

MARSH RIVER COOPERATIVE
5 VETERANS HWY, BROOKS ME 04921
(207) 722-3053 WWW.MARSHRIVERCOOP.ORG AND ON FACEBOOK



ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL 2020-2021

THE MISSION OF THE MARSH RIVER COOPERATIVE is to foster our local community and economy by offering affordable high quality, and locally produced food and goods in a welcoming space that strengthens our community social fabric.



MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

State of the Co-op 2021

ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, November 14

5:00 – 6pm

Via Zoom

Link to be sent via email or ask at the
register!

AGENDA

5:00 – 5:05 Welcome/Intro of the board

5:05 – 5:10 Message from the President

5:10 – 5:25pm Manager Presentation

5:25pm-5:30pm Bylaw Presentation


5:30-5:40 Candidate Presentation

5:40 – 6:00 Open Forum

Greetings, members and patrons of the Marsh River Cooperative! I'm glad to report that our Co-op has continued to grow despite the ongoing challenges that the pandemic has brought to our community. Through the perseverance of our dedicated staff, volunteers, board of directors, and our community we have seen the Co-op continue to thrive and deliver on our purpose to provide a year-round consumer/producer market.

Despite the many hurdles that would otherwise threaten to close our doors, the co-op has remained open and continues to strive to accommodate our members and community. We owe our continued thanks and gratitude to those that have dedicated time to keep our Co-op open.


- Our volunteers who perform a myriad of tasks including, regularly showing up to sanitize the store, water our flowers and keep everything tidy, driving across the county to pick up the various goods to keep our shelves full, driving across the state to pick up new equipment or to fix the ones that are in need of maintenance and repair.
- Our landlord who continues to accept less than market value rent so that we can focus on investing in the growth and development of the Co-op as a place of gathering and commerce for our consumers and producers.

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- Our store manager, who provides a phenomenal service to our community and without whom we would be lost. He continues to be the true heart of the Co-op as he manages our staff, tech, finances, merchandise, marketing, and many, many other facets. He continuously monitors the current state of the pandemic and advises the board on cautionary measures to ensure the safety of our staff, volunteers, and customers. He is our ear to the community and is constantly working to progress the Co-op to better serve the needs and desires of everyone that walks through our doors.

Without these individuals the Co-op could not nearly be the place that we are able to experience and rely-on today. Please remember when you come into the Co-op that what you see is the result of the collaboration of this collective of folk. Each with their own place in our community, and each bringing a unique value to our Co-op.

The Co-op continues to face various challenges throughout the year that we are working to address as effectively and dynamically as our resources allow. However, we continue to face challenges that we have yet to resolve. Such as;

- Having a paid staff for every shift
- Securing regular volunteers for all our pickups
- Securing a consistent vendor for various goods such as bakery items
- Revitalizing our many committees that prior to the pandemic consisted of both board members and community volunteers
 - Committees such as Art & Crafters, Education, Volunteer & Outreach
- Resolve our septic capacity issues
 - This continues to disrupt our ability to offer a public bathroom, which impacts our ability to effectively utilize the co-op as a community space.
 - This also disallows the Co-op from approaching the goal of having a certified kitchen both for the preparation of co-op products and for community use, which has been planned since the founding of the Co-op.
- Maintaining our Board of Directors membership well above our minimum bylaw commitments
- Being able to confidently provide a living wage to our Manager and staff



As we, the Marsh River community, plan for the future and begin preparations for post-pandemic life, we find ourselves with the opportunity to revitalize much of our intentions. This will be the second year that the membership has met via video call instead of our usual potluck annual meeting. Our community strives for interpersonal interaction and collaboration. We are hopeful that we can soon safely return to these in-person events, which provide the experience of what it's truly like to be a part of our community.

Our Co-op endeavors to provide a community space and within that provide opportunities for events like educational workshops, music collaborations, wine tastings, makers & crafter events, and community gatherings. But, we continue to rely upon our community to achieve these aspirations. We hope that you can rely on the Co-op to be a space that supports your passions and that we can rely on our community to support one another.

It is important to remember that we are not a business seeking sheer profit, but we are a cooperative that is forged and fueled by our members. We run on the insights of our membership to achieve the goals set by our community. Goals that through all challenges we continue to gather to support and see through.

We look forward to another year of our collective collaboration and hope to see you in Marsh River Co-op soon!

One Behalf of the Co-Op Board

Be well, be safe, and remember to be kind!

Jamas R Branchaud - President



The Marsh River Cooperative Needs You!

The Marsh River Coop is a member owned and volunteer run cooperative. We are experiencing rapid growth. While this is good, we are struggling to keep up with the additional needs of the organization and operations especially in these challenging times. We are hoping for individuals who share our values and appreciate having the coop in existence, to volunteer their time and energy to keep the coop open and to become truly sustainable.

