



NEWS BITES

Rewards of the Board

by Carla McCullough, Board Chair

After volunteering as an herb stocker at Open Harvest for several years, I thought a new volunteer challenge with the Co-op would be fun. I had read an article in this newsletter about getting involved with the Co-op and was inspired to run for the board by longtime member Terrance Moore, who has since passed away. Now into my second term on the board, I was recently elected as Board Chair at the November 2011 board meeting. Thankfully, Keith Dubas is still serving on the board and as a mentor. His wealth of knowledge after 15 years on the board and four years as Board Chair is invaluable.

My motivation to volunteer in the first place came from the sense of community of Open Harvest and wanting to see this continue successfully into the future. While the food brought me in the doors to begin with, it has been the staff and fellow

shoppers at Open Harvest through all these years that inspired me to donate "human capital" to this organization I've grown to love. While over the past 10 years our competition has grown, it is the fact that we are a cooperative that sets us apart. While the board does not have authority over day-to-day management of the store, we have the duty to make sure we stay true to the cooperative principles upon which we were founded. The cooperative principles are posted on our website and the west wall of the store.

Have you ever considered volunteering your time for our Co-op? Board involvement can be a very rewarding experience. Bylaws state board candidates must be current members of Open Harvest and staff members are not eligible to serve on the board. Crucial for a great board is diversity. Diverse opinions have very often shaped our discussions and decisions and our Co-op is better for it. The board performs crucial duties for the Co-op, such as hiring the General Manager, conducting the annual meeting and general supervision of the business and affairs of the Co-op. With the Board elections coming up in April, I encourage you to consider the impact you could have on our Co-op through your involvement. The rewards are sure to come back to you multiplied.

There are ways to be involved even if you are not on the board, such as attending board meetings and serving on its committees. All members are encouraged to attend board meetings to learn about



Carla volunteers at the Grand Opening in 2009 with her son Emmett.

operations and are allotted time on the agenda. Attending board meetings is highly encouraged for those interested in running for the board. Please feel free to contact me at harvest@openharvest.coop for information about running for the board, board committees or any other board questions.

Board meetings are on the first Monday of each month EXCEPT for July (July 11th) and September (Sept 12th) due to July 4th and Labor Day holidays, at 5:30pm at Irving Rec Center at 20th and Van Dorn Streets. Members are welcome to attend. The board calendar for 2011 board meetings is now posted on our website at http://www.openharvest.coop/about_bod.php

Editor's Note: Submissions of candidates' statements for the newsletter must be sent to the editor by March 1 to be included in the April newsletter. Maximum of 250 words.

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1618 South Street
Lincoln, NE 68502
402-475-9069
harvest@openharvest.coop
www.openharvest.coop
Call for advertising rates.

Contributors: Jody Hoover, Bob Hutkins, Carla McCullough, Jim Nelson, Elaine Warren
Editor: Jackie Barnhardt
Layout: April Stevenson

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The Board of Directors generally meets the first Monday of the month, 5:30pm at Irving Rec Center, 20th and Van Dorn. Members are welcome to attend. If you would like to join us, call Carla McCullough at 325-9918.

Mission Statement:

The goal of Open Harvest is to provide good health through good nutrition. Open Harvest provides high quality and natural foods with a high level of service and a reasonable price to the community of Lincoln. Open Harvest is a member-owned retail cooperative dedicated to equitable employment practices, support of local producers, consumer education, and sustainable agricultural practices.

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www.openharvest.coop
and at the Nebraska State
Historical Society.
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Credit Card Charges Cost the Co-op \$55,000 in 2010: You Can Help!

by Jim Nelson, former General Manager

In today's lifestyle the use of plastic money has become the norm. Many customers are no longer carrying cash or only a minimal amount. Sometimes change is not good and this may be an example.



Credit card fees cost the Co-op almost \$55,000 in 2010. For our first quarter accounting period (July 1, 2010-September 30, 2010), credit card fees and charges were up 33% over the same period a year ago. This percent increase is far greater than the percent increase in sales.

Credit card charges vary dramatically by the type of card. A premium card that earns air miles or points, costs the Co-op more than a generic type credit card. Debit cards are much less costly to transact.

