



Bulk Buying Club Guide

How to Start and Run a Bulk Buying Club with Your Friends & Neighbors



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How to Start and Run
a Bulk Buying Club
With Your Friends
& Neighbors





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First Edition, First Printing

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Welcome, food lovers!

In the CoFED network, we have seen how bulk buying clubs have served as a powerful step in the formation of student food cooperatives. Bulk buying clubs are often the first pilot project of a student group, and may grow to serve many people in your community or even evolve into a storefront. It will give you and your team a chance to practice cooperative business with your fellow workers and customers, and a chance to source healthy food at affordable prices from fair trade distributors, local farmers, and other inspiring food producers!

This guide will help you roll up your sleeves and get down to business! We'll go over everything from food sourcing and organizing your members to running your operation and logistics. We'll peek at different student-run bulk buying clubs in the CoFED network and learn about their strategies. Our Resource Portal on our website, at CoFED.coop, offers helpful supplementary resources to this guide that we hope you take a look at as you begin your BBC endeavour. If you have questions, don't hesitate to contact your us for further assistance.

We would like to give a special thanks those that lent their knowledge and words to develop this guide - Matthew Hokanson and the Startabuyingclub.com team, along with many other students working on projects like these, Chelsea Enwall, Alyssa Lee, and Franny Barnes.

Enjoy!

Anna Isaacs
CoFED Programming Coordinator, 2014



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Introduction

Why should I start a buying club?

There are many different reasons why one would decide to start a buying club. The motives range from controlling food sources to saving money by buying in bulk. Others include wanting to help local farmers, minimizing a product's carbon footprint, or simply yearning to get closer to the food system. This is just a small list, and the reasons vary for each buying club. We'll see how the answer to this question impacts decisions below.


What are the different models of organization?

While the concepts behind most buying clubs are similar, their structure can vary greatly. Some models include:

Member Club: This is the most common type of bulk buying club. In this model, customer-members are the owners, and may choose to hire employees or appoint people to run the group, or decide that everyone has to volunteer a set number of hours per month to contribute, etc. If membership is closed, that means the group has decided to limit who is in the club or how many members are in the club. While the buying club's main goal is to maximize savings for its members, it charges membership fees and marks up prices minimally in order to encourage members' personal ownership of and investment in the club, cover business overhead, create reserves for a financial safety net, and generate capital to further develop the project.

Worker Co-op: The core organizers own and/or manage the organization. They choose either to be paid or to volunteer their time in exchange for free or discounted ordering.

Farmer Owned: Occasionally a farm will decide to sponsor a buying club. Some sell only their products while others will also place orders with other distributors. This type of club is great if you're looking to establish a relationship with your local producers.



There are infinite variations these models, but they are the basic type of buying clubs currently operating. That is one of the best things about starting your own buying club: you can pick elements from each model and create something that works best for your group.

Who else, besides me, wants to be in the buying club?

Depending on where you live, this could either be an easy or difficult task. In some communities, uttering the words 'raw milk' could set off a three-hour discussion about micro-flora and the FDA. Conversely, some towns might require an equally long discussion to explain why we would want to buy directly from farmers versus supermarkets. Either way, there are several ways to gauge interest in your local area:

Farmer's Market: At a local farmer's market you're bound to be surrounded by people who take food pretty seriously. From the farmers to the patrons, strike up a conversation with a few people and see how they react. Also, depending on the rules at your local market, you might even be able to set up a stand. Bring a sign and some quarter-sheet handouts, and have a notebook ready to collect e-mail addresses.

Local Produce Markets: People who frequent or work at a smaller produce market might have some interesting insight into the local food scene. At the very least, you might be able to get some information on potential distributors.

Internet: The 'Community' section of Craigslist.com could prove to be useful. Publish a post explaining your plans and ask people to send along emails if they're interested. Another site that could be useful is Meetup.com. Start a meetup group surrounding food and see if anyone's interested. Even if you don't have an actual meetup, the site's discussion tools are pretty useful.

Cooperative Extension: No matter how successful the prior avenues are, a phone call or meeting with your local cooperative extension would most likely prove fruitful. These people deal in the agriculture and community on a daily basis, and always possess a wealth of knowledge.

What type of product (food, seeds, vitamins) do we want to buy?

Most people assume a buying club would be associated with products normally found at a supermarket, but that's not always the case. At the very least, it can be just the beginning of a buying club's scope. For instance, in one buying club members got together and ordered a palate of glass gallon jars. These jars were great for storing the bulk items ordered through the club. In another instance, the same group bought several dozen fermentation crocks at wholesale price. Nothing prompts the purchase of ten pounds of cabbage like a three-gallon crock. You can start with local produce from a farmer in your area. You can buy seeds in bulk for your respective gardens in the winter. Or, you can even purchase an entire animal in the spring to be split among the club's members.

Who can we buy these types of products from?

There are several types of distribution to consider when forming a buying club. This decision will require the group to really focus on what it's trying to accomplish. Cheaper food for members? Getting food closer to its source? Generating more profit for the producer? These points and many others all have pros and cons.

