



DNF Board of Directors 2025 Candidate Information Packet

Revised 1/31/25

Application deadline is Saturday, March 15th

Thank you for your interest in joining the Board of Directors (BOD) of Durango Natural Foods Co-op (DNF). We hope this packet will help you understand DNF's history, mission and current goals, as well as, the role of the DNF BOD.

For 50 years, DNF has been providing the community with quality natural, local and organic products. It has grown from a buying club to a member-owned retail store that is governed by its members, for its members, and is supportive of the community at large.

DNF is a representative democracy that is governed by the BOD. Any Member-Owner can run for the BOD and all Member-Owners are eligible to vote in the annual elections. Officer positions are voted on by the BOD at the first meeting after the election. Any Member is welcome to attend any regular Board meeting.

The BOD is committed to fulfilling DNF's mission, sustaining financial stability, and providing strategic planning for our future. The DNF Board strives to represent its diverse membership by recruiting and retaining a diverse BOD who offer a spectrum of perspectives, skills, and talents that cooperatively contribute to our decision-making processes. Interested BOD candidates are encouraged to attend at least one BOD meeting before committing to run, and potentially serve, as a DNF BOD.

Sitting on DNF's BOD is a responsibility and requires commitment. Directors need to have a deep belief in the Co-op's mission and the time to listen, learn, and contribute to its exciting future. In addition to professional development and networking, BOD members receive a 20% discount on all purchases which can be stacked on top of other member discounts.

DIRECTOR EXPECTATIONS

- Attend and participate in monthly Board meetings (once a month for 2.75 hours)
- Read and contribute to email discussions
- Participate in the Annual Meeting & Celebration (Harvest Festival)
- It is highly encouraged to join a committee (meeting schedules vary)
- Rotate into an Officer position as needed
- Contribute 5 - 15 hours a month to the above tasks
- Participate in the annual 4 - 8 hour Board Retreat (held in the fall)
- Shop regularly and interact with staff and members to learn how we are doing
- Share positive aspects of DNF in your circles and community
- Complete your full term in good standing. BOD members serve 2 or 3-year terms. The length is determined by rank in member voting and the BOD turnover schedule, so as to only have 3 – 4 seats up for election each year. There are 7 seats on the DNF BOD

If you are interested in a seat on the BOD, please complete the application sheet on the back of this packet and either submit it to a cashier or preferably email it to: board@durangonaturalfoods.coop.

BOARD ELECTION SCHEDULE

- Friday, Feb 7th - Applications available
- Saturday, March 15: Applications due in-store or received via email
- Tuesday, April 1: Candidate information for voters is available in-store & online at www.DurangoNaturalFoods.Coop
- Monday, April 21 – Wednesday, April 30: Ballots available to vote in-store or online (10-day voting period)
- Friday, May 2nd: Election verified and results announced
- **Wednesday, May 8, 5:30 - 7:00: New Director Training**
ALL CANDIDATES, SAVE THIS DATE NOW
- **Wednesday, May 21, 5:30 – 7:45pm: First meeting of the new Board**
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ROLE OF THE BOARD

- Represent member interests and maintain open communication channels
- Provide vision and direction for the membership and the General Manager (GM)

- Develop, update, and carry out a Strategic Plan
- Develop, update, and carry out the Ends Statement & Mission Statement
- Hire and monitor GM Performance
- Work with the GM on Business Development
- Adhere to all State and Federal laws as well as DNF Bylaws
- Operate in accordance with the DNF Policy Governance Manual
- Perpetuate itself through recruitment, appointments, and open elections
- Improve itself through professional development, consultation, and self-evaluation

ENDS STATEMENT

Durango Natural Foods Co-op is a member-owned cooperative grocery store serving the Durango area. Our business philosophy is based on ‘triple bottom line’ values – people, planet, & profits. We do this so that:

- Healthy, local, organic, responsibly sourced products are available to anyone who wants them.
- Consumers have an uplifting, satisfying, and safe shopping experience.
- Local and regional farmers and producers have a reliable market.
- Our employees have a great place to work.
- Our community has more equitable food distribution.
- Members are part of a socially just and environmentally responsible business.
- Our community has a hub of ideas and visions for the future.

This will ultimately result in a thriving, informed, locally-focused community, which rests on a healthy planet.

THE COOPERATIVE IDENTITY

Definition: A cooperative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet its common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise.

Values: Cooperatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and solidarity. In the tradition of its founders, DNF cooperative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility, and caring for others.

Principles: The cooperative principles are guidelines by which cooperatives put their values into practice. DNF is a cooperative grocery store, founded on Cooperative Principles, which are:

1. **Voluntary and open membership** Cooperatives are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use the services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political, or religious discrimination.

