

Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op  
Membership Handbook

2010

**Congratulations** on becoming a member of Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op! Your membership represents an investment in our local economy and in the future of a sustainable food network. We look forward to sharing each week's local harvest with you. We hope you take the time to understand the advantages and obligations of being a member of Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op. Please always feel free to contact the cooperative with any comments, suggestions, or concerns. We want to make Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op a lasting, vibrant component of our community. To do so we will continually need the strong support of our general membership and continual ingenuity of our producer members to support and feed our community.

# Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op Membership Handbook

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## Contacting Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op

Please try our online " [FAQ](#)" page to see if your question has already been addressed.

### Email (the best way to contact us)

Questions about ordering online?	<a href="mailto:help@easternontariolocalfood.org">help@easternontariolocalfood.org</a>
Questions about ordering in general?	<a href="mailto:orders@easternontariolocalfood.org">orders@easternontariolocalfood.org</a>
Problems with your order from delivery day?	<a href="mailto:problems@easternontariolocalfood.org">problems@easternontariolocalfood.org</a>
Questions about your payment?	<a href="mailto:treasurer@easternontariolocalfood.org">treasurer@easternontariolocalfood.org</a>
Questions about your Membership?	<a href="mailto:membership@easternontariolocalfood.org">membership@easternontariolocalfood.org</a>
If you're a producer with a new product:	<a href="mailto:standards@easternontariolocalfood.org">standards@easternontariolocalfood.org</a>
Questions about the website?	<a href="mailto:web@easternontariolocalfood.org">web@easternontariolocalfood.org</a>
General Information	<a href="mailto:info@easternontariolocalfood.org">info@easternontariolocalfood.org</a>

### Mailing Address:

9500 Fitzpatrick Road  
Vankleek Hill, Ontario K0B 1R0

## General

**Acting as an agent for producer members**, the Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op posts on the internet and publicizes the products its producer members have for sale within its marketplace of members. We receive orders, provide a way for products to be delivered between members of the cooperative, collect payment from the customers and forward the payments to the producers. For some of our producer members, we are agents that facilitate farm gate sales of their products. For other producer members, we facilitate off-farm sales or sales of processed products.

**Acting as an agent for customer members**, we provide them an online catalog of available local food products that includes information about how and where the product was grown or processed. We receive their orders and notify the appropriate producers, arrange for the food to be delivered, receive and process their payments. For both producer and customer members, we provide a basic screening of products and producers based on our published parameters, and education and training regarding the use and the advantages of local foods and the core values of the cooperative.

The essential business of the cooperative is to provide a marketplace where willing buyers and sellers who are members of the cooperative can meet. Never does the cooperative ever have title to any of the products. The products that go through our distribution system are owned either by the producer, or by the customer who purchases "title" to the product from the producer.

**All producer members are responsible for reading and complying with the operating procedures of the cooperative.**

**The cooperative will forward payment to the producers for their products by Paypal or by check within seven days after they are delivered on Delivery Day**, unless there are missing item tickets or an unresolved discrepancy in the amount you should be paid, as long as the cooperative has the working capital to do this. **Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op reserves the right to refuse to accept delivery for products that are not what customers ordered, or which are spoiled or contaminated, or otherwise not acceptable.**

**Any customer complaints or requests for refunds or return of merchandise will be referred directly to the responsible producer and cc'd to Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op.** Each producer will provide us a written statement of their policies for returns. In the event of a dispute between a customer and a producer, the matter shall be referred to an arbitration committee. One member shall be appointed by the customer, one by the producer, and one by the Eastern Ontario Food Co-op. In the event the dispute is between the producer or the customer and the Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op, a similar procedure shall be used. The producer or customer will appoint a member, the co-op will appoint a member, and the two chosen arbitrators will then together choose a third person.

**We have a weekly order/delivery cycle.** Please be aware of the key days and times of the order cycle so you may purchase and/or post and prepare your product in a timely manner.

**These procedures are established to benefit the common good of the cooperative's members. The more members we have, the more critical it is that we achieve 100% compliance with these procedures. This is necessary for the long-term sustainability of this business enterprise.**

## Terms of Service for Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op

Our system works because we, the member-owners of the Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op (or EOLFC), take pride and responsibility for making it work. Every member is expected to abide by these Terms of Service.

