The Wedge Community Co-op, Inc.
Sustainability Report

September 2010
Mission Statement

Our Mission is to provide a diverse selection of highest quality, fairly-priced products and a deepening understanding of their importance to our members, employees and community. To achieve this, we will: 1. Earn the loyalty of our member-owners through an ongoing commitment to service; 2. Forge a deepening bond between sustainable local producers and the co-op community; and 3. Build upon Cooperative Principles and Values.

Background Information

The Wedge Co-op has been a feature of its neighborhood since 1974, when a group of neighbors met to organize a cooperative store to provide themselves with whole and natural foods. In the basement of an apartment building, the first store sold natural, unrefined bulk foods, as well as fresh produce and dairy, frozen vegetables and fish. The co-op name comes from the popular nickname for the Lowry Hill East neighborhood, called “The Wedge” due to its shape.

From that small and humble start in a store of roughly 400 square feet, the Wedge and our membership have grown to a store with 11,000 square feet of sales floor, 11,000 square feet of office space, and over 14,500 active members from all over the metro area and beyond. And stocking well over 18,000 products, our FY 10 sales were $30,493,708 and the average number of customers per day during the year was 2,658, which both represent slight increases over the previous fiscal year.

Our members are loyal and continue to help shape our development as we continue to pioneer ways to bring delicious organic and sustainable food to our community. A local magazine once called The Wedge “the crowning achievement of a local co-op movement that, challenged by some of the nation’s best mainline grocers, evolved beyond marginalia and dogma to real relevance.”

Evolution of the Wedge

Sales rapidly outgrew capacity at the Franklin apartment, and in 1979 the co-op moved
to a small convenience store on Lyndale Avenue.

In 1992 the growing membership needed more room so the Wedge built a new store adjacent to the old site.

In 1994 the Wedge and Mississippi Market Co-op in St. Paul co-founded Midwest Food Connection, a program that presents lessons about food and farming to thousands of area school children.

In spring of 1997 an addition was opened which doubled the retail space and included a teaching kitchen.

In 1999 our wholesale distribution department, Co-op Partners Warehouse (CPW), was created to meet our needs for access to organic produce. CPW is now a major distributor of perishable products to retail co-ops, natural food stores, and restaurants in the Upper Midwest, and works closely with local and regional producers to help get their products to market with cross-docking arrangements.

Then a bakery was built on the south side of the store in 2001.

In 2002 the Wedge became the first Certified Organic retailer in Minnesota. CPW was Certified Organic at the same time.

In 2007 the Co-op entered into an agreement to purchase Gardens of Eagan, one of the oldest local Certified Organic farms serving the Twin Cities area, and began running the farm. At about the same time, we started the non-profit Organic Field School at Gardens of Eagan, to offer education and other services to the organic farming community.

In 2009 our Deli passed its first Organic Certification inspection, bringing all the retail departments under certification.
Cooperatives

The Wedge is a consumer co-op which is a business, owned and governed by its customers that operates for their benefit. When people need something they can’t get easily or at a reasonable cost, they can start a co-op to get it. Cooperation is a powerful tool to help communities meet local needs.

Cooperatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, cooperative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility, and caring for others.

The cooperative principles are guidelines by which cooperatives put their values into practice. They include:

1. Voluntary and Open Membership,
2. Democratic Member Control,
3. Member Economic Participation,
4. Autonomy and Independence,
5. Education, Training and Information,
6. Cooperation Among Co-operatives, and
7. Concern for Community.

While we teach school children, run a farm, deliver food all over the Midwest, work to protect organic integrity and teach organic farmers, we never lose our primary commitment to our membership. The foundation of all our work is and will always remain service to our community of members and the values they hold dear.
On April 23, 2008 the Wedge Community Co-op became a member of the Food Trade Sustainability Leadership Association (FTSLA). This organization provides business in the organic food trade with guidelines and recommendations for how to embody sustainability in their own operations. The FTSLA spent two years compiling input from organic growers, distributors, processors, retailers and certifiers to create an 11-point action plan titled “Declaration of Sustainability in the Organic Food Trade”. Companies who sign the pledge commit to continual improvement and transparency around practices in key areas.