We have many different ways you can volunteer at the coop depending on your time, your interests and your talents.

Serve on the board Our volunteer board both governs the organization and helps run the operational side of the coop as an enterprise. For many years we have been running without a full board. A full board would be nine members, we are finishing this term with five returning members. We are very happy to have two additional people stepping up to be on the slate for this election. Please give them your vote of confidence. We are still looking for two others, with any combination of interests and strengths, to complete the board. Additional members can be appointed to unfilled, interim positions at any time.

Serve on an existing committee, revitalize or head up a needed committee, or work in one of these areas on your own. Usually there would be committees made up of board members, coop members and other from our customer base and community to facilitate many aspects of our mission and operations. We have been functioning with a minimum of committees. Many previously functioning committees are in abeyance due to lack of people. There are many interesting and fun areas that you could get involved in.

We could use your help in the areas of-
Finance – and Fundraising
Marketing
Member Outreach and Cooperative Education

Events

-

Education

Management of our Consignment Art and Craft Area

Facilities/Store/Infrastructure

Volunteer Coordination

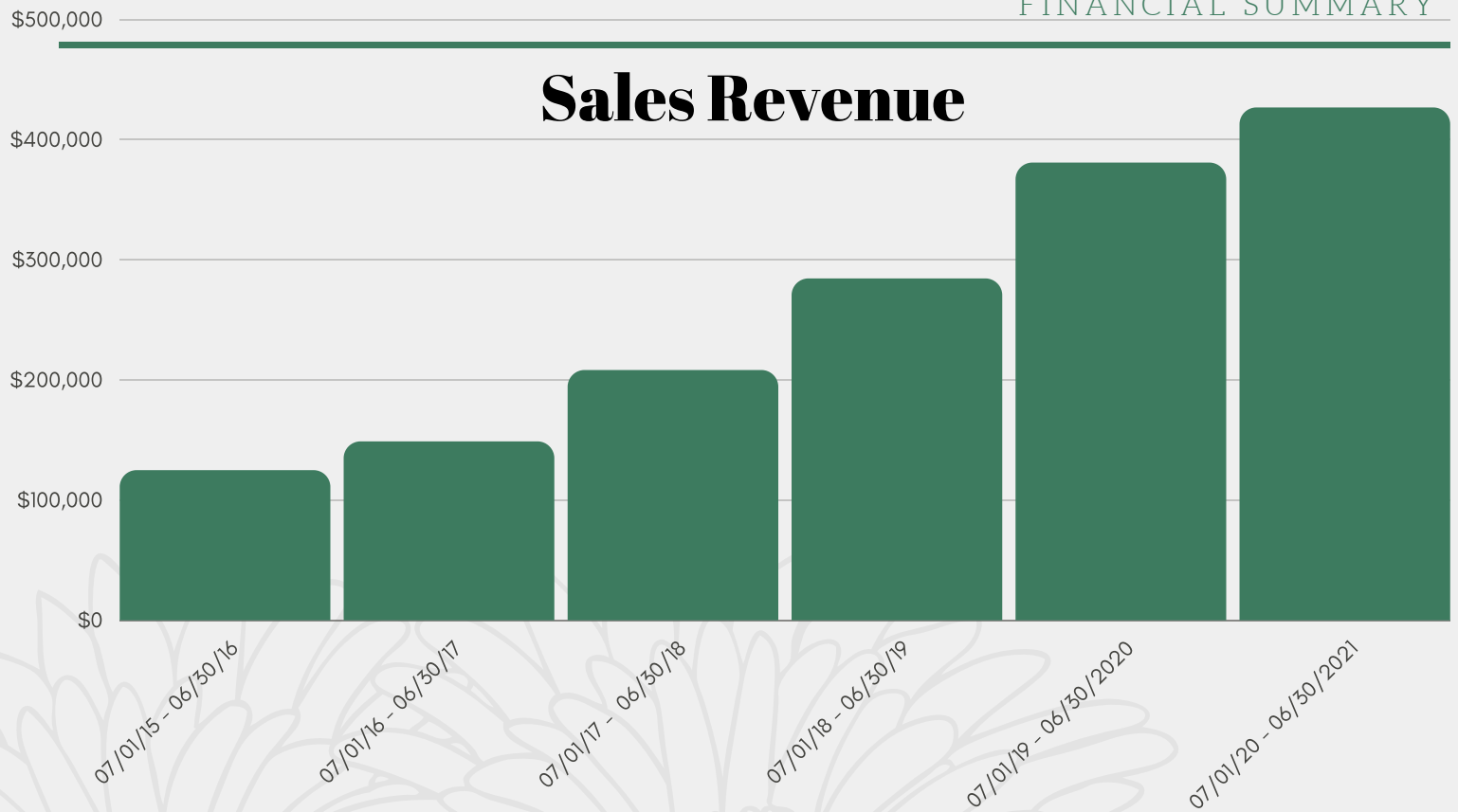
Coop Policy

Choose from a variety of in-store tasks or types of shifts. We have a manager and part time paid staffing, but for many of our open hours we are staffed by volunteers only. Volunteers also fulfill many of the other tasks needed to keep the business side of things running, including stocking and repack, product pickups, cleaning/disinfecting and facilities maintenance tasks.

