

CALEDONIA FOOD CO-OP



ANNUAL REPORT 2020





REFLECTIONS FROM ERIC SKOVSTED, BOARD CHAIRMAN

A Worthy Task and a Big Challenge

Last year we as a community took giant strides towards turning Caledonia Food Co-op from a dream into a store. Establishing a new, community owned and directed, co-op that becomes a long term successful business, is no small task. In fact it is a significant, multi million dollar task, that takes several years of community support, hard work, and a little good luck to accomplish.

2020 – Progress

The Board of Directors addressed fundamental questions about the nature of our Co-op: What scale would make it financially feasible? What are the site requirements and where should it be located? How do we get the funding we need? How do we build membership awareness and support? And last year--crazy 2020--we made great progress answering many of these questions.

2021 – The Feasibility Process and Construction

The goal of the feasibility process is to build a budget for the store's construction and initial operating expenses that balances with the sales forecast from the market study. The current climate of rising construction costs and general price uncertainty are complicating this exercise. To date we have received construction estimates for one location and are estimating a second. In the next six months we will be designing, budgeting, permitting, and making an option to purchase or lease then starting a loan capital campaign. But, if post Covid construction costs continue to be inflated, in the short term it might be a time best used for site comparison, inquiries on additional sites, and further membership outreach.

So Many People to Thank

Thank you to the **Town of St. Johnsbury** for being a crucial early partner in obtaining funding for our market study and pro forma and to the **Littleton Food Co-op** for their mentorship.

Thanks to **NCIC, NVDA**, and the **St. Johnsbury Development Fund**: much of our future success will depend upon these emerging partnerships. Thank you **Nicole Bartlett** for being an angel, **Mel Reis** for your can-do spirit and creative marketing. Thanks to our illustrious **Board of Advisors – Minty Conant** you are invaluable. Thank you to our amazing **Board of Directors**.

Scott Davis, David Hale, Margaret Healey, Celia Jackmauh, Jaime Murphy, and Rick Witt.

Flexible, reliable and talented not even realizing the scope of the challenge that lay ahead but working undaunted with quiet cooperation and dedication. It has been a pleasure to get to know you and to work with you.

Lastly and most importantly I am so grateful to you, our members, We began 2020 with 196 Founding members and ended with 397. As of this date in May 2021 we are 565 strong and growing. **Thank you for trusting us, standing with us and investing in this, YOUR co-op.**

Eric Skovsted
Board Chairman



2020 YEAR IN REVIEW



With all the challenges of this year, our community has made significant progress towards opening the doors to the Caledonia Food Co-op in St. Johnsbury. None of this would be possible without the steadfast support of our Member Owners. Thank you!

MEMBERSHIP

- We began the year with 196 Founding members and ended with 397: a 102% increase.

GRANTS

- On October 14th, the Co-op received a USDA Rural Business Development Grant for \$50,300, which provides the funding to proceed with critical next steps: finding a site and Founding Member Owner recruitment.

SOCIAL MEDIA

- We ended the year with:
 - 624 followers on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CaledoniaFoodCoop>
 - 232 followers on Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/caledoniacoop>
 - 280 Newsletter recipients

MEDIA

- Caledonia Record Article - December 2020
- The North Star Monthly
- Radio: Magic 97.7, November 20: Interview with Eric Skovsted
- Anastasia Maher from Littleton Coop interviewed David Hale for the Podcast "That's Rad" The main topic was the support and cooperation we have felt from all of the Coops in our region and beyond. This will be broadcast in early 2021.

PROMOTIONS

- Get a Free Pumpkin - October
- Give the Gift of Membership - December
- Board Member Challenge - we successfully completed our November Challenge and recruited more than 35 new Founding Owner Members
- December to April - CSA Drawing for all new Founding Members: Drawing takes place on April 22nd, 2021 (Earth Day)



FINANCIALS

CALEDONIA FOOD COOPERATIVE, INC. 2020 FINANCIAL POSITION

PROCEEDS

Founding Memberships	\$22,100.00
RBDG Phase I Grant Cash Proceeds	\$25,040.00
RBDG Phase I Grant In-Kind Contributions	\$1,800.00
Donations	\$1,000.00
Total	\$49,940.00

EXPENSES

RBDG Phase I Grant-funded activities	\$29,900.00
Marketing	\$882.62
Website and Computer	\$434.00
Administrative	\$246.00
Total	\$31,462.62

Proceeds less Expenses	\$18,477.38
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CASH POSITION

Cash on hand 12/31/19	\$18,059.00
Plus: Founding Memberships	\$22,100.00
Plus: Contributions	\$1,000.00
Total Cash In	\$41,159.00
Minus: Marketing/Website/Administrative	\$1,562.62

Co-op Cash Available on 12/31/20	\$39,596.38
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GRANTS

USDA Rural Business Development Grants (RBDG):

Phase I: This RBDG grant awarded in late 2019 provided the funds in 2020 to hire a consultant from G2G Consulting to develop a feasibility study and a consultant from Columinate to develop Pro Forma financial statements as well as start work on site identification. Our consultants concluded that we have every chance of creating a successful co-op and now we are crunching the numbers to develop a solid financial plan. Funding also allowed for work to begin on finding a site to lease or build.

Phase II: This RBDG grant awarded on October 14th, 2020 for \$50,300 has provided the funding to proceed with critical next steps in 2021: finding a site and building the organizational structure required to run a successful member loan campaign.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND ADVISORY BOARD

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Eric Skovsted, Chair, owner of Joe's Brook Farm in Barnet

Margaret Healey, Treasurer, retired Foreign Service Officer

David Hale, Secretary, Chef, culinary arts instructor at St. Johnsbury Academy

Jaime Murphy, Co-owner of Kingdom Taproom

Celia Jackmauh, Art Director

Scott Davis, Development Officer at St. Johnsbury Athenaeum

Rick Witt, International Business Development Leader

ADVISORY BOARD

Minty Conant, CPA, MBA Financial Advisor

Jody Fried, Executive Director of Catamount Arts

Adam Kane, Executive Director of the Fairbanks Museum & Planetarium

Tom Lovett, former Headmaster, St. Johnsbury Academy

Jeff Moore, President, Quest Transportation

Shawn Tester, CEO Northeastern VT Regional Hospital

Amanda Weisenfeld, Environmental Education Professional and Artist

Tracy Zschau, Statewide Conservation Director, the Vermont Land Trust