What can you as a member-owner do to help? There are basically three things:

1. Use cash or check if at all possible for your purchases at the Co-op.
2. If possible, buy an Open Harvest gift card (with cash or check) and use it as your plastic money. We pay no fees on transactions of Open Harvest gift cards.
3. If you have a debit card, it is very advantageous for us to run the

transaction as debit instead of credit. If possible, know your PIN number so we can run your debit card as debit. We do not store your PIN number in any way.

On average, it costs the Co-op over 55 cents each time

we swipe a piece of plastic. This is one reason we are asking that all purchases of less than \$5.00 be cash. The Co-op cannot continue to allow credit card payments for small purchases.

We understand that today's lifestyle is fast paced and offers many challenges, however, helping your Co-op with this issue is one way to keep prices of good and healthy food as low as possible.

Offering cash discounts is not feasible for your Co-op due to the amounts of transactions and the size of orders. We currently experience about 35-36% of our sales in cash or check. A great goal would be to have 50-55% of sales that way.

Please do all you can to help us with this issue. Current legislation did not set lower rates on retailer fees. The law controls the amounts banks and card issuers can charge customers for late fees, etc.

Thanking you in advance for any help you can give with this issue.



Help the Co-op by using a gift card just like cash!

The Open Harvest Purchasing Policy:

How Open Harvest Stocks the Shelves

by Bob Hutkins, Board Member

For many consumers, the greater availability of organic foods means more choice, more convenience, and often lower prices. This has led to considerably greater penetration of organic foods in the homes of U.S. consumers. Indeed, according to one recent survey, nearly 70% of U.S. adult consumers buy organic products at least occasionally, and nearly 1 out of 5 adults are weekly organic users.



Although the increased demand for organic and natural foods has been good for Open Harvest business, it has also led to concerns among Open Harvest members about the products carried in the store and whether such products are consistent with the Open Harvest purchasing policies. Indeed, they even challenge many of the fundamental tenets on which Open Harvest was founded. For example, should Open Harvest carry food products produced by Coke, Cargill, or Dean Foods? With so much GMO corn and soybeans already in the food chain, it is inevitable that some Open Harvest products will contain GMO ingredients. Should Open Harvest sell products, even those labeled as natural or organic, that come from faraway places with huge carbon footprints? What about products produced locally right here in Nebraska and that are popular with Open Harvest shoppers, but which are not organic?

When Open Harvest first opened, it was the only grocery store in town that sold so-called natural foods. When the "organic" label was officially recognized by the United States Department of Agriculture in 2002, Open Harvest was again the first and only full-service grocery store in Lincoln to carry such products. Now, natural and organic foods sections are found in Wal-Mart, Hy-Vee, and

other area grocery stores, and include products with surprising brand names, including Nabisco's Oreos, Frito Lay's Tostitos, and Kraft Macaroni and Cheese. What is even more surprising is that many of the products on the shelves at Open Harvest are also manufactured by many of these same multi-national food companies. Coca-Cola owns Odwalla, Kellogg's owns Kashi, and General Mills owns Cascadian Farm and Muir Glen.

The Open Harvest management, which is responsible for purchasing decisions, is well aware of these issues and regularly reviews products and policies. The purchasing decisions are based on the Open Harvest Guidelines for Purchasing (available on-line at www.openharvest.coop/about_policy.php).

These guidelines state that "as much as possible, we will buy products from sources which are local, small scale, etc.", and that "as much as possible, we will sell products that are organically grown, bio-dynamically grown, pesticide free, etc." The Policy further notes that many factors are involved and that the guidelines must be clearly defined and flexible. However, the number one priority is serving customers. Therefore, demand for a product may sometimes override general guidelines, such as when there is no alternative to the product or when the alternative is significantly more expensive.

Thus, the question that has been raised is whether our current policy is consistent with the Open Harvest core values and principles or does it simply reflect modern day realities? If only locally produced, organic foods were to be carried at the store, then that would certainly reduce the number and diversity of products on the

shelves. Likewise, if we eliminated products manufactured by multi-national food companies, even fewer products would be available. And if locally-produced, but not organic, products were removed, well by that point, the store shelves would be mostly empty. Thus, the purchasing policy reflects a balance between Open Harvest policies, member and customer needs, and the financial well-being of the store.