The Wedge Community Co-op signed on to this Declaration with a commitment to report annually on our performance in the 11-action categories: organic, distribution, energy, climate change, water, waste, packaging, labor, animal welfare, consumer education and governance.

Sustainability at the Wedge reflects our social awareness, deep commitment to local and global environments, and transparency with accountability to our members.

This, our first sustainability report, is an effort to increase our awareness of our impact in the areas of sustainability established by the FTSLA. It’s not about the questions of what, why, or how our co-op operates but more about the business as a whole, integrated system, with all the elements in full view to determine, from a sustainability perspective, how we can improve our service to our community and/or provide new services.

Each year, we will strive for continuous, progressive improvement and to practice transparency in auditing our performance and reporting metrics that are relevant to our business and members.

For the purposes of this first sustainability report, the Wedge is reporting on the retail store in FY10 (July 2009 through June 2010). Subsequent reports will include Co-op Partners Warehouse and Gardens of Eagan.
Declarations of Sustainability in the Organic Food Trade

1) Organic Declaration Commitment

We recognize the many benefits of organic farming for the health of the soil, water resources, plant, animal and human communities. We will strive to source the food products we vend from farms using organic methods. Furthermore, we will strive to source all agriculturally derived products (fiber, bio-based fuels and packaging, company meals, etc.) we use in our operations from farms and supply sources using organic methods and offering organically grown product lines. We recognize the importance of independent third-party certification as an assurance that organic methods are being followed and will endeavor to verify all organic claims before vending a product.”

The Wedge provides a diverse selection of high quality, fairly priced products in a Certified Organic environment. Actively maintaining organic integrity is a foundation of store operations and important to our members and staff. The Wedge is committed to organic agriculture and works to deepen that commitment through ongoing product research, development, and procurement.

The Wedge became Certified Organic in 2002, one month before the National Organic Program (NOP) rule went into affect, because we recognized that organic agricultural products were important to our members. Since 2002, we have increased the amount of organic products that we carry, reflecting the value that our members put on the organic food industry. With this in mind, the Wedge has solidified our role in developing and sustaining the local organic food economy.

• The Wedge is Certified Organic through the Midwest Organic Services Association (MOSA), by department. In the beginning a handful of departments participated and now our Certification lists the Accounting, Scanning, Front End, Bakehouse, Cheese, Co-op Partners Warehouse, Deli Kitchen and Bakery, Bulk, Frozen, Packaged, and Refrigerated Grocery, Health and Body Care, Juice Bar, Meat and Seafood, and Produce departments. The Deli Kitchen and Deli Bakery have a number of recipes Certified Organic as are several packaged and artisan breads produced in the Wedge Bakehouse. All these departments have their own Handling Plans and contribute in a meaningful way to maintaining organic certification, verifying that every product label follows the rules, and ensuring that organic integrity is met throughout product flow. This is verified by third party annual inspections and audits.

• To increase consumer awareness about organic agriculture and the issues that are most important to our members about the organic community, the Wedge publishes articles on organic agriculture in our newsletter, on our website, and on signage throughout the store.
• To provide an easy view of what is organic in our co-op, the Wedge uses a yellow sticker to identify organic products.

• In a move to secure the future of the organic farm, Gardens of Eagan, the Wedge agreed to lease the farm until a formal purchase agreement is complete. Gardens of Eagan is a 97 acre, urban-edge, vegetable farm, providing certified organic produce to the Twin Cities and surrounding communities. Gardens of Eagan is a demonstration of the logic, elegance, and viability of ecologically based, organic food production. Its proximity to a metropolitan area allows the farm to serve as an educational resource to consumers and farmers through the Organic Field School at Gardens of Eagan, a non-profit 501(c)3.

• The Organic Field School (OFS) provides on-farm, organic and ecologically based, practical education and research for farmers and education for educators, policy makers and the public, on the benefits and values of regional, ecologically based, organic farming systems.

• WedgeShare, a philanthropic program annually voted on by members, funded a number of community organizations in FY 10 including the Cornucopia Institute, the Minnesota Food Association, and the Farmers Legal Action Group so that organic agriculture has an advocate, a long term strategic vision in Minnesota, and a voice.

