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Welcome to 2019! This will be a year of big decisions for Bloomingfoods. What is the next step for our beloved cooperative? We will soon have results of an initial market research study to help us understand our options moving forward. What are the prospects for relocating the East store? Is the East side where we should be looking for real estate or is there a better area of town? Or should we be shifting gears and combining the East and West stores into one larger location? Or perhaps the grocery scene is getting too saturated and our best bet is to consolidate to the West store while the grocery wars sort themselves out?

These are big questions and the Board will be looking for input from you, our owner-members, as we gather information and analyze the possibilities. We will be holding a series of owner-member forums this year to hone in on the right move forward. It will be an iterative process as we consider different potential locations, store sizes, store formats, expenses, financing, and

projected performance. Along with the business analysis, we need to hold our Ends Statement in mind. Ultimately, Bloomingfoods exists to be more than a grocery store. We are here to provide a strong sense of community; to build a robust and sustainable local food economy; to demonstrate the power of the democratic cooperative ownership model; and to educate about the interconnectedness of food, health, and the environment. We are here to meet the needs of our owner-members. You are the cooperative and we need your voice now more than ever.

I always enjoy hearing why people support Bloomingfoods and although I have heard many different answers, a few common themes have emerged. One is the sense of community, of interconnectedness, of mutual support. Many of those who were here in the early years speak fondly of hours spent volunteering together in the store. It is true that working together is a great way to forge community bonds but it is also true that times have changed and lives feel increasingly busy. With that in mind, we continue to look at other ways to foster interaction and engagement among and between our owner-members and our staff to ensure that sense of community continues to grow. Potlucks, workshops, Facebook discussions, forums, increasing staff retention to keep familiar faces around... What other ideas do you have for fostering community connections?

Another theme is the way that Bloomingfoods can support our efforts to live lightly (rightly?) on the Earth. Some are committed to worker's rights and fair trade as a way to ensure the people who produced their food were treated well. Others are focused on organic certification as a way to push for a healthy body and a healthy planet. All of us are increasingly aware of our footprint on the planet and are considering the various ways we can reduce our impact, many of which involve making different choices about what we consume. Bloomingfoods is looking specifically at how we can help shoppers adopt a low-waste lifestyle. We are looking at ways we can reduce or replace our deli packaging and also ways we can make it easier for shoppers to shop waste-free. My question for you: what would encourage you to buy more from our bulk department using your own reusable containers? What do you see as the next step after bringing your own reusable grocery bags?

A third theme that emerges is the idea of Bloomingfoods as a political choice, as an alternative to faceless nameless soulless corporations. Bloomingfoods is owned and run by members of our community. We are a representative democracy, meaning that owner-members have the power to change things

through the democratic process. It may not be easy to enact change but contrast our operation with national chains where decisions are made far away behind closed doors based on profits to shareholders. Local cooperatively owned and democratically controlled businesses strengthen the autonomy and resilience of a community, allowing local people control over decisions that will directly impact their community. How will you get involved in 2019?

Thank you again for your support of Bloomingfoods.

Maggie Sullivan, Bloomingfoods Board President



THANK YOU once again for helping to raise big money for another crucial community organization! For the month of December, you helped us raise \$7,097.82 for the Bloomington Community Orchard.

\$7,097.82 IN DECEMBER,

\$68,551.76 IN 2018,

+ \$223,042.76 SINCE 2016!

2018 was a fantastic year for our Positive Change program. We were able to raise a stunning \$68,551.76 for local community organizations in 2018 - and that's not counting the \$30,000 that our beloved community raised for Bloomingfoods this summer (thank you!!!). That brings our grand total since we began the program in 2016 to **\$223,042.76!**



CENTERSTONE

In January, shoppers can round up their purchase to the nearest dollar (or more!) for Stepping Stones, a program of Centerstone! Stepping Stones is great because of their work to provide transitional housing to local homeless youth, to help them navigate community resources and food pantries, and to develop skills to live independently. *"Stepping Stones' goal is to provide a supportive community that encourages young people to make decisions that positively affect their lives and prepare them for the future. Our program has two overarching components: transitional housing and independent living."*

[Read More](#)



LOCAL FOCUS

Our January LOCAL FOCUS vendor is LocalFolks Foods, straight out of Sheridan, Indiana! LocalFolks founders Steve & Anita Spencer and Paul Skirvin aim to provide Indiana and the Midwest with delicious locally-produced condiments for all your cooking needs - BBQ sauce, pasta sauce, hot sauce, mustards, salsa, jams and more! Meeting a quality standard of no preservatives, high-fructose corn syrup, GMOs, or artificial colors, LocalFolks products are created within a partnership between family farms and farm co-ops throughout the region, helping to strengthen the food networks of the Midwest.



