



Spring Meeting Recap

Submitted by Meagan Weatherby

On Saturday, May 20th, from 12 to 3 pm, the Syracuse Real Food Co-op hosted our annual Spring Member Meeting. The primary purpose of this year's event was to collect input on the Co-op's branding process. The meeting was also intended to make board members and managers available to owners and customers wishing to share questions, concerns or feedback.

The meeting took place outdoors in front of the store, under a tent. Board members and staff were on-hand throughout the afternoon, greeting and talking with members. The main event took place at 1 pm: Damian Vallelonga, a fellow Co-op member and our brand consultant from ECHO Studio, led participants through a discussion about the identity of our food cooperative. This session built on the Branding Survey that had recently been completed by members during March, with questions focused on our current name as well as several alternative options. We brainstormed ideas, shared reactions to brand names and marks used by other food cooperatives, and explored the perceived strengths and weaknesses of each option. Attendance was low, but about 16 members engaged in a productive discussion.

To keep the conversation going and collect feedback from a greater number of members, the posters from the Spring Meeting branding session were displayed inside the store for the following several weeks. Members were invited to add their ideas and feedback to the board. A survey on potential co-op brand names was also distributed by email, garnering 193 responses. The board would love to see more members participating at meetings, but we are very pleased that members took advantage of other opportunities to engage!