• The Wedge has committed a full time staff position to organic certification.

• Every staff member receives annual training and is fully aware of the details in the Wedge Organic Handling Plan, and specifically their department’s Handling Plan.

• Of the 18,000 products actively being sold, approximately 30% are Certified Organic. Each Department will have different percentages: Produce stocks approximately 99% while our Seafood department will claim 0%.

• Organic product sales have increased over last fiscal year by 1.5%, while total sales remained about the same. Interestingly, non-members have increased the amount of organic products they purchase by 1.5%.

**Organic Metrics FY 2010**

**Organic Product/Ingredients Sold:**

1. Organic sales - $12,411,200.66
2. Organic products sold - 48% of all products sold
3. Organic products in members market basket - 50%
4. Organic products in non-members market basket - 42%
2) Distribution and Sourcing Declaration Commitment

We will strive to produce, pack, transport, and distribute products from field to market using the most efficient means possible with the most environmentally responsible renewable fuel sources. We will systematically improve our energy efficiency, reduce our energy consumption, and reduce food-miles whenever possible.

Minnesota is in the nation’s second largest organic growing region, and while the winter months inhibit our ability to source local produce all year long, this is not the case for all products. The Wedge enjoys a rich history as an outlet for local products and we strive to represent local products in every department. Local is defined as the five state area of WI, MN, IA, ND, and SD. We also consider processing local when a MN company employs local people and pays local taxes even though they may source materials and ingredients globally to produce their product.

- We help our customers find and track their local purchases with shelf signs to identify local products and summing local products as a percentage of their shopping total on their receipt. As a result, local sales are more prominent and now represent 34% of total sales.

- The Wedge participates in Eat Local America Challenge, an event to kick-start the quest to eat more local foods. Hosted by natural food co-ops nationwide, the goal is to eat 80% local foods.

- The Wedge regularly features local producers in store departments, in articles, and by hosting in-store demos and farm blogs on our web site.

- Every spring and fall, the Wedge participates in Eureka Recycling’s Recycled Paper Co-op. This buying cooperative allows individuals, businesses, and organizations in the Twin Cities to purchase recycled printer paper.
• The Wedge is committed to the local food economy and has enabled local growers to aggregate their products at our warehouse, where we can use our trucks to get their products to market. This eliminates the need for each farmer to drive and deliver separately. We also provide space for farmers to build CSA boxes and store products. These initiatives have led to an increase in sales for the warehouse and the ability for many growers to introduce their products to new markets.

Distribution and Sourcing Metrics FY 2010

Regionally Produced /Produced Product: of retail total sales 34% are local products.
3) Energy in Facilities Declaration Commitment

We will strive to store, process, distribute and vend our products using energy resources in the most resourceful means possible with energy efficiency best management practices. We will utilize the most environmentally responsible renewable energy opportunities whenever possible such as solar, wind, hydro, and geothermal.

The Wedge has always been very aware of the energy needs of a retail store and as we have grown, we have utilized the most efficient replacements for equipment, replacing old and worn equipment and fixtures with energy efficient fixtures, making the most responsible decisions with our members assets. As our store grew in size we installed solar panels on the roof to heat water, we installed a voltage regulator on the main electrical panel to minimize power surges on equipment, we use upright freezer cases with doors and recycle coolant to minimize refrigerant use and loss, and we have put in place a maintenance schedule that keeps all the equipment running at its most efficient.

• The Wedge replaced old lighting fixtures, repositioning them to reduce the number of fixtures needed, and utilizing a light sensor to determine the need for brightness resulting in an energy savings of 28,000 kWh/year.

• Our older sales floor with high maintenance costs and requiring regular application of chemicals to keep clean was removed to reveal a nice concrete floor beneath. That concrete floor was buffed and polished and requires no more than scraping and washing with water to keep it looking like new.

• The Front End scheduled their entire line of cash registers and computers to automatically shut down every night.

