



# MEMBERSHIP HANDBOOK

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2017

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## **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

### **WELCOME**

Thank you for your interest in becoming a member of the Cloverbelt Local Food Co-op (CLFC)! In this handbook, you'll find everything you need to know about being a CLFC member and using our website. If you can't find what you're looking for here, please feel free to contact the Co-op anytime with any comments, suggestions, or concerns. We want to make the Cloverbelt Local Food Co-op a lasting, vibrant component of our community.

### **OUR MISSION AND VISION**

The Cloverbelt Local Food Co-operative aims to strengthen food security by encouraging diverse local food production, thereby enhancing overall rural sustainability.

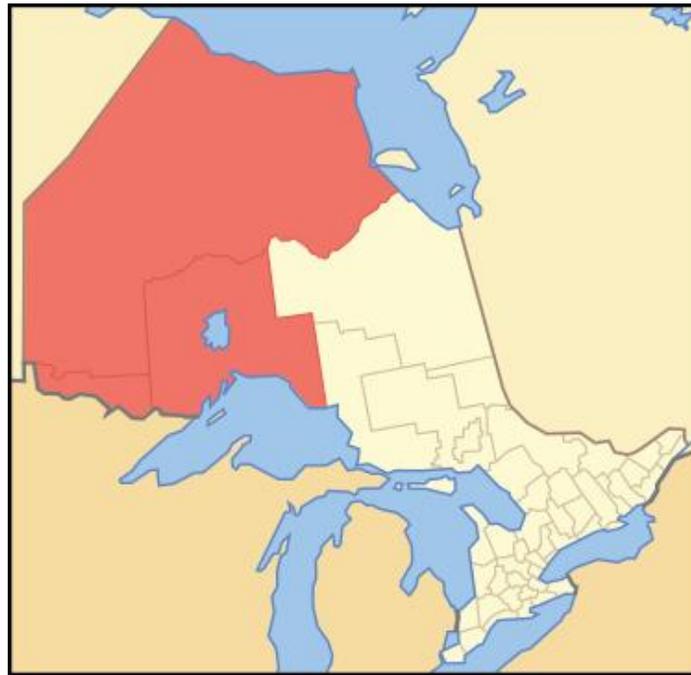
Our vision is to become the central hub for production and distribution of local goods in Northwestern Ontario.

We strive to foster a thriving local food community by:

- cultivating & facilitating farmer-consumer relationships
- promoting the enjoyment of naturally grown, fairly priced, healthy food, and
- providing education & resources regarding environmentally sensitive agriculture.

Our success depends on the ongoing, vibrant support of our general membership and the continued ingenuity of our producer members and supporting and feeding our community.

## WHAT DOES ‘LOCAL’ MEAN TO US?



CLFC catchment area (in red)

The Cloverbelt Local Food Co-op primarily serves producers and residents of Northwestern Ontario (NWO). We offer delivery of local products to our hubs in Dryden, Ignace, Sioux Lookout, Kenora, and Upsala.

All products sold on the Cloverbelt Local Food Co-op site must meet our definitions of a locally grown and or/processed product or will require board approval prior to posting. Product descriptions for items listed on the site must indicate whether products are 100% local, partially local, an Ontario product, or a Manitoba product as defined below:

- **“100% Local”** products contain 100% local ingredients. Local products are grown, raised, produced and/or processed within the NWO region.
- **“Partially Local”** products contain some local and some non-local ingredients.
  - Foods grown outside our region, but processed locally fall into this category (e.g. peaches purchased at a grocery store and preserved locally as jam).
  - Foods grown locally but processed outside our region also fall into this category (e.g. beef locally produced but processed into sausages outside our region).
- **“Ontario Products”** are produced in Ontario but outside NWO. Items for sale under this category must not be readily available locally, and require board approval.
- **“Manitoba Products”** are produced in Manitoba. Items for sale in this category must not be readily available locally, and require board approval.

Items that do not fit any of the above descriptions will require board approval.

## CONTACTING CLFC

The best way to contact us is by e-mail!

- **General inquiries:** [info@cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com](mailto:info@cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com)
- Questions about **ordering?** [info@cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com](mailto:info@cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com)
- Questions about **your payment?** [membership@cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com](mailto:membership@cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com)
- Questions about **membership?** [membership@cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com](mailto:membership@cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com)
- Questions about the **website?** [webmaster@cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com](mailto:webmaster@cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com)

### **Mailing address:**

Cloverbelt Local Food Co-op  
c/o PACE  
PO Box 668  
Dryden, ON P8N 2Z3

## MEMBERSHIP BASICS

**The Cloverbelt Local Food Co-op provides a marketplace to bring together our members: willing buyers and sellers of local food products.**

- **CLFC acts as an agent for producer members** by providing an online avenue to offer their products for sale to CLFC consumer members. CLFC receives orders, helps facilitate delivery, and processes payments. CLFC facilitates both farm-gate sales and off-farm sales.
- **CLFC acts as an agent for customer members.** CLFC provides an online catalogue of available local food products, including information about how and where products were grown or processed. CLFC receives consumer orders and notifies the appropriate producers, arranges delivery, and receives and processes payment.
- **For both producer and consumer members,** CLFC screens products and producers based on published parameters, as well as provides education and training on the benefits of local foods the core values of the Co-op.

The Co-op never has title to any of the products that go through our distribution system. All products are owned either by the producer, or by the consumer who purchases “title” to them from the producer.

## MEMBERSHIP GUIDELINES

These following membership procedures have been established to benefit all Co-op members. The long-term sustainability of the Co-op relies on all members understanding and complying with these procedures.