Once the goals of the group are determined, there are three tiers of producers:

National Distributor: There are several national distributors that work with buying clubs. The benefits include lower prices, greater range of products, order credit plans and organization. Some of the drawbacks are non-local product sources and greater transportation distances. Also, some companies require commercial loading zones for delivery, which is something we'll talk about more later.

Local Distributor: The existence of a local distributor in your area isn't guaranteed, but there is normally at least one handling fresh produce. The pros in this case are locally-sourced product, generally smaller delivery vehicles, and the possibility of forming a close relationship with the company. Downsides can include less formal delivery schedules, cash on delivery (COD) requirements, and large inventory fluctuations.

Direct from Producer: Buying the product directly from the producer is an excellent choice if possible. Not every farmer/producer is willing to deal in small quantities typical for buying clubs, but if an agreement can be reached this can lead to excellent business relationships. The plus to this arrangement is freshness of product, intimate knowledge of its source and the potential to even have a say in the product types available. Potential pitfalls range from a lack of delivery options, payment prior to delivery, and inventory instability.

Step 1: Buying

The first step in establishing your bulk buying club is to have everyone in the club on board with what type of food you'd like to source. Are you in it for just local? Outside a local radius but organic? Big or smaller companies? Mix of all the above? Great! Fantastic! Draft a buying policy to agree as a core group and clarify for your members what these criteria are. The Real Food Challenge, one of CoFED's organizational allies, have outlined criteria that determine what qualifies as "real food". They say that food should fulfill at least one of four categories:

Local and Community-Based: These foods can be traced to nearby farms and businesses that are locally owned and operated. Sourcing these foods supports the local economy by keeping money in the community and builds community relations. The food travels fewer miles to reach consumers. The food is seasonal, and when it is fresh, it often has a higher nutrient content.

Fair: Individuals involved in food production, distribution, preparation—and other parts of the food system—work in safe and fair conditions; receive a living wage; are ensured the right to organize and the right to a grievance process; and have equal opportunity for employment. Fair food builds community capacity and ensures and promotes socially just practices in the food system.

Ecologically Sound: Farms, businesses, and other operations involved with food production practice environmental stewardship that conserves biodiversity and preserves natural resources, including energy, wildlife, water, air, and soil. Production practices should minimize toxic substances as well as direct and indirect petroleum inputs.

Humane: Animals can express natural behavior in a low-stress environment and are raised with no hormones or unnecessary medication.

If you intend on serving or reaching a large group, you may also want to conduct a market survey of students and other potential members of the bulk buying club, as UCLA students did, to understand what people are most interested in buying and how they imagine the club to function.

Step 2: Sourcing

Now that everyone is on board with what type of tasty food you'd like to offer, source it! Most bulk clubs deal mainly with dry goods from wholesale distributors. Dry good sourcing may vary dramatically based on location. To find a supplier, you might ask your local food co-op or family-owned grocer about preferred distributors. These distributors have catalogues that they can send you or you might have to create an account to view items and pricing on their website. You may also want to consider buying bulk vegetables from local farms that could use the additional income and need to sell produce. How would this work? Call up a farm and inquire as to their wholesale prices and what deals they might be able to offer you if you bought x amount of product. Students at Western Washington were able to buy flats of a local farm's biodynamic tomatoes at a price that worked out to less per pound than if you bought them from the store. That's one possible way to make local, organic veggies and fruits more affordable for students. You can also buy organic produce from distributors if you do not have the capacity to buy directly from farmers. Once you have figured out who your suppliers are, keep things organized for your collective by creating a Producers and Distributors Contact and Information Sheet. This can list things like the name of the point person in your collective and point person in the distributor's office, their phone number, the type of items they sell, when and how they like orders placed and paid for, etc. This way, if the core organizers graduate, all the information that was stored in their head can easily be passed to the next bulk buying coordinator/s.

Step 3: Organizational Structure

The next step is to hold a couple meetings to figure out how you are structured. Here are some questions to start with:

Core Organizers: How will the work and responsibilities be divided--placing orders, updating membership database, sending out emails regarding deadlines and specials, updating product list? Who is going to be in charge of what and how do you hold them accountable and make sure they are supported in their work? How will the core group be organized and structured? Do these people make up a Board, are they coordinators, or do they sit on different committees? What happens when students graduate? How do you train incoming core organizers?

Membership/Buyers: Who are the members and how do they interact with the core organizers? How many people would you like to serve in the first month compared to the sixth month? Is it open to anyone or are there requirements or responsibilities to be a member?

School Administration: How are you going to interface with the college--are you a student club going through the university or are you a group of students organizing independently of the school? There are pros and cons. You may get more funding going through the school as a student organization, but you also need to comply with their requests and stipulations. If you organize through the college, where in that institution do you sit--a department, student association, etc.? You need to find the people in the college that can help you through the bureaucracy.

