

Production Issues:

No, you don't have to be organic to sell through the Coop, but it helps. Our members are interested in buying local foods produced in a more "natural" environment. The fewer commercial fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides that you use the more you will sell. The Coop *does not* have a requirement that you be certified organic, but **you must declare your production practices** on our website so members can make informed decisions. *Less chemicals = better sales.*

Possibilities:

There is a HUGE unmet demand for locally produced food. Growing food and selling it direct to the public offers serious income opportunities for those wanting to take the time to raise natural products. The Coop provides excellent opportunities to start small and grow!

Oklahoma Food Coop had their first order cycle in November 2004—it was around \$3500. Four plus years later—an email quote from the President, Bob Waldrop:

"I sent this to the OFC membership today—thought y'all should see it too. Our order this month was the largest ever; \$62,000, an 108% increase over Feb.2007. We had the first ever \$5,000 producer order, and several in the \$3K to \$4K range. "And they are still looking for more Oklahoma producers to meet customer demand!

Formation of the High Plains Food Coop (HPFC) has been guided by the Ogallala Commons, Rocky Mountain Farmers Union with a Rural Development Grant, and the Oklahoma Food Coop (OFC). Committee members have met on a regular basis, attended a three day workshop on forming a local food coop presented by the OFC, volunteered and worked at the OFC Delivery Day (even went back a second time - what an experience!) - worked with the members of the OFC who have generously shared their time and knowledge (saving much time, money and headaches) and shared their software to set up our website ordering system.

**For more information please join us in
Atwood, KS on March 28, 2008
Aberdeen Steak House
11:45am CDST (10:45am MSDT)**

"Bringing the farmers market to you"

Jo Hagney

Becky Roberson

Co-Chairmen

www.highplainsfood.org

High Plains Ag Producers

Looking for an additional source of revenue?



A local Food Coop modeled after the *Oklahoma Food Coop* (www.oklahomafood.coop) is looking for member producers to sell products to consumers in the Denver metro area. These customers are looking for, and willing to pay for, locally grown and raised food products.

Join us for an informational meeting:
Friday, March 28, 2008
Aberdeen Steak House, Atwood, KS
11:45am CDST (10:45am MSDT)
\$15 Registration Fee includes locally grown lunch and refreshment.

High Plains Food Coop *www.highplainsfood.org*

Who we are and how we will do business:

The High Plains Food Coop will make it easy for people to buy food directly from local producers via internet shopping and a voluntary delivery system. *Customers and producers are both members. We do not buy wholesale and sell retail. Each producer is his/her own "brand" within the Coop. You set your own retail price.* Customer members order products at our website from individual producers, so you begin to develop 'brand loyalty' to your products among our customer members.

Each month's order will open on the **first day of the month** at 8am, and always close on the **second Thursday** at midnight. At the beginning of the month the producer goes into the website and enters the amount/number of products that will be available for customers to purchase. This eliminates over selling your amount of production. As customers order the producer can go in and check customer requests online. On delivery day—the **third Thursday** - producers bring their products to a pick-up site for transportation to Denver, packaged and labeled according to the Coop

guidelines, for individual customers. Our online system produces labels for you so all you have to do is copy, paste, print, cut, and attach them to your product packages. Our Coop volunteers sort the products into retail orders in a "barn raising style" event. The food is then ready for pick-up by the customer.

PAYMENT - A check will be written at the close of Delivery Day for products sold. Once the item is checked in, if we lose it or damage it during delivery you still get paid. If a customer doesn't pay for their order—you still get paid. Instead of finding your customers, delivering and collecting—we find the customers, show them the products, organize the delivery, do the billing, and collect the money. ***You produce the food and cash the check!*** You pay \$100.00 for a membership and then 15% of your sales for participation fees. *Where can you get a better deal??*

Local Foods—A partial listing of products needed: lots of fresh eggs, meats, vegetables, herbs, grains/flour/meals (cornmeal, oatmeal, etc.) noodles, pastas, preserved items (jellies, jams, fruit butters, salsa, etc), dairy products

No raw milk may be sold, baked goods, etc., and other ag-related products. **No confined animal operation products may be sold through the Coop.** All meats and poultry **MUST** come from free range, naturally managed flocks and herds. Meat and poultry **MUST** be transported **FROZEN**. Dry ice and ice chests will be used for transportation. ***All meats and poultry MUST be processed in a USDA inspected facility since we are crossing State lines.*** In order to sell ***prepared/processed added value foods*** through the Coop, they must be prepared in ***a health department certified and inspected kitchen.*** Any meats and eggs used as ingredients must come from free-range naturally managed flocks or herds, but you can purchase other ingredients (such as sugar) from the regular food distribution system. We suggest supporting other Coop members when purchasing needed food ingredients. *That will be a big selling point with the customers.*

We sell food with a story— our story as the Coop and your story as the producer. Customers are interested in getting to know you and where their food comes from.