• As staff becomes more aware of sustainable practices we are seeing lights go off in offices, conference rooms, and restrooms between uses, and computers shut all the way down in the evening. Closing routines include checking the entire building and turning off any non-emergency lights.
The Wedge generates $36.02 in sales for every kilowatt hour (kWh) we use, we use 1.18 kWh per customer, and for every dollar we spend for electricity, we generate $481 in sales.

**Energy Metrics FY 2010**

- **Annual Electric Usage:** 1,149,600 kWh
- **Annual Natural Gas Purchased:** 26,940 THM
- **Electricity Usage and Efficiency:** 52 kWh per SF
4) Climate Change Declaration Commitment

We will strive to actively reduce all production, storage, processing, and retail practices that create the greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change. We will measure the carbon footprint of our operations and strive for achieving carbon-neutrality in all of our business practices.

The Wedge is committed to efficiencies in every aspect of all our operations. Sustainability means the Wedge’s ability to operate the business of the co-op without jeopardizing the future of the co-op or our community. Sustainability at the Wedge means that the products we procure and the services we offer to meet member needs also meet high standards with respect to the environment, food security, and community health.

• Approximately 79% of the Wedge staff commutes by foot, bicycle, or bus. Most bicycle commuters ride spring, summer, and fall.

• The Wedge staff gave up an employee parking space to host an HourCar, a program that shares fuel efficient vehicles.

• The Wedge sponsors a Nice Ride Minnesota bike kiosk, a bike share system with bike kiosks in Minneapolis.

• Wedge members voted to award local waste-reduction nonprofit Eureka Recycling a WedgeShare Grant to develop a comprehensive restaurant composting program. This project is identifying and overcoming the obstacles faced by small and medium-sized businesses when they try to compost their food scraps and non-recyclable papers. It addresses issues like costs, logistics, and staff training, and emphasizes education (for staff and customers) about the benefits of closing the loop from food to leftover to dirt and back into food.

• The Wedge used the Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator to convert our THMs and kWhs to CO2 (www.epa.gov/cleangy/energy-resources/calculator).
Climate Change Metrics FY 2010

**Direct GHG Emissions:** 137 metric tons

**Electricity Indirect Energy GHG Emissions:** 826 metric tons

**Annual Emissions Reduced by any Efficiency Upgrades:** 20 metric tons of CO2

**Annual Commuting Miles of Workforce:** 618,487 average miles

**Annual Emissions from Workforce Commuting:** 599 tons of CO2 equivalents

**CO2 Average Emissions per Worker:** 2.3 metric tons of CO2 equivalents
5) **Water Declaration Commitment**

We will strive to reduce our use of fresh water and to optimize our operations to be so that all water use is as efficient as possible. We will raise awareness of regional and local water issues through education and information sharing. We commit to managing our water resources with the realization that multiple water stressors exist today, creating a situation where water is an increasingly scarce resource.

The Wedge uses Reverse Osmosis (RO) water in every application that uses tap water with food. We also offer RO water in a fountain adjacent to a customer hand washing station, the staff break room, and the demonstration kitchen. Bulk RO water is one of our best selling items.

The City of Minneapolis’ municipal water is one of the best tasting waters in the country, but the RO water allows us to offer bulk filtered water to those that want and need to purchase filtered water but don’t want to purchase many individual or larger individual plastic bottles of water.

Our inner city location makes it difficult to reduce the amount of impervious surfaces, but we have reclaimed as much garden space as possible, and have installed garden boxes on our busy Lyndale Avenue boulevards.

*In an effort to reduce the overland flow of water that overwhelms the sewer system during storm events, the Wedge installed a water tank (fondly known as the white submarine) to collect and disperse rainwater slowly into the sewer system.*

*The Wedge sales of Reverse Osmosis water annually has reduced the amount of bottled water sold in the store.*

**Water Metrics FY 2010**

- **Annual Water Consumed:** 1,540,666 gallons of water
- **Annual RO Water sold:** 90,722 gallons of RO water
6) Waste Declaration Commitment

We will strive to reduce waste at the source and treat waste in a way that sustains all living systems, through reusing, donating, recycling, and composting. When necessary we will utilize environmentally sound disposal systems. We will continually redesign our operations so that eventually “waste” will be eliminated because all material will become the raw material for new products and uses.

