



2023-2024 Astoria Co+op Annual Report

Message from the general manager

By Matt Stanley

We've had a blast celebrating the co-op's 50th anniversary this year. We hope you've enjoyed our anniversary promotions - the 50% off bulk and 50% off produce sales were very popular! We fed hundreds of people at our 50th-anniversary summer party. Thank you to everyone who stopped by to celebrate our co-op. Together, we share a rich history of community ownership, hard work, and an enduring love of food.

Like any small business, our co-op has experienced periods of success and challenging times over the past 50 years. Some of your peer co-op members who have been here through the decades have great stories about these ups and downs. Most recently, our co-op completed an expansion and relocation and weathered a global pandemic. These significant changes and external factors had a negative financial impact that we've worked hard to correct.



We've been successful in finding financial sustainability this year. In addition to managing expenses, the co-op is growing at a solid clip. Most food co-ops in the country are seeing sales growth primarily due to increasing customer counts, and so are we. Nationwide co-op sales growth exceeds conventional grocery industry sales growth for the first time in a decade. What is driving this trend? Shoppers

increasingly seek a sense of community and connectedness. A place where they see fellow community members, get to know employees and generally experience a sense of place. Co-ops exemplify these things with our focus on local producers, friendly service, and fun atmosphere.

The sales growth we achieve by reaching more people in our community and region allows the co-op to meet the needs of the many stakeholders who depend on us. We are deeply grateful for the support of our members and shoppers, local producers and vendors, lenders, landlord, member-investors, and more. Your trust and partnership are invaluable to us. Financial success also allows us to reinvest in our co-op. Our new store is nearly five years old, and some equipment is approaching the end of its life. Over time, the co-op will require accumulated cash to reinvest in our facility so that it remains the best grocery store in the region.

Co-op staff are also vital stakeholders who depend on our financial strength. For the past year, we've focused on paying our team a wage that keeps pace with rapid cost-of-living increases. Our starting wage has moved from \$16 an hour

to \$18 an hour. Our living wage calculator indicates a living wage is nearly \$20 an hour for Clatsop County. That means we have more work to do. We must continue to grow our sales to support our hard-working and friendly team.

So here's a call to action for our members and community of supporters. Each week, I hear from someone who has recently discovered our co-op. There are still lots of folks out there who have yet to experience the shopping experience we offer. Please help us continue to grow our customer counts and sales by encouraging your friends, family, neighbors, and visitors to support our community-owned grocery store. Everyone is welcome! Together, we can continue to grow our co-op, build wealth for the business we co-own, and ultimately increase our positive impact on our community and region. Here's to another 50 years.

In Cooperation,
Matt

Thank you for your continued support of the co-op!

Erin Kester, Board President



I am honored to have been part of the Astoria Co-op Board of Directors as we mark a truly remarkable milestone in our co-op's journey—our 50th anniversary! This half-century of commitment to community, quality, and sustainability stands as a testament to the collective spirit and dedication

of each member who has been part of the Astoria Co-op story since the very beginning.

Over the past 50 years, our co-op has evolved from a modest beginning into a thriving hub of community

engagement and responsible commerce. This achievement is not just a mark of time, but a reflection of our shared values and collective hard work. As Board President, I am proud to report that the recent financial performance has been improving month over month, thanks to your unwavering support and the dedication of the entire co-op team.

Our success is not only measured in numbers but in the positive impact we make each day. Our focus has always been on doing good work together—on fostering a space where quality products, sustainable practices, and community well-being are at the heart of everything we do. As we look ahead, we remain committed to these principles while also seeking new opportunities for

continued growth.

The next chapter of our co-op's story will build on the strong foundation we have established. We are excited about the future and the possibilities it holds. We believe that by working together, we can achieve even greater things and make a lasting impact on our community.

Thank you for being an integral part of this journey. Your dedication, enthusiasm, and participation have been crucial to our success. As we celebrate this golden anniversary, let us also look forward to the many more milestones we will achieve together.

