

Co-op Owner Participation

RITA YORK HENNECKE, GENERAL MANAGER



It's National Co-op Month, and we are celebrating what makes co-ops unique. As a community-owned business, we exist to serve people's needs. Here are a few ways owners and shoppers use their voices in shaping how our co-op operates.

- Every fall, owners democratically elect candidates to fill the open seats on our Board of Directors. One member = one vote.
- We issue web-based surveys through our registers at the Lawrence store. Shoppers are incentivized with a \$5 coupon after submitting the feedback. This tool helps us evaluate and improve product mix, prices and customer service on a regular basis.
- We analyze sales reports, which tell us what our customers want and what they don't. Seasonality, placement, price and national sales data are all considered in this process.
- This year we issued a comprehensive shopper survey to find out how well we are meeting the needs of our owners and shoppers via product mix, prices and service. 92% of participants were owners. See highlights to the right.

SHOPPER SURVEY RESULTS

- 89% of shoppers said they were satisfied or extremely satisfied with the co-op at both locations. In particular, the cleanliness of our stores, knowledge and friendliness of staff and the quality of products stood out.
- 6% improvement from the last survey on questions related to price perception.
- 69% of shoppers were satisfied or extremely satisfied with the availability of brands, which is an increase of 8% since our last survey.
- 81% of shoppers were satisfied or extremely satisfied with product selection, which is a 17% increase from our last survey.

Comments were shared by 252 participants. Shoppers had the most to say about product selection, hybrid product mix, price and appreciation for the co-op. These results indicate that we are heading in the right direction as our co-op continually evolves. We appreciate all the folks who took time to share feedback that will help make our co-op better.

There are more opportunities to participate in the co-op. Make sure to take advantage of your Owner Appreciation Days coupon this month. October is also Fair Trade Month and we hope you will join us for the unveiling of the We Are Fairtrade mural at the Lawrence store on October 7. At our Kansas City location, the board will be present at the Farmers Market on October 14 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. These are great opportunities to get to know the candidates running in the election, talk to established board members about the co-op's goals and enter to win fun prizes!

Join the virtual Annual Co-op Meeting on November 14 and learn about the impact that our co-op makes in the communities we serve.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Judy Dutton
President
board@themerccoop
Sofia Galarza Liu
Vice President
Rachel Jefferson
Anthony Lang
Abbey Reinhardt
LeAnne Richardson
Mark Sprague
Deon Whitten
Treasurer

Board meetings are generally the first Monday of each month at 6 p.m. The next board meetings are October 2, November 6 and December 4. Email board@themerccoop for location or log in information.

CO+OP DIRECTORS

Rita York Hennecke
General Manager
gm@themerccoop
Jason Lovell
Finance Director
finance@themerccoop
Laura Marsh
Marketing Director
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Seth Naumann
Operations Director
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Connections is published by:
The Merc Co+op

901 Iowa St.
Lawrence, Kansas 66044
785.843.8544
Open daily 7 a.m.–10 p.m.

501 Minnesota Ave.
Kansas City, Kansas 66101
913.320.0404
Open daily 8 a.m.–9 p.m.

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On the cover: Artist rendering of the fairtrade mural courtesy of IT-RA Icons.

Board Elections

VOTE NOW THROUGH OCTOBER 24

The Merc Co+op's Board of Directors is comprised of nine co-op owners who are elected by the general ownership and serve three-year terms. The Board represents our nearly 10,000 owners and helps shape the vision for the co-op while evaluating the performance of the business. There are five candidates running for three open seats on the board. Claim one of your most powerful rights of ownership and vote in our 2023 board elections!

MEET THE CANDIDATES + VOTE

Owners can find candidate statements and vote through a secure portal at themerc.coop/ elections or by paper ballots available in store. All owners with shares paid in full by September 15, 2023 are eligible to vote. Board election results will be announced at the Annual Co-op Meeting on Tuesday, November 14 and on our website following.

QUESTIONS

Contact Laura Marsh, Director of Marketing, at lmarsh@themerccoop or 785-843-8544 ext. 209. Or, contact the board at board@themerccoop.



Hans Carttar



Margaret Rausch



Alex Hamilton



Dorri Rowan



LeAnne Richardson,
Incumbent



Virtual Annual Co-op Meeting

Co-op owners are invited to the 49th Annual Co-op Meeting which will be held virtually on November 14 from 7–8 p.m. Our board and staff will collaborate to provide an informative and engaging presentation. We will review the accomplishments of the past year, and share our cooperative vision for the future.

In addition to election results and updates, every owner who logs in will receive:

- One \$10 coupon for use on one co-op purchase.
- Automatic entry for a chance to win a variety of valuable prizes, including gift cards to the co-op.

RSVP in advance at themerc.coop/acm. You will receive a link to log in prior to the event.

Thank you for your ownership! This is your special Owner Appreciation Days coupon.

Save 20%
on one purchase during
Owner Appreciation Days

OFFER VALID OCTOBER 1–31, 2023

ONE COUPON USE PER OWNER NUMBER.

Offer applies before tax. Not valid with any other offers or discounts. May not be used to purchase non-taxable items, alcohol, catering orders, special orders, gift cards, class gift certificates or owner shares. Good for use at either location.