The Wedge is committed to finding the very best disposition for our waste. Our waste stream consists primarily of food waste, waxed and corrugated cardboard, paper, and produce and meat trimmings. Our waste is transported to a waste-to-energy (WTE) facility close to our store that utilizes the energy generated from the facility to heat areas businesses. Our single sort recycling goes to a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) that separates glass, plastic, newspaper, and metals. Our cardboard and paper is compacted and delivered to a paper processor and plastic bags are collected and recycled through a local non profit agency. Meat trimmings are collected and reclaimed and food waste is collected and composted, generating worm castings that are used as fertilizer.

- The Wedge offers recycling opportunities throughout the store with recycling containers at every check stand, inside and outside the front doors, in every office, and staff breakroom. They are well marked with what materials can be recycled in individual containers. We also offer plastic bag collection for recycling.

- We publish recycling information such as household recycling tips and where to find community and city recycling information.

- The Administrative office has a dedicated tray in the printer for reusable paper so that any one sided copy can be printed on reused paper. This printer also prints double sided.

- In the Front End we have eliminated double paper printers and have started duplex receipt printing on BPA free receipt paper.
Our General Merchandise Buyer stocks recycled glass tableware, sustainably produced kitchen, table, and flatware, recycled material toys, bags, and jewelry. Many items are unique, made locally by artists and craftspersons, Fair Trade, and gentle on the environment.

We offer coffee grounds with paper filters from our Juice Bar for composting.

**Waste Metrics FY 2010**

**FY 10 WTE Output:** 235 tons

**Annual Recycling Output:** 209 tons
7) Packaging Declaration Commitment

We will strive to implement a zero-waste approach to packaging. This will entail: 1) reducing the amount of packaging we use, 2) actively participating in the development of packaging that is reusable, recyclable, and/or biodegradable; 3) considering packaging material contents when making all purchasing decisions, and 4) collaborating with buyers and suppliers on creative solutions which eliminate unsustainable packaging throughout the value chain.

In March 2008, the Wedge stopped offering free plastic grocery bags at the cash register. Paper bags continue to be free and customers can pay 90 cents for a re-usable plastic bag. To offer some perspective on how many plastic bags a store like the Wedge uses, our co-op went through 4000+ bags per week in 2007, roughly 25,000 a month that were probably headed for a landfill. The new reusable bags can be used over 800 times each and are recyclable at the end of their useful life. We offer our customers who reuse bags the choice of a $.10 per refund or donation to a community garden.

The overall result of discontinuing to offer plastic bags and offering incentives to reuse bags is we diverted 283,828 bags in FY09 and 304,677 bags in FY10 that had limited use for a more permanent solution.

Our regular paper bag is constructed with a minimum of 40% post-consumer paper. We also stock an assortment of reusable containers for bulk purchases and reusable bags for produce. And the plastic bags in the Produce Department are compostable.

• The Meat Department has replaced Styrofoam meat trays and plastic wrap with a biodegradable fiber tray and non-PVC wrap, displacing approximately 52,000 Styrofoam trays per year.

• The Deli Department is always looking for a better food container; currently we use compostable paper and a #1 recyclable container. Our Deli Catering provides bio-degradable cups and flatware and compostable paper products with every order.
8) Labor Declaration Commitment

We acknowledge that those communities which protect and work the land are particularly vulnerable and must be treated fairly. We will strive to ensure that growers and handlers of food products collaborate to guarantee basic labor rights and verifiable improvements in the lives of farm workers and their communities. We will work to ensure that all workers are given the opportunity to give feedback about their needs and wants. We will develop and implement company policies, procedures, training and internal reporting structures to ensure commitment to good labor practices throughout our organization. These labor practices will include ensuring that we compensate our employees to enable them to meet at least their basic needs and provide the opportunity to improve their skill and capability in order to raise their social and economic opportunities, promoting equal opportunity for our employees at all levels of the company, and provide a safe and healthy workplace.

