



Zero Waste Grocery Shopping

by Jocelynn Anderson –
Owner of [Well Earth Goods](#)



Grocery hauls are frequently loaded with packaging, plastic, and waste. Learning to avoid this unnecessary trash is an important component of the zero waste lifestyle and helps protect your health and the beautiful planet we live on!

With the right items and mindset, reducing waste when grocery shopping can be a breeze! Here are a few tips to help get you started.

1. Bring your own cotton produce bags and use them instead of the plastic ones offered in the produce department! You can make your own, repurpose bags from around the house, or purchase bags from a zero waste store, such as [WellEarthGoods.com](#). Purchased bags have the tare weight (weight of the bag) written right on the tag, and it will be subtracted from the total weight so you don't end up paying for the weight of the bag.

2. Shop in bulk. Buy everything you can from the bulk section rather than its plastic packaged counterpart. (I'm talking about your pasta, rice, flours, granola, and nuts).

3. Use your produce bags for bulk items. Your produce bags can be filled with oats, grains, pasta, chocolate chips, spices, etc. The tare weight works the same for bulk items with one extra step: You will need let your cashier know the four-digit code for the bulk items. You can do this by taking a picture of the code, adding it to your notes app on your phone, or writing it down with a pen and paper to help your cashier at checkout time! When you get home, transfer your goods to glass jars for storage.

4. Bring your own jars. Your jars can be filled with any bulk items including liquids. The Co-op carries many wonderful

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MFC Vendor Profile:

Alexandre Family Farm

[Alexandre Family Farm](#) is setting a new standard in organic, pasture-raised dairy farming. They're looking beyond organic and biodynamic certification and they're raising crossbred A2/A2 cattle to craft the healthiest, best-tasting milk possible. They are more than farmers, they are caretakers with a commitment to stewardship that reaches beyond their farm gate.



MFC: *How did Alexandre Family Farm get started and what inspires you to continue farming?*

ALEXANDRE: Where the redwoods meet the sea in Northern California's Humboldt and Del Norte Counties, we – Blake and Stephanie Alexandre along with our five children – work together as a family. We are 5th generation grass-based dairy farmers on the North Coast of California. Grass-based dairying is what we always did, and when we went organic 20 years ago, we truly became organic consumers as well – realizing the great purpose we have as milk producers to provide wholesome, nutrient-dense products to consumers. It starts with the soil; this is where we cultivate a complex nutrient cycle that takes root in our year-round green grasses, and comes full circle on your table in the form of delicious, nutrient-dense organic milk and eggs. The inspiration is knowing we produce the best products – nutrition you can see and taste!

Alexandre profile continues on page 2.

liquids in bulk such as maple syrup, honey, olive oil, and more. [To obtain the tare weight of the jar, the Co-op provides a scale in the bulk section.](#) You can use a wax crayon, dry erase marker, or a sticker to write the tare weight and product code on the lid of your jar.

5. If you forget your bags, **try not using a produce bag at all.** You can give your veggies a good wash when they get home! If a bag is really essential for something loose and small, use a paper bag provided for mushrooms. It can be thrown in your compost pile and will biodegrade.

6. **Make foods from scratch.** Some foods only come packaged, BUT, you can avoid the plastic by making your own with ingredients from the bulk section! Make your own vegan cheese, popcorn, cookies, nutmilks, hummus, crackers, cooked beans, broth, etc.

7. **Purchase beverages in glass bottles.** The Co-op carries glass bottles of water for guzzling on the go! If you drink kombucha, get a growler and use it for refills from their station.



8. **Bring baskets or reusable grocery totes made out of natural fibers.** These bags can be used over and over, but at the end of their life they will biodegrade.

9. **Buy fresh produce and freeze it at home** rather than buying frozen fruits and veggies in plastic bags.

These tips will all but eliminate unnecessary plastic and waste from your grocery shopping! We LOVE the Co-op because they make it easy! They provide a wide variety of bulk items, scales for customer access, and their cashiers are always prepped and ready to help with tare weights to make sure you don't overpay for your groceries! Happy Shopping! ■



commitment: to family tradition, to our EcoDairy farming practice, and to providing consistent quality from our single-origin farm, is matched only by the depth of taste in our products. We love to hear people saying “this is the way milk is supposed to taste” and “this is the way milk used to taste.”