For instance, many wholesale distribution companies require that you have a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN), which is tied to a business license or an individual's social security number. Many teams for that reason choose to go through a student club or a school department,

and therefore, have these legalities attached to the school rather than a student. The Flamming Eggplant, at Evergreen State College, operates under Evergreen's business license and TIN. The business services department of the college is responsible for negotiating the use of this license. You can circumvent this issue by operating outside of the college, but you should probably find an attorney to help you set up a corporation or other type of legal entity that can enter into contracts, as a separate entity from any one individual to avoid specific students facing liability. A 501c3 non-profit status from the IRS allowed the Berkeley Student Food Collective to obtain a business license through their nonprofit tax ID, but takes months to get. See "How to Start a Food Coop" for more information on incorporation.

Step 4: Logistics

Items available for ordering: You might want to standardize the items available for ordering to a set list while starting.

How often do you place an order: This can depend on the needs of the buying club and the capacity of distributors. Some clubs order as often as once a week, while others order monthly or even quarterly. It is important that you standardize the day of the week the order is final. It could be every Wednesday, or the first Tuesday of every month. Whatever it may be, members will find helpful a system that is established and followed.

Receiving deliveries and splitting bulk items: This ultimately depends on several factors, including how many people there are in your buying club, how large your orders are, and who you're ordering from. If your club is small, the distributor may deliver it to a member's house, a residential living room, or a garage. If the club is a bit larger and/or a national distributor requires a commercial loading zone, you may have to consider a larger venue. Such spaces include churches, grange halls, community centers and even unused commercial spaces for lease.

Pick-up time and location: This should be standardized and congruent with the drop off times and locations of the distributor/s. Are you going to have one long pick-up day or one short pick-up window with a secondary choice for those who can't make it? A method for finding the perfect pick-up time and location will be contingent on your campus and the makeup of your group.

Order delivery: If delivering orders to members, the routes and rates should be standardized.

Method of payment: This system should be standardized. Here are some questions to consider:

- Does the distributor expect payment when the order is submitted or when the order is delivered, or will they send you an invoice to be paid within a certain timeframe?
- Are members paying as they order or at pick up?
- Through what means will members pay--cash, check, card, online checkout?
- Do you need to set up a bank account to write and deposit checks and/or a Paypal or Dwolla account for online checkout?
- Do you need to request funding from your school for software or equipment to take credit cards?

Here's where going through your school can prove to be very helpful for a student-run organization. Your university is basically one big business, with many accounts and subaccounts, which all can be traced back to one bank. For example, Sprouts Cafe is a subsidiary of the Alma Mater Society (AMS). That means they are technically a student club, and have a bank account through AMS. This allows suppliers to charge them invoices that have to be paid by a certain date rather than having to pay suppliers upon ordering or delivery. UW Student Food Collective set up an account on their own with a local credit union, and only take credit card payments via Squareup.com, which plugs into one of their personal smart phones. es.

If your team wants to set up an organizational checking account with a credit union, some institutions will require a business license and others will just ask for a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN). The processes to obtain a business license is a little different in every state. Visiting the U.S. Small Business Administration at SBA.gov or enlisting the help of your state's Department of Licensing is a good place to start. To obtain a TIN, all you have to do is go to the IRS' website. You'll need to appoint a treasurer or a financial committee, or some makeup of people that can access funds from the account and make deposits. These people will be signers on the account and will have to fill out paperwork and present their social security numbers. They can then be assigned a debit card. When they graduate or leave the school, your team will need to take them off the account as a signer and add other people on.

Step 5: Recruitment

AKA outreach, marketing, advertising, education, campaigning, customer service

Basic questions to ask your group:

- What is the purpose of the bulk buying club? Is it to engage the campus community, raise your profile, increase group membership? The answers could be endless. Pick the top three or four that are most important to your group and base your tactics off of this.
- What are the desired outcomes? Do you want a full-scale cooperative and are using the BBC as a stepping stone?
- How will you define success? Is it by member number, amount of your purchase order? Number of new member-recruits to your group or events?

It may also be wise to craft a marketing plan that fits in with your overall strategic plan as a group. The questions above will help you define what that may be. Once your group has a clear vision for what you're trying to accomplish, and has established goals, figure out where to go from there. This will include tactics and strategies, my friends! The relationship between tactics and strategies is easy to get muddled so think of it like a mountain: the top is where you want to be, how you climb there are your tactics. Here is an example:

Strategy: Establish a presence with on campus students and encourage them to cook more

Tactic:

Host a granola party & show how easy/delicious to make your own breakfast foods with goods from the Bulk Buying Club

Tactic:

Host cooking classes in the dorms. You could even do a version of Iron Chef!

Tactic:

Attend a hall council meeting to ask about frustrations students may be having with food on campus.

Tactic:

Silk screen t-shirts with your logo, a food positive image, or simply a picture of your favorite veggie!

