



## MFC Vendor Profile:

# Cowhorn Vineyard & Garden

by Jimmy Breedlove - Front End Manager



[Cowhorn Vineyard and Garden](#) is a certified Biodynamic farm and winery in the Applegate Valley. If you're not familiar with [biodynamics](#), you are certainly not alone. The lack of awareness surrounding biodynamic farming has led Bill and Barbara Steele, the owners of Cowhorn, to take a relatively drastic step: they are offering guided tours of their vineyard and winery. On a cool, drizzly day in April, I had the opportunity to take one.



Charlsie, the Tasting Room Manager, led the tour. Over the next half hour, my understanding of biodynamic practices began to expand and solidify. The farm as a whole is a living organism. In order to produce high quality wine, all parts need to be healthy and thriving. To this end, Cowhorn uses as few external inputs as possible. This means the soil is rejuvenated through the use of cover crops, grapes are fermented using their natural yeast rather than a commercially available one, and the roads and building foundations are made out of rock that was already on the property.

## From the General Manager:

# Café Update

by Anne Carter - General Manager

Stop in at the co-op any weekday, and you'll see construction activity: contractor trucks, back hoes, front loaders, dump trucks, concrete mixers. They're making steady progress on transforming the vacant annex building into our new café!



The interior framing has been completed and windows installed. The exterior walls have been pushed out and the old siding removed. Plumbing and electrical work started this week. Most of the kitchen equipment has been ordered and/or purchased.

To reduce congestion in the front lot, we've opened up access and made improvements to the back lot. Customers can exit out the back and connect to the Winco lot or access road. There is also additional parking available in the back lot.

We can't wait to introduce you to Medford's first community-owned organic foods café this fall!



From the Board:

## Cooperative Principles #3 & #4

by Debi Boen - Board Member & Board Secretary

The “[cooperative principles](#)” are guidelines by which cooperatives put their values into practice. This month we will discuss Principles #3 and #4.

### **3rd Principle: Member Economic Participation**

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their co-operative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the co-operative. 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 co-operative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the co-operative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

This is how the principle is worded in our existing policy register (the document used by your board for guidance as we govern the business of the Medford Food Co-op). That’s a lot of words; let’s simplify their meaning.

Each member of the Medford Food Co-op has purchased a share in the co-op. Each share costs \$100.00. When you [purchase a share](#), you become an owner. As an owner, your opinion carries

weight; the color palette for our store was a decision made by owners before we opened. Everyone is welcome to shop at Medford Food Co-op, but only owners will be allowed to vote. Owners will vote on directors for the Board of Directors, or any bylaw additions or changes. When an official vote is not required, the voices of owners are actively solicited by your Board of Directors and General Manager. Medford Food Co-op is currently developing our café expansion because our owners overwhelmingly requested that we take this step. *Owners’ shares have the advantage of being a low-cost way for the Co-op to build capital and maintain growth.*

This is my favorite part: consider [Bylaw Section 3.6](#), which reads, in part: “...each ownership unit shall have one and only one vote on each issue submitted to a vote...” An owner may choose to purchase up to 20 shares; MFC has used additional owners loans and/or gifts in our brief history. An owner might choose to purchase multiple shares and/or make a loan or gift to the co-op simply because that owner supports the concept and mission, and wants to help bring those to fruition. This is a wonderful thing; I acknowledge, recognize, and am thankful for such owners. But I am even more thankful for the equity provided through that bylaw. Not every owner will be able to afford multiple shares, or be able to make a significant loan or gift. At Medford Food Co-op, the owner who used a payment plan (\$20.00 down, \$10.00 per month) to purchase one share, has the same vote and the same voice as the owner who purchased 20 shares, made a loan, and threw in a one-time gift just for fun. *Neither of those owners is any more or less necessary than the other* – and both are part of the same club. They are both owners of the Medford Food Co-op.

### **4th Principle: Autonomy and Independence**

Co-operatives 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 co-operative autonomy.