Here's to celebrating our past, embracing our present, and building our future.

Warm regards,

Erin Kester



Storefronts over the decades



1974
1120 Marine Drive



1986
1389 Duane Street



2008
1355 Exchange Street



2019
2350 Marine Drive

Co-op and Community

At Astoria Co+op, we are passionate about delivering exceptional food and outstanding service to our community. We see each day as an opportunity to create a positive impact through our values by prioritizing community well-being through local partnerships, creating a welcoming and inclusive environment, and giving back with our Change for Community program.

Our community-owned and independent store supports local and Fair Trade producers, and producers who identify as women, BIPOC, disabled, LGBTQIA+ and veterans. Astoria Co+op is the only grocery store in the lower Columbia region to offer Double Up Food Bucks, which matches the value of SNAP spent on fresh fruits and vegetables providing shoppers with credit for future produce purchases, up to \$20 per shopping trip. The co-op also accepts WIC payments so women of young children can access affordable staple items for their families.

The co-op's Change for Community program makes it simple for shoppers to support organizations making a positive impact in our community. Each time you shop, you can round up your total.



 82

The co-op orders directly from 82 local producers.

 \$210K

Funds raised for local nonprofits through our Change for Community program.

 \$20

Value of fresh fruit and vegetables that can be matched each day with Double Up Food Bucks.





 **7,000**

7,000+ members of Astoria Co+op.

 **66%**

Co-op members account for 66% of sales.

 **\$6M**

By the end of 2024, our owners will have put over \$6 million in sales back into the local economy.

owners
save an
extra
10% on
coop deals.

Co-op Ownership

Co-op owners help grow our co-op, keep more money in our community and invest in a business that will always be locally-owned. Ownership is not required to shop, everyone is welcome. The benefits of ownership include a \$20 store coupon upon joining and an additional 10% off Co+op Deals items with every shop. They also save 10% when they special order a case of an item.

In addition to the discounts that come from ownership, owners receive regular communications including email updates and an annual meeting invite, and they can vote for board members to represent them, or run for the board themselves.

 **380**

New members have signed up so far this year as of September.

Employment



Benefits include healthcare, vision, dental, short-term disability, staff discount and the Employee Assistance Program.



Astoria Co+op employs 50 people, including 47 full-time staff members.



93%, or 15 out of 16, of floor managers and leads/buyers have been promoted from within our team.



Median pay for non-salary employees.



Average years of tenure.

Employee Bio

Meet Danny, he's been an employee of the co-op for over 12 years! Danny started in 2012 as a produce stocker and has since worked in many capacities at the co-op, including as a cashier, grocery receiver, and produce manager. His knowledge in many areas of the co-op makes him an ideal fit for his current role – point-of-sale coordinator – which he's held since moving to the new store location in 2019. Danny is a key to database management, sales analysis, and technical support at the co-op. Danny is a part of the administrative leadership team and the co-op's official promotions liaison.

What makes the co-op a place you want to work?

It's the wonderful staff who are passionate about what they do. And just the community around the store, being able to see the same members week after week is great. It's a really calm and comfortable environment to work in.

What keeps you engaged at work?

Continually finding ways to keep the business fresh and keep the experience exciting for our shoppers and members. Food is always evolving, new interesting products and diets, and that keeps it fresh for me.



Sustainability

We have high standards for the products we carry, including organic and local produce, humanely raised meats, special diet foods and natural wellness items. We strive for sustainability with our solar panels, EV chargers, bulk section and pollinator-friendly landscaping.

You won't find food waste at the co-op, as we give excess food to local food banks and send compost to local farms.



Pounds of CO2 emission saved with our solar panels.



Equivalent trees planted.





Board of Directors

Erin Kester
Norma Hernandez
Karen Niemi
Sarah Nebeker
Jennifer Teeter
Mark Porter
Heidi Brown
Sarah Manor
Jessica Gordon

General Manager

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About this Content

This content is based on metrics and other data collected by Astoria Co+op as of September 2024.

