

Produce market 'plants' co-op seeds at opening

By Michele Matassa
Of the Emerald

After several years of planning Organically Grown, a new co-op, finally celebrated its grand opening Saturday, complete with food, music and ribbon-cutting.

But the market, a 40-foot by 60-foot cooler, wasn't the guest of honor, says Thomas Forster, Organically Grown's public relations person.

"It's not the building that is being commemorated, but the marketing system itself," Forster says.

The cooperative system of marketing is "very important from the standpoint of supporting local farm production" because it "helps small growers get a more consistent line of products to offer," he says.

This would allow less dependence on California and regional production, Forster says.

He says by working together — not secretly trying to undercut each other like bigger corporations do — the farmers can expand their harvest time and produce goods at higher levels.

The market will be run by a hired manager and will provide a "real diversity of produce" at wholesale prices and amounts, Forster says. Customers will be able to choose from more than 30 varieties of produce, including raspberries, strawberries and all of the "salad vegetables," he says.

Most of the "member farms" have pro-



Photo by Dave Johnson

Organically Grown cooperative members ceremoniously cut a garland of cloves celebrating their grand opening.

vided produce at the Farmer's Market, a spin-off of the Saturday Market.

But "a lot of these same farmers have more than they can sell at these Saturday Market things," so they are making a move to expand, Forster says.

He compares the co-op's beginning to that of Eugene's Agripac, a 10-acre warehouse and processing facility that started in 1908 with \$5,000 capital.

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Pot advocates fight drug 'war'

By John Healy
Of the Emerald

The Reagan administration has declared war on the "200,000 green collar workers of America," according to George Farnham, director of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws.

Those green collar workers grow domestic marijuana, Farnham says, and they "are treated as second class citizens."

Farnham was in Eugene Saturday for the Oregon Marijuana Reform Conference, held at the Hilton Hotel.

He was also in Eugene to show support for an initiative drive to place a statewide referendum on the 1984 ballot that would decriminalize possession and growing of marijuana.

Under Pres. Ronald Reagan, the federal government has adopted a "confrontational approach" against domestic marijuana growers, Farnham says.

As evidence of the Reagan administration's new tactics, Farnham points to high-altitude reconnaissance flights of the U-2 spy plane

over California, Arkansas and Oregon, and an agreement between the Pentagon and 20 states that will allow the National Guard to search for marijuana fields.

The administration's \$300 million war on domestic marijuana growers also includes the use of NASA's Landsat surveillance satellite and the establishment of 12 regional task forces set up to fight drug trafficking in those areas. All are modeled on the widely acclaimed South Florida Task Force, Farnham says.

"Anti-marijuana forces have re-established the Reefer Madness syndrome," he adds, referring to the federal government-produced film which portrayed the evils of "killer weed" in the late 1940s.

Farnham says the federal government believes its "OK to violate civil liberties if you

go after drug users," especially since Congressional legislation was passed last year allowing the government to seize property of suspected marijuana growers who are arrested.

NORML plans to file a lawsuit next month in federal court that will seek to invalidate any search warrant based on evidence gathered by the military, Farnham says.

"Marijuana reformers," as Farnham calls himself, have had more success over the last several years because of the aging of the largest group of marijuana users.

Those are the "60s generation" that are now over 30 and have amassed "more money and impact," Farnham says.

"Legislators don't think we are burned out hippies anymore," he says.

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