1. Each order is a legally enforceable contract to pick up and pay for the groceries ordered. You are obligated to pay for the items you order, **even if you do not pick them up**, unless they are delivered to you damaged or broken. **Everything showing in your online shopping basket when the weekly order closes is an order for those products. The co-op's software does not have a "check-out" page.** When you place something in your shopping cart, it stays there until you remove it. You can remove or add items up to the close of the weekly order.

2. When you order, pick up your order during the time specified for your pickup site. This is part of our contract. We are unable to hold orders past operating hours. It is your responsibility to know where to pick up your food and the hours the pick-up site is open. This information is on your invoice. Any order which is not picked up at the specified time without prior arrangements being made will be donated to charity. If you cannot pick up your order yourself, please arrange to have your order picked up by someone else. You can contact us for suggestions of members who may like to share in picking up orders.

3. All orders must be paid in full before they leave the pickup site or left at delivery. Members paying via PayPal must pay before coming to pick up their groceries. Please bring a copy of the PayPal receipt with you to the pickup site. Other members are expected to pay by check. Prompt payment is a condition of membership.

4. We understand that emergencies happen on delivery day. If this happens to you, please call the emergency telephone number listed on the web site as soon as possible. The earlier we know about a situation, the better we will be able to deal with it. You can also contact the co-op before the weekly order closes about making alternative delivery arrangements. Depending on the circumstances, we may be able to arrange something other than the specified hours for a particular site, but this must be arranged before you turn in your order.

5. When you pick up your order, make sure you get all the items you ordered. Take the time to check your invoice thoroughly to make sure you get everything. If an item is missing, send an email to [problems@easternontariolocalfood.org](mailto:problems@easternontariolocalfood.org) and you will receive credit on your invoice.

6. Treat the co-op volunteers well. The Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op has a limited number of employees to keep costs down. We have volunteers who are investing their time and effort as sweat equity in growing the future of this cooperative. Thus, there can never be a question of an "employee-customer" relationship in your interactions with the volunteer workers of Eastern Ontario local food Co-op. Please do not complain to delivery day volunteers or berate or blame them for something that may have gone wrong with your order. Volunteers have no control over what the producers do. If you have an issue with the producer, bring it to the attention of the producer. If you have an issue with the cooperative, bring it to the attention of the Market Manager, or via email at [info@easternontariolocalfood.org](mailto:info@easternontariolocalfood.org). Mistreatment of volunteers is a serious breach of cooperative ethics.

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7. Please keep your contact information current on our cooperative records. We encourage you to list cell phone numbers on your member profile so we can contact you directly on delivery day if there is a problem. If you change your email address, notify us. Email changes or updates to [membership@easternontariolocalfood.org](mailto:membership@easternontariolocalfood.org).

8. If you become a producer member, Producers Standards are incorporated into these Terms of Service.

## **Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op Membership Structure**

1. Your lifetime membership fee is your equity in the Market. It is money we ask for to allow us to afford capital expenditures.
2. Membership in the Co-op is open to both customers and producers of local food products or other local products that are authorized by the Board of Directors. Any person shall be eligible to become a member of the association, regardless of race, gender, religion, income, marital status, culture, or nationality.
3. Each Member shall be entitled to make purchases from the Co-op on terms available to members. Producer members participate in the governance of the Co-op.
4. We are a not for profit organization with all actions directed toward serving our members. We are all in this together to make our communities richer, healthier and sustainable. Memberships fees are not refundable.
5. Members may be expelled for cause from the Co-op by a 2/3rds vote of the Board of Directors, acting upon the recommendation of the Co-op Manager. Expulsions may be appealed to the Board of Directors. Cause for expulsion can include illegal activity, fraudulent affidavits regarding the origin or production practices of products sold through the Co-op, repeated failure to pay bills, and prolonged and egregious inability or unwillingness to follow Co-op standard operating procedures.
6. It is understood that funds remitted pursuant to this membership agreement are subject to the risks inherent in any start-up enterprise of this character, and that such risks may result in the loss of part or all of such funds.

## Logging in to the Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op System

To log onto our system, go to: [www.easternontariolocalfood.org](http://www.easternontariolocalfood.org). You should BOOKMARK this address so you can easily find it when you need it. Sign in with your USER NAME and PASSWORD. Please note that your Username and Password are case sensitive. If you don't have that info handy, send an email to [membership@easternontariolocalfood.org](mailto:membership@easternontariolocalfood.org) and ask for your info again.