1. Your membership fee is your equity in the Co-op. This is a one-time fee that provides the member with a lifetime membership to the Co-op. Membership fees are vital and cover our capital expenditures. As a non-profit organization, all CLFC activities are directed toward serving our members and making our communities richer, healthier and sustainable. As such, membership fees are not refundable.
2. Membership in the Co-op is open to customers, organizations who support our mandate, and producers of local food products authorized by the CLFC’s Board of Directors. Any person shall be eligible to become a member of the association regardless of race, gender, ability, sexual orientation or gender identity, religion, income, marital status, culture or nationality.
3. As a member, you are a part-owner of our operation. As such, you are encouraged to volunteer on a delivery day at least once during your first 6 months of membership to better understand our policies and how they help us operate efficiently.
4. The CLFC offers three types of memberships: Producer, Consumer and Organizational.

- a. Producer members offer local items for sale and may also purchase items from other Producer members. Producer members are also able to access the wholesale section of the website in order to sell and purchase products in bulk.
  - b. Consumer members are able to purchase items listed for sale by Producer members.
  - c. Organizational members are institutions or organizations such as restaurants and schools. This type of membership allows members to purchase products in wholesale volume. Organizational members can also become producer members without paying additional membership fees. These members are entitled to the same voting rights as Producer and Consumer members (one vote per organization). By becoming a member, you are stating that you support our mandate, and you will be acknowledged on our website as a community supporter.
5. Each member is entitled to make purchases from CLFC on terms available to members. Producer, Consumer & Organizational members participate in the governance of the Co-op, and are entitled voting rights at general member meetings.
  6. **Consumer members must place a minimum of two orders annually, and producer members must post inventory a minimum of once annually** to demonstrate a continued interest in our local food network and retain current membership status.
  7. Members may be expelled for cause from the Co-op by 2/3 votes of the Board of Directors, acting upon the recommendations of the CLFC manager. Expulsions may be appealed to the Board of Directors. Cause for expulsion include illegal activity, fraudulent affidavits regarding the origin or production practices of products sold through the Co-op, repeated failure to pay bills, and prolonged and egregious inability or unwillingness to follow Co-op standard operating procedures.
  8. Please make sure that the Co-op has your current contact information. We encourage you to provide us with your cell phone number so we can contact you directly on delivery day in the event of a problem. Contact information can be updated manually on the Member Panel once you login to the website. You can also send information about changes in contact information to [info@cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com](mailto:info@cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com).
  9. As a non-profit co-op, CLFC is obligated to host an Annual General Meeting (AGM) where we must report our audited annual financial statement to our members, elect members to our Board of Directors, and receive member input to make any major changes to the operation of our organization. Your attendance (or that of a representative of your household or farm/organization) at our AGM is important for the continued viability of our organization.

## THE WEEKLY ORDER & DELIVERY CYCLE

**The Cloverbelt Local Food Co-Op runs on a weekly order and delivery cycle. Please be aware of the key days and times of this cycle — members' understanding of and adherence to this schedule is crucial to the successful operation of the Co-Op.**

**\*\*Please read this section carefully\*\***

The weekly order and delivery cycle means that CLFC produce is available at set times each week and varies week to week according to season and availability. The weekly cycle offers many benefits:

- It allows us to readily distribute fresh product on behalf of multiple producers in one day, reducing production overhead;
- It eliminates the need for storage and physical inventory, thereby lowering Co-op overhead costs;
- It minimizes Co-op staff hours by facilitating distribution over one day;
- It reduces interference with farmers' markets, allowing us to complement rather than compete with them.

## HOW THE CYCLE WORKS

**Consumer members** pick up their orders on **Tuesday**. Consumers in Dryden are able to place orders weekly. Our external hub locations, Ignace, Sioux Lookout, Kenora, and Upsala, are able to order monthly with pick up on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month. (See the table on page 10 for specific pickup times for each community.) Here's how the order cycle works:

- **5 PM Thursday:** This is the deadline for **Producer members** to post **new products** to the website for the following Tuesday delivery day.
- **1 PM Saturday:** This is the deadline for **Producer members** to update quantities and prices of **existing products** listed on the website for the following Tuesday delivery day.
- **2 PM Saturday:** The Order Cycle opens — members can begin shopping! The Co-op coordinator will circulate an e-mail to all members announcing that sales are open and providing an update of items available for the upcoming week.
- **2 PM Saturday–10 AM Monday:** **Co-op Consumer members** can shop and place their orders.
- **10 AM Monday:** The order cycle closes. All products in **Customer member** shopping baskets will be considered purchased. Staff work to check out baskets to make sales final in the system. **Producer members are then able to review** their sales for the week. Consumer members can prepay for their orders via e-mail transfer or pay by cheque when picking up orders on Tuesday.

- **10 AM Monday–2 PM Tuesday: Producer members** harvest and package product for delivery.
- **2–3 PM Tuesday (2:45 on hub week): Producer members** deliver product to the drop-off site at the Dryden District Agricultural Society Fairgrounds (Producers OUTSIDE of the Dryden area who are unable to drop off orders at the Agricultural Society must make other arrangements). **CLFC will pay Producer members their total earnings**, minus the Co-op handling fee, as long as the Co-op has the resources to pay immediately upfront. If not, payment will be made by the next Tuesday after all customer payments have been received.
- **3–4 PM Tuesday:** CLFC staff and volunteers sort products and assemble customer orders.
- **4–6 PM Tuesday: Consumer members** pick up their orders. Members who have not prepaid for their orders must pay for them in full.
- **Thursday evening:** The process starts all over again!

