



Positive Change Profile:

Rogue Farm Corps



Rogue Farm Corps's training programs offer hands-on experience on a diverse network of commercial family farms in Oregon. They provide real world opportunities for beginners and advanced students of agriculture. Learn more about their work below.

MFC: Give us a brief overview of Rogue Farm Corps's work. What's your inspiration?

RFC: [Rogue Farm Corps](#) trains and equips the next generation of farmers and ranchers through hands-on training programs and the preservation of farmland.

We believe in transforming the food system, from the ground up. Supporting the development of successful new farmers utilizing earth sustaining regenerative farming practices is the cornerstone of changing our food system.

MFC: What is the difference between the Internship program and the Apprenticeship program?

RFC: The [Internship Program](#) is designed for entry-level beginning farmers seeking an entry point into farming as a profession. The Internship Program runs for one farming season and includes farm tours and classes designed to give the students a well rounded introduction to the basics of farming.

The [Apprenticeship Program](#) is designed for advanced-level beginning farmers seeking to gain managerial and entrepreneurial skills and find permanent employment in farming, or to start and run their own farm businesses. The Apprenticeship Program runs for up to two farming seasons and includes course work in advanced agricultural skills and business development skills.

MFC: What are the biggest issues young farmers face today? And are there solutions and/or support accessible to help young farmers overcome these challenges?

RFC: Access to education and training, access to land and capital, and access to markets are the biggest issues facing young farmers. RFC and our many partners are

From the Board:

Be Part of the Success

by Debi Boen – Board Secretary

Medford Food Co-op strives to operate within the [Seven Cooperative Principles](#). The second principle, Democratic Member Control, states, in part, that “co-operatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions.”



The most obvious way an owner can participate in the decision-making process is by becoming a member of the Board of Directors – and we are always happy to discuss that with anyone who is interested. But participation is not limited to Directors. Remember, Directors exist to represent the interests of all the owners; you are encouraged to share your thoughts with the Board as a whole (all meetings are open, and tentative agendas to upcoming meetings are available on the [website](#)). If you prefer to speak one-on-one, you can also find out who current Directors are by visiting the website; or General Manager Anne Carter (541-779-2667) can connect you with a Director.

working on developing support services, technical assistance, and connections to support young farmers in overcoming these challenges. The challenges are amplified for young farmers from historically excluded communities, such as people of color, women, and LGBTQIA+ individuals.

MFC: Tell us something most people don't know about Rogue Farm Corps.

RFC: This past summer we launched our [Growing Rogue Scholarship Campaign](#). This campaign is specifically designed to give support to participants from historically excluded communities.



There is an urgent need to train and prepare the next generation of farmers. According to the latest [USDA Census of Agriculture](#), the average age of farmers in Oregon is nearly 60, sparking concern for how we will steward our agricultural lands and continue to produce food into the future.

We must address systemic inequalities in our food system, including who can access land, who receives financing and who is able to become a farm owner-operator.

According to the last USDA Census of Agriculture, only 3% of farmers in Oregon identify as a race other than white. This is in part due to a legacy of Oregon's racist Donation Land Claim Act and Black Exclusion Laws of the mid-1800s. These laws set into motion over a century of institutional racism most notorious for stealing land from Indigenous communities and excluding Black people from living in Oregon. Many barriers still exist today in providing equitable access to land and capital for non-white farmers in Oregon. It is past time that we act collectively and decisively to dismantle these systems of white supremacy.

Nearly two thirds of Oregon's farmland is slated to change hands in the next 20 years as the baby boomer generation of farmers retires. With many adult children of farmers leaving the farm to pursue other careers, this farmland is at risk for development, real estate investment and being taken out of agriculture. Who this land is transferred to and whether it continues to produce food will shape the future of Oregon's farmland, food systems, and rural communities for many decades to come.

MFC: How can the community get involved and support Rogue Farm Corps?

RFC: RFC needs your financial support to further our mission. Our capacity to support beginning farmers is only limited by our contributions from the community. As a 501c3 tax exempt non profit organization, your donations are tax deductible. Monthly sustaining supporters are key to our future health and well-being as an organization. You can contribute today at www.roguefarmcorps.org/donate.

We're making it easy to support Rogue Farm Corps at the Co-op this October! Round-up your purchase to the nearest dollar and help us create [Positive Change](#) for future farmers. ■

But this is not an article of board recruitment. Rather, the Medford Food Co-op [Board of Directors](#) is pleased to offer you another way to participate. We understand that joining the Board of Directors is a big commitment. Other life demands sometimes prevent us from taking that three-year plunge. We also understand that seven individuals can only be stretched so far. This is an exciting growth phase for the Co-op. There are many avenues to be explored, multiple areas of interest to be more fully developed.



To that end, we are establishing multiple ad hoc committees. Each committee will have at least one Director on board, and that individual will be responsible for reporting committee business to the full board. Committees will vary in length of operation, and there is no set term of participation – committee members may rotate in and out of service as schedules allow – although we do ask for at least a six-month commitment. We want these committees to run smoothly, and there will be a natural time of adjustment every time someone new joins a committee.

If you have an interest in any of the following committees, please contact President Kellie Hill (541-951-5564), Vice President Patty Casebolt (541-301-4632), or talk to any Director.

