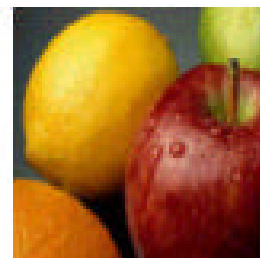


# **OAKLEY FRUIT AND VEGETABLE CO-OP**

## **START-UP PACK**



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# INTRODUCTION

## **Introduction**

This pack is a straightforward guide to running a fruit and vegetable co-op in your community. It provides information and guidelines that will help you avoid some of the difficulties all fruit and veg stalls will face in the course of setting up.

The sections within the pack are designed for you and your group to dip into and adapt to your local needs. Enthusiastic as your group may be, you must always remember that you are providing a service for your community.

Before you begin trading, the first step involves spending a great deal of time exploring the needs of your local community. It is important to get this first step right. If you rush into starting a fruit and veg co-op your group could miss important opportunities to find out what your customers want as well as other issues including location, opening times, etc.

In this pack, you will find useful contacts throughout Fife and Scotland. Community Food Projects are increasingly seen in our communities. Your group is not alone. Your group should visit other projects and find out how they work. A chance to spend a day working with other volunteers will give you a great insight into running a stall.

Your customers only see the tip of the iceberg; there is a lot of work going on in the background including ordering, stock checking, banking, reporting, negotiating with suppliers and training. Working alongside experienced volunteers will give you a real flavour of the work your group will have to undertake.

We are sorry if we have focused on the hard work so far in this introduction, but we need to be realistic about the workload your group will take on.

On the positive side, running a fruit and veg co-op is a great way for anyone, no matter what skills they have, to get involved. A fruit and veg stall can make a real impact on the health of your community. It is a great opportunity to increase your skills and confidence as well as to make friends.

## **Health Promotion**

Fruit and vegetables are important sources of vitamins, minerals and fibre and are an important part of a healthy balanced diet. It is now also recognised that they are important in the prevention of cancer and heart disease.

Experts in the UK and around the world recommend that we should eat five portions of fruit and vegetables each day. The Fruit and Vegetable Co-op could have an important part to play in helping people in the local area increase the amount of fruit and vegetables they eat each day and help to protect their health.

Theme days and promotional events can help you to advertise your co-op and increase sales. A range of free promotional material is available from:

### **~~✂~~ Information and Resources Centre (Fife Primary Care NHS Trust, Health Promotion Department)**

A variety of resources such as books, videos, teaching kits, information packs, displays, etc are available for loan to individuals and organisations involved in promoting health in Fife. A range of free leaflets and posters is also available. Catalogues are also available. Catalogues are kept in the Information and Resources Centre for general reference and are also available online.

Leaflet Catalogues are also located at:

- ~~✂~~ ~~✂~~ Kirkcaldy, St Andrews, Leven, Kelty and Cupar Health Centres
- ~~✂~~ ~~✂~~ Carnegie Clinic, Dunfermline and Dovecot Clinic, Glenrothes
- ~~✂~~ ~~✂~~ Queen Margaret, Lynebank and Victoria Hospitals

Tel. 01592 712812 ext. 291 / 294

Fax 01592 716858

[www.show.scot.nhs.uk/fpct/irccat](http://www.show.scot.nhs.uk/fpct/irccat)

## **Comic Company**

Produce a wide range of health information resources including posters, leaflets, badges, stickers, balloons, activity packs, puzzles, postcards, etc which you may wish to purchase for a special promotional event. Available from:

Tel. 0208 675 1007

[www.comiccompany.co.uk](http://www.comiccompany.co.uk)

## **Support**

Where can your group go for help? Throughout Fife and further afield there are a number of agencies that can help you get started. By tapping into these agencies, your group will be able to use the resources they have to hand.

## **Health**

A number of health professionals are involved in this area of work across Fife. They can provide training, information and, in some cases, funding for your group.