## Planning Meals as Amazing as Your Getaway

by Halle Riddlebarger - Marketing Manager



Summer is finally here! If you’re eager to hit the trails, build a bonfire, and/or stake a tent, we get it. Nothing makes it feel more like summer than a good camping trip. From car camping to backcountry backpacking, the co-op can make your meal around the bonfire or camp stove an experience worth remembering (and repeating).

Car camping will afford you many gourmet luxuries that backpacking will force you to leave behind: the ability to keep food chilled in a cooler for days, the option to bring more food than you could possibly eat, a variety of cooking implements (think cast iron skillets, spatulas, grills, etc), and of course, no need to worry about how much every single thing weighs (looking at you bottle of wine). From fresh ingredients in foil packets to a campsite-provided charcoal grill, an abundance of delicious recipes are out there for all you car campers to discover with just a quick [“campfire recipes” Google search](#).

Backpackers have much more to take into account when planning meals for the trail. To keep the weight of your pack minimal, choose foods with low or no water content. On that same lightweight note, keep cooking implements to just the necessary items: a camp stove and fuel, a couple lightweight pans, and a bowl or plate, cup, and utensils. After a day of climbing mountains with weight on your back, you’re going to want foods that are quick-cooking because you’ll be famished (so skip the brown rice). Meals that can be made by just adding water are ideal. If you can rehydrate your meal without needing to boil water for more than a couple of minutes, you’ll also save fuel (which in turn will save you weight in your pack). And remember: the foods need to be nutrient and calorie dense because you’ll

*P3: member economic participation*



And it isn't a monoculture. In addition to several varieties of wine grapes, Cowhorn grows asparagus, hazelnuts, truffles, and lavender. Pest control is done without "cides". There are no pesticides, herbicides, or fungicides used on the property.

To take care of the occasional fungus, they spray cinnamon oil. Pest control tends to take the form of bears, birds of prey, and fisher cats. This wildlife is encouraged and is an integral part the farm ecology.



And there's so much more to it. Bill makes organic sulfites and uses only the bare minimum necessary to stabilize the wine. Cowhorn's employment practices are also designed to be sustainable. Employees earn a living wage and participate in everything from pouring wine to harvesting to crushing the grapes. There is even a lab in their on site winery so that Barbara can make sure the grapes are doing what they should during fermentation and aging.

At the end of the tour, with all of this information still swirling in my head, I found it best to enjoy the fruits of Cowhorn's labor by unwinding with a flight of wine at the tasting room which was recently [Living Building Challenge](#) certified. I would encourage anyone interested in learning more about biodynamics or wine production to take a tour. More information and pricing can be found online at [cowhornwine.com](http://cowhornwine.com).

# Staff Spotlight

*Get to know the staff!*

## Cassie Stratton

### How long have you been cooperating?

I've been working at the co-op for just over a year.

### What do you do at the co-op?

I work in the Bulk department doing refilling and packaging. I also work in the Front End as a cashier.

### What brought you to the co-op?

I was looking for a job within biking distance from my home. Since I was already an avid shopper, and so passionate about health, cooking, and the environment – it was a great fit!

### What do you like best about your job?

I like the great people I get to interact with. I love being able to help customers with their health and cooking questions, as well as finding out about their lives. The employees are also some of my closest friends.

### Tell us your co-op favorites:

The large variety of fresh, organic, local produce and the Bulk department, which allows me to buy food without the wasted packaging.

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

I've made a lot of connections with people of all walks of life and I've become even better informed on nutrition during this past year at the co-op.

### Tell us something we don't know! (Tell us something about yourself others might not know):

I just started my own cooking business called [Real. Delicious](#). I sell organic, gluten free, soy free, dairy free pre-made meals at the Medford Saturday Grower's Market. It is an eco-conscious business with goals toward zero waste. I've been so happy to put my passions into reality.

### What do you like to do outside of work?

When I'm not riding my bike, I love to west coast swing dance, blues dance, and play recreational volleyball and tennis. I also enjoy going on hikes, swimming in the river, and spending time with family and friends.