The Wedge is involved with many communities. But of all the communities touched by the Wedge sustainability practices, our vendors and staff are the most directly affected. When the Wedge negotiates directly with a producer the goal is to pay a fair price, both for the grower and for the Wedge. We strive to keep prices affordable to our members while ensuring the growers receive a price that allows them to achieve success in their business with the Wedge as their partner.

When the Wedge, an equal opportunity employer, determines staff benefits the objective is the same: we strive to provide a competitive, living wage that reflects the mission and vision of the Wedge, but more importantly to attract and retain the most qualified applicants. The Wedge provides a staff benefits package that goes beyond wages, discounts, and health insurance; we provide an opportunity to work in a healthy, safe, and community oriented environment that offers opportunity for growth and individual development.

Buyers consider a handshake and eye to eye negotiation the basis for long term business relationships that will thrive in an atmosphere of good will. Employment at the Wedge provides a secure place to work that offers paid community service hours, profit sharing, and education. To formalize fair working conditions, the Wedge has adopted a Direct Communication and Problem Resolution Policy and Freedom from Harassment Policy. The Wedge conducts an Employee Engagement survey on a biennial basis.

Labor Metrics FY 2010

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<th>Labor Practices</th>
<th>Total Workplace Employment: 260 employees, 75% FT (60 hours bi-weekly pay period), 25% PT</th>
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<td>Total Number and Rate of Employee Turnover: 25.22% (2007 through 2009)</td>
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Compensation

**Employee Health Care Benefits:** Includes medical, dental, life, vision, and LTD insurance.

**Employee Health Care Benefits:** All 75% FT employees are eligible.

**Employee 401(k) Plan or Other Retirement Plan Contribution:** 100% of employees are eligible for employer 401K plans (provided service and hour requirements are met), two enrollment periods per year.

**Employer 401(k) Matching Contribution or Other Retirement Plan:** The Wedge matches 50% of employee contributions up to 8%.

**Profit Sharing:** Distributed quarterly, the store retains the first 1.75% profit and 30% of additional profit goes to employee profit sharing.

Health and Safety

**Number of Recordable Injuries and Illnesses Under OSHA:** The Wedge recorded 10 incidents in 2009, an injury frequency of 2.3%.

**Injury Frequency Ratio [IFR]:** 2.3 %

Diversity and Equal Opportunity

**Composition of Workforce:** Our workforce is 47% female, 53% male. 87% Caucasian, 5% Latino or Hispanic, 3% Black or African American, 3% Asian, 1% American Indian or Alaska Native, a 1% two or more races.

Training Programs

**Employee Training Programs Offered:** The Wedge offers Co-op Education, Natural Foods Education, and First-Aid courses on paid time; Wedge Cooking Classes (one free per quarter) and contribution toward individual education based upon relevant coursework to staff position/function.

Community Volunteering

**Employee Paid Time Off for Volunteering:** Opportunity to accrue up to 20 hours at employee pay rate annually.
9) **Animal Care Declaration Commitment**

We will strive to ensure that livestock have access to clean and sufficient food and water; that their environment is not dangerous to their health; that they have sufficient protection from weather elements; that they have sufficient space allowance in order for them to move naturally including access to pasture; and other features to ensure the safety, health and comfort of the animal. In addition, that managers and caretakers be thoroughly trained, skilled and competent in animal husbandry and welfare, and have good working knowledge of their system and the livestock in their care.

The Meat and Seafood Department opened in 1997. In October of 2002 the Wedge Meat Department became the first USDA Certified Organic meat department in the country, specializing in providing healthful, environmentally sane, and humanely treated meats. The knowledgeable, honest, and friendly counter staff enjoys a great working relationships with all of the farmers we feature and has direct contact with the producers and processors.

When purchasing meat for our customers, we take into account the locality of the farms and ranches, the treatment and health of the animals, the sustainability of the farms and ranches, and last but not least the price. We strive to feature meats made without growth hormones or antibiotics, and we never sell meat made from animals that have been fed animal byproducts.

