



TPSS Co-op Product Selection Guidelines - Approved 10/27/2013

Takoma Park Silver Spring Co-op promotes healthful living by offering wholesome foods, high quality products and community resources in a clean, friendly and cooperative grocery store ... that you own!

The following product selection guidelines were approved by the TPSS Board of Representatives to promote healthful eating, healthful communities and a healthful environment. They are meant to guide staff as they exercise judgment in making decisions about different product lines.

Members are invited to give input on purchasing decisions, as well as the evolution of these guidelines through the suggestion box, interaction with our staff, or proposals to the Board for amendment of these guidelines.

Quality

The Co-op will make every effort to provide its members with reliable sources of fresh, high-quality, organic or sustainably grown food, supplements and body care products. The Co-op considers quality to include purity, freshness, taste, desirability as well as the considerations outlined throughout this document.

Wholesome Foods

The Co-op will prioritize foods with a minimum of processing and refining, but does not prohibit items solely due to processing.

The Co-op will strive to not sell products containing synthetic additives and/or artificial coloring, preservatives, and flavorings.

Organically Grown

The Co-op will emphasize organically grown food products. We will carry organic products while keeping in mind the following factors that may tip the balance in favor of carrying non-organic products in addition to, or instead of, organic:

- 1) Locally grown or sustainably produced;
- 2) Lack of availability of a comparable organic product, yet consistent with the rest of the product selection guidelines.

Genetically Modified / rGBH

The Co-op will seek to diminish products that contain genetically modified organisms (GMOs). We will make every effort to provide customers with a full range of products that,

to the best of our knowledge, do not contain genetically engineered ingredients, such as products that are certified organic, or are explicitly labeled as non-GMO.

The Co-op will prioritize carrying fish, poultry, and meat products that are organic or free of growth hormones and/or antibiotics. We will give preference to dairy products that are organic or free of growth hormones and/or antibiotics.

Environmental

Types of foods or products: We will prioritize those foods and products with the smallest carbon footprint.

Amount and type of packaging: We will prioritize goods sold in bulk or minimal packaging, limit the number of products sold in non-recyclable or energy-intensive packaging, encourage recycling and use of recycled and biodegradable containers, and encourage manufacturers and distributors to make products available in recyclable packages.

How the food or product was made: The Co-op will prioritize organic, biodegradable, compostable, non-dyed paper products, and low and no-phosphate detergents.

Where the food was made: The Co-op will consider “food miles” impact, prioritizing those products that require the least transportation and result in the least pollution.

Truth in advertising: The Co-op will strive not to carry products that make false or misleading nutritional, environmental or ingredient claims on the package.

Animals

Eating Animals and Animal Byproducts: Sale of animal parts and byproducts is limited to naturally- or organically-raised animals with some consideration also given to quality-of-life issues in the raising and slaughtering of the animals.

Laboratory Testing on Animals: The Co-op will carry primarily health and body care products that are not tested on laboratory animals.

Supporting Community and Local Products

In order to support community endeavors and locally-produced goods and produce:

The Co-op will prioritize local products that are grown and produced within a 50-mile radius of the store and regional products that are grown and produced within a 250-mile radius of the store.

The Co-op will promote local sustainable farming by maintaining a network of growers who do not use pesticides and sell produce directly to the Co-op. These growers will be selected through a stringent selection process to ensure healthful, sustainable and pesticide-free agricultural practices, regardless of whether they have attained “organic” certification. The phrase “TPSS Select” will be applied to alert customers to produce that is local and has gone through this selection process (Under Development).

The Co-op will support and encourage other cooperatives and community endeavors.

Social consideration /Fair Trade

The Co-op will prioritize products that are certified fair-trade and products produced and distributed by companies whose practices promote safe and fair working conditions and the welfare of communities. For products that are being boycotted, please see the boycott policy.

Special dietary needs

The Co-op will attempt to meet the needs for healthful living of those with special dietary needs such as vegan, vegetarian, gluten-free, kosher/hallal, raw, and those with food allergies.

The Co-op will strive to provide wholesome foods that appeal to the dietary preferences of our culturally diverse community and meet product selection guidelines.

Economic Accessibility In order for good food to be more accessible to all, regardless of financial status:

TPSS will carry a selection of low-priced foods which satisfy basic nutritional needs, yet still meet the product selection guidelines.

TPSS may choose to stock foods otherwise excluded by product selection guidelines if they are required for participation in WIC or similar food-access programs.

When evaluating and selecting food items, consideration shall be given to providing the best nutritional value for the most affordable price.