Health Promotion (Fife Wide)	Haig House, Cameron Hospital, 01592 712812
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All Round Care Project (West Fife Villages)	Deborah Vanstone, Dietitian, All Round Care Project, Admin Block, Lynebank Hospital, Dunfermline. 01383 565314
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Public Health Practitioners	Contact your local CHP Office:
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## **Economic Development**

The Small Business Gateway (Glenrothes) can give you advice on sources of funding. They also offer training courses and business advice about bookkeeping, taxes and grants.

Telephone Small Business Gateway 0845 609 6611

## **Community Services**

Community Education Workers can provide training in setting up your group and developing your structure. The Community Education Worker can help your group work through its needs and provide useful contacts. They will also be aware of other successful local Fruit and Vegetable Co-ops, which you can contact for advice and support.

Contact your local Fife Council Locality Manager

## **Scottish Co-op**

The Scottish Co-op is an invaluable training resource and has worked with many Food Co-ops. To find out more, contact the Co-operative Strategy Unit on 0161 827 6696. The Co-operative Group website has a pack on setting up food co-ops, visit [www.co-op.co.uk](http://www.co-op.co.uk)

The Co-operative Group also operates a Community Dividend Fund. This is a fund from which awards are made to help improve the community in which they live. The scheme is open to organisations operating in the trading area of Co-operative Group (CWS) Limited. Additional information and application form can be obtained from the Website:

[www.co-op.co.uk](http://www.co-op.co.uk)

## **Scottish Community Diet Project**

The SCDP's over-riding aim is to help improve Scotland's diet and health. It does this by supporting work within low-income communities, which improves access to and take-up of a healthy diet. It supports both community initiatives and inter-agency partnership working.

It offers: a grants scheme for community initiatives; toolkits and guides for groups to use; information exchange and networking facilitation; development of partnership working models; and support action research and practice development.

The SCDP was set up in October 1996 as a result of the recommendations contained in the Scottish Diet Action Plan published a few months earlier. It is funded by the Scottish Executive Health Department.

The project is based within the Scottish Consumer Council, and is assisted by a Steering Group made up of a range of groups and agencies, which advises on the nature and direction of the work.

Telephone 0141 226 5261

Web site [www.dietproject.org.uk](http://www.dietproject.org.uk)



## **PREPARATION**

### **Public Meeting**

Interest in starting a Food Co-op can come from local individuals or Community Groups who have seen and heard about the benefits of Community Food Co-ops in other areas. As with the Oakley Project they can be spoken to individually and encouraged to form a steering group. They can then tell their friends / relatives and very soon you have a good number of interested volunteers. Another way to gain further volunteers is to hold a Public Meeting.

When planning a Public Meeting, it is worthwhile thinking about what else is happening in the Community such as bingo nights, school times, should the meeting take place in the morning or afternoon as these will influence the number of people who will attend the Public Meeting. Arranging a crèche can also help encourage younger people to come.

When a date, time and appropriate venue has been arranged, then look towards producing publicity material.

It is worthwhile contacting other Co-ops to find out if they can provide a speaker.

Try to make the meeting as informal as possible and make time for questions and answers. At the conclusion of the meeting make time available for people to volunteer.

The Public Meeting will give an indication as to the number of people willing to support a Food Co-op and, therefore, an indication of prospective members.

### **Publicity**

Advertise the Public Meeting in local newspapers and put up posters in shops, community centres etc to advertise the meeting or get volunteers to post flyers through doors. Get volunteers to tell friends / relatives about the meeting and ask them to invite people along.

## **Volunteers**

Without volunteers the Food Co-op will not work. The more volunteers there are, the stronger the Co-op will be.

To get volunteers, you will have to advertise. The best way is by using posters and leaflets. Make them bright and bold. (See publicity). Door-to-door leafleting and leaflets in Health Centres / Community Centres etc are good ways to advertise the Food Co-op as well as requesting volunteers.

Volunteers will require training in the use of equipment, book-keeping, stock-taking systems, and health and hygiene. Training can be given by experienced volunteers. There might even be a Development Agency with a remit for a Food Co-op in your area that will be able to help with training.

It is important the volunteers make a commitment to the Food Co-op to ensure its smooth running.

