



Producer Guide

Updated February 28, 2025

The Gorge Farmer Collective (GFC) exists to streamline our regional food chain in a way that lets farmers farm. We pool our resources as farmers, ranchers, fishers, and food businesses. Together, we are able to minimize duplication of efforts, increase market access, foster space to lean into niches, and decrease burnout. We reject the rugged individualist notion that every farmer must fend for themselves - we are stronger together, as a Collective, and we practice that fully through our Cooperative model.

In this Producer Guide, you will find a compilation of all policies, procedures, and other documents that provide all the details relevant to how the Cooperative functions day-to-day.

Aggregation Warehouse:

% Double Mountain Brewery
1460 Indian Creek Rd, Room #3
Hood River OR 97031

Mailing Address:

PO Box 162 Mosier OR 97040

Office: 203 2nd St., Hood River, OR 97031

Executive Director

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Member-Elected Board of Directors:

Merrit Monnat, M&P Ranches, Chair
Daphne Gill, Pine Shade Farms, Co-Chair
Paul Hansen, Total Eclipse Farm, Treasurer
Zoe Mitchell, Bran & Ash Bakehouse, Secretary
Matthew Thurston, Costarossa Farm, Member at Large

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History & Structure

Our history. GFC was born out of the COVID-19 pandemic, as an innovative response to restaurant accounts disappearing overnight, and farmers facing the potential of losing their ability to sell directly through a farmers market environment. In the Columbia River Gorge, there existed no grassroots local farmer network to overcome this barrier, and so we created one. In spring of 2020, five farms came together to form an online, direct-to-consumer marketplace to ensure we could sell our products, and our customers could maintain access to safe, healthy foods in a time when it mattered most. We have since transitioned from a multi-member LLC to a Cooperative. In addition to our original direct-to-consumer marketplace, our sales channels now include commercial and institutional distribution, as well as food access programming in partnership with hunger relief organizations.

Why Cooperatives matter. A co-op is a business model that is equally owned and controlled by the very members whose needs it is created to serve. It is a democratic and community-oriented organization. The members collaborate and manage the business according to their shared priorities, each with a single vote and an equal ownership share. We are an organization of farmers, for farmers. Because there is no outside owner to take profit from our work, the costs of doing business can be kept as low as possible, translating to more money in our members' pockets. When income exceeds expenses and capital reserves needs, profits will be distributed among members.

Board of Directors. The Gorge Farmer Collective's Board of Directors consists of five member-owners, elected annually by the membership as a whole. The Board meets monthly to discuss operations, finance, policies, and provide strategic direction to GFC's staff, vendors and members. The board is responsible for the strategic development of the Gorge Farmer Collective business. All producers are encouraged to attend Board meetings.

Membership Participation & Communication. Each Monday, you will receive an email from GFC staff outlining the week's logistical flow and communicating any updates, changes, or important information to be aware of. Each winter, GFC holds an annual All Members Meeting, a mandatory gathering to relay financial reports from the previous year, inform the membership of important operational updates, and vote as a group on any bylaw amendments.

Producer Types

There are two ways to participate in the Gorge Farmer Collective (GFC)--as a *Cooperative Member* or as a *Vendor*. These are contrasted below:

Cooperative Member	Vendor
Farmers, ranchers, fishers, and value-added food businesses may apply.	Farmers, ranchers, fishers, and value-added food businesses may apply.
Owns an equal share in the Cooperative, is represented in decision making, entitled to a vote at membership meetings, and eligible to run for a seat on the Board of Directors.	No ownership stake, no representation on the Board.
Membership is acquired through a one-time, \$350 equity contribution, refundable upon exiting the Cooperative.	No equity contribution requirement.
No annual fee; need not reapply annually.	Initial application and annual renewal fee of \$45
You list your products at the price you need to make. GFC marks up 25% to Direct-to-Consumer customers and 20% on wholesale customers to cover operating expenses.	You list your products at the price you need to make. GFC marks up 50% to Direct-to-Consumer customers and 20% on wholesale customers to cover operating expenses.
Patronage refunds: When annual net profits exceed operating expenses and capital reserves needs, patronage refunds will be distributed to all Members, in proportion to their use of the platform.	No patronage refund.
Responsible for weekly product delivery and packing their own product into individual customer orders at our warehouse facility.	Responsible for weekly product delivery only; GFC staff packs product into individual customer orders. On a case by case basis, shelf-stable or frozen product may be stored onsite.
Shopping discount to purchase goods at-cost from the website.	No shopping discount.