Creativity draws people in, but being able to talk about what it is you're offering is just as important. Be sure that every member knows what to expect, how to handle any aspect of running the bulk buying operation, and what to say or where to direct people when there are questions. If bulk buying clubs isn't something students on your campus may know about, you want to have the bases covered and exude knowledge. And if you're using the bulk buying club as a means to an end (a student-run food cooperative!) be sure to make that clear.

Step 6: Running Your Bulk Buying Club

Collecting and Compiling Member Orders

Depending on the size of your club, this will vary. Some groups get together in one place and compile the order together based on the distributor's catalogues or website. Others use Google Forms, which can act as individual ordering forms. Google Forms automatically compiles everyone's orders in a spreadsheet, and then a core organizer makes the final order with the distributor. You could also use a Google Spreadsheet to act as a Sharing Board, so that all of the members can collectively fill out the order form. With a Google Spreadsheet, a core organizer should be responsible for updating ordering information, making sure customers are entering items correctly, and submitting the final order to the distributor. The University of Washington Student

Food Collective designed a fantastic ordering form out of a Google spreadsheet. If your group continues to grow, and the spreadsheet begins to hit its limits, there are several online software options to help manage member ordering, order and payment compilation. What to look for in software:

- Internet based - A more accessible alternative to in-store ordering/paying
- Automated and computerized order/payment documentation - Easier to record and track than paper forms
- A catalogue system that is maintainable and updatable on a monthly basis
- Expand the cash only payment system - Have a way to take credit/debit cards

Here are some software options:

Food Club Foodclub.org

Food Club is totally free and set up ready to go. It offers all of the highlighted items above except direct credit card integration. You can however simply use Paypal or Dwolla, which has fees comparable to credit card processors. You can also link your account at Food Club directly to larger distributors like Frontier. Check out their demo on the website for a full tour.

Open source software code Sourceforge.net/projects/foodcoop/

This is free, open-source software developed by the Oklahoma Food Co-op Online Market. It requires someone knowledgeable with PHP, MySQL, and web programming. It sets up an online food coop ordering system. Producers/farmers can add products to their product and pricing catalog at anytime. During a designated time, co-op members place orders. It generates reports and invoices. The Co-op facilitates this producer drop-off/shopper pick-up transaction

Buying Club Software Buyingclubsoftware.com

As administrators, you can add/edit, or delete members. You can add notes to the shoppers to communicate anything about ordering, or reminders about pickups. You can create your own ordering catalog, one by one or do mass uploads using simple spreadsheets. All members use a username and password set by the manager to access the shopping system, and they only see orders that are currently open. Shopping basket shows all products and estimated totals. You can set the state's sales tax and markup/discount for shoppers. Splits are easily displayed to identify both filled and unfilled orders. You can set up opening times and closing times of the ordering period. You can print

automated receipts and split sheets. PayPal/Credit Card transactions are possible, but not included in the system at this time. You get a free demonstration and trial period. It costs \$300 for a one-time fee, which includes software setup and training. \$1/user/month (that's \$12/person/year). And then a continuing fee of \$50/month for unlimited users.

Local Food Marketplace Localfoodmarketplace.com

Their technology can help your group track membership and automate membership fee payment, as well as offer multiple membership levels. It can automate product listings for producers/distributors, with a localness rating scale to incorporate regional and processed foods into your market. Customers can easily adjust orders for items purchased by exact weight or items not received. You can quickly settle up and pay member accounts at the end of each order period. Reports for member order totals and producer sales over any date range can also be made. It costs \$1000 up front, with a maintenance fee of 2% of sales.

•Local Food Marketplace <http://www.localfoodmarketplace.com/LFM/Default.aspx>

Submitting the order

This task depends on which distributor/s you've decided to deal with. In some instances, faxing or calling in your order is an option, mainly with small vendors. However, a bulk of distributors will either prefer or require the order to be submitted electronically. In this realm, it's usually either via email or an online form. For example, Frontier accepts orders through an on-line ordering tool. This tool is extremely handy in that as you enter products, it will indicate if said product is in stock, back-ordered, or sold out entirely. If you're submitting your order by email, vendors usually prefer a spreadsheet format of some sort. Some will provide the format, others are just happy to be getting it electronically. Both the aforementioned spreadsheets and software option help take a lot of the busywork out of preparing the order for submission.

Receiving the goods

Again, this section is dependent on the distributor. That said, you'll almost always have to have someone meet the delivery. Beyond ensuring the safety of your club's food, you might also need to pay the delivery driver. If possible, having multiple members at drop-off will be best. These people can help cross-check the delivered items with the invoice and quickly discover any damaged or sub-par items. After

the delivery is complete, this small team can help organize the order and move any perishables into refrigerators or freezers. In some clubs, these members can also begin splitting or weighing some of the items. Over time, you'll be able to determine which products are best to do right after delivery, such as meats and cheeses. This may drastically help the next step of the process.