- Bylaws Revision Committee
- Staff Appreciation Committee
- Outreach Support Committee ■



Staff Spotlight

Get to know the staff!

Andrea Warfield

How long have you been cooperating?

I have been working at the Medford Food Co-op for just over 3 months.

What do you do at the co-op?

I am the manager of the Co-op Café.

What brought you to the co-op?

I worked for a non-profit in White City that ended up closing their doors and leaving me in need of a job. I applied for two jobs and got a call back from both of them. I went to both interviews and knew immediately which job I wanted to take: the Medford Food Co-op Café Manager.

What do you like best about your job?

What I like most about my job, besides the wonderful owners and customers, is the sense of family around our work place.

Tell us your co-op favorites:

Anything that is served in the Café – with Denise's brownies at the top of my list. Also all the fresh organic produce.

How has working at the co-op affected your life?

My husband and I owned and operated a Mediterranean Café for many years which exposed us to a very healthy diet including some vegan choices. Working at the Medford Food Co-op has opened my eyes to many more vegan options. I still eat meat, but enjoy many of the plant-based foods prepared by our Café team.

Tell us something we don't know!

I have a twin brother!

What do you like to do outside of work?

I love spending time with my husband, and our dog, Bandit. We spend a lot of time outdoors and with family. I also love photography and quilting.

Where did you grow up/where have you lived in your life?

My Dad was a career Navy man of 25 years (CPO), so growing up a Navy brat, I have lived up and down the West Coast. ■



Grocery Giants & the Food Co-op Alternative

by Halle Riddlebarger – Outreach Manager

As local farmers harvest their crops and we head into the busiest grocery shopping season of the year, it's a good time to center the story of the groceries you buy and how they impact local farmers and the local economy. That's just what Jon Steinman's new book, [Grocery Story](#) aims to do. As the cover states: "Food has become ground-zero in our efforts to increase awareness of how our choices impact the world. Yet while we have begun to transform our communities and dinner plates, the most authoritative strand of the food web has received surprisingly little attention: the grocery store – the epicenter of our food gathering ritual."

We invite you to meet the author and join us for a compelling talk sure to inspire co-op owners and engage anyone who cares about the future of food. On [Wednesday, November 20th](#), Jon Steinman will visit Medford on his 130-stop North American book tour. During the lunch hours, Jon will be tabling in the store and chatting with shoppers from 11:30am – 1:30pm, and will offer a talk and book-signing that same evening in the Café beginning at 5:30pm. Along with the talk, we'll be offering a variety of complimentary seasonal samples of locally and regionally produced goodies. We hope you can join us as Jon offers a preview of his book, and we offer you samples to inspire your holiday meal and help put local and regional foods at the center of your holiday table. ■

GROCERY STORY

THE PROMISE OF
FOOD CO-OPS
IN THE AGE OF
GROCERY GIANTS
JON STEINMAN



Important Dates

Holiday Hours & Closures

Nov. 28 – Thanksgiving Day – CLOSED
Dec. 4 – Holiday Staff Party – Closing early at 6pm
Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve – Closing early at 6pm
Dec. 25 – Christmas Day – CLOSED
Dec. 31 – New Year's Eve – Open regular hours
Jan. 1 – New Year's Day – Open regular hours

Grocery Story Events

You're invited! Meet Grocery Story author, Jon Steinman, and join us for an inspiring talk about how food cooperatives play an essential role in transforming local and regional food systems. Jon will be in-store tabling on [Wednesday, November 20th](#) from 11:30am – 1:30pm, and will be giving a talk that evening in the Café beginning at 5:30pm. Enjoy complimentary seasonal samples to inspire your holiday meals during the evening talk.

Thanksgiving Turkeys

Reserve your holiday bird! Choose from natural, certified organic, or organic heirloom Diestel turkeys in a range of sizes. No deposit required. Ask your cashier for a reservation form on your next Co-op visit, or call the store to reserve your turkey today.

Board of Directors Meetings

New regular meeting time! The Board of Directors is now meeting on the third Tuesday of each month from 5:30pm – 7:30pm at the Medical Eye Center. Please check our [online calendar](#) for any location and/or time changes. If you are an owner planning to attend a meeting and you would like a specific topic to be addressed, please email the General Manager: gm@medfordfood.coop.

Melissa Cohen, General Manager of Isla Vista Food Co-op in California had this to say about Grocery Story:

In Grocery Story, Jon Steinman shines the light on the long and steady work of consumer-owned food co-ops and their relentless and remarkable work to remain relevant and impactful in their communities even in the age of modern chain grocery giants. Grocery Story tells a tale of food co-ops through common values and shared mission-driven work. Impressive metrics and inspiring moments collectively create the story of a movement helping to redefine what's possible when a grocery store is actually a place to inspire community. This book weaves together many food co-ops into an inspiring historic and very current picture of the ground-level community change happening as the co-op movement continues to grow and adapt and stay relevant in the evolving food landscape dominated by supermarkets and a demand for low-cost food. This book offers an important consideration of the impact that can happen when going to the grocery store becomes an activity and not a chore, and when a grocery cart can ultimately become a vehicle for social change.