Operating Schedule

Producers are in full control of their own inventory and pricing on the website. GFC will provide software onboarding guidance and other necessary materials, including [videos from Local Food Marketplace](#). Each producer creates their own profile, adds their own products and corresponding selling units and pricing, and provides their own original photos for each listed item. GFC then marks the product up 25-50% to cover operating expenses. Producers update their product availability weekly.

Customers order weekly, year-round, Thursdays at 8 a.m. to Mondays at 10 a.m. You receive a Pick List of what sold each week on Mondays at 10:15 a.m., and deliver sold product to our warehouse in Hood River on Tuesdays or Wednesday mornings. Deliveries go out on Wednesdays and Thursday, and your net payment for products sold is issued the following Monday via bank transfer.

Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thrs.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
Feb 5	Feb 6	Feb 7	Feb 8	Feb 9	Feb 10	Feb 11
11am List product availability	List product availability	List product availability by 12pm	Customer Ordering @ 8am	Customer Ordering	Customer Ordering	Customer Ordering
Feb 12	Feb 13	Feb 14	Feb 15	Feb 16	Feb 17	Feb 18
Customer Ordering: Closes @10am	You deliver product to whse	You deliver product to whse. GFC delivers orders				
11am List product availability	List product availability	List product availability by 12pm	Customer Ordering @ 8am	Customer Ordering	Customer Ordering	Customer Ordering
Feb 19	Feb 20	Feb 21	Feb 22	Feb 23	Feb 24	Feb 25
Customer Ordering: Closes @10am	You deliver product to whse	You deliver product to whse. GFC delivers orders				
GFC issues ACH Transfer				ACH Transfer hits your bank		
11am List product availability	List product availability	List product availability by 12pm	Customer Ordering @ 8am	Customer Ordering	Customer Ordering	Customer Ordering
Feb 26	Feb 27	Feb 28	Feb 29	Mar 1	Mar 2	Mar 3
GFC issues ACH Transfer				ACH Transfer hits your bank		
Customer Ordering: Closes @10am	You deliver product to whse	You deliver product to whse. GFC delivers orders				
11am List product availability	List product availability	List product availability by 12pm	Customer Ordering @ 8am	Customer Ordering	Customer Ordering	Customer Ordering

Aggregation Procedure

WEDNESDAY orders can be delivered Tuesdays 8-5 or Wednesdays 8-9:30am

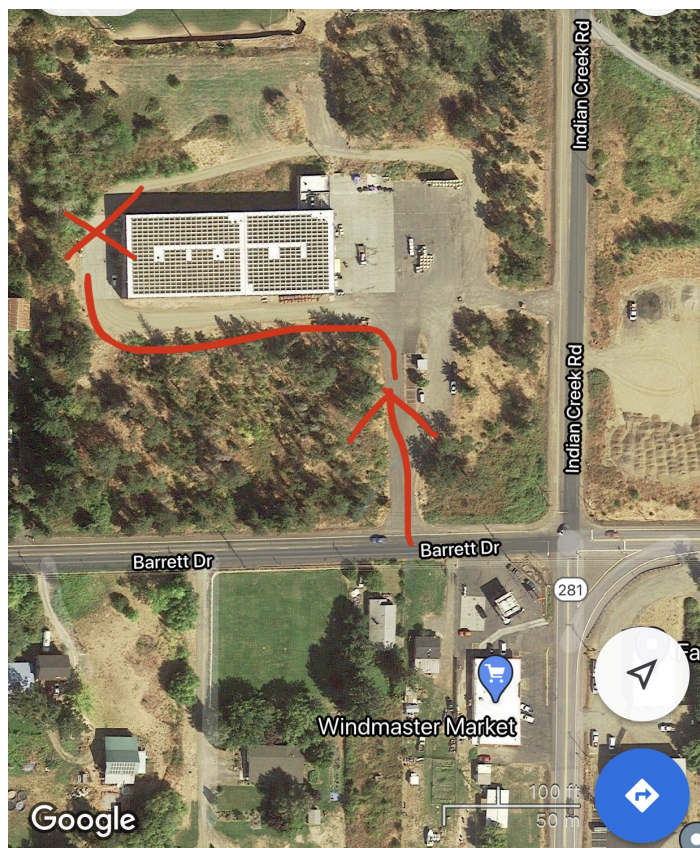
THURSDAY orders can be delivered Tuesdays 8-5 or Wednesdays 8-5pm