These issues are certainly not unique to Open Harvest, and indeed, they have been addressed in detail in the media, particularly Michael Pollan's *Omnivore's Dilemma*, and in the film, *Food Inc.* However, unlike Wal-Mart and other privately-owned retail grocery stores, Open Harvest operates as a cooperative, with decision-making done democratically by the members. This means that members have a voice and can express their concerns to the General Manager or other staff members directly or via the suggestion box located at the customer service desk. Indeed, everyone connected to Open Harvest – members, staff, and the Board, has a role in making these decisions. Members are always welcome to attend the Board of Directors meetings (usually the first Monday of the month at 5:30 at the Irving Rec Center) to make comments about this or any other issue.



Board member Gail Kendall volunteers her time during the holiday season and keeps the shelves organized.

Eating Well

What's new in the Meat and Seafood Department?

by Jody Hoover, Meat and Seafood Assistant Manager

Our department is making in-house stock for all your favorite recipes calling for stocks. They are made with organic grass-fed beef, free range chicken, or wild caught fish and bones. We use only filtered water and organic vegetables (carrots, celery, and onion). Our stocks are sodium free and can be found in our freezer case.

Look for our value added items in our display case using local meats. Check out our buffalo cranberry burgers, Greek burgers (made with local meats) and our Italian turkey burgers. For seasonings, try Jody's BBQ and chili seasoning. It's a special blend of herbs and spices that will warm you on a cold winter day.

Mardi Gras, St. Patrick's Day, and Easter are coming! Special orders are always welcome and encouraged in the meat and seafood department.

Scallop Salad with dried Cranberries and Gorgonzola

By Chef Judy Gilliard "Judy a la carte"

- 1 pound sea scallops, large
- ¼ cup flour
- ½ teaspoon sea salt
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 2 Tablespoons grapeseed oil
- 6 cups mixed lettuce, sliced ½" thick
- 4 ounces gorgonzola cheese, crumbled
- 4 ounces dried cranberries
- 2 ounces balsamic vinegar
- 1 ounce rice wine vinegar, seasoned
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 lemon, sliced

Toss scallops in flour with sea salt, cayenne and black pepper. Heat grapeseed oil in skillet and sauté on medium-hot, turning as needed, approximately 2-3 minutes on each side. Do not burn or char. Meanwhile place lettuce, gorgonzola cheese, cranberries, balsamic and rice wine vinegars in a mixing bowl. Toss gently with tongs. Neatly place salad in middle of plate. Top with scallops and garnish with lemon slices.



Jody Hoover prepares her secret ingredient for her chicken soup stock. Come in and ask her about it!

Classic Fish Soup

By Dika Eckersley

From *Open Harvest Cooks*, published 2010

- 1 Tablespoon butter, margarine or oil
- 1 leek, green top removed, cut in half vertically and then sliced thin
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon of saffron
- 1 teaspoon whole fennel seeds
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 5 cups fish stock
- 3 fresh tomatoes, peeled, seeded, and chopped
- ½ cup heavy cream
- 1 pound boneless skinless white fish (cod, sole, or halibut) diced into chunks
- Fresh mussels and/or shrimp-optional but recommended
- Lemon wedges and fresh parsley for garnish

Sauté the leek in the oil or butter with garlic, saffron and fennel seeds until the leek is soft. In a large pot, add fish stock, tomatoes and leek and bring to a gentle boil. Reduce heat and simmer about 10 to 15 minutes to blend flavors. Peel and de-vein shrimp. Use only fresh mussels, scrubbed well, that are completely closed. Add fish, mussels and shrimp and continue to simmer about 5 minutes until fish, shrimp and mussels are cooked. Mussels will open with cooking. Discard any mussels that remain closed.

Whisk the flour into the cream. Remove the soup from the heat and add the cream to soup. Whisk everything together gently. Heat on low but do not boil the soup once the cream is added.

Garnish with fresh parsley and lemon wedges. Serve with a hearty rye bread.



Try Scallop Salad with dried Cranberries and Gorgonzola .

