



Apply to Become a Vendor

This packet is intended to help you, the **potential vendor**, understand what the Co-op is looking for before you contact us. The information in the packet allows us to evaluate potential products more efficiently.

Our store is a busy place and the volume of visitors we have makes it impractical for our department managers to meet with all potential vendors. As a courtesy to our customers and staff, we ask that vendors **do not drop in on our department managers** and **do not leave samples with staff on the sales floor**. Depending on the time of year, it may take us a few weeks to respond to your application. Please be patient - we will contact you!

Samples* and this form can be mailed to the Co-op or dropped off in our Administration Office, Suite 301 during normal business hours. Samples without contact or pricing information may not be given consideration. Please also note that **samples will not be returned** to the vendor.

The **Skagit Valley Food Co-op** is dedicated to supporting local producers, but like any responsible business, must balance this priority with labor efficiencies, cost, category requisites, and the diverse needs of our owner-members. **Completion of our vendor application does not guarantee placement in our store.**

****If you are already established with us as a vendor, distributor or product representative, you do not need to fill out this form. Simply drop off samples in Suite 301. Be sure to include contact, pricing, and sign the log.***

The Steps

- 1) Visit our store and become familiar with our product selection.
- 2) Review our **business standards** and **product selection guidelines** (see page 2).
- 3) Once you've determined that your product is a good fit for the Co-op, send us your application and samples.
- 4) After reviewing your information, we will be in contact if we have additional questions.
- 5) If we accept your product for retail sale in our store, we will ask you to sign a **New Vendor Terms Agreement** and **submit your business documents** before placing our first order.
- 6) If we decline your application, we will let you know why. (The two most common reasons are 1) the category of product is full or, 2) the department is at capacity for how many individual vendors they can order from!)



The Co-op's Business Standards

Are you retail ready?

- Are you licensed to do business in Washington State?
- Do you have a wholesale or resellers permit?
- Are your products made in a certified facility?
- Do your product labels meet FDA, USDA, or WA State Agricultural labeling requirements?
- Does your business carry liability insurance? Does it include Product and Completed Operations Liability minimum \$2M?
- Do your products have a bar code label? (For retail packaging it is preferred, but not required).
- Is your product set-up to deliver through one of our established distributors? (if so, you do not need to fill out this application. Simply send us samples along with your contact info, distributor info, and pricing).
- If you do not have distribution and will be handling your own orders & delivery**, please make certain that you are able to accept orders via phone or email during normal business hours, that you are able to deliver product reliably and safely, and that you can provide a detailed and accurate invoice at time of delivery.

The Co-op's Product Selection Guidelines

If you have visited our store, you know we offer a unique shopping experience. More than a natural foods store, we offer a world of culinary delights and quality goods that support a healthy life. Here are the over-arching guidelines that we use when assessing a new product. You don't have to meet every criteria, but meeting most will help you get placed on our shelves.

- 1) High quality at a fair price
- 2) Strong focus on products that support healthful living
- 3) Strong focus on hand-crafted, artisan, and **local*** production
- 4) Responsibly-produced and mission-oriented products
 - a. For example: Organic, Non-GMO, Fair-Trade, Direct-Trade, and programs that support social programs.
- 5) Products that are non-toxic and environmentally sound
- 6) Free from artificial flavors, colors, fragrances, and preservatives
- 7) No High Fructose Corn Syrup or MSG. No hydrogenated fats or artificial sweeteners
- 8) Free from growth hormones and antibiotics
- 9) Foods that satisfy limited & special diets, like gluten-free and vegan.
- 10) Products that limit or reduce packaging waste

***What does local mean?** We define "locally produced" as a product that is grown or made within 250 miles or a 4-hour drive of the Co-op. We define "local company" as a business whose owners live (or offices are located) within 250 miles or a 4-hour drive of the Co-op.



Additional Department Specific Requirements

Produce

- 1) Documentation of farming practices: Organic Certification, Good Agricultural Practices, or Statement of Best Practices.
- 2) Wild harvested mushrooms must be accompanied by the Washington State Department of Health **Wild Mushroom Harvest Form**.
- 3) In most cases, the Co-op cannot sell homegrown fruit. Some exceptions are made for unique offerings of exceptional quality that come from local hobby farmers.
- 4) Country of Origin labeling and organic status included on invoices.
- 5) Are we able to schedule a visit to your farm?

Dairy, Cheese, and Meat

- 1) Documentation of farming and/or manufacturing practices: Organic Certification, Good Agricultural Practices, Good Manufacturing Practices, USDA or Health Department Inspections.
- 2) No rBST or artificial growth hormones. No antibiotics.
- 3) Humanely-raised. Preference given to pasture-raised and grass-fed livestock.
- 4) If grain is included in the animal's diet, preference is given to herds and flocks that are fed Non-GMO grain. Please provide verification of Non-GMO status.
- 5) Country of Origin labeling.
- 6) Are we able to schedule a visit to your farm?