Splitting the goods

Different bulk buying clubs split orders to varying degrees. You can decide to either just split the items between the orderers, or you can do more work to split bulk amounts into smaller quantities for customers. In the first case, you might order three 25-pound bags of oats, and you separate these 3 bags into 3 different orders but customers have to buy a whole bag of oats, while in the second case, you are willing to break into a bag of oats and separate oats into smaller quantities among many customers. This is for the core organizers to decide based on what they and the members want.

It's important to have the proper tools and supplies to do a split. As a student organization through your school, you may be able to apply for funding for items if they are related directly to the operation of your organization. For example, UCLA received all of the items below through the Student Organization Operational Fund of their Undergraduate Student Association Council. Here are items to consider:

- Pens and markers
- Gloves
- Receipt books
- Cash box
- Extra bags or boxes if people forget to bring theirs
- A regular kitchen or weigh scale
- Scoops
- A rolling cart to get the food from markets or to bring it to the distribution site

You'll also want to create some helpful documents to keep things organized:

- Split sheets - lists out, by product, which members purchased said product and in what quantity
- Customer receipts - lists out, by customer, all the products

Again, the online software tools are extremely helpful in these tasks, and most automatically create these printable sheets for you.

With tools and documents in hand, have your splitting team meet with enough time before the club pickup/delivery starts. Have some people weighing and bagging items (like dry beans) and other people distributing products into each member's box or bag. Boxes should be labeled with members' name and receipt. As the items are placed in their proper box, check off items on member's receipt. Once all of the product has been split and distributed, double check that all items on the receipt are in the box.

If you deliver...

Pack up the boxes and go on the routes.

If you require pickup...

It can help to put boxes in alphabetical order. It is important to remind everyone that they should double check their order box with their receipt. This will help prevent any issue after they leave. Once all orders have been picked up and each member checked out, one final and important part is left--cleanup. Regardless of if you're renting, borrowing or own your space, it is imperative that there be people tasked with cleaning the space after pickup and checkout. If possible, it's good to have these cleaners be someone other than splitters or checkout people, as those people are normally fairly tired by this point. From there, the money must get to the person who will deposit it into the bank, and the final numbers must be shared with people in the club who'll need them.

Money Management

You decided in Step 4 how you were going to handle payments, based on the requirements of the distributor and needs of your organizers and members. Whichever way you choose, you must track expenses, transactions, the club's balance--EVERYTHING! Don't let money management intimidate you, however. Examples prove, students are very capable! Students at UCLA for example have a sophisticated method of tracking their finances, and have shared this template with students in the CoFED network via CoFED's Resource Portal, found on our website.

Money management may be a less communal step, but is very important to the fiscal health of your buying club. You must make sure that the amount of money that came in from your members roughly equals the amount you have paid or will be paying the distributor. Some

things to consider are products that weren't delivered, broken or spoiled products and any price changes in products after the order was placed. There are a whole slew of other possible hang-ups in the reconciliation process, but if the checkout process was organized and well-recorded, it shouldn't be anything insurmountable. If there are any discrepancies, you'll possibly have to contact the distributor and determine a solution and/or alter credits or debits on a member's account. Like any business, you'll have to determine your own threshold when dealing with losses.

Strategy Share

Strategies from schools that are working on BBC projects like yours! And see CoFED's Resource Portal for related documents, shared by these schools.

Sprouts, University of British Columbia

Sprouts uses a main ordering document which their ordering coordinator looks at to see what they need to order for the week. Several other coordinators who run different aspects of Sprouts (the kitchen, community eats, store, and bulk buying coordinators) populate this order form based on what they need. For the bulk buying program, customers come in and look at the distributor's wholesale catalogues when they are at Sprouts Cafe and then they fill out a paper invoice in the store with what they want to order and basic contact information, and pay upfront at the cash register and get the carbon copy as a receipt. They then get a call from the bulk buying coordinator the next week when the orders are in and then they pick it up within a few days.

University of Washington, Seattle

The Bulk Buying Club is organizing the regular distribution of high-quality and affordable bulk goods in hopes of providing UW students with greater autonomy when it comes to the foods that they eat. In exchange for a small initial fee, those interested can purchase bulk foods at cost. The way they run their program is that students fill out a Google doc ordering form that allows them to see what they are ordering and what everyone else is ordering on the same day every week. Pick-up also takes place on the same day every week. They only take cards and use Square, the app and software to take cards via a smartphone. They ask people to bring their own bags to transport their food home, and/or containers for their split orders. And if students

don't feel like walking their goods home, they deliver for an extra \$5.

UC Berkeley

The Berkeley Student Food Collective runs a bulk buying program for students and community members who wish to buy larger quantities of product for an event or community home. A \$100 minimum is required for the BSFC to make a worthwhile profit off of the program. The BSFC has UNFI catalogs to take, where customers can choose which products they would like to buy in-bulk. The BSFC will then give a 20% discount from what the price would be if bought in-store (an incentive for people to buy more frequently in bulk). When we get the order, the customer must pick it up in-store asap due to our limited space.