Beef sold at the Wedge is Food Alliance Certified and grassfed, and processing is performed at a Temple Grandin designed facility. Pork is raised without crates or confinement with plenty of air and access to sunshine. Indoors they live in social communities of deep bedded sleeping areas, fresh air open sided barns, with the freedom to roam outside. Poultry sold at the Wedge is either organic or free roaming (kept inside with plenty of space in the winter) but they are all fed small and whole grains (flax), no growth hormones or antibiotics, and since they are free to roam about they eat bugs and grass. Chickens and turkey are processed humanely, hand cleaned, and air chilled before they are brought to market, just hours away from the farms.

The Seafood Department shares the same values. By keeping the staff up to date, we are able to educate our customers and offer a better fish product. Ultimately there are a myriad of potential questions to address when buying fish; our purchases are an attempt to offer customers a variety of choices that speak to their particular values—environmental, health, fair trade, low carbon footprint, taste, and price.
The Dairy Department carries organic cow, goat, and vegan milks, butters, and cheeses, but there are some conventional products available. Free range hens produce all the eggs offered, both organic and conventional.

- For the second year, the Meat Department has featured Heritage breed turkeys from a local young 4H farmer for Thanksgiving.

- 1000 Hills Cattle Company located in Cannon Falls, MN supplies grassfed beef with robust flavor. This superior product is 100% grassfed and these free range cattle are grazed on pastures free of pesticides and herbicides and raised without hormone or antibiotics.

- Country Natural Beef Cooperative, a rancher owned co-op, is well represented in our meat department. Country Natural Beef is third party certified for humane animal practices and environmentally sensitive land management by Food Alliance. CNB cattle are raised without hormones or antibiotics.

- Applegate Farms is the leading provider of premium quality, all-natural and organic “ready-to-eat” meats. Applegate Farms meats are made from premium cuts of antibiotic free beef, pork and poultry, raised responsibly on small family farms and processed without artificial ingredients or chemical preservatives for great tasting meats.

- Eichten Hidden Acres brings us bison, a great alternative to cattle beef. Leaner and higher in protein than other red meats, it’s even lower in cholesterol than turkey. Bison is also indigenous to the prairies of Minnesota, making it the only truly native domesticated beef available.

- Kadejan Chickens, one of our premier vendors, bringing us poultry less than 24 hours after processing - the freshest possible without being on the farm itself.

- The Wedge Seafood Department features the 150-year-old, Wisconsin-based Star Prairie Rainbow Trout Farm. This is a local company that utilizes approved farm raised practices and strives to provide a product that is low in mercury and contains no PCB’s.

- Larry Schultz Organic Farm of Owatonna, Minnesota, has distinguished itself as one of the Wedge’s best friends, supplying free-range, cage-free, certified organic eggs, chickens, and turkeys to the co-op for nearly fifteen years.
10) Consumer Education Declaration Commitment

We will strive to provide consumers, employees, our communities, and the media accurate, useful and timely information about all of the areas listed in this document.

The fifth cooperative principle is about education, training and information. Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives. They inform the general public - particularly young people and opinion leaders - about the nature and benefits of cooperation. The Wedge has always been a leader and a source for accurate and timely information in a number of publications. Our staff participates in various community education programs as well.

Within our store there are many ways we communicate with our members. Our favorite way is through direct communication, but we also use store signage, shelf tags, our decor, the placement of products in specific locations, and their placement in the aisle.

- The Wedge publishes a newsletter six times a year, *At the Wedge*, which is also available online at www.wedge.coop. Our website is a plethora of information, social networking, and links to other useful information on the web.

- Demonstrations, sampling, and hosting producers in the store introduces growers and producers to consumers and cultivates relationships with people and products.

- The Wedge provides on demand store tours tailored specifically to each group. Our tours ranged from the “Stone Soup Tour” 5- minute talk for kindergarten pupils to talks for foreign academics, agriculture enthusiasts, business and professional groups, and potential members.

- Our teaching kitchen hosts classes on cooking, nutrition, health and food relationships, and specialty information such as knife sharpening, winter bicycle transportation, preserving food, fair trade wine and cheese pairings, and balancing meal planning within a budget.

- Midwest Food Connection (MFC) empowers elementary school children to make healthy and responsible food choices. Through school programs MFC educates children about natural foods, local sustainable farming, and the cultural origins of our food.
• The Wedge uses social networking formats such as Twitter and Facebook.

