

Ethical Eating Team Visit to People's Food Co-op  
216 N Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor, 48104  
<http://www.peoplesfood.coop/index.htm>

We met with Kevin Sharp, from Marketing and Member Services.

- History - PFC was founded in 1971 as a grass roots movement, with the idea that people should take back control of their food from the government. Started as a drop location for bulk purchases of tofu, brown rice and other foods unavailable in mainstream stores, the coop soon realized a storefront was needed as the number of items and number of members expanded. They have remained committed to a downtown location, despite ongoing parking issues.
- Co-op = Member Owned
  - 64% of shoppers are members; you don't have to be a member to shop at PFC
  - 6,500 members
  - Members pay a one-time lifetime membership investment of \$60, fully refundable for any reason
  - Member Rebate System: Members' purchase totals are recorded, and if the Co-op makes a profit that year, then a percent of what was spent goes back to the member
- Policy Governance Model
  - How decisions are made:
    - "In the end, who do we want to be?"
    - "If we went away tomorrow, what would be missing?"
    - Buying local and fair trade is written into the Ends policies
  - Ends Policies
    - Education
    - Products & Service
    - Cooperative Community
    - Collective Action
    - Intrinsic in all of the Ends is running a viable business
- Food
  - Even in January, there were 18-19 locally grown produce items!
  - Examples of local food included bread (Avalon), dairy (Guernsey), beans (Eden), pasta (al dente), corn chips (Ann Arbor Tortilla Factory), popcorn, eggs
  - 100% of coffee sold is fair trade
  - No products containing high fructose corn syrup
- From the PFC website:
  - Local – We support our local community by buying locally grown and locally produced goods when available. We feature seasonal local produce, and we support local farmers and businesses through preferential buying.
  - Organic – We support our environment by carrying organic items in all of our departments. The majority of our produce is organically grown, and we offer organic grocery, home and beauty care items.