

New co-op 'lowers cost of food'

Food for Thought is the name of a cooperative community food store which recently opened in Oregon City.

Located at 106 Molalla Ave. (next to Moser's Meat Market), it's the first food store of its kind to come to the area.

The new co-op is strictly a non-profit store. "Any money we do make goes right back into lowering the cost of the food," said Ken Roberts, Co-Chairman of the co-op.

Roberts, a student and senator at Clackamas Community College, has been working hard with several others to organize and raise funds and donations for the new co-op.

Most of the materials, time, and money required to help the co-op get its start has been donated. At a benefit held on August 22 of this year \$ 400 was raised for the store. Then a \$2000 grant was received from the Clackamas County Nutritional Education and Emergency Delivery System (NEEDS).

Members of the co-op can buy their food at 10% above the store cost. This is a substantial discount over the non-member price of 30% above store cost.

Just browsing around in the new Food for Thought store is very interesting. Looking down the center of the small store one can see a double row of small plastic barrels containing grains and flour. On either side of the store are shelves and cabinets, most of which are hand made out of wood. They contain everything from spices and dried fruits to alfalfa and sunflower seeds.

Sometime this week a few dairy products such as milk and cheese will be added to the stock.

Most of the foods are in bulk quantities so customers are asked to bring their own containers.

The store hours are Tuesday - Friday 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. The store is closed on Sunday and Monday.

Everybody in the community is welcome and encouraged to join the co-op. Membership fees are \$7.50/family and \$5/single. Members however, are required to donate three hours of time per month for a family membership and two hours per month for a single membership. This is to keep overhead costs to a minimum and to maintain thrifty food costs to the members.

People interested in becoming members can go to the store and talk to someone or call 657-0071.



Volunteer carpenter puts finishing touches on remodeling of new Oregon City food co-op. Below, the 'finished product' opened recently for business in all types of bulk food.

Photos by Steve Wilkowske

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