Volunteers need support. The volunteers with the Oakley Fruit and Vegetable Project are supported by the Volunteer Co-ordinator with the New Ways Healthy Living Centre Project. This support can also be provided by Community Education / Development Workers, committee members, general members and other volunteers.

Volunteers need to know how and what the decisions regarding the running of the Food Co-op are if they are not involved in the Committee. Volunteers should be encouraged to bring any grievances out in the open. The place to air grievances is at Committee Meetings. Existing volunteers should be encouraged to help and support new volunteers.

## **Market Research**

We asked the volunteers about what food issues there were in Oakley including:

- a. Foods available locally in shops – quality, cost;
- b. Transport;
- c. Home delivery;
- d. Barriers to eating more fruit and vegetables – cooking skills, availability, fear of waste, etc.

The Health Visitors gave a questionnaire to mums in the Baby Clinic. They requested better access to better quality fruit and vegetables locally. This evidence was used to help with funding applications.

A questionnaire can be used to:

- a. Find out if the Community would find a Food Co-op beneficial.
- b. Ascertain the type of stock people would purchase.
- c. Get an idea of the number of people who would join the Co-op when it opens.
- d. Find out the range of age group to target.

Results of a Questionnaire can also be useful when applying for funding.

Canvassing door-to-door can be more productive because of the personal touch and a better response on a one-to-one basis.

It takes a lot of time and volunteers to carry out this type of Market Research, but you can use local resources such as scout groups and youth groups to help distribute and gather information.

If this cannot be done, visit local groups such as Mothers and Toddlers, Lunch Clubs, etc.

## GETTING STARTED

### Committee

A Committee is essential for the every day running of the Food Co-op. The Committee shares the responsibilities for the operation, ensuring that work is spread evenly and attending to any grievances of members and volunteers.

A Committee normally consists of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and additional elected members as laid down by the Constitution.

Meetings are normally held at least once a month, or as required. The Committee will generally make all the decisions about the running of the Food Co-op. Some decisions that will require to be made are: -

- ?? Ordering / Delivery
- ?? Mark-up Percentage / Pricing
- ?? Buying
- ?? Work rota
- ?? Setting up stall
- ?? Arranging insurance (if appropriate – [Health Centre insurance covers Oakley Stall]).

Any decisions to be made are made by a majority vote at the monthly meeting.

## **Constitution**

A Constitution is a list of rules and regulations governing the running of the Food Co-op. It is necessary to have a Constitution before applying for funding or a bank account. Having a Constitution reassures the members that the Food Co-op is democratically run.

A basic Constitution would contain: -

1. Name and address of Food Co-op.
2. Aims of Food Co-op, e.g. to supply cheaper, better quality food.
3. Date of AGM.
4. Office bearers.
5. How many members on Committee.
6. Quorum.
7. Financial accountability.
8. Annual membership fee (if charged).
9. Changes to constitution.
10. Dissolution.

## **Premises**

When starting up a Food Co-op you need premises. There might be premises available in existing Tenants Halls, Community Centre or Community Flat. Oakley Health Centre had sufficient space in the reception area to enable a stall to be set up. The advantage of this was its central location, easy access and a constant flow of people in and out of the building.

If there are no suitable premises available, you will have to apply to the Local Authority for accommodation. A Food Co-op can apply for a council flat. When applying for Council accommodation, it is important to find out the rent. Sometimes, it is possible to get the use of a council flat rent free, but the Food Co-op will have to meet the cost of utilities. The cost of the premises will be a contributory factor to the percentage of mark-up.

When choosing premises, it is important that there is good access for customers and deliveries. All Food Co-ops should be based in ground floor accommodation. It is also important that the premises are located centrally.

If you are to be based in a Community Flat, premises should be made secure by installing an alarm system and grilles / shutters for doors and windows.

It is important to have an alternative exit in case of fire. Security should be taken into account when a Food Co-op applies for premises. Good security will reduce the cost of your insurance.

The Co-op should be insured against fire, theft and public liability. Stock and equipment should be taken into consideration when applying for insurance cover. Co-ops should use reputable insurance companies. Insurance payments are usually made on a yearly basis.