Cooking Classes

**These six classes will be held at
Grace Lutheran Church,
2225 Washington Street.
For more information, and to
register, call Open Harvest at
475-9069 or come into the store.**

Soups, Stews and Chowders

Thursday, February 10, 6 to 8 pm

\$15 members, \$25 non-members

Warm your home and your family with easy yet hearty soups. Open Harvest Meat and Seafood Assistant Jody Hoover will demonstrate how to make salmon chowder, beef stew, French onion soup, and chicken noodle soup. Samples and recipes are included.

Pizza! Pizza! Pizza!

Thursday, March 10, 6 to 8 pm

\$15 members, \$25 non-members

Pantry expert and Italian enthusiast Jody Hoover returns to share her secrets of luscious deep-dish pizza, calzones and a variety of pizza crusts. Learn to roll out and bake a crust with a variety of wonderful Open Harvest cheeses and fresh topping ingredients. Recipes and samples will be offered.

East Indian Vegetarian Cooking

Thursday March 24, 6 to 8 pm

\$15 members, \$25 non-members

Learn to prepare delicious, traditional Indian vegetarian favorites such as kabuli-channa (spicy garbanzo beans), saag (pureed spinach and mustard greens), potato stuffed paratha (flatbread), and savory lassi (cumin yogurt beverage). Includes a show and tell on key Indian spices such as turmeric, cumin, coriander and garam masala. Bring a rolling pin if possible. Instructor: Becky Seth has been cooking East Indian foods for 40 years and has made many visits to India.



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More Courage in the Kitchen with Chef Judy a la carte

**Learn food preparation made simple! Sign up
for any one class or all three!**

Celebrity Chef Judy a la carte returns! We received such a wonderful response from students at our first culinary series. The excitement continues as Chef Judy brings Open Harvest's local, all-natural meats to the kitchen and shares her gastronomic techniques to bring out each meat's fullest flavors.

Session 1 BEEF

Monday, February 28, 6 to 8 pm

\$20 members, \$30 non-members

There are many delicious ways to prepare beef in the kitchen. Dry heat methods include grilling, broiling, sautéing, roasting, stir frying, and deep frying. Wet heat includes braising, pot roasting, stewing, steaming, poaching, and slow cooking. Chef Judy will bring meat from local ranches and demonstrate some of these techniques. Recipes and samples included.

Session 2 PORK

Monday, March 14, 6 to 8 pm

\$20 members, \$30 non-members

Join Chef Judy in the kitchen as she shares recipes and the best methods of how to prepare pork chops, tenderloin, and sausages using fresh pork from local Nebraska farms. Recipes and samples included.

Session 3 LAMB

Monday, March 28, 6 to 8 pm

\$20 members, \$30 non-members

Learn to make lamb kebabs and other tender, tasty entrees with local lamb. Chef Judy will also share techniques for cooking lamb for Easter dinner. Recipes and samples included.



Judy a la carte demonstrates entertaining with style at Open Harvest's fall cooking class series

Open Harvest Buying Guidelines

In January 2010, the Board posted a response on the website to a petition "Members Raise Concerns over Non-Food Products: New Greener Products Coming to Open Harvest". This was inserted in the Summer 2010 newsletter. The following is an excerpt: *Although stocking decisions are made by staff and are not in the purview of the board, the board still felt that a response to the petition was warranted. To that end, the board requested the GM to report at the January 2010 meeting on progress towards addressing concerns raised.*

Open Harvest has had a general Purchasing Policy for many years that has guided the staff. This can be viewed on the website at http://www.openharvest.coop/about_policy.php Under the umbrella of the Purchasing Policy, each department manager has now developed their own Buying Guidelines. These are listed below, and can be viewed by clicking on each department on the front page of the Open Harvest website.

Grocery

- The Grocery Department will, as much as possible, buy products that are organically grown and produced, sustainably grown, fairly traded, local, non-GMO, and free of artificial colors, flavors and preservatives.
- We will try to support companies that are local, small scale, or cooperatively run and that use packaging that is minimal, recyclable or biodegradable.
- In our non-food items we will, as far as possible, purchase goods that are environmentally friendly. This includes, but is not limited to, high recycled content, free of artificial fragrances and colors, biodegradable, compostable, chlorine-free, non-toxic, sustainable, sweatshop free, and rechargeable, as applicable.
- Other considerations include customer demand and competitive pricing. We reserve the right to go outside these guidelines when no other option is available to maintain a broad product line and to offer our customers a wider and more complete range of products.