MFC: What is the most difficult part of running a farm?

ALEXANDRE: Farmer pay price – consumers vote everyday with their dollars and too many want more for less. It's cheap food that is causing a healthcare crisis in America. Our style of dairy farming is more expensive and we are after the consumer that will pay more for something better, higher quality, organic, unique old-fashioned A2/A2 genetics, family farmed, pasture-based and supporting the local community. We cannot survive as we are with the prices we are paid – our biggest worry is our checkbook!

MFC: What are your most popular products?

ALEXANDRE: Alexandre Family Farm [6% A2 Organic Milk](#) – the 48oz size is our top seller. [Chocolate](#) is second then followed by [Ginger-Turmeric](#). The Ginger-Turmeric has surprised folks and if you like ginger and turmeric you'll love our milk. The goodness of our flavored milks is that they start with great whole milk, with clean flavors, and minimal organic cane sugar.

MFC: Tell us something most people don't know about Alexandre Family Farm.

ALEXANDRE: Most people don't know what [A2/A2 Organic Milk](#) is! When we went organic 20 years ago we started reading about the new research that came out of New Zealand on A2 milk. Traditionally, cows produced milk with A2/A2 beta-casein protein. Over time, a mutated A1 gene worked its way into dairy cattle. Cows today produce a combination of A1 and A2 proteins, creating a type of milk that is relatively new to the human body and may be more difficult to digest. We choose cows that while roaming our pastures only make A2/A2 milk. It's most natural to the body and easily absorbed. You can trust that our milk is always 100% pure A2/A2. Our milk is milk the way cows were intended to produce: old-fashioned milk. We verify this by submitting DNA to a lab to ensure the cow carries strictly the A2/A2 gene. If you'd like to know more, we encourage you to [Google it](#). Besides hearing that our milk is the best tasting milk, we continually hear from consumers who can not digest dairy that they have no problem with our A2 Organic Milk. Most people who think they are lactose-intolerant are actually sensitive to the A1 protein that mutated in modern dairy cows. ■

MFC: How do your farming practices affect the flavor and quality of your products?

ALEXANDRE: Our location is the “mecca” for organic dairying. Our regenerative pastures, cool season weather environment, and old-fashioned A2/A2 genetics create the best tasting milk and eggs. Our dairy cows and our hens enjoy true outdoor living as they graze open pastures alongside each other, a way of farming that the [Cornucopia Institute](#) describes as, “Exemplary – beyond organic.” The depth of our



Staff Spotlight

Get to know the staff!

Whisper Smith

How long have you been cooperating?

I have only been here for two months now, but I feel like I have known the people for longer as they made it such a smooth transition and my comfort level with the products we sell here makes me feel like I'm home.

What do you do at the co-op?

I am the Wine and Beer Buyer. I have an Intro to Sommelier Certificate and have beer knowledge and experience from the Midwest to the West Coast.

What brought you to the co-op?

My partner received a job offer from Southern Oregon University and after working for Whole Foods in the Specialty department for 12 years, there was not one to transfer to in the area. When I found out about the Co-op, I was excited to find a job with a company that is invested in both the environment and the community.

What do you like best about your job?

I love learning about local wines, and there are so many of them! Seeing the vineyards during the drive to go hiking in the area and knowing I am supporting these small wine companies, it's a connection that retail rarely affords.

Tell us your co-op favorites:

Foris Pinot Gris was a wine I discovered when I was buying wine in Michigan, great to know I can support it near and far. With stonefruit notes, bright acidity and a clean finish, it pairs well with food and sunshine! Cypress Grove Humboldt Fog is a delicious creamy goat cheese with morning and evening milk separated by vegetable ash, an ode to French cheese makers that used ash to protect the milk from the environment. It's the best when it starts softening at the rind edge, the gooeyness is the goodness.

How has working at the co-op affected your life?

I now have work-life balance. Getting to satisfy and delight our customers, building relationships with coworkers and having time to research products and sharing knowledge between departments are what I love about retail and it's so great to be able to focus on the basics.

Tell us something we don't know!

My name really is Whisper. My grandfather thought of the name when my mom was a young girl and she remembered it when she was pregnant with me. I didn't appreciate the uniqueness of it till I was an adult and realized what a gift a name could be.

What do you like to do outside of work?