### WEEKLY TIMELINE

| Weekly Operation                                    | Wednesday          | Thursday | Friday | Saturday                   | Sunday | Monday AM | Monday PM | Tuesday PM   |
|---|--------------------|----------|--------|----------------------------|--------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| Producers register new products                     | by Thursday at 5pm |          |        |                            |        |           |           |              |
| Producers update current inventory                  | by Saturday at 1pm |          |        |                            |        |           |           |              |
| Customers order                                     |                    |          |        | 2pm Saturday – 10am Monday |        |           |           |              |
| CLFC processes invoices and producers prepare items |                    |          |        |                            |        |           |           |              |
| Order Pick-up and delivery                          |                    |          |        |                            |        |           |           | Pick Up Day! |

### TUESDAY DELIVERY TIMELINE

| Delivery Day (Times are in CST unless otherwise specified)     |                         |                         |          |             |         |  |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------|-------------|---------|--|
| Producers drop off product                                     | 2-3pm (2:45 on hub day) |                         |          |             |         |  |
| CLFC staff & volunteers sort product                           | 2-4pm                   |                         |          |             |         |  |
| Product going to other hubs leaves Dryden via delivery drivers |                         | departs 3pm from Dryden |          |             |         |  |
| Dryden consumers pick up product                               |                         | 4-6pm                   |          |             |         |  |
| Ignace consumers pick up product                               |                         |                         | 4:30-6pm |             |         |  |
| Sioux Lookout consumers pick up product                        |                         |                         |          | 5-6pm       |         |  |
| Kenora consumers pick up product                               |                         |                         |          | 5:30-6:30pm |         |  |
| Upsala consumers pick up product                               |                         |                         |          |             | 6pm EST |  |

## FOR CONSUMER MEMBERS

### CONSUMER MEMBER TERMS OF SERVICE

Our system works because we, the member-owners of Cloverbelt Local Food Co-op (CLFC), take pride in and responsibility for making it work. Every member is expected to abide by the following terms of service.

1. **Each order is a legally enforceable contract to pick up and pay for the products ordered.** You are obligated to pay for the items you order, even if you do not pick them up, unless they are delivered to you damaged or broken. Everything in your online shopping basket when the weekly order closes is an order for those products. The Co-op's software does not have a check-out process so the items in your basket when the cycle closes are considered purchased. When you place something in your shopping cart, it stays there until you remove it. You can remove or add items up to the close of the weekly order.
2. **Please pick up your order during the time specified.** This is part of our contract. We are unable to hold orders past operating hours. It is your responsibility to know what hours the pick-up site is open. This information is on your invoice. If you cannot pick up your order yourself, please arrange to have your order picked up by someone else. You can contact us for suggestions of members who may like to share in picking up orders.

We understand that emergencies happen and that members may occasionally be unable to pick up their orders on delivery day. If this happens to you, please call us as soon as possible. The earlier we know about a situation, the better we will be able to deal with it. If you need to contact us to make arrangements before Tuesday afternoon, please call us at the PACE office at 221-3293 ext. 26. If you need to reach us after noon on Tuesday, please call us at the Dryden District Agricultural Society building at 223-6766.

3. **All orders must be paid in full before they leave the pickup site.** Members paying via email transfer must pay before coming to pick up their groceries. Please bring a copy of the email transfer receipt with you to the pickup site as proof of payment (a screenshot on your phone would also suffice). Other members are expected to pay by cheque. Please make all cheques payable to "Cloverbelt Local Food Co-op".
4. **When you pick up your order, make sure you received all the items you ordered.** Check your invoice thoroughly. If you notice an item is missing once you take your order home, email [info@cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com](mailto:info@cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com) and we will work to correct the mistake.
5. **Treat the Co-op volunteers well.** As a non-profit entity, the Cloverbelt Local Food Co-op has a limited number of employees to keep costs down. Our volunteers invest their time and effort in the growing future of this Co-operative. Please do not complain to delivery day volunteers or blame them for errors on your order. Volunteers have no control over what the producers do. If you have a concern about a producer, please bring it to the attention of the

producer. If you have an issue with the Co-operative, bring it to the attention of the staff, or email the CLFC at [info@cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com](mailto:info@cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com). Mistreatment of volunteers is a serious breach of Co-op ethics.

6. **If you have a complaint, please bring it to the attention of CLFC staff via email at [info@cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com](mailto:info@cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com).** We will refer customer complaints or requests for refunds or return of merchandise directly to the responsible producer. In the event of an unresolved dispute between a customer and a producer or CLFC, the matter will be referred to the arbitration committee, which is comprised of one customer, one producer, and one CLFC director (who acts as the chair). Disputes over items over \$50 in value will be referred to the Board of Directors.

## HOW TO BECOME A MEMBER

To become a consumer member with CLFC, follow these easy steps:

1. Visit our site, [www.cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com](http://www.cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com) and click 'Join' on the top menu of the main page.
2. A new page will open for you to fill in your contact information.
  - You must have an active email address to sign up with the Co-op.
  - Please provide us with your home phone and cell phone number (if you have one). This information is important for both CLFC staff and producers to be able to contact you if there are issues with your order or if we need to contact you on pick up day for any reason.
3. Choose a USERNAME and PASSWORD that you will remember. Please save this information.
4. Choose a consumer membership from the dropdown menu.
5. Tell us how you heard about us, and agree to the Terms of Service once you have reviewed them.
6. Click submit. If you have made any mistakes, you will receive a message at the top of your page alerting you to any changes you need to make or information that is missing. Your successful application will be submitted to the system and you will be able to begin shopping with us!

Your membership fee can be paid by EMT or cheque to CLFC when you sign up. If you are shopping immediately after signing up for a membership, your fees can be paid with your order. Payment information is outlined below in the "How to Place an Order" section.

For more detailed instructions on how to become a member, you can find a **helpful tutorial video** on our website under our Resources page or by clicking [here](#).