### Order Cycle

Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op runs on an “order-cycle system,” meaning that product is available at set times each week and varies week-to-week according to season and availability. The following details the weekly order cycle:

**Thursday, Week 1:**

**5:00 PM** Deadline for producers with new products.

**Friday, Week 1:**

**1:00 PM** Deadline for producers to have products listed on the site for the upcoming delivery day.

**Friday, Week 1:**

**2:00 PM** The Order Cycle opens and members can begin shopping!

**Sunday, Week 1:**

**9:00 PM** Order Cycle closes. All products in customer shopping carts become final orders.

- Producers receive a final notice of their sales and have until Tuesday morning to prepare product for delivery.

**Tuesday, Week 1:**

**Delivery Day!**

**9:00 AM** Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op staff volunteers on hand at drop off site.

**9:30 AM -11:30 AM** Producers deliver products to the drop off site.

**11:30 AM-1:00 PM** Consumers pick-up products. Delivery truck leaves at 1pm.

**5:30 PM-6:30 PM** Customers pick up orders at designed producers farms.

**PROCESS REPEATS !**

**In other words.....**

The basic idea behind the order cycle is that each producer is in charge of keeping product posted as it is available. Since we are dealing with small producers and fresh product, the product that is available each week will vary. That fact, combined with the fact that Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op will simply facilitate the postings and sales, rather than actually manage an entire “inventory” of product from all producers, brings the necessity of an “order cycle” into play. The feedback we’ve received from consumer and producer members says that weekly order cycles are best, primarily as it is easier to remember. So.....

1. Producers have until **Friday afternoon at 1:00 PM** to have all products posted and listed that they would like to have sold by the next Tuesday. This means that the Producer must “add” each specific product, and in doing so, mark that product as, “list” (this option is at the top of the product feature) or “do not list” ( except for producers with new products posted by **Thursday 5:00 PM.**)

- Being able to list and unlist products enables the Producer to enter as many products as possible in their down time, so that come that Friday deadline, only a few minutes is spent online clicking “list” or “do not list.”
- If an item is always available, the Producer simply leaves it alone as listed and does nothing (unless price or other details must be edited).

2. The Co-op Manager will then login **Friday before 2:00 PM** to make any product changes “live” (making anything that Producers have indicated to “list” viewable by the public). He then “opens the order cycle” and sends an email to all cooperative members (consumers and producers) to announce that the cooperative is now open for shopping. He’ll also include an update of what’s available that week.

3. All co-op members then have from early **Friday 2:00 PM to Sunday 9:00 PM** evening to order from what is available from Producers’ listed products. During this time, during the “open order cycle,” all co-op members will see a new feature on their login page, their “shopping cart,” along with various links to search for product (by category, producer, new products, organic, etc.). When co-op members look at product from their login page, they will see an “add to cart” link next to each product listed. Co-op members select any products they’d like, and add them to their carts.

4. The “order cycle” or open shopping period, then closes **Sunday 9:00 PM. Any products in carts at that time become final orders (there is no check out process with this software maybe in the future?).** Producers then receive an email notifying them of their sales.

5. Producers have between **Sunday 9:00 PM till Tuesday 9:00 AM** to harvest and package product for delivery (see Membership Handbook for details).

- Each Producer will be able to print lists of all products sold by Customer name or Product name from their login page. They also have pre-made labels for packaging each item which has sold, with customer name, product name, and producer name.

6. Consumers can view their invoices **Sunday evening/Monday evening** to pre-pay via Paypal or wait to pay by check at the time of pick-up or delivery.

7. Producers will then deliver all sold Product to the drop off **Tuesday from 9:30 AM to 11:00 AM**. Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op will pay the Producer their total price, minus the co-op handling fee, as long as the co-op has the resources to pay immediately up front. If not, payment will be made by the next Tuesday after all customer payments have been received.

8. Between **11:00 AM to 11:30 AM** the Co-op manager and volunteers will finish sorting all products into individual customer orders.

9. All co-op members who have purchased product can pick-up their orders between **11:30 AM and 1:00 PM** or arrange for someone else to do so. We'd also encourage Producers living nearby each other to work together in delivering product on delivery day. ( We hope to eventually have a delivery system in place, for picking up and delivering product, but perhaps an entrepreneur will develop that as a business and "sell" their services on the site!) Consumers must pay for their order total in full, by check or Paypal. Their total will be the total price listed by the producer, plus a co-op handling fee.