Keeping the cost of the premises as low as possible helps to keep the Co-op running costs down. These savings can then be passed onto your members.

Sharing premises with other groups helps to reduce the Food Co-op running costs.

Also find out if liable for Council Tax or rates.

## **Environmental Health**

# DON'T FORGET

### **Fife Council Environmental Service – Advice for Food Co-operatives**

A Food Co-operative Undertaking needs to have premises from where it can operate but before it can there are a number of matters which need to be considered first. With regard to Environmental Services concerns, the most important of these include the following:

#### ***Registration of Premises***

According to the Food Premises (Registration) Regulations 1991, all food premises that are used as a food business for at least one day a week for five consecutive weeks must register at least 28 days before the first such use. If the premises are to be used wholly or in part as a food business then the person responsible is required to complete a food registration form (see attached form) and return it to their local Environmental Services office. This may be the person who is responsible for the operation of the Co-op or it may be the person who is responsible for the premises if they are not both one and the same.

There is no charge made for registration and it cannot be refused. The purpose is to allow Environmental Services to add the premises to the food premises register and incorporate it into the system of food hygiene inspections. A copy of the form is available from Environmental Services.

## ***Standard of Premises***

Any premises which are used as / by a food business are required to meet the minimum specifications of the Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995. The definition of a food business is *'any undertaking, whether carried out for profit or not and whether public or private, carrying out any or all of the following operations, namely, preparation, processing, manufacturing, packaging, storing, transportation, distribution, handling or offering for sale or supply, of food'*.

There are therefore standards of structure, cleanliness and facilities, which must be met before premises can be used for the purpose of a food business. Food handling practices carried out on the premises must also comply with the regulations. Advice on these matters and a leaflet on the regulations are available from Environmental Services.

## ***Training***

According to the Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995, it is up to the proprietor of a food business to determine the level of training and / or supervision that is required for food handlers to allow them to handle food in a manner that does not present a risk to the safety of the consumer. In the case of a food co-operative, since there is not likely to be an 'owner', then it is most likely that this should be the person responsible for running the Food Co-op. The level of appropriate training will depend on the type of food handled, i.e. whether it is classed as low risk or high risk.

Information and advice on these matters can be obtained by contacting the local Environmental Service Office.

## ***Waste Disposal***

There must be adequate provision for the hygienic disposal of waste, including food waste. If the services of Fife Council are chosen as the waste collector then, as a food business, Co-ops must present waste in orange commercial waste sacks and not in black domestic waste sacks.



## **Advice**

Advice on these matters, a copy of a food registration form and the leaflet on the regulations can be obtained by contacting Environmental Services on the following numbers:

Central      01592 417747

East          01334 412720

West         01383 313850

## **Additional Considerations**

- ~~It~~ It is important that strict health and hygiene regulations are in force.
- ~~It~~ It is imperative that smoking be totally banned from Food Co-op serving areas.
- ~~Hand~~ Hand washing facilities and toilet facilities must be available
- ~~Separate~~ Separate knives used for vegetables and fruit cutting (i.e. one for each)
- ~~Facilities~~ Facilities for washing knives, chopping boards, etc
- ~~Notices~~ Notices displayed to tell customers to wash fruit before eating
- ~~If~~ If selling nuts for birds, these must be labelled 'Not for human consumption!'

The Environmental Health Officer will be able to advise you of other legislation that will be appropriate for the goods you are planning to sell.



## **Transport**

Oakley Fruit and Vegetable Project has the fruit and veg delivered by a market trader. Produce has to be carefully inspected on delivery and any sub-standard produce returned immediately and recorded on the invoice. Goods are sent the following week as an exchange or credited.

If transport is an issue then the better the transport, the fewer problems, the better the Food Co-op.

Forms of transport a Food Co-op can use are:

1. Food Co-op's own transport
2. Community transport
3. Volunteers' own transport

If you have no transport, it is still possible to run a Co-op but it can prove difficult and expensive. Most Cash and Carries have a van that can be hired and the fruit market traders will deliver.

