



2019 & 2020 Combined Annual Report



SEVEN COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES

- VOLUNTARY OPEN MEMBERSHIP** (Icon: hand)
- DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL** (Icon: ballot box)
- COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES** (Icon: two hands shaking)
- AUTONOMY & INDEPENDENCE** (Icon: banner)
- MEMBER ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION** (Icon: hand holding coin)
- CONCERN FOR THE COMMUNITY** (Icon: house with bicycle)
- EDUCATION TRAINING AND INFORMATION** (Icon: open book)



From Our Co-op Board President:

Fellow DFC Member-Owners and Supporters:

I'm honored for the opportunity to share my gratitude for the support and work of every one of you. I was not there at the beginning, but I know that right about this time, 10 years ago, neighbors were coming together around the need for a food co-op in Dorchester.

COVID has a way of blurring our sense of time. While some things slowed down, the DFC timeline didn't. Our Board doubled up on meetings to keep up with the work. Some became experts at zoom. Others of us continue to resist and can't wait for a level of normalcy to return so that we may again work in teams and in-person.

They say "we make the road by walking". I'd say we've made OUR ROAD by walking and knocking. And knocking. And knocking. We've knocked on so many doors! Many doors have opened, and some have not. But in organizing, we also say "there are no permanent friends, no permanent enemies, just permanent issues". And that's what keeps me going. Like our motto says: "Cooperation is our approach. Justice is our goal". Justice has to be our goal. That is why this work is so important. That is why this next year is so critical for our cooperative.

COVID made more than clear the role that access to nutritious food has on our physical health. In my own experience, it is also the basis for mental and spiritual health. Last fall, a few of us were able to set up a table in front of 195 Bowdoin St. and engaged neighbors with paper copies of the same design tools used in our zoom series. As they passed by to do their shopping, the conversation with neighbors always included "fresh veggies", "freshly baked bread", "hot peppers", "dried chiles", and left us smiling. Food is medicine! For the mind, the body, and the soul.

A year from now, God willing, we'll be opening the doors to OUR STORE. Our initial goal of 1000 member owners is within reach, and at the current pace, we hope to have 1,200 member owners by then! To quote Arundhati Roy, "Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing." When I see the renderings that resulted from our design process, I think about that other world, where our community has access to the foods we want, jobs that pay decent wages, and a space to come together. Thanks to your support and commitment to DFC, that other world is closer than ever.

¡Gracias!

In Solidarity,

Marcos Beleche

Mission

The mission of the Dorchester Food Co-op is to challenge the traditional food system by building a community and worker-owned asset that nourishes, employs, and reinvests in the local community.

THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS & FUNDERS

The Dorchester Food Co-op is grateful for the dedication of our member-owners, who have provided countless hours of volunteer time and financial support in 2019-20.

Funders (Partial List)

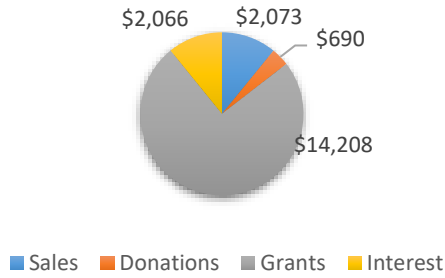
- Boston Foundation
- Burges Fund of the Episcopal City Mission
- Harvard Pilgrim Health Care
- Hyams Foundation
- New England Grassroots Environmental Fund
- Wild Geese Foundation
- Babson Foundation

Supporters and Partners (partial list)

- Boston Area Gleaners
- Klavens Law Group
- Neighboring Food Coop Association and Food Coop Initiative
- OASIS on Ballou Farm
- Upham's Corner Health Center PACE program
- Urban Farming Institute
- Trustees
- Cooperative Fund of New England
- Cooperative Development Institute

TREASURER'S REPORT for Years 2019 and 2020

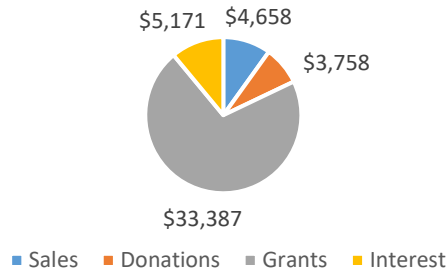
Income 2019 = \$19,037



Expenses 2019 = \$16,043



Income 2020 = \$46,974



Expenses 2020 = \$28,946



Balance Sheet (as of 12/31/20)

The Balance Sheet reflects our overall financial position

Total Assets:	\$138,097
Total Liabilities:	\$4,981
Total Equity:	\$133,116

2019-20 Financial Notes:

In FY '19-20 our Co-op added 243 new member-owner households over the two years, generating an additional \$19,900 in member equity. The total member-owner investment in the Co-op at the end of 2020 was \$77,416. In addition, we received \$66,011 in grants, donations, sales and interest over that two-year period.

