



Member Action Committee (MAC)

Minutes – May 8, 2019

Arcata Co-op Conference Room (upstairs), Arcata

Present:

Board Members: Cheri Strong, Colin Fiske

Member-Employees: Emily Walter Kiya Villarreal

Members: Andre Gascoigne, Korinna Domingo, Andy Reyes, Roger, Joel

1. **Welcome:** At 5:30pm Kiya welcomed everyone.

2. **Approve Minutes**

Consensus to approve the April 2019 meeting minutes.

3. **Member Comments**

- Roger – I want to move the Member Action Committee meeting to the floor. I want to see a facilitated employee/mgt./union and member meeting. Is there way for members to participate in stores?

4. **Purchasing Policy**

Palm Oil

A group of three HSU students (all members) that are in a human and wildlife conflict class presented information to the committee about an audit they did on the Arcata Co-op store to see what products contain palm oil. They created a list of the most popular brands carried at the Co-op that use palm oil. It appears in a wide variety of brands, including in-house bakery items. The inhouse products tend to be vegan. The students are asking the Co-op to stop buying all products that contain palm oil. Stores in other countries have boycotted products containing palm oil, yet no store in the US has yet. The Co-op could be the first.

This is an interesting suggestion as usually a boycott is of a product, rather than an ingredient. It was explained that we don't usually jump into boycotts. First steps generally involved education to inform shoppers so they can decide how they want to shop their values. We want our shoppers to make educated choices. A good method of educating could be starting by asking the Co-op to stop using palm oil in their in-house products. The committee suggested having the students submit a letter for Co-op News and forward it to National Co+op Grocers.

Next Steps:

- Talk to Lauren about this topic regarding inhouse products containing palm oil.
- See if Laurie can find any good vegan bakery recipes via Marketing Matters.
- First address inhouse products, then any Co-op branded products, then all products.
- Palm oil should be a consideration when assessing each store product against the Purchasing and Merchandising policy which will be taking place to fulfill the Strategic Plan.

ACTION: Kiya will work with the HSU students to get an article in the Co-op News.

Beef

The committee is curious to know why we sell Humboldt Grassfed Beef and not Organic Eel River Beef. Part of the inquiry is to find out which meat product is the most sustainable, humane and healthiest for consumers. We do sell some Organic Eel River Beef and Organic Prairie Beef in frozen.

- The committee decided to move the beef topic to the Earth Action Committee.

5. Lighting in Arcata

Three wireless light options have been identified for outside the Arcata building and should be installed soon.

6. Co-op Access Program (CAP)

Kiya was able to get data about low cost programs at other co-ops from Co+efficient. Data included the cost of discounts for the programs but did not include the number of participants. The committee wants to know if other co-ops have methods for estimating if the program brings in more money overall because participants shop more. What is the impact on overall margin?

ACTION: Kiya will contact co-ops with similar programs to CAP and see if she can get more information about margin impact.

7. Agreements

No recommendations to the board.

Agenda items for next meeting:

- Discuss ways to get Union at a meeting of the board, that includes members and employees
- Update on low cost programs and margin

July MAC

- Kiya will report back on the topic of palm oil

8. Roles & Responsibilities

Laurie will facilitate the next MAC meeting.

Kiya will write the MAC report.

Next MAC meeting:

Wednesday, June 12, 5:30pm at the Arcata Store (upstairs).

Minutes by Emily Walter