## HOW TO LOG ON TO THE CLFC SYSTEM

Once you have become a member, logging on to our system is simple:

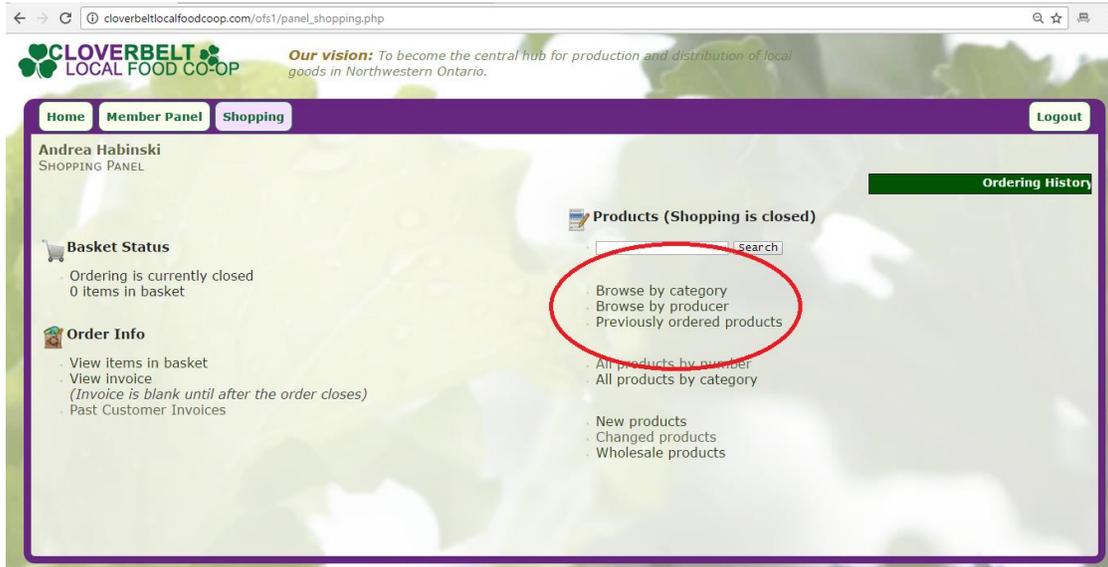
1. Go to [www.cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com](http://www.cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com) (we suggest you bookmark this site).
2. Click on MEMBER LOGIN.
3. Sign in with your USERNAME and PASSWORD. Please note that both your USERNAME and PASSWORD are case sensitive.
  - If you have lost your USERNAME, please email [info@cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com](mailto:info@cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com) and ask for your info again.
  - If you have forgotten your password, you can reset it by following the PASSWORD RESET LINK on the log-in page.

## HOW TO PLACE AN ORDER

The website is open for shopping each week from Saturday afternoon at 2 PM to Monday morning at 10 PM.

You can visit the Resources page on our website for a [video tutorial](#) on how to shop with us or you can follow the easy steps below to learn how to shop on our website:

1. Log in to the website (see above). If you haven't already started an order, you will have to **choose a delivery location for pick up**. This can be found from a drop down menu on the top left of the Shopping page.
2. Click the **SHOPPING** button on the menu bar to browse available products. You can choose to browse by category or producer, search for keywords, or view all products.



3. To purchase an item, click **ADD TO BASKET** to the left of the item. You can view your basket anytime by clicking **VIEW BASKET**.

| 5 Lg Smokies per package  |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| Meats — Pork  |   |   |  |
| <br>+ in basket    | <br>Approx 1lb packages! | <b>#2327 – Smoked Farm Bacon</b><br>11 more packages available. Order number of packages.<br>Smoked farm bacon. Nice thick cut. | All Natural<br><b>FROZ</b><br>\$7.88/package |
| Just packaged, frozen and ready for you to enjoy! Need room in the freezer so sale pricing for you! |   |   |  |
| <br>Add to basket  | <br>Approx 1.5-2 lbs     | <b>#2511 – Bacon Ends</b><br>7 more Packages available. Order number of Packages.   | All Natural<br><b>FROZ</b><br>\$5.78/Package |

- a. When you do this, the system adds **ONE** of the items you have selected to your cart. If the item will not add to your basket, you have not selected a pick-up location.
  - b. You can purchase more than one of an individual product, if available, by clicking on the plus sign (+) to increase your order to the desired amount.
  - c. **To remove a product** from your basket, go to your basket (found at the top right of the screen) and open it. Remove the items individually by hitting the MINUS (-) button.
  - d. **To edit your order (add or subtract items, or change quantities)**, log in to the online ordering page and click on VIEW BASKET. You can edit your weekly order up until 10:00 AM Monday.
4. **Anything in your shopping cart at 10 AM Monday morning, the time the order cycle closes, is considered an order for that product. We do not have a “check out” or “send order” page/process.**
  5. **You can pay for your order in advance or when you pick up your products.** All orders include a Co-op shipping/handling/transportation charge of 10%. Any applicable sales tax is included in product prices and will not be extra on your invoice.
    - a. To pay in advance, view your finalized invoice in your SHOP area. Your final invoice will not be ready until Tuesday morning. Pay via Interac E-Transfer to **membership@cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com**. Please show us your receipt on your smart phone or print your receipt and bring it with you when you pick up your order.
    - b. Alternatively, you can choose to pay by cheque at time of pick-up or delivery. **We do not accept cash for orders over \$20. We also do not accept cash at any of our hub locations.**

## FOR PRODUCER MEMBERS

### PRODUCER MEMBERS TERMS OF SERVICE

***Producer members of the Co-op are required to follow all CLFC procedures. Before applying, please read through the following Terms of Service to ensure that you understand the unique way that Cloverbelt Local Food Co-op works with you to market your products.***

1. **Producer members must have a valid, working e-mail address.** The CLFC uses e-mail to contact all members for on-going Co-op business. Please ensure that we have your current contact information — especially your e-mail address — on file at all times.

When you join the co-op, you will be assigned a **user name and password** so you can access the members-only pages of our website. You will also be assigned a **member number**. Please retain this information: you'll need it to log in to the online system.