Contact for info on any of the above:

Kim Jacobs at volunteermarshriver@gmail.com or 722-3139

Sales Revenue



OUR CURRENT FINANCIAL SITUATION

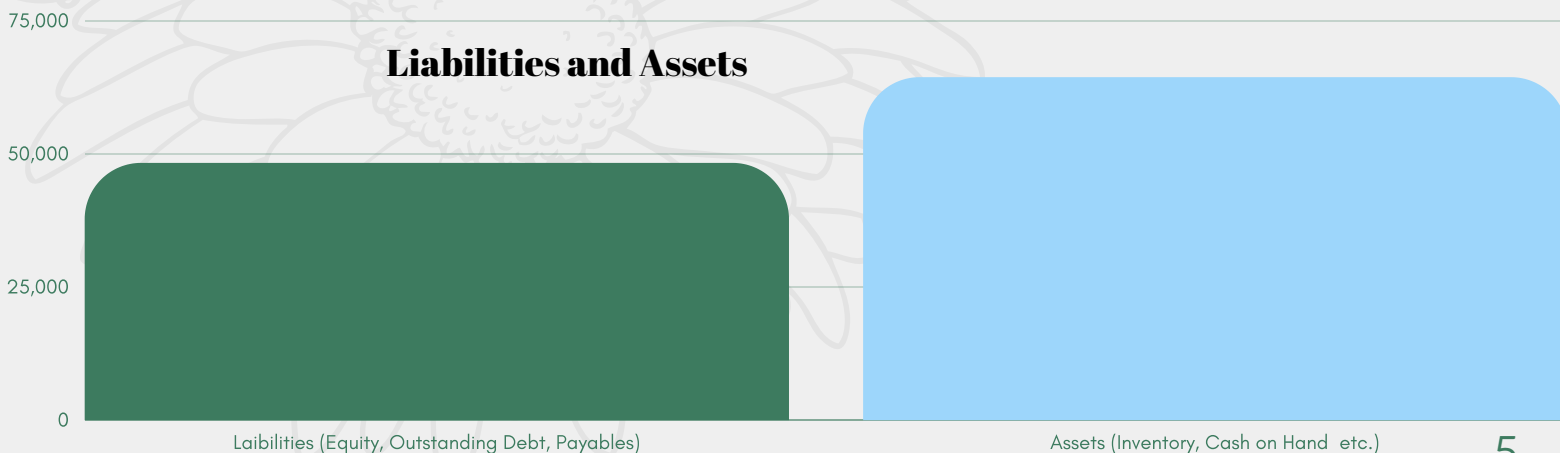
The Co-op continues to see strong growth in revenue year over year (Total Revenue was \$426,000). In Fiscal Year 2021-2021 we saw a 12% growth in sales which allowed us to keep pace with inflationary pressures as well as continue to add new products and generate additional efficiencies and make continued investments in operations and equipment.

Full Profit & Loss Statement is available to members upon request

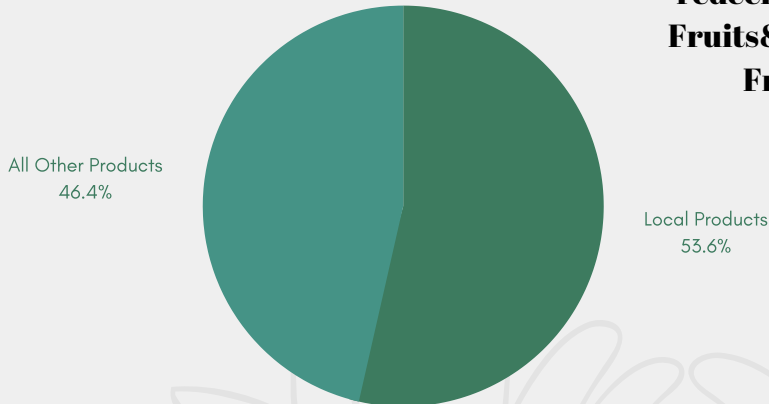
Our Fiscal Year is from July 1st through June 30th

We've been working to adjust our margins/markup in a reasonable manner such that we can meet our sustainability goals of paying employees better as well as increasing our rent payments (our generous landlord has been receiving below market rate rent since our inception, thank you so much Izzy for your continued support) while continuing to make the products we carry as affordable as possible. This is always a difficult balance to find and we keep both goals in mind as we make adjustments. Most businesses have seen their costs increase this year which unfortunately has led to increases to our prices on the shelves.

