



Hunger Mountain Cooperative  
exists to create and sustain  
a vibrant community of healthy individuals,  
sustainable local food systems,  
and thriving cooperative commerce.

## **Hunger Mountain Cooperative Buying Policies Revised May 2019**

The Co-op emphasizes natural, organic and local foods and products that support the health of our customers and community. We consider the environmental impacts of the production, distribution, and use of its products. Hunger Mountain Co-op offers member-owners and customers products and information that promote personal health, environmental sustainability and social responsibility. Our buying decisions are informed by the principles set forth in our mission statement. In general, we want to carry a wide variety of high quality products that are wholesome, supportive of local producers, help build a sustainable food distribution system, are produced in an environmentally sound and socially conscious manner, and are available at a fair price.

In our buying decisions, we therefore give preference to products that are:

- Grown and produced by local or regional vendors
- Grown and produced organically
- Produced without genetically modified organisms or hormones
- Certified fair trade and/or produced by cooperatives
- Packaged with minimal, recycled and/or recyclable packaging
- Humanely raised in the case of meat, eggs and dairy products

We act as a buying agent for our members. Each buying decision requires the consideration of our criteria and the values of our cooperative. We continuously adapt and improve our product mix based on our members' needs and the evolving natural foods industry and local food supply. To that end, we actively strive to keep up with and share information concerning the health, sustainability, economic and environmental impact of the products the Co-op carries- so as to enable our shoppers to make informed decisions about the products they choose to buy. Additionally, customer requests are continuously reviewed and considered.

The Co-op maintains a list of artificial and/or patently unhealthy ingredients used to screen out unacceptable ingestible products. We use the Environmental Working Group's Skin Deep database as a guideline in evaluating the safety of body care products; in general we will not carry products on the hazardous end of their rating system. Given the complexities typically involved, we will review issues of human rights violations on a case-by-case basis.

## **Glossary of Terms**

These are the generally agreed upon definitions for terms presented in our buying policies.

**Local or Locally-Produced:** Products grown or value-added within the state of Vermont and/or 100 miles of Montpelier.

**Organic:** A system of agriculture designed to be environmentally sustainable. Products that are grown and processed without synthetic chemicals, pesticides or fertilizers.

**Certified Organic:** Products that are grown and processed according to the Department of Agriculture's organic standards and monitored by independent certifying agents.

**Genetically Modified Organisms:** Organisms which are produced by isolating and splicing a gene from one living creature onto the DNA of another plant or animal.

**Fair Trade:** The practice of ensuring that producers work in safe conditions, are paid fair wages and are mindful of the environment.

**All Natural:** Products that do not contain artificial or genetically modified ingredients.

**Humanely-Raised:** Living conditions that allow animals to access to the outdoors and discourages caging, force feeding, and inhumane living conditions.