10. The process starts all over again Thursday evening!

## **How to Order**

1. The Order Cycle is open for shopping Friday afternoon to Sunday evening each week. Go to the [member login page](#) or to [www.easternontariolocalfood.org](http://www.easternontariolocalfood.org). Enter the username and password you created when you submitted your Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op [Membership Registration](#) form. When you log in, if you haven't already started an order, it will ask you to choose a delivery method and site (home or work delivery, or pick up site) and a payment method. Then click the button to start your order. There are two methods of selecting products you want to buy.

2. You can browse through the product lists and click ADD TO SHOPPING CART. When you do this, the system adds one of the items you have selected to your cart. If you want to buy several packages of an individual product, click on the VIEW YOUR CART button. Place the cursor in the quantity box for the item you wish to order, and change the number to however many you plan to buy. Then click on the UPDATE button to the right of that product entry. When you are done, press the CLICK TO SUBMIT YOUR ORDER button.

3. You can also browse the product lists and make a note of the product ID numbers of the items you want to buy. To enter those items, click VIEW YOUR CART and you will find a box at the top of the page where you can add items, one at a time, by entering the product ID and how much or how many items you want to buy . Then hit the ADD THIS PRODUCT TO THE ORDER button.

4. To remove a product from your shopping cart, change its Quantity to ZERO and press the UPDATE button.

5. You can edit your order up until the time that the Order Desk closes at 9:00 PM on Sunday each

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week. To edit your order (add or subtract items, change quantities.), log in at the [online ordering page](#). If you want to add items, you can use methods (1) or (2) above to add items, to edit quantities, or remove items, click on VIEW YOUR CART and make your changes, then press the CLICK TO SUBMIT YOUR ORDER button.

**6. Anything in your shopping cart at 9:00 PM Sunday evening, the time the order cycle closes, is considered an order for that product. We do not have a "check out" or "send order" page at this time.**

**7. IMPORTANT: Any questions about products should be directed to the producers themselves.** We at Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op are not likely to have the answer to a question about a product. Please feel free to contact any of our producers directly with any questions about their products.

8. All orders include a co-op shipping/handling/transportation charge of **5%**. Sales Tax when applicable are included. Pickup locations and contact information will be listed on your invoice.

**9. You can pay in advance through PayPal from your finalized invoice.** Please print out your receipt and bring it with you to Delivery Day. We receive updates from Paypal on who has paid, but we may not receive the Paypal receipt in time to make note of it before you pick up your order. **Or you can choose to pay by check at time of pick-up or delivery.**

## **Procedures for applying to become a Producer of Eastern Ontario Local food Co-op.**

1. Join the co-op at [www.easternontariolocalfood.org](http://www.easternontariolocalfood.org).
2. After your membership is active, fill out the online Producer application.
3. Your application automatically goes to the co-op's Manager, who will review your application and contact you with any questions. The Co-op Manager may ask for more information, and may visit your farm or business before approving your application.
4. The Co-op Manager may make a recommendation to the Board of Directors regarding accepting your application to become a producer. The Board will vote on the application to approve it.
5. Producer members of the cooperative are required to follow all of our cooperative procedures, and must have a working email address. Please read the Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op Membership Handbook for all of the cooperative procedures.
6. As part of the application process, you or a representative of your farm or business must attend and volunteer at one delivery day within the first six months after your membership is approved for your products to continue to be sold through the cooperative. This enables you to take ownership of being a member of Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op and have a greater understanding of how Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op functions.
7. If any licenses or certificates are required for your product (e.g. health department inspection certificate for a kitchen, organic certification number, etc.) we must receive a copy of those documents before approving your application. Copies of your current licenses or certificates should be mailed to Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op, 9500 Fitzpatrick Road, Vankleek Hill, Ontario, K0B 1R0
8. The approval process can take up to 4 weeks to complete. If you are not accepted as a producer member and do not wish to purchase products through the co-op, at your request we will cancel your membership and refund your membership payment.
9. By submitting an application to become a producer, you agree to our Terms of Service and these Producer Standards.

***Before applying, please read through the following material to ensure that you understand the unique way that Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op will market your products.***

## Producer standards

**Acting as an agent for producer members**, the Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op posts on the internet and publicizes the products its producer members have for sale within its marketplace of members. We receive orders, provide a way for products to be delivered between members of the cooperative, collect payment from the customers and forward the payments to the producers. For some of our producer members, we are agents that facilitate farm gate sales of their products. For other producer members, we facilitate off-farm sales or sales of processed products.