Monday:

- Detailed pick lists sent to producers upon order closing - shows who ordered what at each location. You will receive a pick list for each “subperiod” - Weds and Thurs. These lists will come in two separate emails. For clarity, we recommend printing your pick list directly from your LFM account; this way one list can include all orders (Weds and Thurs orders)
- If another format makes more sense to you, you can play around with the “Selected View: Packing List” at the top of your account’s Pick List tab. From there, you can sort by location, product or customer, and you can also download the info into an excel sheet and organize it how you wish.

Tuesday:

- Farmers arrive from 8am-5pm, while warehouse gate is unlocked: 1460 Indian Creek Rd, Hood River (entrance on Barrett Drive, across from Windmaster) - use door around back of the building. **DRIVE SLOWLY!!** There are dogs, children, forklift, dump trucks and other hazards zooming about.



- Deliveries to be made around the back of the building. Be mindful of any forklift action. Park on the side so other cars can come through the driveway if need be. Lock box code [REDACTED]. Keep door shut as much as possible to maintain warehouse temperature.
- Use man-door as much as possible. If you need to use the large blue door, be very careful and prop open with a cement block, as it can be very dangerous if it gets caught in a gust of wind. The warehouse staff can also unload full pallets for you with their forklift - find someone around the front and politely ask for a load out (having an extra item to share with them is always a good way to make friends, too)
- Unload product with roly carts inside... save ya back
- Lugs will be on shelves, pre-labeled and organized by customer location and last name.
- “NOT PACKED” Clipboard: Will include page to log time in/out, all producer detailed pack lists.
- Drop off product directly into each customer lug (all info needed on detailed pick list - printed for you and in the “Not Packed” clipboard)
 - Check off items on your detailed pick list as you pack it. Watch for multiple Qty orders! We highlight multiples for you.
 - BE MINDFUL of product already in the lug- no squishy! Make it look nice and make sure everything fits in the lug - they may be put into stacks at pickup locations.
 - If a customer needs another lug: write “+lug” on their label, grab a new lug and hand write all the necessary info on a new label (name, location) - make a note on the master sheet (hanging from rack clipboard) that you created another lug for them.
 - If you are short on product, make detailed notes on your pick ticket and place onto the “Notes for Kiara” clipboard. Then, you will also need to cross items off the invoices for customers who did not receive your item. Customer invoices are located on each location’s label clipboard on order shelving.
- Meat: place meat into coolers in the freezer (middle room 2) - each cooler corresponds with a pickup location. If a bag become full, grab another blue bag, label it, and put into freezer.
- When finished packing, place pick list into clipboard that is labeled “PACKED”
 - *If anything is missing or subbed, notify Kiara immediately OR note on your detailed pick ticket and put it on the “Notes for Kiara” clipboard.*
- Vendors: just put your items on the delivery receiving shelf- we will pack up for ya.

Wednesday:

- If you didn’t drop on Tuesday, deliver products for WEDNESDAY orders between 8-9:30am. Deliveries to go out at 10am.