2. **Democratic member control** Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting the policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary cooperatives, members have equal voting rights (one member (household), one vote) and cooperatives at other levels are also organized in a democratic manner.
3. **Member economic participation** Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the cooperative. Members 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 their cooperative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative; 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** Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute to their effectiveness. They inform the general public, particularly young people and opinion leaders, about the nature and benefits of cooperation.
6. **Cooperation among cooperatives** Cooperatives 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** Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.

DNF HISTORY

In the spring of 1973, a few grassroots visionaries chose to establish a local buying club to share low-cost, quality food and soon rented its first 10 x 30 ft. room located in the back and northern side of 700 Main Avenue. DNF operated on all volunteers. In 1974, it was legally registered with the state of Colorado to become Durango Natural Foods, Inc. In 1975, it moved to a 600 sq. ft. rented space in the alley of 2nd Ave. and 7th St. DNF invited a Social Services Program, the Single Purpose Application Referral System (SPARS), to initially share the premises.

In addition to staffing the store, DNF volunteers worked with the community through SPARS by providing services and transportation for the elderly and the disadvantaged. Its first organic community garden flourished on the ground where The Mears House now stands. DNF organized a network of local farmers and producers to supply, as much as possible, its bulk grains, beans, nuts, seeds, fruits, vegetables, herbs, honey, beef, and eggs.

In order to accrue sufficient assets to buy its own building, DNF first invested its savings in a duplex at 3100 & 3104 West 2nd Ave. Using this property as collateral, members stepped forward to loan the down payment in March 1979 and purchased the northern half of its current 575 East 8th Ave property. Community involvement continued through helping the Local Organic Produce Project (LOPP), the Soup Kitchen, and San Juan Resource Recovery, among others. Education, too, has been one of DNF's priorities throughout its history. Informative newsletters have been a tradition, plus a wide variety of classes and trainings.

In July 1987, DNF planned a parking expansion and improved handicap accessibility by selling the duplex in order to buy the adjoining property to the west. It built a wheelchair ramp entrance and removed the house on the west property in August 1990. In January 1999, DNF purchased the adjacent property including an older house to the south. After removing the older house, it constructed a new adjoining building for larger retail and storage areas including a deli. In 2006, DNF installed an automatic glass sliding front door, refilled the depression in the parking lot, and painted the outside of the building. Most existing member loans were consolidated and the commercial bank loan was increased by an additional \$50,000 to pay for the improvements.

In 2009, members voted to replace the membership structure with an owner-equity system. Patronage dividends (the profits of the business) may be shared with member-owners in profitable years if the Board approves.

In 2015, DNF Co-op was selected as the recipient of the 2014 Green Business Leadership Award presented by the San Juan Citizens Alliance's Green Business Roundtable for demonstrating leadership, risk, and innovation in utilizing environmentally responsible, healthy and profitable business practices. The award recognized, among other efforts, the Co-op's participation in 4CORE's Resource Smart Business Program, undergoing a comprehensive sustainability audit and investment in energy efficiency.

In late 2018, DNF experienced a financial crisis that nearly led to the closing of the Co-op. Luckily new Board leadership and 2 very generous member loans breathed new life into the 45-year-old business. Assistance from National Co-op Grocers and consultation from Columinate also brought on a successful GM/Board/Staff relationship to carry DNF out of crisis and into success. The volume of healthy, affordable, and local products distributed into our community increased over 100% and revenue increased over 165% from 2019 through 2024, with a sustained trend of growth. Also, DNF's participation in the Double Up Food Bucks program which benefits low-income families and local farmers is one of the most successful in Colorado.

DNF CO-OP BOARD APPLICATION

The following information will be used to create the board election ballot, as well as the printed and online brochure. The intention is to educate the members about you. It will be shared in the store and online. Phone number, mailing address and email will be used internally only. Please print clearly, or (preferably) email your typed response within this form.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Your occupation: _____

Your education: _____

Previous Board of Directors experience or related experience:

Please answer the following question in 300 words or less:

Why do you believe DNF owners should choose you to represent them? (Include skills, expertise and resources you could bring to Board service; what areas you think the Board should be focusing on over the next 1-5 years; anything else you would like to share with owners.)

Please also include a photo of yourself.

Please submit this completed form and a photo to a cashier in the store or (preferably) send via email to board@durangonaturalfoods.coop

IMPORTANT DATES TO SAVE

- **Feb 7th** – Applications available in-store & online at www.DurangoNaturalFoods.Coop
- **March 15th** – Application process closes
- **April 1st** – Candidate info is distributed via Newsletter and on our website
- **April 21st to 30th** – Election period
- **May 2nd** – Election results announced
- **May 7th** – New Director Training
- **May 21st** – First meeting with the new Board

2024 Election Timeline for Reference

- **Sunday, March 15:** Applications due in-store or received via email
- **Tuesday, April 1:** Candidate information for voters is available in-store & online at www.DurangoNaturalFoods.Coop
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