**Acting as an agent for customer members**, we provide them a catalog online of available local food products that includes information about how and where the product was grown or processed. We receive their orders and notify the appropriate producers, arrange for the food to be delivered, receive and process their payments. For both producer and customer members, we provide a basic screening of products and producers based on our published parameters, and education and training regarding the use and the advantages of local foods and the core values of the cooperative.

The essential business of the cooperative is to provide a marketplace where willing buyers and sellers who are members of the cooperative can meet. The Co-op never has title to any of the products. The products that go through our distribution system are owned either by the producer, or by the customer who purchases "title" to the product from the producer. **All producer members are responsible for reading and complying with the operating procedures of the cooperative.**

**The most efficient way for us to communicate is by the Internet.** We utilize email to contact all our members on a regular basis. Please notify us when any of your contact information changes, but especially your email address. When you join the cooperative, you will be assigned a user name and password so you can access the members-only pages of our web site. You will also be assigned a member number. All members will need to keep track of their member number, as well as their user name and password to login to the system.

Every potential producer must complete the Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op Producer Registration Form providing information on their location, products, livestock, and practices. All Producer Registration Forms are subject to review by Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op for adherence to these standards. **Producer Registration Forms must be kept current and reflect all items that the producer has for sale.** An addendum shall be submitted when a producer offers new classes of products for sale. Please contact the Co-op Manager for details.

**To protect the integrity of our marketing system, Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op reserves the right to verify via physical inspection, the production claims and geographic production location of products offered for sale through our Co-op.**

**Every producer member is responsible to know and be in compliance with all appropriate Province of Ontario Regulations and local inspections, licenses, statutes and ordinances. Producer members must also comply with any relevant health codes or agricultural laws regarding direct sales of farm and food products to the public. A copy of any licenses or certificates required for your business must be on file with the cooperative.**

**After a producer and his or her initial product list have been approved, the producer may add new products in subsequent months without having them approved in advance by the**

**Standards Committee.** However, the Standards Committee periodically reviews all products and may at any time question a producer about their compliance with our Standards. Products that do not meet our standards may be removed from the public price lists of the co-op by the Standards committee.

**The co-op does not automatically enter products in our database.** Producers get to market their own products by uploading information about each product they have available for sale.

**However, the Market Manager must first update the product list before any additions and/or changes to products are made live and viewable on the website. This live-update process will happen automatically every Thursday afternoon.**

**Producers set their own prices, and receive the full retail price they set for their products, less the cooperatives shipping and handling fee for producers (presently set at 10%).**

The charges the cooperative makes for its services are always under review in consideration of our expenses. The cooperative is not in a position to lose money on its operations, so the financial structure of the cooperative may be changed from time to time.

**The cooperative will forward payment to the Producers for their products within seven days after they are delivered on Delivery Day, if not on the day of Delivery, unless there are missing items or an unresolved discrepancy in the amount you should be paid, as long as the cooperative has the working capital to do this. Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op reserves the rights to refuse products that are not what customers ordered, or which are spoiled or contaminated, or otherwise not acceptable.**

**Any customer complaints or requests for refunds or return of merchandise will be referred directly to the responsible producer and cc'd to Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op.**

Each producer will provide us a written statement of their policies for returns. In the event of a dispute between a customer and a producer, the matter shall be referred to an arbitration committee. One member shall be appointed by the customer, one by the producer, and one by the Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op. In the event the dispute is between the producer or the customer and the Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op, a similar procedure shall be used. The producer or customer will appoint a member, the co-op will appoint a member, and the two chosen arbitrators will then together choose a third person.

**These procedures are established to benefit the common good of the cooperative's members. The more members we have, the more critical it is that we achieve near 100% compliance with these procedures. This is necessary for the long-term sustainability of this business enterprise.**

## **Products Sold**

Members of the Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op (EOLFC) support local foods and products produced with sustainable practices that show good stewardship of the environment.