University of Colorado, Boulder

Before moving into a space just off campus, folks at CU Boulder ran a 70-person Bulk Buying Coop out of their homes. The group buys locally grown foods in bulk to disperse among members, which saves them money on staple foods like oatmeal and beans. They distribute order forms, which are filled out for individuals and households, and then turned in with checks and clean empty containers to the co-op core team. The core team compiles the orders in order to submit the final order with the suppliers. Every member donates two hours of their time a month. These hours go to separating the deliveries into individual household orders. And last but not least, on pickup day, members congregate to partake in a joyous group meal and fill out their order form for the next week.

UCLA

After several months of planning, The Student Food Collective (SFC) at UCLA kicked off their Food Buying Club (FBC) in April 2013 as a pilot program for starting a grocery store on campus. The program was conceptualized as "the co-op without a storefront," designed to serve students who are interested in supporting local food businesses and acquiring tasty, organic, and healthful food. As a pilot program without any start-up capital, the SFC deliberately started their FBC on a small scale, limiting it to friends and by word-of-mouth. Throughout Spring 2013, it had a consistent membership of 15-25 students and purchased from two businesses - Gaytan Family Farm (located 52 miles from the campus) and Homeboy Bakery (17 miles). The FBC focused on food that could be ready-to-eat in order to appeal to students living in the dorms, including carrots, kale, strawberries, brussels sprouts, sugar snap peas, and various types of specialty breads.

To join, individuals must fill out an introductory survey indicating which

types of items they are most interested in, what qualities they prioritize in their food purchases, and their interest in being involved in our mission. Orders are taken every other week via an online form featuring 10-20 items at a time and must be picked up the following week right before SFC meetings (in the same location). On off-weeks, there are membership meetings in which members decide what items to include in the order. Attendance at the meeting is required to have a vote within the FBC. Purchases also require a \$2 membership fee, which is used to supplement the cost and time of picking up and delivering the orders. This fee can be waived or reduced by volunteering to help with the pick-up, storage, or delivery of the orders. Involvement in the SFC is not required to be part of the FBC. The FBC is also open to faculty, staff, and graduate students though it has so far only served undergraduate students.

With the acquisition of \$15,000 through The Green Initiative Fund, the SFC is looking to expand the program to serve more people, have greater publicity, and offer a larger selection of items, all of which will require a more sophisticated form of organizing and intaking orders and storing and distributing the food.



Recipes!

The recipes in this manual come from all over the CoFED network. They are recipes that use the type of ingredients that you can buy through a bulk buying club. They will feed big groups of people. They are delicious and have fed many a happy student cooper! Try them and change them and share them with others!

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*Best D*** Vegan Biscuits*
From Down to Earth Food Co-op
Newark, Delaware 2014

Yield: 21

Ingredients:

6 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
3 Tbsp baking powder
1 1/2 tsp baking soda
2 1/4 tsp sea salt
12 Tbsp non-dairy, unsalted butter (like Earth Balance)
3 cup unsweetened plain soy or almond milk + 3 Tbsp fresh lemon juice

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees F.
2. Mix dry ingredients together in a large bowl.
3. Add cold butter and use fingers or a folk as a pastry cutter to combine the two until only small pieces remain and it looks like sand.
4. Make a well in the dry ingredients and, using a wooden spoon, stir gently while pouring in the milk mixture 1/4 cup at a time. You may not need all of it. Stir until just slightly combined – it will be sticky.
5. Turn onto a lightly floured surface, dust the top with a bit of flour and then very gently turn the dough over on itself 5-6 times
6. Form into a 1-inch thick disc, handling as little as possible.
7. Use a 1-inch thick dough cutter or a similar-shape object with sharp edges and push straight down through the dough, then slightly twist. Repeat and place biscuits on a baking sheet in two rows, making sure they just touch.
8. Next brush the tops with a bit more of melted non-dairy butter and gently press a small divot in the center using two fingers. This will also help them rise evenly, so the middle won't form a dome.
9. Bake in a 450 degree oven for 10-15 minutes or until fluffy and slightly golden brown. Serve immediately. Let remaining biscuits cool completely before storing them in an airtight container or bag.

Whole Wheat Oat Quick Bread
From Down to Earth Food Co-op
Newark, Delaware 2014

Yield: 6 loaves

Ingredients:

6 cup old fashioned oats
6 cup whole wheat bread flour
2 tbsp baking powder
1 tbsp sea salt
3/4 cup + 2 tbsp agave, honey, or maple syrup
1/3 cup (heaping) oil
6 cup almond milk (or other milk of choice)

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 450F.
2. Grind oatmeal in a food processor or blender.
3. In a large bowl, combine oatmeal, flour, baking powder and salt.
4. In a separate bowl, dissolve agave/honey/maple syrup in oil then stir in the almond milk.
5. Combine both mixtures and stir until a soft dough is formed.
6. Form the dough into a ball and place on a lightly oiled baking sheet. Bake in preheated oven for about 20 minutes, or until bottom of loaf sounds hollow when tapped. Cooled, it can be transferred to a large Cambro container and refrigerated.

