

# FIRST ALTERNATIVE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

## VISION

First Alternative (FA) aspires to be a cooperative model, providing high quality natural and organic products in a community-oriented store.

## MISSION

FA is a community market aspiring to be a model for environmental sustainability through our purchasing and workplace practices. We seek to honor our traditions and build upon our potential. We are committed to cultivating tolerance and diversity in our operations. We strive for excellence in our products and services, including wholesome organic foods, innovative education and community outreach, while offering high quality, local, organic and minimally packaged products whenever possible. We will act ethically and appropriately in our pricing practices. We seek to provide a democratic business climate, fostering worker and owner participation, according to cooperative principles.

## PRINCIPLES

FA is a cooperative community that exists to realize people's aspirations for a healthy, simple and humane life. Relationships of trust, respect and integrity make an organization that feels good. This inspires owners and potential owners to participate beyond the retail level. Our natural food store and community business support participants in the following ways:

I. We act ethically and responsibly by:

- Implementing sound environmental practices
- Manifesting unquestionable integrity throughout the institution
- Respecting and valuing healthy human diversity
- Promoting socially responsible practices, choices, and products

II We care for our community by:

- Serving FA's owners, staff, customers, and the larger community
- Ensuring that FA nourishes the mental and physical well being of owners, customers and staff alike
- Promoting a web of interconnection within FA, and between FA and other co-ops and local community groups
- Offering multiple opportunities for owner involvement in FA
- Utilizing local sources for goods and services whenever feasible
- Presenting opportunities for the FA community to know that its work and involvement is valued, and providing people with opportunities to excel and grow
- Encouraging the volunteer service whenever and wherever possible to the shared benefit of FA, the volunteer and the community.

III. We provide high quality products, goods, and services to our customers by:

- Marketing wholesome, affordable, natural and organic foods and other products
- Offering education, information, and resources for healthy living
- Ensuring a welcoming, service-oriented atmosphere

IV. We balance human needs, financial necessity, and daily realities by:

- Understanding and accepting the impact of our decisions
- Considering long-term and overall costs as well as short-term ones
- Depending on our community for appropriate support
- Making socially responsible choices in preference to profit-driven ones