**Individual producers may only sell products they themselves have grown, processed or crafted.** An individual producer may not buy wholesale from someone else and then retail the product through the Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op, unless they are buying ingredients for

further value-added processing. If ingredients are bought, the producer must add value to the product. Simply repackaging the ingredients is not adding value. (For example, you can sell tomatoes that you grow, but not tomatoes that you buy from someone else unless you buy the tomatoes and make salsa to sell through EOLFC. As another example, you can buy flour or cornmeal and make bread or tortillas to sell, but you can't buy bread from someone else and sell it through EOLFC). The producer must use a minimum of 65% in weight of local ingredients produced in Eastern Ontario.

**Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op will market local foods and agricultural products produced within Eastern Ontario.** “Agricultural products” include whole produce, fresh cut flowers,\* nursery stock,\* and value-added products made from locally grown ingredients (such as soap made from local goats milk). Genetically modified animals, plants, seeds, grain, or fruits shall not knowingly be used. Customers members of Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op are interested in local food produce with sustainable practices that show good stewardship of the environment.

**\*Please read further under “Food Standards.”**

**Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op will allow the following items, as long as they meet the specified standards:**

- **Raw or fresh fruits and vegetables, cereals, grains and nuts in the shell.**
- **Meats and Dairy products processed under Ontario Regulations**
- **Wild berries.**
- **Cultivated, domestically harvested mushrooms** that are grown from an approved spore source.
- **Factory-sealed, non-potentially hazardous foods from an approved source.** Non-potentially hazardous foods are foods which are not perishable and do not have to be kept under refrigeration. Examples include canned soda, packaged potato chips, cookies, bread and candy.
- **Nursery stock, fresh-cut flowers, and other whole agricultural products.**
- **Additional food and agricultural items, with approval from the Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op standards committee.** Preference is given to products grown or given added value with the most sustainable methods possible and/or with as many local ingredients as possible. When ingredients cannot be sourced locally, we encourage producers to seek out products grown using sustainable farming methods and fair trade and labor practices.

**In the end, you as a Producer will be held liable for the products that you sell. We want to protect both our Producers and Consumers and will do all we can to help you. Please contact us if you have a product that may be questionable and we may be able to work with you and the health department to make your product safely marketable through Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op.**

**\*Please read further under “Food Standards.”**

## Food Standards

**Beef, pork, lamb, goat and all other meat and poultry sold through Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op must meet Ontario Regulations.**

**Processed and prepared foods that are offered for sale shall be submitted with a complete list of ingredients.** Ingredients that originate locally shall be noted. The producer should estimate the local content of the product. The list of ingredients must be included in the product description displayed at the co-op's website. Local ingredients should be used whenever available.

**Customer members of the Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op support local foods produced with sustainable practices that show good stewardship of the environment.** Consequently, they have a preference for organically or naturally produced foods that originate around Eastern Ontario and will be much more likely to buy these foods, which they regard as superior to the foods offered by supermarkets.

**Organic producers must be in compliance with their certifiers** and provide Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op upon request.

## Procedure for listing your products on our price/product list

To offer your product for sale through the cooperative, **we need to know everything a customer needs to know in order to make an informed decision about your product.** If you enter products on-line, you will be prompted for the relevant information.

- **Availability.** This feature enables you to enter all products that you know that you might carry at one time. Great to do in the winter-time when you have extra time on your hands, so come harvest time you can quickly activate what products you have available that week.
- **Name of the product**
- **Product Details.** This is a basic description of the product. If the approximate size, weight or contents are not clear from the name of the product, list those details here. If it is a processed item, include a list of the ingredients and estimate the content percentage of local ingredients. **If it is a package of several items**, the approximate (or exact, whichever the case may be) number of items in the package should be listed. You can describe the production practices and location for the product here.
- **Category or subcategory** that it should be listed under. If we do not have an existing category and/or subcategory, please give us some guidance on how the product would be categorized. This feature enables consumers to search for specific products.
- **Inventory.** Our system has an inventory feature. If you will only have 10 units for sale, you can set the inventory control at 10. Once 10 items have been sold, no more orders will be taken for that product. If a customer changes their mind, and deletes their order for that

product, the system will reset to allow the unsold product to be sold.