Lemon-Tahini Sauce

From the Flaming Eggplant
Olympia, Washington 2014

Ingredients:

6 C tahini
1 C minced parsley
¼ C cumin, toasted
2 Tbsp salt
4 tsp black pepper
3 C olive oil
3 C lemon juice
2-3 C water (depends on consistency)
¼ C white wine vinegar

Instructions:

1. Put tahini, parsley, cumin, salt, pepper in a plastic tub. Blend thoroughly with immersion blender.
2. With immersion blender running, slowly add olive oil until thoroughly blended.
3. With blender still running, slowly add lemon juice until combined.
4. Slowly add water, blending until emulsified.
5. Add vinegar 1 Tbsp at a time, and blend thoroughly. (It curdles easily, so be careful)
6. The slow adding of ingredients while blending is important: this emulsifies the sauce (an emulsion is when oil and water-based liquids combine smoothly.) If you add the oil too fast, the sauce will curdle. You can fix this by letting it sit a few minutes, adding a little extra acid (such as lemon juice or vinegar) and then blend it some more.

Hummus

From the Flaming Eggplant
Olympia, Washington 2014

Ingredients:

2 quarts chickpeas, soaked for at least 24 hours
2 C tahini
3 C olive oil (this needs to be adjusted depending on how oily the tahini is)
2 C lemon juice
½ C garlic cloves
1 Tbsp paprika
1 Tbsp cumin
1 Tbsp black pepper
1 tsp cinnamon
2 Tbsp salt
2 C fresh parsley, finely chopped
1-4 cups chickpea water (depends on the consistency before adding the water)

Instructions:

1. Put chickpeas in pot and cover with water. Bring to a boil and cook for 1 hour or until done.
2. While beans are cooking, put all other ingredients except water in Robocoupe and puree them into oblivion.
3. When chickpeas are done, strain in a colander and reserve the cooking water.

How to Cook Beans...and make them delicious!

from the Flaming Eggplant
Olympia, Washington 2014

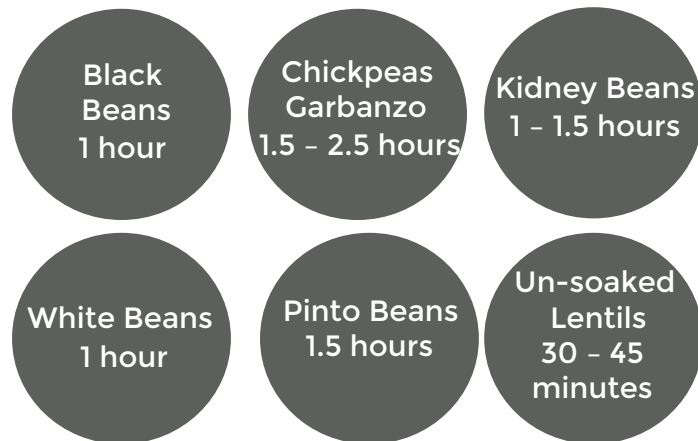
Soaking – all beans we serve, except lentils, must be soaked in water for 48 hours before cooking. This is important for a few reasons:

- They cook faster
- They are more digestible (less farts!)
- The nutrients in the beans will be much more available for human bodies to uptake. Soaking beans (and grains and nuts, for that matter!) helps break down the enzyme inhibitors in the plant, which makes them healthier for us.

So... Fill a large plastic tub with 10 quarts dry beans, cover with water to about 6 inches above the beans. Label it and refrigerate. Let them soak for 48 hours before cooking.

Basic Bean Cooking – Drain off the soaking water, and rinse the beans thoroughly. While rinsing, sift the beans with your hands and keep a look-out for small pebbles that end up in dry beans. Pour beans into a large pot and cover with water. Bring to a boil on high heat. Then cover and simmer on low heat until beans are soft and easy to chew, but not mushy. Cooking times vary for different types of beans. Always test your beans to see if they are done, and yummy to eat.

Below is a guide to approximate cooking times for pre-soaked beans we use frequently:



Seasoning – As in soups, it's all about the flavors cooked into oil. Tossing dry spices into cooked beans doesn't cut it.

The best way: Sautee aromatic vegetables, spices and/or herbs in oil in the cooking pot on medium heat for 1-2 minutes, before you add the water and beans.

The second-best way: While waiting for beans to boil, fry the spices in oil on medium heat, just until spices become more fragrant – about 1-2 minutes. Then add the spice/oil mixture to the bean pot and continue to cook the beans.

Either way: adjust the spices and salt to taste when they are done cooking, and modify if needed. Way-too-spicy- beans or bitter beans can be fixed with a bit of agave, dissolved in.

Beans, continued...

Try some of these spice profiles for your beans if you want – they're tried and true.

