

# **Good Tern Co-op and Natural Foods Merchandising Policy**

**The Good Tern Coop and Natural Food Store is a consumer-owned, natural foods retail store. Our purpose is to be a trusted source of natural foods and products, and a reliable resource for consumer information.**

**Merchandising Defined** Merchandising is an ongoing process of achieving the standards and goals set forth in this policy. It is also the way products are chosen and presented to shoppers through display, pricing, advertising, and education. The Merchandising Policy provides standards and goals for product selection, including food prepared by the Good Tern Coop. It is the responsibility of all staff who make merchandising decisions, under the direction of the General Manager, to judge products according to these standards and goals approved by the Board of Directors.

**Merchandising Policy:** The Good Tern Coop merchandising policy flows from our mission statement and provides standards for how we work to improve product selection. Our policy is to offer products that are local, organic and of high quality that are produced using sustainable and humane methods. Our goal is to achieve customers' trust that all products sold at the Good Tern Coop have been selected to come as close to these standards as possible and that an honest effort has been made to label alternative products selected due to availability or cost considerations.

**Shared Responsibility.** Merchandising priorities are determined through a dynamic process involving communication among the manager, staff, the Board, and owners:

1. The Board affects decisions by setting policy and advising the General Manager. The Board is responsible for an annual review of the Merchandising Policy and for revising and updating it as necessary.
2. Manager and Staff affect decisions by recommending and choosing products consistent with the merchandizing policy and in response to input from owners and prevailing sales records.
3. Owners affect decisions by requesting new products or challenging existing products.

**Merchandising Standards:** The following standards and goals guide the product decisions of the Good Tern Coop.

**A. Nutritional Content: Product Ingredients:** The Good Tern Coop strives to buy and sell foods of high nutritional value and free from synthetic additives and processing.

**The Good Tern Coop will not knowingly sell:**

1. Foods containing artificial preservatives, hydrogenated oils, trans fats, antibiotics, hormones.
2. Any products containing artificial flavorings or colorings.
3. Products that contain milk or milk products from cows treated with recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone (rBGH)
4. Foods made from plant engineered ingredients.(GMO) (GEI)

**The Good Tern Coop is committed to provide:**

1. many organic foods and products that are locally grown/produced as possible As
2. least one high quality/less expensive alternative to local/organic products in each major food/product category when there is a significant price differential. At
3. any options for unprocessed foods such as fresh produce, whole grains, nuts, and beans M
4. products that are as minimally refined or processed as possible. Pr
5. products lower in fat, sweeteners, salt, and common allergens in comparison to products of the same category. Fo
6. variety of foods that meet the needs of special diets such as wheat-free, sugar-free, dairy-free and salt-free. A
7. products that contain as little saturated fat as possible. Fo
8. locally items produced in the store which are made using ingredients which meet the standards of the merchandising policy. De
9. the highest quality natural supplements. Th
10. diverse selection of botanically-based body care products of the highest quality available and with lower priced, high quality options as feasible. A

**B. Environmental Impact:** Good Tern Coop employs business practices that are both economically and environmentally sustainable. We emphasize products that minimize packaging and are manufactured or grown using the most sustainable methods, including:

1. Organically grown foods and products, including animal products, produced in a humane manner that minimizes negative environmental impact.
2. Sustainably harvested seafood .
3. Unpackaged bulk products, especially alternatives to packaged foods, as well as products in reusable, recyclable, recycled, and/or reduced packaging.
4. Locally produced products.
5. Herbs that are ethically harvested with regard to species endangerment.

**C. Cooperative Business Practice and Social Responsibility:** Consideration of the short and long term social and environmental impact of doing business in a community is reflected in the Co-op's offering of:

1. Locally produced and cooperatively or collectively produced products.

2. Products of small businesses.
3. Products made or sold by businesses that are known to demonstrate concern and fairness for workers, consumers, and the larger community, including "Fair Trade."
4. Animal products that are raised or produced in a humane manner, using sustainable methods.
5. Health and body aid products that were not tested on animals.

Revised 3/22/10

### **Known Exceptions to Above Standards**

1. Dietary supplements made from meat products (e.g., glandulars and gelatin capsules) that are sold in the Health and Beauty Aids department may not meet these standards,
2. Meat products in pet foods may not meet these standards
3. Without federally required labeling of products containing GEI, Good Tern Coop cannot guarantee all products are GEI-free.
4. Organic infant formula containing synthetic vitamin E used as a preservative may be sold, although it does not meet the standard regarding Nutritional Content. Technology does not currently offer any other ingredient that can be used to preserve organic infant formula.

**Product Information:** Information will be increasingly available in the store and through the Good Tern Coop website ([goodtern.org](http://goodtern.org)) concerning what is known about nutritional differences in various fats and oils, sweeteners, flours, etc., as well as different diets, and different methods of producing and preparing foods. Given the rapidly changing information about nutrition we recognize that there is much to be learned about what is healthful and that customers want a variety of educational information and product options to achieve their vision of a healthy diet.

Revised 3/22/10

???FUTURE ???

**Response to Product Safety and Other Consumer Concerns.** The General Manager is responsible for ensuring that the Good Tern Coop staff respond promptly and appropriately to required food and product safety recalls. In addition, the manager is responsible for staying aware of controversial consumer concerns that are likely to be of interest to owners and customers. As quickly as possible, management is expected to prepare, update, and make available to customers balanced information about controversial food and product issues.

**More Detail** – Probably too much for now

Some Co-op products contain high fructose corn syrup. Good Tern Coop will provide information about the possible relationship between high fructose corn syrup and obesity, and the information that a high percentage of high fructose corn syrup contains GEI.

Meat products in pet foods may not meet these standards may not meet the standards in the sections of this policy regarding Nutritional Content, Environmental Impact, and Cooperative Business Practice and Social Responsibility. At this time, Coop can not commit to the standards for meat products in pet food products due to lack of available sources and ingredients. Coop staff will look for every opportunity to find the best available sources for meat products in pet foods.

Organic infant formula containing synthetic vitamin E used as a preservative may be sold, although it does not meet the standard regarding Nutritional Content. Technology does not currently offer any other ingredient that can be used to preserve organic infant formula. Although infant formula contains natural vitamin E, D1 alpha tocopherol acetate is necessary to maintain shelf life and protect naturally occurring nucleotides that offer optimum nutritional support to infants, therefore there is no organic infant formula available without synthetic vitamin E. D1 alpha tocopherol acetate is not considered to be toxic.

## **II. Product Recommendations, Inquiries, and Challenges**

All questions and suggestions about product are to be directed to SNFC staff. If an owner feels that the SNFC Merchandising Policy is being violated, or that SNFC should carry a product that meets the merchandising standards, she/he may submit a formal written challenge or recommendation to the General Manager. Under the direction of the General Manager, staff shall respond in writing to the challenge or recommendation.

#### **IV. Exemptions**

When no other options are available, the Board may exempt products from the standards contained within the Merchandising Policy. A list of exempted products and reasons for the exemptions shall be attached to the Merchandising Policy and shall be available at the front of the store for review by shoppers. (See Appendix A)

Revised 3/22/10