A good way of overcoming transport difficulties is sharing transport with other Food Co-ops.

There are lots of problems associated with your transport. It can prove a constant drain on your funds because of insurance, tax, MOT, petrol and breakdowns. The older the transport a Food Co-op uses, the more expensive it is.

Another problem is drivers. The more drivers available, the better. If a volunteer uses his / her own transport, it is worthwhile for the Committee, in conjunction with the driver, to draw up some guidelines, e.g. what cost the Co-op is prepared to meet, what the driver is responsible for, and what happens if transport breaks down.

## **Mark Up**

Food Co-ops are not about profit, but they do have to put some mark up on the prices of goods to cover their overheads, i.e. transport, fuel, rent, equipment, plastic bags, etc.

This mark up will vary from Co-op to Co-op as overheads differ.

The amount of money you take, in sales, will vary with the size of your membership, how competitive your prices are with your local shops and the amount of hours you are prepared to open.

As an example, a Co-op with a weekly turnover of £300.00 of stock at cost price with a 10% mark up should give £330.00 of takings = £30.00 to pay for weekly expenses.

The same Co-op with a weekly turnover of £900.00 stock at cost price with a 10% mark up should yield £990.00 = £90.00 to pay for weekly expenses (wastage will probably reduce this sum).

The mark up percentage should be an informed Committee decision and based on actual expenses incurred and should be regularly reviewed, perhaps on a 3-month basis.

Oakley has a 30% mark up as we do not charge a membership fee and are only open one afternoon a week with sometimes quite a high wastage. Any money made is used to sustain the Project and to put money into other Community health initiatives.

Remember, when deciding on a mark up to also take into consideration quarterly, bi-annual or annual costs such as insurance, running cost for van (if you have your own transport), rates, etc.

## **Funding**

The Oakley Fruit and Veg Project was set up with the following grants:

- ~~£~~ Council Seedcorn Grant
- ~~£~~ Scottish Community Diet Project Start Up Grant.

Because Community Food Co-ops are run by volunteers for the Community, funding is available through Local Authority Grants to help start up the Food Co-op. It is important to account for any money groups receive through funding.

Funding events involving members can be held. Good fund-raising events include raffles, bingo and Karaoke nights.

Membership fees are another source of funding. Membership fees are set by what the Committee thinks people are willing or able to contribute. Oakley does not charge a membership fee but has a list of members.

Funding is used to buy equipment for the stall, to pay for security to protect the premises, and to buy stock to sell to the Public. The better the application for funding, the more likely you are to obtain the funds you require.

## **Membership**

Any person living or working (depending upon the Constitution) in the area served by the Food Co-op may become a member by paying the appropriate fee or be given a membership card and not charged (as with the Oakley Fruit and Vegetable Project). The membership fee can be reviewed annually. Some Food Co-ops issue life membership.

Annual memberships are usually renewable after the AGM. Try to change the colour of your membership cards every year so that current ones are instantly recognisable.

If there are enough volunteers, you can appoint a membership officer who will be responsible for keeping membership lists up to date, issuing numbers and keeping membership money separate. For accurate accounts it is important that membership money does not go through the till.

Even if the above is not possible, it is important that all volunteers know how the membership system works and time should be taken to show everyone.

It is very important that membership control is tight.

## **TRAINING**

### **Training**

Every volunteer involved in the Food Co-op needs training.

Training should take place before the Co-op opens and should be an ongoing process. Practical training can be obtained from local Food Co-ops, the Scottish Co-op, Credit Union, local Colleges.

General training can be provided by local Food Co-ops and / or local agencies with a remit to Food Co-ops.

The following are some of the training issues that need to be looked at:

1. Book keeping
2. Stock control
3. Banking
4. Healthy eating messages

### **Book Keeping**

It is important that a Food Co-op has account books so that a record of purchases, sales and expenses can be kept. This means that accountability is ensured.

Financial books should be kept by the Treasurer and updated on a daily or weekly basis. However, all Committee members should be trained in the book keeping system in case the Treasurer is ill or on holiday. Training for all ensures a better understanding of the systems.