Product Standards & Quality Agreement

We pride ourselves in offering customers the highest quality, source-identified, honest, and safe local foods in the Gorge, picked and packed to order. The loyalty and satisfaction of our customers, and thus the viability of the Cooperative, depend on *all* our producers meeting the standards outlined in this agreement: keep in mind that the quality and integrity of an individual producer's products reflects on every other producer and the Cooperative as a whole. Additionally, responding to customer complaints takes time and resources which are better used elsewhere. Please read and agree to abide by our quality standards and policies below.

Product Qualifications and Origin

Products sold through GFC must be created, grown, or raised by the first party producer; sale of second farm or business products is prohibited unless otherwise approved by Management / Board of Directors. Products for sale are approved on an individual basis via your application: if you wish to sell products not approved via your original application, you will need to seek approval from Management before your product is admitted to the website.

Food Safety & Licensing Requirements

Product for sale must be stored properly and safely between harvest and pack, in compliance with food safety laws (see: [Food Safety Modernization Act / FSMA](#) for guidelines. We require all produce farmers to obtain a Produce Safety Alliance certificate within one calendar year of admittance to GFC.

NEW! Sales through GFC are regulated at a wholesaler/distributor level, *not* as a direct-to-consumer farmers market. It is the producer's responsibility to ensure that all products are compliant with federal, state, county, and local jurisdiction requirements and/or licenses required to sell all products in a wholesale manner, and shall provide copies of documentation and proof of compliance to GFC. Please direct any questions regarding licensing requirements to your local Oregon or Washington Department of Agriculture agent. Note this means you may need to seek additional licenses in order to sell products such as eggs, baked goods, preserves, dried foods, foraged foods, plant starts, etc. through GFC.

Presentation of Products for Sale

All products listed for sale on the website must include an original photograph (not stock photos) that accurately represents the product. The quantity unit of the product for sale must be communicated to the customer (e.g. one bunch, ½ lb, dozen, 28oz can, etc.). Products may only claim terms such as "organic" or "naturally grown" if the farm is properly certified as such and provides GFC with a copy of the certificate.

Expectations of Delivered Product

- Washed and cleaned
- Properly ripe
 - Exception: if it is an industry standard that an item requires ripening before eating (storage pears, for example), please include that note in the product description on the website
- Reasonably free of insects, disease, environmental or other damage
- Provided in correct quantities, according to your Pick List
- Properly labeled with farm name, item and quantity, and any other labeling requirements per ODA / WSDA licensing.
- Packaged in a way that preserves product quality during pack, and from aggregation to distribution. Between leaving the warehouse (~10am) and pickup (4-6m), most* products are stored in vented lugs, placed in properly refrigerated trailers, walk-ins, or reach-ins, and transported in a refrigerated truck.
 - *Meat is stored in a cooler with ice packs inside a refrigeration unit, flowers are stored in a bucket of water, and plant starts are stored separately in stackable totes.
 - Note: use of single-use plastic such as clamshells and plastic bags is discouraged unless absolutely necessary to preserve product quality
- Delivered in full and on time. Communicate with Management as soon as possible if you are unable to fulfill your total delivery or cannot deliver on time.
- Reflective of the image and description of the product as advertised on the website. All products listed for sale must include an original photograph that truthfully represents the product for sale.

Protocol for Responding to Quality Issues & Customer Complaints

In the case that we must credit a customer's account for a product's failure to meet our quality standards, you will not be paid for that item; those funds will be transferred to the customer's account to provide their credit. If it should happen that we must credit a customer for your product, you will be notified in writing. Should the problem recur, you may be asked to submit a written plan outlining actions you will take to avoid the problem in the future, and you will be required to thoroughly re-inspect the product at check-in on pack day. A pattern of problems may result in a temporary or permanent suspension of a producer's access to the Collective's sales platform, after review by Management and/or the Board.

In the case that product is damaged during aggregation or transport by the fault of the Cooperative (e.g. a tomato is properly packed, but destroyed during transport): you will receive payment for the item; the customer will not be charged for the item; and GFC will assume the cost of crediting the customer's account.

