

Co-ops Against Genocide Statement

Did you ever wish you could just vote with your heart on what you believe is right?

Well, look no further! The EEFC board is giving you that very opportunity. The board received a petition signed by over 500 people requesting a binding referendum to decide if Israeli-sourced products could be sold in the store. The board refused this request.

Rather than a binding referendum, the board is holding this advisory referendum which carries no requirement for the board to adhere to its outcome. The board opposes the boycott. It is important for the board to know that the membership supports this boycott.

In 2005, Palestinian civil society called for an international boycott on Israeli goods “until Israel meets its obligation to recognize the Palestinians people’s inalienable right to self determination and fully complies with the precepts of international law.” EEFC would be joining this nonviolent international movement, it would not be committing an isolated meaningless gesture. Boycotting Israel does not call for the dismantling of Israel, it calls for Israel to adhere to international law, to extend equal rights to all living there.

The board is worried that the co-op will open itself to both business and legal risks. The Olympia Food Co-op voted to boycott Israeli-sourced products in 2010. They were sued by members in coordination with Stand With Us. The court threw out the lawsuit in 2017. The ruling included a requirement that those who sued had to pay the co-op’s legal costs to the tune of \$160,000. The Olympia Food Co-op thrives today as a well-respected and inspirational co-op.

Staff from Stand With Us have attended EEFC board meetings and have argued against the boycott, ostensibly threatening EEFC with a lawsuit. We should not give in to this form of intimidation, we should be strengthened by it.

We have also heard those against the boycott worry that EEFC members who are Jewish will be uncomfortable or feel unsafe in the co-op if Israeli products are boycotted. A boycott of Israeli goods is not discrimination against Jews, but is a

response to Israel's violation of international laws. Kosher foods and Passover goods not made in Israel would continue to be sold.

So: if you have been in pain over the last 30 months watching the Israeli destruction of Gaza, the West Bank, Lebanon, Syria, and Iran, and the long standing occupation of Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon; if you agree with the International Court of Justice that Israel is plausibly committing genocide**, if you agree with the UN, Amnesty International, the Israeli human rights organization, B'Tselem, and other international human rights orgs that Israel is an apartheid state vote yes for this boycott.

In the words of a co-op member whose parents were born in Palestine, "You don't need to be Palestinian to oppose genocide, apartheid, ethnic cleansing, war crimes, displacement, starvation, [and] collective punishment... I would think, you only need to be human."

Co-ops Against Genocide encourages all members to send a clear message to the board by voting in favor of a boycott. Vote yes for humanity.

** The following are the relevant sections of the ICJ Order of January 26, 2024. The EEFC Board has included this footnote for clarity.

54. "In the Court's view, the facts and circumstances mentioned above are sufficient to conclude that at least some of the rights claimed by South Africa, and for which it is seeking protection are plausible. This is the case with respect to the right of the Palestinians in Gaza to be protected from acts of genocide and related prohibited acts identified in Article III, and the right of South Africa to seek Israel's compliance with the latter's obligations under the Convention."

58. "The Court has already found (see paragraph 54 above) that at least some of the rights asserted by South Africa under the Genocide Convention are plausible."

59. "The Court considers that, by their very nature, at least some of the provisional measures sought by South Africa are aimed at preserving the plausible rights it asserts on the basis of the Genocide Convention in the present case, namely the right of the Palestinians in Gaza to be protected from acts of genocide and related prohibited acts identified in Article III, and the right of South Africa to seek Israel's compliance with the latter's obligations under the Convention. Therefore a link exists between the rights claimed by South Africa that the Court has found to be plausible, and at least some of the provisional measures requested."