2. Producer members are responsible for **knowing and complying with all appropriate Province of Ontario regulations, licenses, or certificates required for producing and selling their products** (e.g., Health Department inspection for a kitchen, organic certification number, etc.). Producer members must also comply with any relevant health codes or agricultural laws regarding direct sales of farm and food products to the public.
3. **Products must meet the CLFC's standards for "local production"** (see page 4). New products must be reviewed by CLFC staff/volunteers to help ensure adherence to the standards, as well as adherence to our standards. Products that do not meet our local criteria may be removed from the public price lists of the Co-op.
4. Producers market their own products by uploading information to the CLFC website about each product they have available for sale. **The Co-op staff are not responsible for entering producer products into our database.** Staff will approve new listings each Friday afternoon before the order cycle for that weekend opens.
5. **Producers set their own prices, and receive the price they set for their products, less the Co-op's shipping and handling fee for producers (currently 5%).** The Co-op's fees are reviewed regularly and are subject to change in order to reflect costs.
6. **The Co-op aims to pay producers on delivery day, or within seven days of delivery day,** unless there are missing items or an unresolved discrepancy in the payment amount, as long as the Co-op has the working capital to do this.
7. **CLFC reserves the right to refuse products that customers did not order, which are spoiled or contaminated, or otherwise not acceptable.**

8. **Any customer complaints or requests for refunds or return of merchandise will be referred directly to the responsible producer and copied to the Cloverbelt Local Food Co-op.** In the event of a dispute between a producer and a consumer, the matter shall be referred to an arbitration committee. One member shall be appointed by the customer, one by the producer, and one by CLFC. In the event the dispute is between the producer or the customer and the CLFC, a similar procedure shall be used. The producer or consumer will appoint a member, the Co-op will appoint a member, and the two chosen arbitrators will then together choose a third person.

## HOW TO BECOME A PRODUCER

Join the Co-op at [www.cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com](http://www.cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com). There are instructions in the consumer members section detailing how to sign up for a membership. Follow these instructions, but choose a producer membership from the dropdown menu.

1. After your membership is active, fill out the online Producer Application. Every potential producer must complete this application providing information on their location, products, livestock, and practices. All producer applications are subject to review by CLFC for adherence to these standards.
2. Your application automatically goes to the Co-op staff, who will review your application and contact you with any questions. The staff may ask for more information, and may visit your farm or business before approving your application.

As part of the application process, you or a representative of your farm or business is encouraged to volunteer at one delivery day within the first six months after your membership is approved. This enables you to take ownership of being a member of the CLFC and have a greater understanding of how the Cloverbelt Local Food Co-op functions. We are volunteer run, and volunteering is a great way to support us!

The approval process can take up to 4 weeks to complete. If you are not accepted as a producer member and do not wish to purchase products through the co-op, at your request we will cancel your membership and refund your membership payment.

3. By submitting an application to become a producer, you agree to our Terms of Service and Producer Standards.

## **FOOD PRODUCT QUALITY STANDARDS**

1. Producers may only sell products they themselves have grown, crafted, or processed in Northwestern Ontario (NWO). For example:
  - Members cannot buy wholesale from someone else and then retail through our service, unless they are buying ingredients for processed foods.
  - If ingredients are bought, value must be added to the product by the producer. Simply repackaging the ingredients does not add value. For example, you can sell tomatoes that you grow, but not tomatoes that you buy from somebody else to sell. You can, however, buy tomatoes from someone, make salsa from them, and sell that through our Co-op.
  - You cannot buy an animal from someone else, and then have it butchered and sold through the Co-op as though it was your own product.
  - You can buy flour or cornmeal and make bread or tortillas to sell, but you can't buy bread from someone else and sell it through the Co-operative.
2. CLFC encourages the use of local ingredients whenever possible.
3. Customer members of the Cloverbelt Local Food Co-op are interested in local foods produced with sustainable practices that show good stewardship of the environment. Consequently, they have a preference for organically or naturally produced foods that originate in NWO, and will be much more likely to buy these foods, which they regard as superior to the foods offered by supermarkets. When ingredients cannot be sourced locally, we encourage producers to seek out products grown using sustainable farming methods and fair trade and labour practices. We ask that you avoid Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) ingredients and Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) meats, poultry, eggs and derivatives from them whenever possible, as many of our consumers find these conventional farming practices objectionable.
4. In an effort to further support our producers, and to incorporate local ingredients in processed products sold through CLFC, producers are given access to wholesale listings where they can purchase bulk items from other producers.
5. Meats to be sold through the Co-op must be processed in a licensed and inspected plant. Any meat packages brought to delivery day stamped "not for sale" will be returned to the producer.
6. Processed and prepared foods that are offered for sale must be submitted with a complete list of ingredients. Ingredients that originate in NWO must be noted. The producer should provide a statement regarding processing practices. The list of ingredients must be included in the product description displayed at the Co-op's website.

## **NON-FOOD PRODUCT STANDARDS**

1. Non-food items that can be sold through the Co-op include useful and aesthetic items for the home, garden, or business, such as clothing, health and body-care items, written materials, scented products, decorations, pet and agricultural products, art, jewelry, photography, music and media. Business or personal services may not be offered through the Co-op except for classes/seminars.
2. Producers may sell only nonfood products that fit within our defined definition of local (see page 4).
3. Producers cannot purchase finished products (wholesale or retail) and sell those products through our service.
4. A producer may purchase a variety of raw materials and components to create a non-food item. Producers must add significant value to those materials. Repackaging purchased materials and components does not constitute adding value.
5. Producers are encouraged to avoid animal products from Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) whenever possible and to include the item's CAFO status in its description.
6. We encourage non-food producers to use materials originating in Northwestern Ontario wherever possible.
7. For non-food items weighing more than 25 pounds, or that are larger than 1 cubic yard, the producer must arrange delivery with buyer, and the product description must include the method of delivery.
8. Producers are responsible for their own packaging. Fragile items must be packaged appropriately. All non-food items must be packaged so that they do not damage, scent, or affect other products, and are protected from damage, including but not limited to moisture. The Co-op may reject any improperly packaged items at check-in. The Co-op will not assume liability for products damaged or broken through delivery.
9. Producers may not sell items that are illegal or that advocate illegal activity, nor may they mention illegal or advocate illegal activity in their listings.
10. Producers must disclose all potential allergens or other harmful substances in non-food items for sale.
11. Non-food producers warrant that their products meet all legal, regulatory, and labelling standards.