The books and statements should be presented at every monthly Committee meeting to allow regular questioning of the accounts by the rest of the Committee.

Training on book keeping can be supplied by support workers if available. If this is not the case, then contact can be made with local Credit Unions or Colleges / Agencies with a training remit and / or local Food Co-ops to learn their system.

Financial record keeping is also important so that up-to-date accounts can be produced for prospective funders.

Books of account should be audited and presented to members at time of the AGM, although members have the right to inspect books at any time.

## **Banking**

Food Co-ops, when applying for funding, are asked for Bank details as payment is made by cheque. A decision has to be taken by the Committee to decide whether a Deposit or Current Account is best for them to operate.

The Bank Book or Statement is a double check on deposits and withdrawals.

In order to open a Bank Account it is essential that a copy of the group's constitution is given to the Bank Manager. Any accounts held by the Food Co-op should always require two out of three signatories to authorise any payments or withdrawals, using the Treasurer to account for any monies in monthly reports.

A banking system offers protection to the Committee and makes them accountable for their members. A Unit Trust Account is used by the Oakley Fruit and Vegetable Project, with the local Post Office used as an Agent.

Regular monthly reports should be made up by the Treasurer for the Committee, backed up with books of Account, Bank Statement, etc. and produced when required and for Committee Meetings.

Oakley Fruit and Vegetable Project has an account with the Market Trader and pays by cheque on a monthly basis.

Only trial and error will decide the best system suited to individual Food Co-ops.



## NEARLY THERE

### Stock Variety

In order to encourage members into the Co-op it is necessary to stock produce suited to their needs.

The essential items can be identified by:

- A. Survey (see Market Research)
- B. Listening to members
- C. Purchasing new items in smaller quantities to gauge whether they are a seller or not.

It is also a good idea to rotate the stock to give members a bigger variety.

It helps to have different brands of the same item, again allowing customers choice.

Depending on hours of opening, it is important not to have perishable stock, e.g. fruit, vegetables, stored for any length of time.

Unsold fruit and vegetables at the Oakley Project do not all go to waste. Because the stall is only open on one afternoon per week, produce has to be sold / given away as it cannot be kept. Unsold fruit is usually given to the local schools and unsold vegetables taken to the luncheon club for the elderly the following day and sold on a donation basis.

## **Buying**

In Oakley fresh fruit and vegetables are ordered by fax from the Fruit Market Trader the afternoon before the stall opens. The Market Trader delivers the order the following morning to the Health Centre.

Fruit juices are purchased from a Cash and Carry. These are restocked when needed as they have a long shelf life.

No dried foodstuffs are sold as yet on the Oakley Stall but it is the intention in the future to stock barley, lentils, etc for soup making.

## **Stock Control**

A note is made each day of how soon goods are sold out and a record of unsold fruit and veg is kept so that ordering for the following week is much more relevant and closer to the needs of the customers.

Benefits of stock control include:

- ~~✍~~ Information about how much has been sold
- ~~✍~~ Information about what items are good sellers
- ~~✍~~ Prevention pilfering
- ~~✍~~ Information about goods to be replenished.

## **Price Marking Legislation**

(The following information is a guide only and does not cover every aspect of the legislation. For more detailed information you can contact:

Fife Council  
Trading Standards Service  
Kingdom House  
Kingdom Avenue1  
Glenrothes  
KY7 5LY

Phone: 01592 414141  
Email: [fifets@sol.co.uk](mailto:fifets@sol.co.uk)  
[www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/fife](http://www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/fife)

The Price Marking Order 1999 requires that the selling price **must** be displayed for all food and no-food products offered for sale. For fruit and vegetable products sold loose, a unit price must be displayed. For packaged foods a final total price must be marked and include the net weight, unit price (metric) and selling price. All prices will be inclusive of VAT.

It is an offence under the Consumer Protection Act 1987 to give the consumer misleading price indications about a product, therefore all prices **must** be true and accurate. Products must also comply with The Trade Descriptions Act 1968. Information relating to the products should be disclosed at the point of sale, e.g. how it was produced (organic) and who by, species or type etc and if any products have been genetically modified.

