



## **ARROYO FOOD CO-OP Product Sourcing Guidelines**

### **ARROYO FOOD CO-OP MISSION STATEMENT:**

To engage the ecologically aware hearts, minds and stomachs of our area by offering the most earth-friendly grocery products and services available. To consistently search for better offerings and to support suppliers that are working toward the same goals.

The Arroyo Food Cooperative will differentiate itself in the marketplace by empowering our members with practical product choices, thoughtful education/social opportunities and substantial entrepreneurship encouragement – all with an emphasis on supporting a sustainable local economy and strengthening our community.

### **Product Sourcing Guideline**

The goal of the Arroyo Food Co-op, based on the mission statement above, is to offer the highest level of whole foods and products that meet (and where possible, exceed) the most current standards of safety, quality, and sustainability. The health of the Co-op's member-owners is the top priority of the Co-op, as is the commitment to community and the greater environment. The Co-op will strive to find practical choices that are affordable without compromising quality and health. The Co-op will also encourage and maintain relationships with responsible local producers and manufacturers.

The Product Sourcing Guidelines define the product quality standards that shall be employed by the General Manager and Section Managers of the Arroyo Food Co-op to guide their purchasing decisions. They are to be used in conjunction with the List of Unacceptable Ingredients, Additives, and Agents. These Guidelines will reflect the preferences of the member-owners as well as the changing market, and therefore constitute a flexible document, subject to revision and change as new information and new products become available.

- Selective and Evaluative

Arroyo Food Co-op shall continually develop and review the List of Unacceptable Ingredients, Additives, and Agents, the document that identifies ingredients that are

harmful, questionable, unnecessary and unacceptable. Products containing ingredients from this list that are deemed unacceptable will not be carried by the store.

- Quality and Taste

Arroyo Food Co-op will make quality and taste a top priority when buying food products, whether fresh or packaged. Quality and taste will be the benchmark when applying any other criteria in these Guidelines.

- Local

Arroyo Food Co-op will make it a priority to buy from sources that are closely located. Wherever possible, it will identify each source location, in order to empower our members to buy products that have travelled only short distances. In some cases, *local* may be prioritized over *organic*, as long as the product is sustainably and responsibly produced.

- Organic

Arroyo Food Co-op will make it a priority to choose *certified organic products*. Certification entities such as Oregon Tilth, USDA Certified Organic, Quality Assurance International (QAI), Sustainability In Practice (SIP), and California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF) will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that standards are being maintained. If a local or socially responsible product is preferred, certification may be waived. If *100% organic* is unavailable or does not meet the “Taste and Quality” guideline, a high percentage of *organic ingredients* will be preferred over *natural or conventional*.

- Whole

Arroyo Food Co-op will give priority to products with minimal processing, whole ingredients, and natural sweeteners over processed, artificially sweetened food.

- Sustainable and Low Impact

Arroyo Food Co-op will make it a priority to buy sustainable products: products that come from supportable production, from the ground to delivery to packaging. The products chosen will be those that have the lowest possible environmental impact. Priority will be given to producers that pay attention to the environment, food justice, humane husbandry, and fair practice.

The procurement of fish and seafood will be made with the utmost attention to sustainability, and will be guided by accredited programs such as the Monterey Bay Aquarium’s Fishwise Program. Standards and criteria will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, and sensible decisions will be made with regard to farmed versus wild fish and seafood.

- Knowhere and Sourceable

Arroyo Food Co-op will make every effort to know the source of its products and practices of its suppliers, and convey this information to member-owners. Special diets such as vegetarian, gluten-free, vegan, wheat-free, sugar-free, dairy-free, kosher, low-salt, salt-free, or any other special diets that are identified by the member-owners will be addressed and clearly conveyed on product shelves and in special sections.

- Fair Practice and Social Justice

From the labor of its product suppliers to the labor of its own employees, Arroyo Food Co-op will make every effort to observe and promote social justice. The Co-op will support domestic and/or international Fair Trade certification when available, and review these criteria on a regular basis. The Co-op shall not knowingly sell products from any vendor who engages in unfair labor practices, including but not limited to union busting, paying below minimum wage, engaging in discrimination (based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, or disability) or in other ways treating its workforce and local community in harmful and disrespectful ways.