## HOW TO LIST YOUR PRODUCTS ONLINE

As a Producer member, **you are responsible for entering information for your products.** If you are unable to use the Internet, or are having troubles posting your products, please contact the Co-op to receive volunteer assistance with uploading your products. You can also find [helpful tutorial videos](#) on our website under our Resources page or on how to use the site as a producer.

You have many opportunities to market your products to and share your story with CLFC customers. Each producer has a web page on the CLFC site to introduce themselves and tell the story of their farming operations and their products.

Many of our customers are looking grass-fed and ethically produced meats, free-range eggs, produce grown without the use of herbicides or pesticides, and other sustainably or naturally raised products. We encourage you to let customers know how you try to keep your farming practices sustainable and natural.

To offer your product for sale through the co-op, you need to tell us everything a customer needs to know in order to make an informed decision about your product. When you enter your products online, you will be prompted for the relevant information.

Follow these easy steps to list new products on the CLFC website:

1. Login to the website and click on the PRODUCER PANEL tab
2. Scroll to the bottom of the page and click “Add A New Product” which will bring up a new screen.
3. For the system to add a new product, all of the following fields need to be filled out:
  - **Listing type:** choose which consumers (retail or wholesale) can purchase the product. Wholesale listings are reserved for listing with a bulk quantity/discount and only other Producer or Organizational members can view these product listings. At a later time, this active listing can also be deactivated by unlisting or archiving the listing which will prevent consumers from seeing the listing. Unlisted or archived listings can be relisted at any time.
  - **Tangible:** Please always keep this item checked when creating a new product. If this item is unchecked, it will not show up properly on our records and it may be difficult get your product to the correct consumer.
  - **Product Name.** Give your product a name
  - **Product Details.** This is a basic description of the product. If the approximate size, weight, or contents are not clear from the name of the product, list those details here. If it is a processed item, include a list of ingredients and distinguish local ingredients (and/or

estimate the content percentage of local ingredients). If it is a package of several items, the approximate (or exact, whichever the case may be) number of items in the package should be listed. You can also describe the production practices and location of production for the product here.

All products sold by the Cloverbelt Local Food Co-op must be **locally grown and/or processed**. Posted product descriptions will indicate whether they are local, partially local, an Ontario product, or Manitoba product. Please see our standards for local under the “What Local Means to Us” section on page 4.

- **Category or Subcategory.** This feature enables consumers to search for specific products. If we do not have an existing category and/or subcategory that fits your product, please give us guidance on how the product would be categorized.
- **Inventory Rate/ Name.** Our system has an inventory feature which allows you to limit the amount of product that can sell at one time to keep consumers from over-purchasing a product. You do not have to create a new inventory unit every time you make a new listing, but this is what links your inventory to the product listing. If you would like inventory to be pulled from other listings for multiple products, then you can choose an existing inventory category from the drop down menu. You also need to choose the amount of product that each purchase will pull from inventory (the unit). For example, if you list carrots by the bag, then you will tell the system to pull 1 unit from inventory. Therefore, one purchase will pull 1 unit from inventory and the consumer will receive 1 bag of carrots. If you do not choose to use inventory and leave it as ‘Do Not Use Any Inventory’, consumers can buy an unlimited amount of the product.
- **Price/ Pricing Unit/ Ordering Unit.** You are only able to enter a price in the Co-op Price section. The system will then automatically generate the Producer and Retail prices from this price. The Co-op price should be entered as the regular retail price for that item. For example, if you sell eggs at the Farmer’s Market for \$4.00 per dozen, this will be entered as the Co-op price. The system will then automatically set the Producer price at \$3.80 (what the producer gets paid) and a retail price of \$4.40 (what the consumer pays). Producers should not alter the Co-op price of the product to receive their normal full retail payment. You will then need to assign a pricing as well as ordering unit. Examples of these units include “pound,” “bag,” “package,” or “unit” — essentially, whatever comes after the “per” in the \$ per \_\_\_\_\_. The ordering unit is generally the same as the pricing unit; that is, when the customer orders, they will order XX number of pounds, bags, packages, units, etc.
  - Example 1: You are selling a 5-pound bag of flour for \$10. The price is \$10. The pricing unit is “5-pound bag.” The ordering unit is also “5-pound bag,” because the customer orders by the number of 5-pound bags they want to order. This item is not considered random weight because the bags always weigh the same and the customer knows the final price when it is ordered. Note that in this example the flour ends up costing \$2/pound. You would not, however, list it as \$2/pound because you are only selling 5-pound bags that cost \$10.