My partner and I have just started taking weekly hikes around the area, and have a list of places we want to explore once the snow melts. I also enjoy reading and playing with my cat Thomas.

Where did you grow up/where have you lived in your life?

I grew up in a small town in the heart of the thumb of Michigan. I moved to the Metro Detroit area after high school. I received a job offer to be a Wine Specialist in Ann Arbor, MI and met my partner while living there. He received a job offer from Stanford and we moved to the Bay Area a couple years back. Just a few months ago, we relocated to Medford which I lovingly refer to as the "Midwest of the West Coast." ■



From the Board:

Annual Owner Meeting

by Kellie Hill – Board President

Our [Annual Meeting](#) is right around the corner! Once again this year we will be facilitating a roundtable discussion to ensure we, as your Board of Directors, are following your wishes. As an owner of the Co-op, attendance at the Annual Meeting is a right and a responsibility. One of the seven cooperative principles is Democratic Member Control. Medford Food Co-op is a democratic organization controlled by our owners, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. The Annual Meeting allows owners to elect representatives from among the ownership and these representatives, your Board of Directors, are accountable to the owners. One of the benefits of ownership in the Co-op is the opportunity to participate. You have voting rights!

And your Board of Directors wants to hear from you!

In addition to voting for directors, this year's ballot will include voting for the 2020 [Positive Change](#) recipients. You've probably been asked while checking out if you'd like to "round up" for the monthly recipient. In January, we raised \$2,465.11 for the Community Works Transitional Living Program, and in February, we raised \$1,740.17 for the Medford Food Project. You, as an owner of the Medford Food Co-op, give this financial support for the growth and prosperity of our local community and economy. Your 2019 ballot includes voting for the recipients of 2020.

Speaking of ballots... the biggest excitement includes our new online, electronic ballots. Co-op staff and directors have run test ballots and are thrilled to report how well the

system worked. This year you will not be required to print out and bring in your ballot in order to have your vote counted. You will have the option to vote online using an electronic ballot. Hopefully, this new way of voting will enable every owner to participate in the election process. While we appreciate the owners who have voted in years past and attended the Annual Meetings, we want to see more of the ownership actively involved in our Co-op; hopefully this new system will make it easier for more people to participate.

But, this simplified voting doesn't mean you're off the hook for coming to the Annual Meeting! The Annual Meeting is your primary opportunity to meet other owners, hear directly from your Board of Directors and General Manager, and give input on the future of Medford Food Co-op. Our Annual Meeting is the chance to celebrate our past, get information about the present, and be aspirational about our future.

I look forward to seeing you there. And remember your right and responsibility to vote. ■

Important Dates

Two Ways to Celebrate Earth Day

Bear Creek Stewardship Day Volunteer to clean-up along the Bear Creek Greenway for Earth Day! Join us on Saturday, April 20th from 9:00am-12:00pm. More information at bearcreekstewards.org.

Rogue Valley Earth Day is a joyful, annual celebration for all ages to learn about environmental stewardship and build a sustainable community in a fun and inspirational setting. Join us on Saturday, April 20th from 11:00am-4:00pm, outdoors at ScienceWorks in Ashland.

Annual Owner Meeting & Good Food Festival

All owners are invited to the Annual Owner Meeting on Sunday, May 5th at 3:00pm in the Café. Join us before or after the [Annual Meeting](#) for the [Good Food Festival](#) – featuring family-friendly activities, free samples, and delicious culinary demonstrations. Details to follow.

Brews, Bluegrass & BBQ

Brews, Bluegrass & BBQ is an annual festival and fundraiser to benefit the Rogue Valley Food System Network. Featuring all the best local and regional craft beers, 8 hours of foot-tappin' bluegrass music, and delicious BBQ. Join us on June 1st from 12:00pm-8:00pm at RoxyAnn Winery. More information at rvfoodsystem.org/bbb.

Rogue Valley Farm Tour

Your local food co-ops, Ashland Food Co-op and Medford Food Co-op, are organizing the second annual Rogue Valley Farm Tour on Sunday, July 14th from 10:00am-3:00pm. Meet your local farmers and learn about the abundance of our local food system. More information on Facebook [@RogueValleyFarmTour](https://www.facebook.com/RogueValleyFarmTour).

Save the Date!

Annual Meeting & Good Food Festival

Sunday, May 5th

