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Construction Starts On Co-Op Grocery Store In McHenry County

A ground-breaking ceremony took place on July 18.



Amie Schaenzer, Patch Staff

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The Food Shed Co-op board of directors break ground at the location of the future grocery store in Woodstock. (Parker Kellas)

MCHEMRY COUNTY, IL — Construction is underway on a community-owned and controlled grocery store in McHenry County.

The [Food Shed Co-op](#), which will be located at Route 14 and Lake Shore Drive in Woodstock, is expected to open later this year. A grand opening date has not yet been announced.

On July 18, the board of directors for McHenry County Food Cooperative, DBA Food Shed Co-op, officially broke ground on the grocer store, which plans to prioritize local suppliers whenever possible. The co-op is committed to offer shoppers access to affordable quality foods and teach people about the foods they eat.

The mission of the co-op is to offer only the best quality, sustainable, local and organic produce available in the marketplace. When open, the store will be 9,000 square feet and offer approximately 5,000 different items, according to a news release.

The co-op's building partner, Gallant Building Solutions of Crystal Lake, has begun preliminary work on the Woodstock property. At the July 18 ground breaking ceremony, co-op board president Rusty Foszcz and the president of McHenry County College Clint Gabbard spoke about the future collaboration between the locally sourced grocery store and the community college.

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Gabbard said that the school's Center for Agrarian Learning could provide the community with information on sustainable growing practices through the store and Culinary Arts students could partner with the co-op on workshops on how to cook and serve local produce.

Woodstock Mayor Michael Turner was also on hand at the event and spoke about the city's excitement about the addition of the Food Shed Co-op to Woodstock's business landscape.

Co-op Vice President Scott Brix shared some of Food Shed Co-op's nine year history of community building and fundraising before announcing an exciting \$100,000 match in their ongoing Community Investment Campaign, backed by an anonymous donor wanting to invest in the local community.

The public event culminated with the symbolic groundbreaking, where co-op board members donned hard hats and simultaneously lifted shovels full of soil out of the ground.

"The profile of a typical food co-op member is someone who is a strong advocate for local farms using sustainable agricultural techniques," said Scott Brix, vice-president of the Food Shed, in 2020. "Owner-members also value supporting the local economy, providing access to healthy local food and protecting the environment by reducing the distance food travels, thereby reducing carbon emissions."

[*More information is available online.*](#)

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