Meat & Seafood

- The Meat Department will only purchase meat that is antibiotic and hormone free, vegetarian fed, and without added preservatives, nitrates or nitrites.
- As much as possible, the Meat Department will only purchase meat that is fed GMO-, pesticide- and herbicide-free feed, grass fed, and organic.
- The Meat Department will emphasize buying local meat as much as possible.
- The Seafood Department will buy sustainable fish whenever possible, and will only buy wild salmon, never farmed or GE.

Refrigerated & Cheese

- The Refrigerated and Cheese departments will, as much as possible, carry products that are seasonal, organically, sustainably and bio-dynamically produced, as fresh as possible, minimally processed, free of artificial coloring agents and preservatives, free of nitrates and nitrites, and fairly traded.
- In the case of dairy products and eggs, we will buy, as much as possible, products from animals that are pasture fed or fed non-GMO grain feeds, cage free, humanely treated, and antibiotic and hormone free.
- The Refrigerated and Cheese departments will purchase, as much as possible, products from suppliers that are local, small-scale, collectively or cooperatively run, or needed to maintain a broad product mix.
- As much as possible, the Refrigerated and Cheese departments will sell products in packaging that is minimal, recycled, recyclable or reusable, bio-degradable, and optimal for flavor, freshness and shelf life.
- Other factors that will be considered when making purchasing decisions include: Shelf life, customer demand, competitive pricing, special dietary needs, vegetarian/vegan options, ease of ordering and available storage space.

Produce

- The Produce Department purchases and sells to the community produce that is Certified Organic or naturally grown. This means produce free of synthetic and artificial pesticides, herbicides, or other chemicals.
- The Produce Department emphasizes the importance of local food by favoring local suppliers when able.

Bakery

- The Bakery department does not use artificial colors, flavors or preservatives in its baked goods.
- Whenever feasible we use organic and/or locally sourced ingredients.
- When selecting packaging for our products we choose items that will meet the consumer's needs with the minimum impact on the environment.

Deli

- All items prepared in the Deli contain no artificial colors, flavors or preservatives as well as no antibiotics or growth hormones.
- We incorporate organic and locally sourced ingredients whenever feasible.
- When choosing packaging, we keep these 3 things in mind; minimal impact on the environment, the ability to recycle and/or compost, and meets the need of the customer.

continued page 7

Supplement & Body Care (*Buying Guidelines con't*)

- The Supplements & Body Care departments will, as much as possible, carry products that are organically, sustainably and bio-dynamically produced, pesticide free, minimally processed, free of artificial flavors and ingredients, non-GMO, non-irradiated, fairly traded, sweatshop free, and not tested on animals.
- The Supplements & Body Care departments will purchase, as much as possible, products from sources that are local, small-scale, collectively or cooperatively run, and not-for-profit.
- As much as possible, the Supplements & Body Care departments will sell products in packaging that is minimal, recycled, recyclable or reusable, bio-degradable, and health hazard free.
- Other factors that will be considered when making purchasing decisions include: special dietary restrictions and avoiding common allergens, vegetarian/vegan options, protection of sensitive ecosystems and preservation of endangered or over-harvested species, customer demand, diversity of product selection, competitive pricing, and ease of ordering and available storage space.

Our goal is to maintain guidelines for product selection which are both clearly defined and flexible. There are many considerations involved in our purchasing choices. We strive to balance these factors in our decision-making process. We aim to provide a selection of products suitable to accommodate our diverse customer base. This means that, while we carry brands with the highest standards and ingredients, we also provide quality alternatives for a lower price. Since our first priority is serving our customers, demand for a product may sometimes override our general guidelines. We welcome product information and feedback from customers.