• Product information, food and nutrition information, and various dietary choice guidance can be found in printed materials and on our website.

Consumer Education Metrics FY 2010

List the certifications and labels you display on your products:

**Eco-friendly**- The Wedge general merchandise buyer has designated this product as Eco-friendly which means it has less of an environmental impact than many of its commonplace counterparts.

**Fair Trade Certified**- This product carries the TransFair USA Fair Trade Symbol.

**Member of Fair Trade Federation**- The vendor that we purchase this product from is a registered member of the Fair Trade Federation.

**Fair Trade Practices Not a Member**- The vendor we sourced this product from pledges to practice one or more of the following fair trade practices:
• Paying a fair wage in the local context.
• Offering employees opportunities for advancement.
• Providing equal employment opportunities.
• Engaging in environmentally sustainable practices.
• Building long-term trade relationships.
• Providing healthy and safe working conditions within the local context.
• Providing financial and technical assistance to producers whenever possible.

**USDA Organic**- The U.S. Department of Agriculture has put in place a set of national standards that food labeled “organic” must meet, whether it is grown in the United States or imported from other countries.

**Socially Responsible**- A product with this icon designates that the company we buy this product from donates a percentage of their profits to worthy causes such as organizations which help the environment and other various charitable interests.

**Recycled**- This product was made from recycled materials.

**Locally Made**- This product was made by a regional artist or business.

**Non-GMO**- These labels certify the product free from GMO ingredients.
11) Governance Declaration Commitment

We will strive to review our progress toward these goals on a regular basis by conducting self audits and being transparent with all employees and the public with the results. We will actively engage in communication across the trade to solve sustainability related challenges and will facilitate dialogue regarding action.

The Wedge is a single store, consumer co-op; it is the highest volume, single store, consumer owned, natural foods cooperative in the United States with over 14,500 members. Members elect a Board of Directors to direct the co-op on their behalf. The Board hires the General Manager to manage co-op operations and the General Manager hires Department Managers and staff to operate the store according to the interpretation of the Board’s direction. Each of the seven co-operative principles is a sophisticated and complex concept that the Wedge considers with every business decision.

Board of Directors

When issues arise that require a vote from the Board of Directors (BOD), the Board receives written information, the issue appears as an agenda item, and it is discussed and voted on democratically during eight (8) meetings throughout the year. The Board does much of its’ work in Committees that meet more frequently than the Board; the Committees are Leadership, Economic, and Trusteeship. The Leadership Committee provides guidance for the overall work of the Board in areas such as setting goals, strategic planning, and establishing policies. The Economic Committee reviews and monitors financial statements, budgets, insurance, and investments. The Trusteeship Committee initiates recommendations for policies and actions that help the Board serve the sustainable needs and wants of the Co-op members and community. Recommendations come out of Committees to the Board for decision making.
General Manager
Our General Manager, Lindy Bannister, is responsible for the business of the Co-op and so makes all the decisions necessary to operate the business. Lindy’s decision making style includes an outcomes and process evaluation involving all those affected by her decision. She presents her decisions to the BOD with a fully exposed assessment about how the decision will affect the business and lays out a plan for rolling out implementation. For many projects Lindy delegates implementation to Department Managers and then follows up and is a silent partner as implementation progress evolves.

Department Managers
At the Department level, Managers are solely responsible for their Departments and so decisions are made with the input of staff, their collective skills, knowledge, and experiences. Some Department Managers make buying decisions, while others have specific Department Buyers.

- Sustainability metrics collected and reported in this first report will serve as a basis for moving forward with establishing goals, internal metrics, and projects that demonstrate our commitment to local and global environments.

- Sustainability metrics and information will be posted on the website.

- The Wedge educates members about issues relating to the integrity of the food supply and the environment. Members are encouraged to write or call government decision-makers to make their voices heard.

Governance Metrics FY 2010

Frequency of Self-audits and Metrics Reporting: to be determined

List All Current Third Party Certifications: The Wedge Departments are Certified Organic by the Midwest Organic Service Association (MOSA).