- Example 2: You are selling packages of steaks. The package varies in weight from a little under 2 pounds to a little over 2 pounds. However, you always charge \$6 per package. In this case, price is \$6, the pricing unit is “package,” and the ordering unit is “package.” This is not a random weight package because the customer knows the weight in advance.
- Example 3: You are selling tomatoes at \$3/lb. The customer can order by the pound. If the customer orders 3 pounds, you have decided that you will always provide a minimum of 3 pounds, but will not charge for exact weight but instead charge for weight ordered. So if the customer orders 3 pounds and you end up giving them 3.1 pounds you still only charge \$9. In this case, the price is \$3, the pricing unit is “pound,” and the ordering unit is “pound.” This is not a random weight product because the customer can determine what the price will be in advance.
- **Random Weight.** This function is especially useful for meat products such as steaks, roasts, chicken breasts, etc. that are hard to package at a consistent weight and are usually priced on a per weight basis. If you were charging for pre-weighed 1lb packages of hamburger, however, you would not use this function. The default for this section is not to assign a random weight for the item. If you would like to charge for an item by weight, then you would change this to ‘Yes’ to activate the function. You will then need to indicate a minimum and maximum weight so that consumers have an idea of the size of the item they are buying. This also helps the system to generate an estimated cost so consumers have a rough idea of what the item will cost them. Please do not set min. and max. weights with large differences (eg. use 0.5kg – 1.0kg and not 2lb – 15lb) as consumers may be willing to pay for a 1kg package of chicken breast but not a 3kg package. You can then choose a Meat Weight Type as it pertains to the product.

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE\*\*** If you decide to charge on a random weight basis, you **MUST** entre meat weights for consumer invoices. Once the cycle has closed on Monday morning and baskets are checked out, you can begin to entre meat weights. Once a meat weight is entered on an invoice, you must ensure that each consumer receives the product they have been charged for by correctly attaching consumer labels to the items. Please do not begin to entre meat weights until after baskets are checked out and make sure that they are entered before midnight on Monday. If weights are entered outside of this window, it creates issues in our system that need correction. If weights are entered too early or late, please bring it to the attention of staff immediately so it can be correct.

- **Product & Storage Type.** This is how you can convey to consumers how your product is produced and how it should be stored. Storage type will also appear on the label that the system generates which will aid CLFC to properly store items before pick-up. For this reason, please ensure that storage type also matches how the product will arrive to distribution. If we receive a product that isn’t properly categorized, it may be stored improperly during sorting and pick-up which could lead to spoilage or consumers being unhappy with the state of the products they receive.

- Once you have clicked to add the product, as long as you have made no mistakes, the product will be added to the system. If you have made mistakes, a notification will appear at the top of the screen and alert you to how to correct the mistake. Staff will then look over the new listings to make sure that they have been created correctly and that the products meet our standards before they are approved and are available on the site.
4. **Add a photo of your product!** Experience shows that items with pictures are much more likely to be sold. Please take photos of your actual product so consumers know what to expect. After you have submitted your product info for an item, the system will take you to your own Product List. You can also access this page from your Producer Panel and clicking on ‘Listed Retail’ or ‘Listed Wholesale’, depending on where you listed your product. There will be a list of options to the left of the product including ‘Set Image’. Click here to add an image to your product listing. Find your image on your computer, ensuring that the image is in .jpg or .swf or .gif format and no larger than 11K. Then click ‘Upload’. The image with the check mark will be the image that appears for that product.
  5. **Add inventory to your product.** Your confirmed listing will not be visible to consumers until you add inventory (if you have chosen to require inventory in your listing). To add inventory, use the options list beside your products on the Listed Retail/Wholesale section of the Producer Panel. If you have 10 units for sale, you can set the inventory control at 10. Once 10 items have been sold, no more orders will be taken for that product. If a customer changes their mind and deletes their order for that product, the system will reset to allow the unsold product to be sold.

**Inventory can be updated throughout the order cycle.** If your product sells out early in the order cycle and would like to make more available for sale, you can update inventory to allow more consumers to purchase the product. Inventory must be updated for active listings before the cycle opens on Saturday.

A few other things to consider:

- **Out of Stock, Unlisting or Editing a Product.** If you are only out of stock of an item for a short period of time, but intend to sell it again in the near future, you do not need to unlist the product listing. Simply leave the item with 0 inventory until you have new stock. This will keep it from being visible to consumers but in your active list of products. If you are no longer selling a product, the product listing cannot be deleted from the database. Instead, you can simply mark the product as unlisted or archived so it will not be displayed. To edit your product information, go to your Producer Panel page to click on your Listed or Unlisted products. This will take you to your own listing for products, with an “Edit” feature next to each product you have entered into the system.
- **Unlisting Yourself.** If you choose not to list any of your products on the website for a given order cycle, you can easily remove yourself from the active list of producers by clicking to be Unlisted on your Producer Panel. The advantage of this is that you do not have to empty inventory for all of your products. When you relist yourself, all of your inventory will be the same as it was before you were unlisted and you will be back to being active on the site.

- **Producers may not use ALL CAPS, bold, italics, or programming techniques** that cause the words to jump back and forth or blink. If all producers used such “decorations”, our pages become almost unreadable.
- **You can advertise pre-orders through our website!** For example, meat producers may take orders for meat in advance of the actual dates the animals will be delivered, to allow appropriate time for processing of the meat or poultry. Vegetable producers can book sales for the following season from customers interested in larger amounts of produce. For example, people who do home canning may be interested in buying vegetables by the bushel, and this can be arranged in advance. However, these listings must be advertised clearly as pre-orders in the title and description so that staff and consumers understand the product will not (or may not) arrive on the order cycle it was ordered in. The description and/or title should also provide an approximate date of when the product will be available for pick up. If no money is to be collected for the item when the order is placed, create a product for “Pre-Order of (whatever the product is),” and give it a price of \$0.00. A second listing will then need to be created for consumers to ‘purchase’ the product on the cycle that it will be delivered. This second listing is especially important for those products where consumers need to be charged for an item on a per weight basis. If you are creating a pre-order for a product that does not require entering a weight, you can include a price for the item so that consumers pay in advance for the product. In this case, consumers would pay for their item on the cycle that it was ordered and would not have to provide payment when the order is delivered.

