



Talking Points for Volunteers Engaging in Community Outreach

To the Volunteer: *Know your audience. If you can determine the primary concern of a friend or neighbor, you can focus on points that will be most useful.*

What is the Port Jervis Food Co-op?

- It will be a neighborhood grocery store in Port Jervis.
- It will have a professional manager & staff, and be owned by the community, for the community.

Who is it for?

- **Food co-ops are for everyone.**
- Anyone will be able to shop at the Port Jervis Food Co-op — no membership necessary!
- The co-op will carry a wide range of affordable healthy & local food options.
- The co-op will accept all forms of payment, including cash, debit & credit cards, EBT & will have other discounts for shoppers with limited food budgets.
- The more people who join & shop there, the lower the prices will be.

Why should I support the Port Jervis Food Co-op?

- Port Jervis needs a neighborhood grocery store with fresh, healthy options.
- The food co-op will bring fresh, local products to Port Jervis & will offer items in bulk to keep prices down & cut down on packaging & let you buy as little or as much as you need.
- The co-op will focus on relationships with local farmers, producers & the local economy.

How are co-ops different from regular grocery stores?

- They are owned by community members-owners.
- Member-owners have the opportunity to collaborate with the store manager to meet the community's needs.
- The co-op's profits go back into the store & the community.
- Food co-ops typically do things like:
 - Pay higher wages than other grocery stores do,
 - Employ more workers than other grocery stores do,
 - Support community projects & groups, sponsoring community events,

- Pay fair prices to farmers & producers,
- Offer special discounts to members-owners & those with limited food budgets,
- Reinvest profits in the co-op.

What does it mean to be a member of the co-op?

- Right now, we are asking you to become a **pledge-member**. This means simply declaring interest in becoming a member when the co-op becomes a legal entity.
- Once we move to the next stage of organizing, we will ask people who can do so to become member-owners. This will happen even before there is a store.
- **Member-owners** make a one-time investment in the co-op & get an equity share, that's what makes you a member-owner.
- Food co-op equity shares usually cost in the range of \$100-\$300. We haven't decided on the exact amount yet for the Port Jervis Food Co-op.
- We are committed to making member-ownership accessible to all through flexible payment plans & a fund that will subsidize membership for those on limited budgets.
- Member-owners will have a say in what is carried at the store, how the store is run, what kinds of benefits member-owners will receive.
- Once the store is open, member-owners may have benefits like product discounts, wholesale buying days, discounts for putting in volunteer hours, & special group discounts (for students, seniors, those on limited budgets, etc.).
- The benefit of becoming a member-owner early on is getting to have a say in what the co-op will be like.
- But remember, **even if you're not a member-owner you will be able to shop at the co-op.**

How do I get involved?

- **Sign-up to be on the mailing list** (visit pjfoodcoop.com).
- **Share your opinion in the community survey** (visit pjfoodcoop.com).
- **Tell friends & neighbors** about the food co-op, encourage them to sign up & take the survey too.
- **Consider joining as a volunteer** to help us spread the word or with other projects. You can volunteer through the sign-up process & someone will contact you to discuss how you can help.
- **Get involved!** The more people who get involved, the sooner we'll have a store.