GFC reserves the right to update this Product Quality Policy as need be.

Packaging & Labeling

Packaging Standards

The storage area for your boxes must be off the ground, dirt-free, hair free, etc. If there is any remnant of soil on the box, wipe or spray it off before delivery. Pack with the appropriate packing technique per each crop. Your product should be delivered in clean packaging material, packed according to the LFM Pick List and labeled appropriately.

Common Packaging Materials:

- Waxed or non-waxed boxes
- Waxed paper rolls (to line boxes) and paper cutters
- Plastic box liners
- Perforated root bags
- Plastic bulk bags (25 lbs. capacity)
- Flats, half-flats and other open trays

Weight and Pack Type Standards

Use appropriate weights per industry standard, including bunch weights. Slight variation is ok, but consistency in standard weights creates clear expectations for GFC staff and customers alike. Your product should arrive to use in the same case or pack counts as listed on the LFM Pick List shopping portal.

Common Pack Types

- 25 lb. box, 5 lb bag
- 16 oz bag, 8 oz clamshell
- 1 unit, 4 pack

Bulk/Case Pack Types

- 50 @ 1 lb pack (case labeled and individual pound packs to be labeled)
- 50 lb bulk (exterior case labeled only)

Labeling Standards

Vendors must label all bulk case boxes. This same policy applies to members with any pre-packaged items such as dried fruit, preserves, nuts/seeds, items in clam shells, loose items sold by weight such as apples or potatoes, etc. We encourage vendors/members to utilize branded stickers for their labeling.

Stickers/labels must include the following food safety information:

- Farm Name (or logo)
- Crop name
- Variety
- Amount, pack size

It's very important to remove old stickers/labels when re-using boxes. Failing to remove old stickers creates confusion during the receiving and delivery process. It is the vendor/member's responsibility to make sure your boxes are cleared of all old stickers/labels/tape/etc.

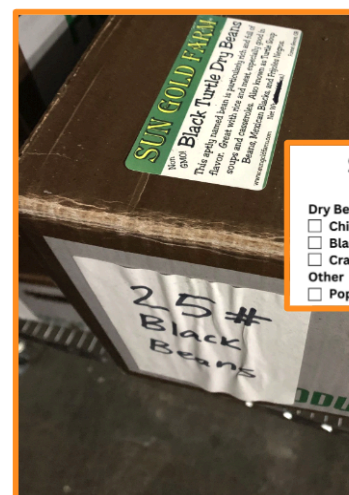
Vendor/member stickers should be placed in plain sight, on the side of the box (not the top, as cases get stacked vertically). Consistency in label placement significantly increases efficiency in aggregation.

What Needs a Label? Anything that doesn't fit in a lug:

- Flowers
- Freezer Items
- Bulk Cases
- Plant Starts

What Goes on a Label?

- Producer: That's You!
- Customer: Last Name, Wholesale Account, Etc.
- Product: What's in the Bag/Box?
- Quantity: Total weight/quantity
- Pack Size: 1 lb packs



Sun Gold Farm	
pack date: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Dry Beans	<input type="checkbox"/> Weight
<input type="checkbox"/> Chickpeas	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 lb.
<input type="checkbox"/> Black Turtle	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 lb.
<input type="checkbox"/> Cranberry	<input type="checkbox"/> 25 lb. case
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Popcorn	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

Label Examples:

Marketing & Photo Tips

Marketing your products on Local Food Marketplace (LFM)

To better promote GFC as a whole, here are some tricks and tips we'd like to share with y'all about setting your products up for success on our website:

- Always take your photos in indirect natural light
- Show your product photograph in the quantity the customer is buying
 - Ex: photograph what a bunch of kale looks like, or post a photo of loose-leaf salad with a note that it's a 1/2 lb bag.
- Take all your photos with a similar background and in a similar fashion to further your personal brand identity and make your product easily recognizable throughout the site
- [Here is an article](#) that has some great suggestions on taking photographs of meat
 - Highlights: undercooked meats look best in photos
- [Here is an article](#) with great tips on taking photos of fruits and vegetables
 - Highlights: spritz produce lightly with water to make them ~glisten~
- Please not use stock photos or others' photos without permission, as it may put us at risk of copyright law infringement
- Ready to add your new product or pictures to LFM? LFM offers a [producer guide](#) that explains everything you need to know about creating and listing new items for sale

Want someone to take photos for you?