Lentils

¾ C curry
¾ C sugar
¾ C salt
2 T garlic powder
2 T onion powder
1 T pumpkin pie spice

Black Beans

¾ C cumin
¾ C salt
2 large onions,
chopped
2 tsp cayenne

Garbanzo Beans

¾ C salt
2 large onions, chopped
1 T cinnamon
2 tsp red pepper flakes
1 bunch of parsley

Pinto Beans

¾ C salt
2 large onions,
chopped
1 bunch cilantro
Juice of 1 lime
2 tsp chipotle chili

Red Beans

¾ C salt
½ C chili powder
2 T oregano
2 lg onions, chopped

Chili Beans

2 onions, chopped
2 Tbsp chili powder
1 Tbsp cumin
2 tsp chipotle powder
2 Tbsp oregano
Salt to taste

Curried Lentils or Chickpeas

Fresh ginger, grated
2 Tbsp turmeric
3 tsp cayenne
1 Tbsp coriander
2 Tbsp ground cumin
2 tsp fenugreek

Herbed Kidney Beans

2 onions, chopped
¼ garlic, minced
4 tsp oregano
1 Tbsp basil
1 Tbsp sage
3 tsp black pepper

Garam Masala Chickpeas

2 onions
2 Tbsp cumin
2 Tbsp coriander
1 Tbsp ginger powder
3 tsp black pepper
2 tsp cardamom
1 tsp clove
2 tsp cinnamon

Black Bean Burgers

from Ruby Levine, Midwest Regional Organizer 2014

Yield: 60 patties

Ingredients:

1.25 cups olive oil
7.5 cup finely chopped onions
7.5 cup finely chopped carrots
7.5cup finely chopped peppers (any color)
7.5 cup finely chopped mushrooms
30 cloves garlic, minced
3.75 tablespoons ketchup
1.25 teaspoons dijon mustard
1.25 teaspoons ground cumin
1.25 teaspoons ground chili powder
2.5 tablespoons salt
22.5 cup black beans
7.5 cup bread crumbs

Instructions:

1. Heat olive oil in a small skillet over medium heat.
2. Add your onions, carrots, and peppers. Saute for 4-5 minutes, until softened.
3. Add garlic and stir for 30 seconds.
4. Add the ketchup, mustard, cumin, chili powder, and salt. Stir to combine.
5. Remove vegetables from heat and set aside to cool.
6. Preheat Oven to 450°
7. Once they're cool enough to handle, place the vegetables into a food processor with the black beans and bread crumbs and pulse a few times to combine.
8. Form the mixture into large patties.
9. Place them on a foil-lined baking sheet coated lightly with oil and bake for 15 minutes.

The burgers will hold together, but they'll always be slightly mushy and have a tendency to crumble if handled too much. Just place them on a bun using a spatula and garnish with your favorite burger toppings.

Moroccan-Spiced Carrot Soup

Flaming Eggplant
Olympia, Washington 2014

Ingredients:

½ C safflower oil
8 onions, finely chopped
½ C minced garlic
20-25 large carrots, diced
1 quart diced fingerling potatoes
2 quarts russet potatoes
6 quarts veggie stock
16 ounces crushed tomatoes (or, 2 C tomato paste + 2 quarts water)
3 Tbsp paprika
½ Tbsp cayenne
3 Tbsp ground cumin
2 Tbsp caraway seed
2 Tbsp coriander (optional)
1 Tbsp cinnamon
¼ C dried thyme, plus more for garnish
3 Tbsp black pepper, to taste

Instructions:

1. Sautee oil, onions and spices in a large pot over medium heat until onions are soft and translucent.
2. Add carrots and potatoes and cook for 4-5 more minutes.
3. Add veggie stock/water, tomato sauce and thyme.
4. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium low and simmer 30 minutes, or until potatoes and carrots are soft.
5. Remove from heat.
6. Puree the soup with immersion blender until smooth.
7. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Tuscan-style Pinto Bean Soup with Kale

Ingredients:

4 quarts dry pinto beans: soak for 48 hours
1 C safflower oil
2 heads celery, chopped
12 carrots, sliced
6 onions, chopped
½ minced garlic
1 Tbsp dried pepper flakes (or cayenne)
¼ C dried basil
3 C tomato paste (or 16 ounces crushed tomatoes)
¼ balsamic vinegar
1/3 C agave
3 bunches kale, trimmed and chopped
12 quarts of veggie stock/water
¼ salt, to taste
3 Tbsp pepper, to taste

Instruction

1. Cook the beans. Or, use some that are already cooked. Drain and set aside.
2. Sauté oil, celery, carrot, onion, garlic and chili flakes over medium heat, stirring until the onions are lightly browned, about 10-12 minutes.
3. Add the tomatoes, balsamic and agave, and continue to cook until the tomatoes are slightly reduced, another 10 minutes.
4. Stir in the beans and veggie stock/water. Bring to a slow boil, then reduce heat to medium-low, cover and simmer until the carrots and celery are fully cooked.
5. Add kale, stir and simmer for 2 more minutes. Remove from heat and season with salt and pepper to taste.