In either case, the producer is responsible for contacting consumers to inform them when their item will be available for pick up. If consumers are required to place a second order to complete their pre-order, producers must also remind them to do so when the time comes. In the case where consumers pre-pay for their order, producers must remind them to attend the pick-up location to receive their item when it is ready. Consumers may not have placed an order on the day your pre-ordered item becomes available and will need to be reminded to attend for pick-up. The producer must also notify the Co-op at the end of the order period of any customers who missed placing their second order or who have products for delivery that cycle that were paid for in a previous cycle. Please do not drop-off pre-ordered items to the CLFC distribution centre if you have not confirmed that the customer will be attending to pick up the item.

- **You can add new products anytime!** This means that at one time, you can enter all the products that you might carry, even if you currently do not offer them. It's a great idea to enter all your products during the winter-time, when you have extra time on your hands. That way, come harvest time, you can quickly activate the products you have available that week. When you create the new product, just don't give it any inventory (or you can unlist it) so that consumers can see your product and try to purchase it.

## HOW TO PREPARE YOUR PRODUCTS FOR DELIVERY

The steps to preparing your product for delivery in summary are:

1. Ensure that the order cycle is closed and complete.
2. Package individual orders.
3. Label the product(s) properly.
4. Ensure products arrive at the distribution centre **before 3PM Tuesday (2:45 on hub day)**.

### 1. **Ensure that the order cycle is closed and complete.**

- You can view the ongoing progress of your orders by logging into the site. Remember that customers may add or delete items, change quantities, or otherwise alter their orders until shopping has closed and baskets have been checked out. If you print your orders too early, you may miss orders and lose business.

### 2. **Package individual orders.**

- Orders are delivered packaged for individual customers. Do not deliver 50 pounds of bulk lettuce for the Co-op to divide up between your customers.
- The order should be packaged securely. Products are transported from your location to the sorting hub, where they are handled, sorted and transported again to customers. The packaging of your product must be able to protect your product during transportation, sorting and delivery.
- If a customer has ordered several products from you, you can put all of those products in one bag, box, or container, or you can deliver them as separate items.
- If you have some products that are refrigerated or frozen, and some that are dry goods or otherwise non-refrigerated, they should be delivered in separate containers. Frozen items should be hard frozen.
- **If you run out of inventory on a particular product**, notify the customer immediately (email is fine), so the customer can choose a substitution from you or another producer.
- If customers have ordered products that are out of stock, you can offer a substitution. Customer contact information will be on your list of orders. **If your customer accepts a substitution**, send an email to [info@cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com](mailto:info@cloverbeltlocalfoodcoop.com) with the details of the substitution. We need to know the customer's name, the product originally ordered, and the product you are substituting with. Please state that the customer has accepted the substitution.
- If you have more orders than you can fill for a certain product, you can also offer it on a "first come, first served" basis. The SORT BY PRODUCT lists the order in which orders were received; you can consult it to determine how to allocate your inventory.
- **All questions about customer orders should go directly to the customer.** Customer contact information is on your order page that is sorted by CUSTOMER.

### **3. Label the product(s) properly.**

- The CLFC provides Producers with labels for all products sold on our website. These labels can be accessed on the Producer Panel tab of the website, and must be used on *all* Customer member orders. Labels are available to print after the order cycle closes.
- You can print the labels onto paper and securely tape them to your bag, box or container. You can also print labels onto label stock and stick them individual containers. Do not use scotch tape or other small, light tapes to attach labels or invoice to packages.
- If you are unable to print these labels at home, please speak to the Co-op when you register as a vendor to get help with this process.
- You can choose to print a label listing *all items in one customer's order*, or labels for *individual products in one customer's order*. If you package all items of a customer's orders in one bag, box, or container, use the label listing all items. If you are sending products as separately packed items, use the individual product labels.
- If you send a package with more than one product for a member inside, attach each of the relevant individual product labels to the outside of the package.
- Do not place customer labels on the outside of any container that contain orders for more than one customer. Packages containing items for more than one customer should be labelled with your producer name. Individual items inside the container should be labelled separately for each customer.
- If you are sending your product in grocery bags, make the label a tag and tie it to the plastic bag, or print the label on label stock and stick it to the bag. Staples don't work well with plastic bags and paper labels, so we require a tag. Do not write information on a plastic grocery bag — it can be difficult to decipher.
- Make sure you print your labels with waterproof ink. If you don't use waterproof ink and it gets wet, we may not be able to deliver the product to the right customer.

### **4. Ensure products arrive at the distribution centre before 3PM Tuesday (2:45 on hub day).**

- We will check off your products with our final invoices. If there are no discrepancies or changes, we will try to pay you immediately for your total, minus the 5% handling fee. Otherwise we will pay you within 7 days of delivery UNLESS you have specified to be paid monthly. It is common for out-of-town producers whom we do not see on a weekly basis to have their cheques mailed out at month end. We also offer payment by e-mail transfer.
- If you have the time, we would appreciate it if you could place your individually packaged products into each customer box for pick up. If you have purchased products from other producers, you may wait until all product is delivered, or return between 4:00 PM and 6:00 PM to pick up your own sorted order.

**Delivery day is every Tuesday** except for Thanksgiving, Christmas, or New Year's weeks and other coinciding holidays. CLFC will publish a calendar of any closures each year.

**Check your email several times during Order and Delivery days**, in case there are any Delivery Day issues that need to be addressed.

## CONCLUSION

We hope you found this handbook to be informative and helpful. If have decided to join our amazing co-op then we would like to congratulate you on our membership with us! Your membership represents an investment in our local economy and in the future of a sustainable food system. We look forward to sharing each week's local harvest with you!

**Thank you for doing your part to make the  
Cloverbelt Local Food Co-op a success!**