In the coming year, both our income and expenses are growing, as we add staff, and expenses to prepare for store buildout.

Membership Growth

In the past two and a half years we have grown exponentially, and as of April 2021, we have gained 290 member-owners for a total of 969 household members. We are very close to our milestone of 1000 member-owners, and our goal is to reach 1200 member-owners before the end of 2021. Together we can do this!



VALUES IN ACTION

The Dorchester Food Co-op has important values, and we as an organization are bringing these values to life. These values will be embedded in the operations of our new store, and inform the projects we develop before the store opens. In 2019-2020—these are a few of the values we put into action:

1 We believe that everyone should have access to fresh local produce they deserve



In 2019-20, DFC created mini farm stands for vulnerable seniors in adult day programs in collaboration with **Upham's Corner Health Center** and

Boston Area Gleaners. The program enables seniors who are housebound and cannot get to farmers' markets to access fresh produce in a market-like setting. **In 2019-20 we delivered over 4500 lbs of fresh local produce to seniors** in Dorchester, Roxbury and Jamaica Plain.

2 We believe that supporting local farmers and food entrepreneurs is essential for the economy and the environment

In 2019, we started a “hyper-local” Community Supported Agriculture program. CSA's offer a box of seasonal vegetables to subscribers at a set rate. CSA's benefit local farms by providing a fixed income stream at the beginning of the season. And consumers benefit by having a wide range of local produce available weekly. The “hyper-local” CSA was developed in collaboration with **OASIS on Ballou Farm in Dorchester** and **Urban Farming Institute in Mattapan**, both BIPOC operated non-profit farms. In 2020 we continued to provide important revenue to these urban farms and created subsidized “solidarity” shares to those in need.



3 We believe in building an asset that is truly of, by and for the people

In 2020, after a national search, we hired CoEverything, a local BIPOC led design firm that specializes in cooperative development and community informed design. CoEverything led a summer interactive design series and survey that engaged more than 200 DFC members to help design the new store. The results of this community input have been incorporated in the final store design, “of, by and for the people.”



“We have an opportunity to really, more profoundly, embrace and engage the community in something that matters. And food matters! The community got together and is doing this, so people in the neighborhood can build something that we own and that prioritizes our needs.” (Apolo Catala, OASIS Farm Manager)

Member Engagement

Member engagement was strong in 2019-20. Dozens of members spread the word about the Co-op at Farmers’ Markets and Community Events (including Juneteenth celebration at Franklin Park, Dorchester Bike and Brew in Peabody Square, tabling in Bowdoin Geneva and neighborhood and block club meetings) Other activities included work days at **OASIS on Ballou Farm** in Dorchester, and a **“Green Future Fest”**, a festival to highlight climate change work in communities of color. (in partnership with the **Trustees, Resonant Energy, Boston Cyclist Union and Co-op Power**)

The Pandemic shut down many of these activities in March of 2020, and the Co-op learned to Zoom and pivot to on-line activities. In the fall of 2020 we had a film screening and discussion on the history of food co-ops. Monthly Meet & Greets were established, and Co-op membership accelerated.

Building our Co-op has begun!

Construction began in late January 2021 for the building that will house the Dorchester Food Co-op and 41 units of affordable housing



Looking Ahead

We currently have 5 active committees comprised of member-owners, leading the co-op development activities. Member-owners are encouraged to participate in these committees. Sign up on the volunteer form on our website:

dorchesterfoodcoop.com/volunteer

Outreach/Membership

Goal: Reach milestone of 1200 member-owners by store opening

Store Committee

Goal: Finish store design and move to construction phase

Capital Campaign Committee:

Goal: Raise \$1.5 million in additional funding to open the store

Food Access Committee:

Coordinate Food Access Programs: CSA and PopUP Farmstands

Solidarity Share Committee: ensure that membership in the Co-op is accessible to all

Construction is scheduled to be completed in early spring, 2022. We hope to open the new Co-op in early summer, 2022

