



# Cooperative Principals

The Sno-Isle Food Co-op operates according to the International Cooperative Alliance Statement of Cooperative Identity adopted in 1995.

The following cooperative principles are guidelines by which cooperatives put their values into practice:

- 1. Voluntary and Open Membership.** Co-ops are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibility of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.
- 2. Democratic Member Control.** Co-ops are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary co-ops members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote) and co-ops at other levels are organized in a democratic manner.
- 3. Member Economic Participation.** Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of the co-op. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the co-op. They usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing the co-op, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible, benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the co-op, and supporting other activities approved by the membership.
- 4. Autonomy and Independence.** Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their cooperative autonomy.
- 5. Education, Training and Information.** Co-ops provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their co-ops. They inform the general public – particularly young people and opinion leaders – about the nature and benefits of cooperation.
- 6. Cooperation among Cooperatives.** Co-ops serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.
- 7. Concern for the Community.** While focusing on member needs, co-ops work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies accepted by their members.