- **The price, the pricing unit** (e.g. whatever comes after the "per" in \$ per \_\_\_\_), **and the ordering unit\*** (when the customer orders, they will order number of \_\_\_\_). -the customer will not know the price until you provide a weight for it after the item is ordered.
  - EXAMPLE 1: You are selling a 5 pound bag of wheat for \$10.00. The price is \$10.00. The pricing unit is "5 pound bag" (because you are selling at \$10.00 per 5 pound bag). The ordering unit is also "5 pound bag" because the customer orders by the number of 5 pound bags that they wish to buy. This item is not considered random weight because the bags always weigh the same and the customer knows the final price when it is ordered. Notice in this example that even though the flour ends up costing \$2 per pound, you would not list as \$2 per pound because you are only selling 5 pound bags that cost \$10.
  - EXAMPLE 2: You are selling packages of chicken breasts, the package varies in weight from a little under 2 pounds to a little over 2 pounds. However, you always charge the same price per package (\$6.00). In this case, price is \$6.00, the pricing unit is "package", and the ordering unit is package. This is not a random weight product because the customer knows the price in advance.
  - EXAMPLE 3. You are selling tomatoes at \$3.00 per pound. The customer can order by the pound. If the customer orders 3 pounds, you have decided that you will always provide a minimum of 3 pounds but will not charge for exact weight but instead charge for the weight ordered. So if the customer orders 3 pounds and you end up giving them 3.1 pounds, you still only charge \$9.00. In this case, the price is \$3.00. The pricing unit is "pound" and the ordering unit is "pound". This is not a random weight product because the customer can determine what the price will be in advance.
- **In general, you should use descriptive terms** (though not too long) for the ordering and pricing units. Some standard terms will be "pound", "bag", "package" or "unit".
- **Product Type. If the product is certified organic**, please be sure to choose "certified organic" as the product type. This will enable your certified organic product to stand-out on a specially-designated organic product listing.
- **When this information is entered into our database, the product is assigned a unique ID number.**
- **Add a photo of your product!** Experience shows that items with pictures are more likely to be sold. Please take photos of your actual product so consumers know what to expect! After you have submitted your product info for an item, the system will take you to your own Product List. The first column is "Edit" where you can add an image (or update your product info). Click on "Add Image." Find your image on your computer, ensuring the image is in .jpg or .swf or .gif format and no larger than 100K. Then click "Upload."
- **Please keep track of the product ID numbers for your products.** Any time you need to change that product, you need the specific product ID number for that product. . If you are

able to use the internet, you can access any of your listed or unlisted products from the price lists at [www.easternontariolocalfood.org](http://www.easternontariolocalfood.org). If you are logging in to our system and updating/adding new products yourself, you will be able to see product numbers for products that were on older price lists.

- **Producers are responsible for entering this information for their products.**
- **If you are no longer selling a product, please do not delete it from the database;** instead, simply mark the product so it will not be displayed.
- **To update your product information,** go to your membership page to click on your “Listed” or “Unlisted” products. This will take you to your own listing for products, with an “Edit” feature next to each product you have entered into the system.

## **The work of the Cooperative**

**Delivery Day is every Tuesday** except for Thanksgiving, Christmas or New Years weeks and other coinciding holidays. The cooperative will publish a calendar of any closures each year.

**You can view the on-going progress of your orders** by logging into the cooperative's membership site, but customers may change their orders (add or delete items, change quantities, etc.) until the close of the order desk. Do not consider your orders as "final" until you receive an email from us that the orders are final. If you print your orders early, you may miss orders and lose business. At the close of order week, the cooperative will notify you that your orders are ready for downloading or printing.

**When you check your orders at the close of the order cycle, there will be links for your orders sorted by PRODUCT, and by CUSTOMER.** You will only see your orders.

**If you run out of inventory on a particular product,** notify the customer immediately (email if they have it is fine) so that the customer can choose a substitution from another producer if you don't have a substitute to suggest. If customers have ordered products that are out of stock, there are several ways to handle the situation. (A) "first come, first serve", in which case, look at the SORT BY PRODUCT list because the orders are listed there in the order in which we received them. (B) You could contact the customer and offer a substitution; the customer contact info will be on your list of orders. If you have a limited quantity of an item, use the INVENTORY feature to limit sales to your actual inventory. If this becomes an habitual problem an additional fee will be charged by the Co-op.

**If your customer accepts a substitution,** send an email with the details of the substitution. We need to know the customer's name, the product originally ordered (its product ID number), and the product you are substituting (its product ID number). Please state that the customer has accepted the substitution.

**Please be prompt in completing these invoices,** especially if you have an out of stock situation. Customers expect to be notified if you are out of a product or can't deliver it, and you will preserve your customer relationship with them if you are prompt in telling them that you are out of an item.