If taking mouth-watering product photos isn't your jam (let's be honest, farmers have one million other jobs that take priority), the below co-op friends are available for hire/trade:

- Elona Trogub: (971) 235-9837 / elonatrogub@gmail.com
- Alicia Estabrook: (678) 634-7997 / alicia.estabrook@gmail.com
- Katie Menzel: (503) 720-8657 / katie.safley@gmail.com
- Lauren Johnson: (701) 426-5844 / lojohnson811@gmail.com

If your product line stays pretty consistent (meat, value-added) consider investing in professional photographs as you'll only need to do this once and then you have great marketing material forever!

Help GFC Source Social Media Content

Every Monday our producer newsletter goes out. One topic is a request for Various "farm-life" images that we can use to keep our social feeds flowing. These images can also be dropped into our shared photo folder located [here](#).

Wild, Weedy & Medicinals Foods

“There are old foragers and there are bold foragers, but there are no old, bold foragers.”

The purpose of this policy is to establish protocols for farmers and foragers who choose to produce for sale, through the Gorge Farmer Collective, foods and medicinals made from wild and weedy plants. Acknowledging that the consumption and use of wild and weedy foods and medicinals can be beneficial and should be accessible to the public, the board establishes guidelines to help farmers and foragers limit potential hazards, trace responsibility as well as navigate cultural appropriation. New plant or mushroom offerings not mentioned below should still be reviewed by the board. If no one on the board is familiar with the plant or mushroom, an experienced herbalist or mycologist will be consulted before approving the product. These lists should evolve as the Co-op evolves.

A critical note on Indigenous community access to traditional foods, medicinals and ceremonial plants: Any plant, herb or meat being offered for sale through GFC that has historically sustained and/or been a part of ceremonial use for Indigenous communities in the Columbia Gorge should be scrutinized by the farmer/fisher/hunter/forager and the board not only for legal and ethical harvest practices but also for cultural appropriation before being listed for sale. This includes *Oncorhynchus spp.* (Wild Salmon), *Entosphenus tridentatus* (Lamprey Eel), *Cervus canadensis* (Wild Elk), *Lomatium spp* (Biscuit Root), *Camassia spp.* (Camas) *Vaccinium membranaceum* (Huckleberry - Black, Red), *Prunus virginiana* (Chokecherry), *Bryoria fremontii* (Black Moss), *Legusticum porteri* (Osha), *Salvia apiana* (White Sage), Hierochloa (Sweetgrass), etc.

Regardless of wild harvested or cultivated plants, all medicinal herb preparations should come with usage instructions and dosage guidelines, lot number, ingredients (latin and common name), source of plant materials, year of harvest, and name and contact information of harvester.

You will need to secure a commercial use permit to sell special forest products. More info in the links below, or contact your local Forestry Department to learn more.

[Washington State Fact Sheet on selling Foraged Goods](#)

[Oregon Special Forest Products - Commercial Use Permits](#)

Local Herbalists and Instructors who may be able to help review unfamiliar plants and products:

- Elona Trogub - Herbalist, Hood River, OR 971-235-9837
- Keith Silva - Herbalist, Hood River, OR 541-419-1647
- Michael Bueg - Mycologist-Educator, Trout Lake, WA beugm@evergreen.edu
- Erico Schleicher, Teacher - Elderberry School of Botanical Medicine, Portland, OR elderberryschoolpdx@gmail.com
- Scott Kloos, Teacher - Cascadia Folk Medicine, Portland, OR info@forestmedicine.net
- Missy Rohs, Teacher - Arctos School of Herbal and Botanical Studies, Portland, OR info@arctoschool.org

Banned Plants & Mushrooms

These plants are banned for sale through GFC due to high risk of overharvest, potential poisoning from look-alikes or inappropriate dosage. This list is incomplete and does not include plants not historically harvested for food or medicinals. Herbalists are still welcome to sell any plant they wish through their private practices but GFC should not participate in the distribution due to excessive risk.