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

I grew up in the Rogue Valley. Southern Oregon feels the most like home. I was born in Los Angeles county, and went to college in Spokane, Washington. But I just had to move back home to great weather and beautiful nature.



This principle naturally carries on the discussion of the third principle; Medford Food Co-op is not your typical sole proprietorship or limited partnership business. The cooperative is our membership. The members are, indeed, owners. You control, democratically, what agreements are entered into by MFC. Now, not every agreement will come to a full ownership vote. Your [Board of Directors](#) is elected (by you) to represent your interests and conduct business in your name. This is why it is so important to vote for your directors, and to talk to them on a regular basis. Make your voice heard.

Consider running for the board yourself, or coming to one of the monthly meetings. All board meetings are open to our owners, and there is time set aside at each meeting to hear from those owners who are in attendance. Our [agendas are posted on the MFC website](#) in advance. We typically gather on the [third Monday evening of every month](#).

Purchasing your share in the Medford Food Co-op was just the beginning. [We want to hear your voice; every voice](#). Your board invites you to continue with us on this remarkable journey. MFC owners are a diverse and complicated group – and every one of you matters.

## P4: autonomy and independence

be burning a lot of calories everyday, but you won't have refrigeration, and items need to be low volume because you also don't have tons of room in your pack.

If all of that sounds too tough to tackle on your own, and you're ready to reach for the MREs (meals ready to eat) or the expensive (and sadly disappointing) dehydrated meals sold in outdoor stores, do yourself an enormous favor and keep reading. Planning your own meals will save you money and drastically improve the quality and flavor of your food. The bulk department at your co-op is a great place to start. Not only can you get exactly as much as you need, you can also bring and fill your own containers. You can even fill your small, lightweight containers for backpacking – just weigh them before you fill them and write down the tare weight along with the bulk PLU number on the bin or jar. Explore all the bulk herbs and spices to find flavor profiles you like, and buy as little or as much as you need. If you don't find everything you want in the bulk department, look around the store to discover other items to work into your meal plan.

Remember to keep weight/water content and cook time to a minimum while looking for ingredients. Otherwise, think about planning meals like you normally would: breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks, carbs, proteins, fats, fruits, veggies, herbs, and spices. [Check out our blog on this topic for a list of ingredients available at your co-op, as well as links to recipes and additional information.](#)

Once you decide on your meal plan, come on in to the co-op. We would love to help you find the ingredients you need to plan meals as amazing as your next getaway. We also have some other essential items you can pick up if you need them: Dr. Bronner's

versatile biodegradable castile soaps, just-add-water Essential Wipes, a variety of eco-friendly hand sanitizers, and our new lightweight, bamboo To-Go Ware utensil sets!



## Important Dates

### **Dogs to the Rescue: A Hairy Tale About Climate Solutions**

Monday, July 10th 5:30pm - 6:30pm Outdoors at Medford Food Co-op. A FREE family-friendly puppet show created to empower families and communities to make healthy choices for people and the planet.

### **Cannabis and Food System: A Changing Landscape**

Wednesday, July 19th 6:00pm - 8:00pm Medford Library. The Rogue Valley Food System Network invites you to learn more about the changing role of cannabis in food production through an expert panel presentation.

### **The Oregon Wine Experience**

Monday, August 21st - Sunday, August 27th Bigham Knoll, Jacksonville. A week-long fundraiser for the Asante Children's Miracle Network featuring extraordinary Oregon wines, amazing culinary creations, & one-of-a-kind experiences.

### **Bear Creek Stewardship Day**

Saturday, September 23rd 8:30am-12:00pm Bear Creek Greenway. This clean up event creates a local community based investment in keeping the Bear Creek corridor clean and keeping trash out of the stream. Register for the event at [bearcreekstewards.org](http://bearcreekstewards.org).

### **Board of Directors Meetings**

Third Monday of each month 5:30pm-7:30pm 225 West Main Street. Please check our online calendar for any location and/or time changes. If you are an owner planning to attend a meeting and would like a specific topic to be addressed, please email the General Manager: [gm@medfordfood.coop](mailto:gm@medfordfood.coop).