

Whole Earth Market Co-op Membership Policy

To be an Owner you pay a One-time Membership Fee. Your Membership Fee is an investment that supports the Co-op. You pay one membership fee to become a Member-Owner. You can be a Member-Owner as long as you like. If you choose to end your Ownership, you may receive a refund for the money you paid for your membership fee or donate it to the Co-op.

You will receive your Membership Certificate and can begin shopping as an Owner when you make your first payment. Please be prepared to show your card or tell the cashier your Owner Number every time you shop.

Individuals and Households

Two adults living in the same home can share a Membership/Ownership. Household Member/Owners will pay the membership fee all at once or over a period of 12-months. The installment plan requires a \$5 administrative fee. Both people can use the Owner benefits, attend the Annual Meeting & Party, and claim patronage refunds when applicable. Only one person can vote on behalf of the Household. If you and another person would like to become an Owner as a Household, you must decide which person will complete the contract and be the Primary account holder. The Primary account holder is the only person who can make changes regarding the Ownership. Only the two people and their dependents listed on the account can use the Household Owner number and receive the benefits of Ownership. Further, only member-owners in good standing can exercise their membership rights. In good standing means the membership fee has been paid in full or installment payments are current.

Non-Individual and Non-Household:

Cooperatives and Nonprofits are entitled to purchase equity and assume the rights and benefits of Ownership. Contracts and payments will be taken in the store at the register. Cooperatives must provide a copy of their Articles of Incorporation, and Nonprofits must provide a copy of their IRS 501c3 determination letter.

As a Whole Earth Market Co-op Owner, you can:

- Receive discounts on products
 - Get discounts during Owner Appreciation Days
 - Get discounts on Special Orders
 - Order products that are not normally sold at the Co-op
 - Participate in member only promotions and events
- Receive discounts on in-store classes and presentations
- Put funds on your account to be used for shopping at the Co-op
- Celebrate with other Owners at the Annual Meeting and Party
- Receive the Co-op's monthly newsletter with information about our sales, membership, community, and Board updates (via email)
- Vote in Whole Earth Market Co-op elections and run for a seat on the Board of Directors
- Share your opinion about Co-op projects and participate on Owner advisory groups

When Whole Earth Market Co-op makes a profit, the Board of Directors will decide, based on financial considerations, whether to give a rebate, or money back, to its Owners. Your rebate depends on how much you shop at the Co-op during the year. If you receive a rebate, you will receive a percentage of the profit as store credit. The rest of the profit is invested, or saved, to support the Co-op as it grows.

As an Owner of Whole Earth Market Co-op you will join many people in the community to build a local business that is responsible, cares for people in the community, and listens to the opinions of its Owners and employees.

As an Owner, you support the goals of Whole Earth Market Co-op to:

- Be part of an active community that is financially responsible and cares for the environment.
- Support small, local, and cooperative farms and businesses.
- Be a great place to work.
- Support the community by giving back in the form of monetary and food donations.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Can my child use my Owner account? Yes, if you have a dependent that lives in your household under the age of 18 years, they can use your Owner account. Let your cashier know, and we can make a special note on your Owner account.

Can I purchase an Owner account for someone? Yes you can! We have gift Ownership packets for purchase at the cash register. We'll provide a blank Contract, Ownership materials, and a letter about their Ownership gift. You will pay for a gift card with the amount of Ownership equity you would like to gift. It is up to the giftee to come in and set-up their Owner account.

I want to close my Owner account. How do I do that? Only the Primary account holder can close the Owner account. To close your Owner account, we first will look up how much equity you have invested in your Ownership at the Co-op. You can choose to have that equity refunded to you or donated back to the Co-op, and you will need to fill out an Owner Resolution Form. Equity refunds can take up to 90 days to complete, but are generally filled in 60 days or less.

I'm a secondary Owner on my Owner account and I wish to close my Ownership. How do I do this? Unfortunately, as the secondary Owner you do not have the privilege to either close the account or receive a partial refund of equity. Any Ownership changes must be made by the Primary Owner in accordance with the Co-op's bylaws.

One of my family members was an Owner, but has recently passed away. How do I close this person's Owner account and redeem their equity? If this person had a household Ownership, the secondary Owner can first decide what to do with the account. In this case, the secondary may become the primary Owner and decide to either add an additional secondary Owner, or refund the extra equity on the account. If there was no secondary account holder, the representative of their estate may fill out an Owner Resolution Form to close the account by requesting an equity refund or donation. In addition, we will need to see some form of legal documentation stating that you are the representative of the estate. Documentation will most likely be in the form of Letters Domiciliary, a will, and/or a Death Certificate.

I would like to close the Owner account of an Owner who is still alive but unable to do so themselves. How do I do this? You can fill out an Owner Resolution Form as the Power of Attorney. You will need to provide legal documentation of your POA status to do so.