Eggs

- 1) Documentation of farming and/or manufacturing practices: Organic Certification, Good Agricultural Practices, USDA or Health Department Inspections.
- 2) Free-range and pasture-raised flocks. Vegetarian Fed.
- 3) No antibiotics or growth hormones
- 4) Preference is given to flocks that are fed Non-GMO grain. Please provide verification of Non-GMO status.
- 5) Are we able to schedule a visit to your farm?

Seafood

- 1) Documentation of sustainably-sourced, wild-caught seafood from healthy fisheries: Marine Stewardship Council Certification or Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch "Best" or "Good" Rating.
- 2) No farmed salmon.
- 3) Country of Origin Labeling

Personal Care & Supplements

- 1) Products must meet or exceed the Natural Product Associations standards for Personal Care Products. If your product is certified, please provide documentation.
- 2) Priority is given to products made from plant-based ingredients and are free from the following: Parabens or Phthalates, Synthetic Polymers, Glycols, Carbomer, Petroleum/Mineral Oil/Paraffin, Chemical Sunblocks, Nano-Particle Minerals, Sodium Lauryl Sulfate.
- 3) No Animal Testing.



- 4) Supplements must come through an established and reputable distributor.
- 5) Supplements are Independent lab tested for quality and concentration.

Garden

- 1) Documentation of growing practices: Organic Certification, Good Agricultural Practices, or Statement of Best Practices.
- 2) Documentation of Non-GMO verification
- 3) In most cases, the Co-op cannot sell homegrown plants or seeds. Some exceptions are made for unique offerings of exceptional quality that come from local hobby farmers.
- 4) No noxious weeds or invasive species
- 5) Bee-friendly: Nursery plants grown without the use of neonicotinoid insecticides or other systemic herbicides and insecticides.

Mercantile

- 1) Free from BPA, PVC, and phthalate.
- 2) Focus on Fair Trade, social causes and charitable giving.
- 3) Sustainably-sourced materials.

Honey

- 1) Priority is given to locally grown, raw and unfiltered honey. Raw is defined as not heated above 118 F.
- 2) Priority is given to bees that forage non-agricultural and non-residential areas.
- 3) Priority is given to Pure USDA Grade A Honey. No Grade C or substandard honey.
- 4) No adulterated honey. No honey from sugar-fed colonies. No artificial flavors or additives.
- 5) Spec sheet and product labels with the following information: Producer Name, Crop Year, Floral Variety, and Geographic Origins.
- 6) Provide any additional documentation that speaks to the quality of the product: Organic Certification, USDA Grade Certificate, Producer Certificate for EU, or Lab Test Documents.

Beer & Wine

- 1) The Co-op can only sell alcohol that comes through a licensed distributor.
- 2) Priority is given to locally produced craft beers and wines of exceptional quality.
- 3) No fortified products. No artificial colors, flavors, or preservatives.

Shelf Stable Grocery

- 1) The Co-op cannot sell home-canned or home-made foods. Produced in a certified facility.
- 2) Must meet USDA, FDA, and WA State labeling requirements.

Housewares

- 1) The Co-op cannot sell home-made cleaning products. Products must be produced in a certified facility.
- 2) Priority is given to products free from SLS, Phosphates, and chemical scents.
- 3) Preference given to paper goods made from sustainable sources and plastics made from plants and biodegradable components.





New Vendor Application

Applicant Information

Business Name: _____ Date: _____

Mailing Address: _____
Street Address *Unit #*

City *State* *ZIP Code*

Alternate Address (please explain):

Street Address *Unit #*

City *State* *ZIP Code*

Business Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

Website: _____ Social Media: _____

Owner's Name: _____ Main Contact Person: _____

Business Tax ID: _____

List Distributors you currently work with:



Delivery Schedule:

Minimum Purchase:

List up to 3 retailers you currently work with:

Have your products ever been implicated in a food borne illness outbreak or been subject to a Class 1 Recall? If yes, please attached information:

Additional Documentation

If the Co-op accepts your application, you will be contacted and asked to sign a **New Vendor Agreement** and submit copies of the following documents:

- Business License
- Wholesale or Resellers Permit (if applicable)
- Liability Insurance
- Ingredient Statement (if applicable)
- Sample Invoice
- Excel spreadsheet containing UPC, product description, order unit, and pricing
- Documents specific to the product or department, such as organic certification or USDA inspections.

Tell us a little more about your product.

Why is your product a good fit for the Co-op's customers? Feel free to attach sell sheets, photos, or other documents.



Vendor Application and samples can be mailed to:

Skagit Valley Food Co-op

Attention: Category Manager

202 S. First Street

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Or, You can drop off the application with samples in our Admin Office, Suite 301 on the third floor of the Co-op building.

For Internal Use by Department Manager

Date _____ Name _____

Did vendor provide the following documents?

- Business License
- Wholesale Permit
- Liability Insurance with Product and Completed Operations Liability min \$2M
- Ingredient Statement
- Sample Invoice

Did vendor meet additional department specific requirements? Yes No

Locally made locally owned It's One World

Is packet complete? What Information needs follow-up? _____

Next steps:

- Accepted: **New Vendor Agreement** sent on _____
- Not Accepted: Reason _____
- Notice sent on _____