Some customers are ordering most of their family's food from the cooperative, and if an item is not delivered, then that creates a problem for them. Don't alienate customers by waiting until the last minute to discover that you are out of a product.

**All questions about customer orders should go directly to the customer.** Customer contact information is on your order page that is sorted by CUSTOMER.

**CHECK YOUR EMAIL several times during Order and Delivery days**, in case there are any Delivery Day issues that need to be addressed.

## **How to prepare your products for delivery through Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op**

The steps to preparing your product for delivery are:

- 1. Package individual orders.**
- 2. Include an invoice to the customer**
- 3. Label the product(s) properly**

These steps are explained more fully in the rest of this section.

### **1. Package individual orders.**

- Orders are delivered packaged for individual customers. Do not deliver 50 pounds of bulk lettuce and expect us to divide it up between your customers for you.
- The order should be packaged securely. Products are transported from your location to the sorting hubs, where they are handled, sorted, and transported again to customers or other regional sorting hubs. The packaging of your product must be able to protect your product during transportation, sorting, and delivery. As many as 8 people may handle your product before it reaches the final customer.

### **2. Include an invoice to the customer.**

- Each order should have an invoice to the customer with it. Use the Producer Invoice by customer sort for each customer's invoice by simply printing it and then cutting it apart for your various customers. If you have your own invoicing system, you can use that. You can also include a thank you note or recipe.
- If a customer has ordered several products from you, you can put all of those products in one bag, box or container, or you can deliver them as separate items.

### **3. Label the product(s) properly**

- Each bag, box, container, or other product for a customer member must be labeled with the labels we provide you at the membership page of our website.

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- Refrigerated items must be marked REFRIGERATE, otherwise we may not know what to do with it. If an item is frozen, but that won't be apparent to the volunteers because of the packaging, it must be marked FROZEN.
- After you have given final confirmation of your orders, prepared Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op labels are available for use on individual products.
- If you are putting all of a customer's orders in one bag, box, or container, use the Producer Invoice by customer sort as the label and securely tape it to the container. Cut it apart to separate the various customers' information. If you are attaching the entire order's document in this way, you can use the customer sort as both the INVOICE and the LABEL. To make these documents into labels, you can print them on plain paper, cut them apart, and tape them (using strong packing tape) to the product or container. Or you can print them on label stock and peel them off and stick them onto the container. Do not use scotch tape or other small, light tapes to attach labels or invoices to packages.
- If you are sending products as separately packed items, use the individual product label provided in your Eastern Ontario Local Food Co-op member area.
- If you are sending a member's products in several containers with more than one product for that member inside, attach each of the relevant individual product labels to the outside of that box.
- Customer labels should not be on the outside of any box or container that contains orders for more than one customer. Those containers, bags, or boxes should be labeled with your producer name with customer products inside.
- If you are sending your product in plastic grocery bags, make the label a tag and tie it to the plastic bag, or print the label on label stock and stick it to the bag. Staples don't work well with plastic bags and paper labels, so we require a tag. Do not write information on a plastic grocery bag and expect us to be able to decipher it. Marker inks do not adhere well to plastic grocery bags.
- Make sure the ink you print your labels with is WATERPROOF. If you don't use waterproof ink, and the label gets wet, we may not be able to deliver the product to your customer.
- **If you have some products which are frozen or refrigerated, and some products for a customer that are dry goods or otherwise non-refrigerated, they should be delivered in separate containers, and frozen and refrigerated items should arrive in ice chests and/or mechanically refrigerated. Frozen items must be hard frozen, and refrigerated items must be cold to the touch.**
- **We will check temperatures on all incoming refrigerated and frozen items as they come in on Delivery Day. Meats and other frozen items must be hard frozen and at 0-10 degrees or cooler. Refrigerated items must be less than 41 degrees. We will refuse any items not at the proper temperatures.**
- **Delivery!**

- We will check off your products with our final invoices. If there are no discrepancies or changes we will try to pay you immediately for your total, minus the 10% handling fee. Otherwise we will pay you within 7 days of delivery.
- If you have the time, we would appreciate your help in quickly placing your individually packaged products into each customer bag for pick-up.
- If you have purchased product from other producers, you may wait until all product is delivered, or return by 11:30 AM to pick up your own sorted order.

**THANK YOU FOR DOING YOUR PART TO MAKE  
EASTERN ONTARIO LOCAL FOOD CO-OP A  
SUCCESS!**