Liabilities and Assets



Local vs From Away



Low income customers redeemed \$5065 of Local Fruits & Veggies with Farm Fresh Rewards!

Over 50% of our revenue came from Maine goods!

We sold over 1200lbs of Local Ground Beef!

We sold \$170,084 worth of Maine produced goods in Fiscal 2020-2021

MESSAGE FROM THE MANAGER

This last year has been one of difficult decisions and heated discussions. Through every decision and discussion we strove to make the Co-op a safe and inviting space for as many people as possible while also navigating the challenges that have come our way. Every business and organization has likely had these discussions as well and has struggled in one way or another. Despite all of the challenges the last year has brought, the Co-op has continued on its path to long term sustainability.

We continue to have a dedicated group of volunteers and staff which I wish to thank for all of their hard work and time spent over the course of last year. Our volunteer Board Members, in coordination with myself, have been making many of the difficult everyday decisions (as well as the mundane) over the course of the last year. Our volunteers do so many tasks from running the register to restocking the shelves, doing order pickups, cleaning etc. With their help and support, along with our staff, they ensure that the Co-op continues to operate and that it will be here in the Brooks community for years to come.

Despite all the challenges we've faced this year it has been wonderful to hear from folks how much they appreciate the Co-op and how excited they are that we are continuing to be able to provide more food and services to the community. We look forward in the next years to improving even more!

The Co-op continues to make investments in our infrastructure and operations to continue with our goal to be fully sustainable. While we aren't there yet every year that goal becomes closer and closer. Please find a list below with some of the things that have been done both behind the scenes and more public facing.

- Thanks to the generous donation of funds and a zero interest loan from two of our members we were able to purchase a new display freezer for ice cream and a new two door display freezer to expand our frozen food selection(more work to be done there).
- We continue to increase our rent payments.
- Switched our banking in order to automate transaction entries resulting in time savings as well as a reduction in data entry errors.
- We received a loan from the Cooperative Fund of New England to help pay off higher interest rate debt which we had accrued over the course of a few years (some of it COVID related).
- Thanks to the help of volunteers(thanks John) we were able to refurbish a table in the basement and bring it upstairs to expand our bulk selection.
- Due to the numerous supply chain issues and actual shortages of various products we have been experiencing in the past year, we contracted with several new distributors. This helps to buffer our supply chain and allows us to be more flexible in purchasing. While this means that the prices from some suppliers don't allow for the best margin and sometimes results in higher prices on the products (and it's a bit more work to source from more distributors) this has gone a long way in minimizing the empty spots on our shelves.
- Installed a new walk in floor and shelving (thank you so much Izzy!).
- Upgraded the Point of Sale computer to improve checkout speed and stability.
- Added a new membership module to our Point of Sale to allow easier tracking of memberships.
- Continued to expand our product selection driven mostly by requests for products from our members

With all these improvements we continue down the path to full sustainability!

Your board of directors:

Jamas Branchaud *President*, Kim Jacobs *Vice President*, George Callas *Treasurer*, Mick Wormsley *Secretary*, Dylan Brown, Catherine Durkin

Current Staff:

Matthew McKillop *Manager*, Mike Switzer *Staff*

CONTACT INFO

Kim Jacobs zephyrhill@fairpoint.net **Matthew McKillop** marshriverordering@gmail.com

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THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!

Board Of Directors

Jamas Branchaud (President)
Kim Jacobs (Vice President)
George Callas (Treasurer)
Mick Wormersly (Secretary)
Dylan Brown
Catherine Durkin

Register Volunteers

Izzy McKay
Becky Weaver
Kim Jacobs
Ed Hamel
Dylan Brown
Jaime Houseir

Pickup Volunteers

Bekki Devereaux
Nancy Quimby
Georges Nashan & Barbara Clement
Bob Klein
Autumn Cassity
Melissa Wilson
Leslie Gregory
Mick Wormersly

Sanitation Crew

Nancy McAlley
Nick Merriman & Carole Mapes
Cathryn Harjung
Helena Malone
Shaun Hamilton & Lauren Mapes
Kim Jacobs & Bob Klein

In Store Support/Repack

Jen Albee
Helena Malone
Laura Pines
Brenda Moot
Bob Morrison
Cathryn Harjung

Facilities

John Purinton
Bob Klein
Ed Hamel
Dylan Brown
Laura McLaughlin

Fedco Preorder Manager

Ed Hamel

Flower Boxes

Lizzie Hogg

Recycling & Trash Disposal

Izzy Mckay

Volunteer Coordinator

Kim Jacobs

**If we have forgotten to acknowledge you
please forgive us!**



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