- Humane and Cruelty-Free

The production of dairy, meat, and poultry sold by the Co-op will be fair and humane and reflect an attitude of responsible and sustainable husbandry. Products will be hormone and antibiotic-free, and meet or exceed the most current standards in quality, responsibility, and safety.

## List of Unacceptable Ingredients, Additives, and Agents

Arroyo Food Co-op will not knowingly carry any ingredient in the list below. The following list is partial and based on the research as it stands to date, and should be continually reviewed and expanded to ensure that the Arroyo Food Co-op meets its mission and the Product Sourcing Guidelines. This list is based upon a variety of resources, including the guidelines used by other cooperatives, such as Co-opportunity in Santa Monica, and nutrition books, e.g., *A Consumer's Dictionary of Food Additives* by Ruth Winter.

- Acesulfame-K (acesulfame-potassium)
- Aceetylated esters of mono- and diglycerides
- Ammonium chloride
- Artificial colors
- Artificial flavors
- Artificial sweeteners
- Aspartame
- Azodicarbonamide
- Benzoates in food
- Benzoyl peroxide
- BHA (butylated hydroxyanisole)
- BHT (butylated hydroxytoluene)
- Bleached flour
- Bromated flour
- Brominated vegetable oil (BVO)
- BST (bovine somatotropin)
- Butane glycol
- Calcium bromate
- Calcium disodium EDTA
- Calcium peroxide
- Calcium propionate
- Calcium saccharin
- Calcium sorbate
- Calcium stearoyl-2-lactylate
- Camphene
- Caprenin
- Caprocaprylobehenin
- Carmine (cochineal)
- Certified colors
  - Cottonseed oil
  - Cyclamates
  - Cysteine (1-cystine), as an additive in bread
  - DATM Diacetyl tartaric and fatty acid esters of mono and diglycerides
  - Dimethylpolysiloxane
  - Diocetyl sodium sulfosuccinate (DSS)
  - Disodium calcium EDTA

Disodium dihydrogen EDTA  
Disodium guanylate  
Disodium inosinate  
EDTA  
Equal  
Ethyl vanillin  
Ethylene oxide  
Ethyocyquin  
FD&C colors  
Foie gras  
GMP (disodium guanylate)  
Hepta- and hexa- and octa-esters of sucrose  
High-fructose corn syrup  
Hydrogenated oil (fat)  
Hydrogenated vegetable shortening (margarine, Crisco)  
IMP (disodium inosinate)  
Lactylated esters of mono and diglycerides  
Lead soldered cans  
Methyl silicon  
Methylparaben  
Microparticulated whey protein derived fat substitute  
Mocha Mix  
Monosodium glutamate (MSG)  
Nitrates/nitrites  
Natamycin – acceptable in certain cheese products  
Nutrasweet  
Olestra  
Partially hydrogenated oil  
Polydextrose  
Potassium benzoate  
Potassium bisulfate  
Potassium bromate  
Potassium metabisulfite  
Potassium sorbate  
Propionates  
Propyl gallate  
Propylparaben  
Quinine  
rBGH  
Saccharin  
Simplese  
Sodium aluminum phosphate  
Sodium aluminum sulfate  
Sodium benzoate  
Sodium bisulfate  
Sodium diacetate

Sodium glutamate  
Sodium nitrate/nitrite  
Sodium propionate  
Sodium stearoyl-2-lactylate  
Sodium sulfite  
Solvent extracted oils and stand alone single ingredients  
Sorbic acid  
Splenda  
Sucralose  
Sucroglycerides  
Sucrose polyester  
Sulfites (sulfur dioxide)  
Sweet-n-low  
Talc  
TBHQ (tertiary butylhydroquinone)  
Tetrasodium EDTA  
Trans fats  
Vanillin

**In addition, the Arroyo Food Coop will not accept the following:**

Dairy or milk products from cows treated with BGH, rBHG, BST, rBST, and/or any other antibiotics, hormones, and additives in meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy  
GMOs – genetically modified food  
Irradiated foods  
Acetaminophen, Advil, Excedrin, Tylenol, Aspirin  
Tobacco  
Products from cloned animals and their offspring  
Products from multi-level marketing companies