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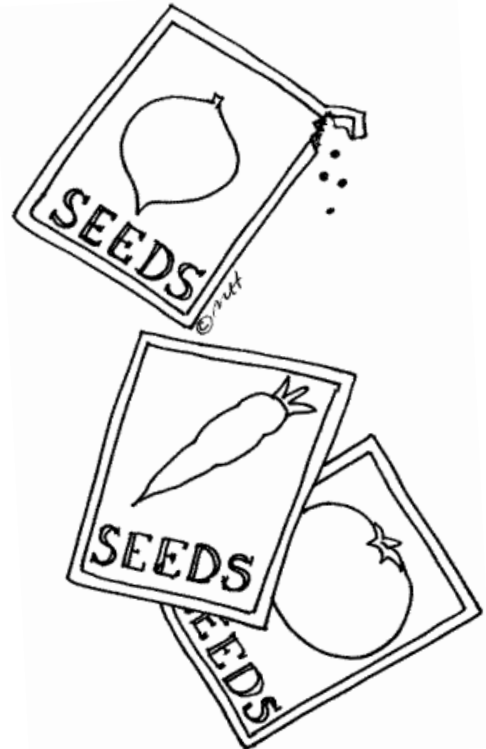
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Seed Swap Saturday, Jan. 29 at Meadowlark Coffee & Espresso



Are you a seedsaver or interested in learning about how to save seeds from one season to the next? Kickstart your garden this year with a seed swap! We will host a community seed exchange for National Seed Swap Day, Saturday, January 29. We'll gather at Meadowlark Coffee & Espresso next to Open Harvest, starting at 1:00 p.m., to share gardening tips and, of course, seeds! Bring seeds for vegetables, herbs, flowers, and native plants. Please label your seeds and bring extra envelopes, if you have them.

Evrett Lundquist, biodynamic farmer of Common Good Farm will be on hand to discuss seed saving and how to start seeds. We'll also have information about plant selection for our local climate, as well as additional seed sources. Save the date and we'll see you there!



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Look for our New Co-op Brand of Supplements!

By Elaine Warren, Supplement and Body Care Stocker

For the maintenance of healthy eyes, skin and mucous membranes, **Vitamin A** is essential. In addition, it is required to support a healthy immune system. Our vitamin A is from cod liver oil to provide a natural source of this important fat-soluble vitamin.¹

In compliance with State of California health laws, be advised this product contains Vitamin A in a daily dosage in excess of 10,000 IU. Large amounts of Vitamin A are known to cause birth defects or other reproductive harm. Children, women who are pregnant, or women who may become pregnant should not use this product except under the advice of a physician.

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¹ These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease.



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Dietary Supplement
100 SOFTGELS

Manufactured for: Open Harvest Cooperative Grocery
Lincoln, NE 68502

Supplement Facts	
Serving Size 1 Softgel	Servings Per Container 100
Amount Per Serving	% Daily Value
Vitamin A (from cod liver oil)	10,000 IU 200%

Other Ingredients: Capsule (gelatin), glycerin, soybean oil.

SUGGESTED USE: Take one softgel daily with food.

CONTAINS NO artificial colors, flavors, or preservatives; no wheat, gluten, milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts or crustacean shellfish.

KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN. VL 100J



1998511004016

Open Harvest's private label brand of supplements soon will arrive on our shelves. A variety of products will target the most popular items customers purchase.

"With our own label, we eliminate the manufacturer's national marketing costs and deliver products at a lower cost to our customers," said Melissa Dowty, Supplements and Body Care Department Manager. Naturally, Melissa and Assistant Department Manager Matt Irvin prioritized quality of the products first and foremost.

"After two years of researching other co-ops' experiences with private labels and different manufacturers across the U.S.," said Melissa, "we selected a supplier with more than 30 years of private label experience, a facility registered with the FDA for Pharmaceutical Manufacturing, a commitment to using recycled packaging, and membership in the Natural Products Association and the Organic Trade Association."

"We are excited to bring Open Harvest private label items to our store," said Matt. "They feature superior quality, extensive testing of ingredients, and full disclosure of ingredients and allergens on the labels. And the manufacture even requires third-party testing to assure the purity and potency of each product."

The Open Harvest private label products will be displayed on an end cap at the front of the store when they arrive. This will let customers become familiar with the label and the various supplements offered. After the initial display period, they will be integrated with other brands on our shelves.

Melissa and Matt remind customers that they can try the Open Harvest brand without worry because of the reputation of the manufacturer, the extensive testing of products, and Open Harvest's money-back guarantee (with receipt). Open Harvest members will save even more when they use their Vitamin Cards.