Enjoy 30% off all LocalFolks products at all locations every Saturday in January! Meet the producers and try free samples at the following dates and times:

Saturday, January 5, 10am - 1pm, Bloomingfoods Near West

Saturday, January 19, 12pm - 3pm, Bloomingfoods East



Love Your Body, Love Your Food: Fueling for Success in Life

Good eating habits start at home. Need some inspiration to make feeding your family healthy and fun? Join registered dietitian nutritionist Jessie Wong RDN, to learn best practices for planning balanced meals, encouraging good bone health, avoiding anemia, and nurturing a positive body image. Enjoy a light meal made from nutrient-dense ingredients. This free workshop is geared towards families with children and teenagers, but open to all.

A sample 5 food group dinner will be provided for all at no charge, includes:

- Beef Stew (protein/vegetables)
- Lentil Soup (protein/vegetables) VEGAN
- Bread (Carb)
- Milk (Dairy)
- Clementine (Fruits)

Jessie Wong RDN, is a sports dietitian at IU Athletics where she works with division 1 student athletes. She is also the owner of [Joy Nutrition Consulting](#) where she supports clients as they deal with weight management, diabetes, heart health, hypertension, GI issues, and more. She will be joined by registered dietitian nutritionist Amanda Boyer RDN, the owner of [The Wholehearted Dietitian](#), who specializes in intuitive eating and body image.

Wellness Wednesday Workshops take place in the Bloomingfoods East Patio Room from 6-7pm (**note the new time!**). These free classes are designed to allow owner-members to teach the Bloomingfoods community new skills to enhance their well-being and happiness.

Interested in offering a future class? Contact Maggie at maggie@bloomingfoods.coop

[Full Schedule](#)



Are you an owner-member? Do you know about our [Community Partners Program](#)? Bloomingfoods' Community Partners Program highlights local businesses that offer exclusive discounts to Bloomingfoods owner-members. We're talking massages, restaurants, music stores, coffee shops, gardening services, and more! Show your owner-member card at participating businesses to receive discounts and perks! Need a new card? Stop in at any location and we'll make you a new one.

[Learn More](#)

Upcoming Board of Directors Meetings

Regularly scheduled monthly board meetings are held the last Thursday of the month at 6:30pm unless otherwise noted. Board Meetings are open to co-op owner-members and guests of the board. Familiarity with the Bylaws, Policies, and the Policy Governance Method will enhance your understanding of the board meeting process.

Meetings will be held at Dimension Mill, 624 N Madison St, unless otherwise noted.

- Thursday, January 31
 - Thursday, February 28
 - Thursday, March 28
 - Thursday, April 25
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COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Join Bloomington Community Orchard volunteers and leaders for a Hibernation Celebration and Volunteer Appreciation party at Switchyard Brewery next Tuesday, January 8th. More details can be found on Facebook here: <https://www.facebook.com/events/348544609255773>

The Orchard is always looking for volunteers! If you're interested in hands on or behind the scenes nonprofit work, this is a great place to meet new people and grow. Email getinvolved@bloomingtoncommunityorchard.org to be directed to the team you're most interested in.

25th Annual Hoosier Hills Food Bank Soup Bowl Fundraiser

Sunday, February 17

Bloomington - Monroe County Convention Center

Bloomingfoods is once again selling tickets for the Hoosier Hills Soup Bowl Fundraiser! Tickets are now for sale at both our East and Near West stores. A \$30 adult ticket includes entry into the event and choice of a handmade bowl by a local potter. Pick one up soon, they always sell out quickly! (Tickets for children under 18 are \$10 and are only available for purchase at the door the day of the event).

[Bloomington Winter Farmers' Market](#) - Saturdays @ Harmony School, December 2 - March 31

Parks & Recreation Gardening Classes

[Apply for the Allegheny Mountain Institute's fully sponsored Farm & Food Education Fellowship!](#)

Now in its eighth year, Allegheny Mountain Institute's fully sponsored 18-month Fellowship prepares and empowers individuals to become teachers and ambassadors for a more vibrant and accessible local food system. Selected Fellows spend six months in immersive training on our mountain farm

campus (Phase I) and one year in service work with food related non-profit partner organizations (Phase II). AMI is an educational non-profit organization with the mission to cultivate healthy communities through food and education.



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