- *Asarum caudatum* - Wild Ginger
Known Risk: Severe stomach irritation from overconsumption of tea of wild ginger
- *Daucus carota* - Queen Anne's Lace, Wild Carrot
Known Risk: Poison Hemlock look-alike.
- *Camassia quamash* - Camas
Known Risks: Overharvest of an Indigenous food that is not easily accessible to Indigenous communities. Also, Death Camas is too difficult to tell apart from edible Camas species post-harvest.
- *Amanita muscaria* - Fly Agaric Mushroom
Known Risk: Coma or Death. While possible to prepare as an edible, not enough cultural knowledge exists to safely sell this to the public.
- *Amanita calyptroderma* - Coccora Mushroom
Known Risk: Too easily confused with the highly toxic *Amanita phalloides*, Panther cap.

Potentially Problematic Plants & Mushrooms

- ***Pteridium aquilinum* - Fiddleheads of Bracken Fern**
Include Customer Instructions: Boil for a few minutes in salted water to draw out ptaquiloside, a known carcinogen that is in fiddleheads in variable quantity.
- ***Morchella* spp - Blonde, Brown or Black Morels**
Include Customer Instructions: Raw morels contain small amounts of the toxin hydrazine. This volatile and toxic compound will evaporate with sufficient cooking. Cook thoroughly at least 10 minutes. *Do not consume raw*. Symptoms of morel poisoning are not severe but can cause stomach upset and cramping, alcohol consumption will worsen effects.
- ***Sambucus* spp - Blue, Black and Red Elderberry species**
Producer Instructions: When preparing elderberry for sale, caution must be taken to remove all twigs, leaves, bark and seeds from preparation as they contain high levels of cyanide. Cyanide is not completely destroyed by heat. Seeds contain cyanide as well and must be removed/strained out without being crushed. For safety, all elderberries should be cooked, but especially red elderberry.
- Foragers need to know the difference between true morels and look-alikes - false morel species such as *Gyromitra esculenta*, *Verpa bohemica*, and *Helvella*.

Sources:

- Hank Shaw's Wild Food Recipes. Hunter Angler Gardener Cook. <http://honest-food.net/>
- Deur, Douglas. Pacific Northwest Foraging: 120 Wild and Flavorful Edibles from Alaska Blueberries to Wild Hazelnuts (Regional Foraging Series). Illustrated, Timber Press, 2014.
- Arora, David. *Mushrooms Demystified: A Comprehensive Guide to the Fleshy Fungi*. 2nd ed. Berkeley: Ten Speed Press, 1986. Print.

Cooperative Membership Agreement

(Applies to Membership applicants only)

Rights as a Member of the Cooperative

As a member of the Cooperative I am entitled to:

- Have one vote at annual and special all-Member meetings, and receive proper notice of meetings;
- Serve on a committee or run for a position on the board of directors;
- Participate in the Cooperative's operations and governance;
- Respectfully and productively raise concerns or issues within the Cooperative;
- Receive information about the Cooperative's financial status and other important processes or decisions (e.g. resolutions); and
- Receive patronage refunds in accordance with my use of the Cooperative, when allowable.

Responsibilities as a Member of the Cooperative

As a member of the Cooperative I have a responsibility to:

- Participate in the governance of the Cooperative through attendance of general meetings, voting on decisions, asking questions, and serving on the Board or committees if so inclined;
- Support the mission, vision, and goals of the Cooperative;
- Adhere to the policies and procedures of the Cooperative (as determined by the Board);
- Support the Cooperative's operations by using its services or contributing to the delivery of services;
- Communicate and interact with my fellow Cooperative Members, Vendors, partner organizations, customers, and any paid/volunteer personnel in a respectful, productive manner in line with our Code of Conduct Agreement;
- Learn more about the Cooperative's operations and organizational capacity; and
- Support the capitalization of the Cooperative by making an initial equity investment of \$350.

