way more meat, dairy, and calories overall than most countries, and even our country's own nutritional recommendations. This over-consumption has important negative implications for health, with high amounts of red meat consumption associated with type 2 diabetes, coronary

heart disease, and certain cancers (National Institutes of Health).

Luckily for us, there is guidance out there on creative ways to increase the amount of plants in our diets, with the World Resources Institute offering 23 science-based suggestions to change consumer behavior. These interventions are rooted in evidence from the field of behavioral economics, that is the study of the effects of psychology, cognitive, emotional, cultural, and social factors on economic decisions.

While these interventions are targeted towards the food-service industry (i.e., chefs, restaurants, nutritionists, cafeterias, etc.), many of the recommendations are highly applicable to those who cook for themselves or

others. There are also recommendations that might make sense for the Coop, in terms of how it markets, promotes, and prices plant-based foods.

One strategy suggests adapting popular recipes to reduce their meat content. For example, when making lasagna or tacos, replace ground beef with mushrooms or plant-based meat alternatives (like those produced by Beyond Meats or Impossible Foods and available in the Coop's frozen food section). Also, if hosting a dinner party, hosts can offer plant-rich starters and appetizers to encourage folks to fill up on these before serving a main dish that might have less meat. Both of these strategies have been proven to reduce meat consumption.

Another option is to improve the flavor and texture of plant-rich dishes. Plant-rich dishes are often considered “healthy” options, rather than “tasty”

or “delicious” choices. Flavor-boosting ingredients like herbs, spices, garlic, citrus juices, oils, vinegars and prepared sauces can drastically change the profile of a dish, without sacrificing health benefits that many people desire. For inspiration, check out a database of appealing plant-rich dishes from the Good Food Institute (<http://goodfoodscorecard.org/>).

The Coop could improve shoppers' awareness of the benefits of plant-rich dishes and the opportunities to add more plants (or plant-based meat alternatives) to dishes. In the same way that the Coop produces guides for dairy, eggs, meat, seafood, and many other products, it could also produce a guide to plant-based substitutes for meat, and position it next to the meat shelf to encourage consumers to second-guess their need to make meat the

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ON LINE OUTSIDE

DEAR MEMBERS,

There is a line going down to Fifth Avenue. They say 45 mins waiting. I moved 1 foot in 40 mins. You must tell people to HURRY UP. I see people loading their car. So unfair that the Management at the Coop allows that.

Rino Varrasso

KUDOS TO THE COOP/HAPPY TO STAND ON LINE

DEAR PARK SLOPE FOOD COOP,

We want to thank you for the heart-warming and inspiring experience of shopping at the Coop last Saturday (March 14th) in the midst of the coronavirus crisis. In 2012, after being an active working Coop member from 1978 till I retired 30+ years later, my husband and I moved 100 miles away. In 2019 a new rule enabled my husband (at age 71 and

a working member for over 10 years) to retire, and we rejoined as “elders” (who can shop without working shifts), driving in monthly to partake of the Coop’s bounty.

This weekend after making a remarkably traffic-free 100-mile drive into Brooklyn, we stood for an hour on a friendly line with fellow Coop members after which a firm but friendly monitor let us into the Coop four at a time (so as not to overload the shopping floor in this time of social distancing). We then entered an exceptionally cooperative and even harmonious environment where there was plenty of whatever we needed on most shelves with workers scurrying to replenish most of what was missing.

We left completely secure in having whatever we need to nourish ourselves over the next several weeks lest we’re quarantined. And feeling reassured that the possibility of cooperation and harmony is not only possible in this

world but actually already exists at our Coop.

Appreciatively,

Heidi Rain, Tom Oleszczuk
P.S. Thanks, Joe! The Coop today is not only still surviving but thriving, in large part due to your strong persevering guidance.

NEEDED INFORMATION

DEAR MEMBERS,

Given the pressure the CV has placed on the Coop’s services, you would think there would be more regular updates about the Coop’s responsiveness to the situation; particularly on the status of food availability (As of 3/14, their last update on the home page was on 3/5!). Instead, we are relegated to standing on line to get into the Coop only to find out when we’re shopping that our primary food needs are not available.

When Hurricane Sandy caused a temporary gas

shortage, BP set up a web page you could check by zip code that informed the public about scheduled gas deliveries and existing gas levels at their stations; mitigating the need to wait hours on a gas line. The Coop has coordinators roaming the floor at all times checking shelf inventory. Why can’t a similar system be set up where the Coop posts the status of inventory levels of at least key items (i.e. staples). There are only so many hours in the day and available places to shop for needed supplies. The Coop should make a greater effort to inform its members of food supplies on a more real-time basis.

Jeff Wolfman

HELPING OUT HIGH-RISK COOP MEMBERS

DEAR MEMBERS,

I was wondering if there’s anything healthy and low-risk

Coop members can do to help our fellow Coop members considered high-risk who cannot enter public spaces to limit germ exposure. If someone is in need of food or supplies but cannot leave their home, is there any way a healthy Coop member can do their shopping for them? There may be limitations based on the proximity of their home to the Coop, but maybe we can make our best efforts to establish a drop-off system, even if it requires sanitizing goods that may have come into contact with frequently touched surfaces.

Not asking this for work slot credit, I am healthy and have been social distancing but I feel there’s more I could be doing to help those who are considered high-risk or are immunocompromised. Any information would be greatly appreciated, and I would be happy to collaborate with others to figure out a solution. Thank you.

Mallory Wood

Plant-Rich Diet

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center of a dish, or to consider alternatives for common meat-based recipes.

Most consumers don’t think about “climate change” when making purchasing decisions, but the Coop could help remind members of these benefits via shopping guides and promotional actions for plant-based meat alternatives and common plant substitutes for meat. These guides could focus more on the positive attributes of plants—taste, quality, or interesting preparation techniques or substitutions—rather than on the negative aspects of ruminant

animal meat production as a way to get shoppers excited about making different buying choices.

Ultimately, all food has an environmental impact that depends on a range of factors—how it’s produced, the inputs involved, the efficiency with which those inputs are used, how food is harvested, transported, sold, consumed or wasted, and what is done with that waste.

From a climate standpoint, beef production has some serious drawbacks that should encourage environmentally-conscious consumers to second-guess default desires to consume meat. Beef production requires 20 times more land and emits

20 times more greenhouse gases per gram of protein than production of plant-based proteins like beans, peas and lentils, according to the World Resources Institute. And in many parts of the world, clearing land for cows and other ruminant livestock comes at the expense of rainforests or other forested land, which has the added effect of also removing the planet’s “sink” for carbon emissions as trees take carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere.

That said, there are efforts by smaller farmers to raise cattle and other animals in more environmentally and socially responsible ways (the Coop buys its meat from these producers, like Ken Jaffe

of Slope Farmers). But this production amounts to a tiny fraction of global beef production, so most climate scientists still advise that reducing beef consumption is a necessary component of any strategy to address climate change.

At the same time, food-buying decisions are often influenced by a range of factors that aren’t “rational” even if shoppers care about pressing global threats like climate change and want to use their purchasing power to make an impact. Understanding more about those environmental impacts, and solutions that shoppers can take, can help consumers make more informed choices about how to shop with their values. ■

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