As a general rule, most foods have to be sold by reference to quantity. Whether that will be a weight, capacity or a count depends on the product. Food sold loose normally has to be weighed or measured in front of the customer. In addition, food that has been pre-packed and ready for sale has to be marked with its quantity. There are strict laws governing the sale of certain foods, which may be sold pre-packed or in specified quantities. Fruit and vegetables must be sold as grams (g) or kilograms (kg):

## Potatoes

- ✍️ If potatoes are pre-packed, they must be in the following quantities:  
500g, 750g, 1kg, 1.5kg, 2kg, or multiples of 2.5kg and up.

## Soft Fruits (Strawberries, raspberries, blackcurrants)

- ✍️ Soft fruits displayed in containers (punnets) sold without a new weight marking **must** then be weighed, allowing the customer to see the weight.

## Fresh Fruit and Vegetables

- ✍️ Some may be sold by number, these include: apples, apricots, artichokes, aubergines, avocados, bananas, beetroots, cabbage, cauliflower, capsicum, celery, coconuts, corn on the cob, cucumber, fennel, mangoes, marrow, melons, nectarines, radishes, shaddock, soft citrus fruits, tomatoes, ugli. If these goods are not sold loose and are pre-packed for the customer then the number **must** be marked on the container. 8 or less items in a transparent container requires no marking.

## Bunched Vegetables

- ✍️ These can be sold by the bunch: asparagus, beetroots, carrots, garlic, chives, onions, turnips, radishes, watercress, parsley.

Under the Weights and Measures Act 1985 it is an offence to supply weighed goods on equipment that has not been approved. Trading Standards can advise on buying scales and will check them on a regular basis.

This information is only a guide.

## **Fruit Market**

### **If buying yourselves:**

No membership is needed for using this facility, but it is important to remember that the earlier the visit is made, the better the quality of goods.

Always check prices as these can fluctuate up or down on a daily basis. Where boxes are deep, i.e. apples, oranges, pears, etc be prepared to check the bottom of boxes as this is where the bad or rotten goods can be found. If it is not possible to check the interior, check the exterior for damp patches as this can indicate a bad batch.

By visiting the market yourself you can control the quality, freshness and range of fruit and vegetables available to members.

Don't be afraid to shop around. You might find that some goods are better quality and / or less expensive at another trader.

### **If having goods delivered:**

Relationships with individual traders should be encouraged, as this will ensure good service. This relationship is important for the Oakley Project as we have our fruit and vegetables delivered by the trader. We rely on him to send us good quality produce. He does exchange bad or damaged goods therefore close inspection of goods on delivery is essential.

At Oakley, when we place our order on the day before the stall, the market trader tells us of produce that is in season and therefore at a good price or what is a good buy that week. Likewise he tells us of produce that has become expensive. We rely on his knowledge to make sure we are buying the best value goods for the money.

## **Launch**

When launching your food co-op, contact local papers and invite them prior to the launch to advertise the fact that you will be opening on a set date. Have volunteers and produce available for a photo opportunity.

Invite people to attend the launch who have been involved in the planning / organising of the stall and those who might help in future with funding, supporting the project, etc.

On the launch date, invite a speaker to make a small speech before opening the stall. Ask local papers to come along for further publicity. Think of something that will be news worthy, e.g. oldest resident in village to cut ribbon, etc.

## **Contact Names**

New ways Project	01383 565314
Veitch Moir (Fruit and Veg Wholesalers)	0131 443 7131
Bookers Cash and Carry Pitreavie Industrial Estate Dunfermline	01383 728876
Scottish Community Diet Project	0141 226 5261
Seedcorn Grant	Contact your local Fife Council Local Office and ask for the Locality Officer
Scottish Food Co-op [Training (Fife)]	01592 610953
Co-op Community Dividend Linda Rae	0141 304 5400

*Our thanks go to Greater Easterhouse Consumers' Project for allowing us to use their start-up pack as a basis for this pack.*