Obligations of the Cooperative to its Members

As a member of the Cooperative, I understand that the Cooperative is obligated to:

- Provide notice of meetings and information on ways that I can participate in the Cooperative's governance;
- Maintain a transparent and efficient system of decision-making that is inclusive of the membership and supportive of the mission and vision of the Cooperative;
- Conduct business, through the board or staff, that is in the best interest of the Cooperative and its Members; and
- Use my financial contribution of \$350 effectively and responsibly, and redeem my initial membership payment in the event I leave the Cooperative.

Code of Conduct Agreement

Code of Conduct: As a Member of the Cooperative, I agree to conduct my business regarding and relationship with the Cooperative, the Membership, Vendors, partner organizations, customers, and any paid/volunteer personnel in an ethical, respectful, and productive manner. Instances of harmful behavior including, but not limited to, bullying, harassment, intimidation, discrimination, deceit, slander, or not acting in the best interest of the Cooperative, are deemed unacceptable and counterproductive to the function of our Cooperative. Such actions will be resolved with intervention and/or disciplinary action, as outlined below.

Grievance Submission & Disciplinary Action Protocol: if first-offense, easily resolvable and less-important issues arise between a Member and any other party affiliated with the Cooperative, the Cooperative encourages said parties to attempt to resolve the matter privately and informally before submitting a formal grievance.

If this is not possible, or the matter is a continuing or second offense, the concerned party shall submit a written grievance to the Manager with as much detail of the incident(s) as possible, along with any applicable supporting evidence. (Grievances involving the Manager will be submitted directly to the Board of Directors.) At any stage, the accused party maintains a right to access all information in any grievances submitted against them and the right to present evidence to defend their actions. The Manager (or Board, if the grievance involves the Manager) will gather information from all involved parties and facilitate a conversation among all parties (enlisting the aid of a third party facilitator, if appropriate) in an attempt to resolve the situation with intervention.

For a third offense, or for any offense the Manager deems to require severe and immediate intervention, the grievance and information from all concerned parties will be brought before the Board of Directors for a hearing in which the defending party is encouraged to attend. Previous grievances, related or not, may be considered as evidence in such a hearing to determine appropriate corrective or disciplinary action. The Board may vote by majority to temporarily suspend the Member's access to the Cooperative sales platform, or revoke the Membership of the accused party if necessary. Termination of Membership is a matter not taken lightly, and will be entertained only as a last resort. The Board's decision may include eligibility for terminated Members to re-apply for Membership after a specified waiting period, at the discretion of the Board. Terminated Members will be reimbursed for their initial equity payment upon departure from the Cooperative.

(Termination of a Board member shall adhere to the protocol set forth in Section 7.6 of the Cooperative's bylaws.)

Non-Compete Agreement

For our collective business to work, we need our producers to be fully committed. GFC depends on consistency, honesty and cooperation from its members in order to provide competitive, transparent, efficient, and mutually beneficial services. To sustain and expand our sales and distribution systems, GFC and all its enrolled Producers and Buyers are asked to follow certain non-compete guidelines:

- Producers will not seek to create new business relationships with GFC Buyers for sales outside GFC.
- Producers and Buyers with an established history of doing business with each other prior to joining GFC may continue transactions outside of GFC, though they are encouraged to use GFC instead.
- To the extent possible, encourage your new and existing business customers to purchase from you through GFC. This way you can maintain and streamline your direct to consumer, commercial and wholesale accounts, spend less time off the farm, save money, and provide a valuable service to your customers.
- Violations of the above-listed guidelines could erode the value and viability of GFC sales programs and its enrolled Producers and Buyers. Any Producer or Buyer who knowingly violates these guidelines may face termination of GFC membership.

Remember, GFC is *your* business! Diverting sales away from the Collective and rerouting them to your personal business jeopardizes the sales of all your co- business owners, and the Cooperative as a whole.