



PRODUCT SELECTION GUIDELINES

Revised and approved by the Ownership June 2018

We have a commitment to our owners and the community to provide products that fall within our high standards of quality, focusing on nutritional, environmental, and social concerns.

PURPOSE

In accordance with Executive Limitations Policies L-7 and L-10, the following Product Selection Guidelines seek to balance First Alternative Cooperative's service to our customers and our financial viability with our commitment to the nutritional, environmental and social concerns in the Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles.

The Management and Staff will use the following criteria to select and purchase products:

QUALITY

- First Alternative shall emphasize and be a reliable source of fresh, high-quality, organic products (as defined by the USDA certification program) which are free of artificial ingredients or preservatives, genetically engineered organisms, antibiotics, or growth hormones; whole foods which have under gone minimal processing; and natural products which are free of artificial or harmful chemical additives, and/or artificial colors, flavors and preservatives.
- Dairy, fish, poultry and meat products shall be organic or free of growth hormones and/or antibiotics as much as possible.
- First Alternative will not knowingly carry any meat products that are derived from DNA cloning or reproductive cloning.
- First Alternative will not knowingly carry products with added trans fats. Naturally occurring trans fats are acceptable.
- First Alternative shall seek to diminish products that contain genetically engineered or modified foods (also referred to as Genetically Engineered Organisms or GMO's), or products, which contain GMO's.
- As of January 1st 2014, First Alternative Cooperative buyers will no longer knowingly accept NEW non-organic products that include GMO high risk items in their ingredient list, unless they are verified by a third-party verification agency or can provide to us a detailed description of the measures they have taken to avoid GMO contamination. With the exception of WIC items, animal products, body care products and supplements (at this time), this new policy applies to all products in the stores. These high risk items currently include: alfalfa, apples, canola (rapeseed), corn, cotton, soy, sugar beets, yellow summer squash and zucchini.

COMMUNITY

- First Alternative shall offer and give selection priority to local products that are primarily grown and produced in the Willamette Valley, Oregon and the Northwest.
- First Alternative shall support and encourage other cooperatives and community endeavors.

AFFORDABILITY

- First Alternative shall offer a selection of low cost products, which satisfy basic nutritional needs.
- First Alternative shall have a pricing structure which addresses the economic diversity of our shoppers.
- Comparable food items shall be evaluated, to the best of our abilities, and selected to have the best nutritional value for the most affordable price.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

- First Alternative shall give preference to those products which require the least transportation and result in the least pollution.
- First Alternative shall promote and seek to provide minimally packaged products whenever possible.
- First Alternative shall encourage responsible recycling efforts, using recyclable or biodegradable packaging within our store and will work with the community to increase recycling practices.
- First Alternatives shall offer a diverse selection of bulk items as an alternative to packaged foods.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- First Alternative shall not knowingly buy products that involve inhumane treatment of animals.
- First Alternative shall not knowingly buy products from those that do not have fair and ethical practices in their workplace.

CURRENT PROHIBITIONS

- Irradiated food, tobacco and nicotine products are prohibited from being sold at First Alternative.
- All products and all special orders that contain any chocolate ingredient (e.g. cocoa powder, cocoa butter, chocolate liquor, cocoa nibs, etc.) shall meet one or more of the following criteria:
 1. Certified Fair Trade or comparable standard (ex:Rainforest Alliance Certified)
 2. Certified Organic.

This requirement shall be rescinded only by a vote of First Alternative Owners.

PROCEDURE

Monitoring of these Product Selection Guidelines will be preformed annually according to First Alternative Board Policy practices.