

cooperative food
COFED
empowerment directive



“Inspiregized!”

a California student, sharing
his feelings in one word
after the first CoFed
workshop

**COOPERATIVE
FOOD
EMPOWERMENT
DIRECTIVE**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Cooperative Food Empowerment Directive (CoFed) is a training program and research institute that enables students to create ethically sourced, community-run cafés and markets on college campuses. CoFed trains, supports, and empowers future food movement leaders and inspires a new awareness in all university eaters.

In 2 years CoFed will:

1. Document successes, issues, and lessons learned from two model storefronts.
2. Train 80 new leaders dedicated to growing CoFed's vision on their campus.
3. Connect and inspire 5,000 students with our vision and mission.

In 5 years CoFed will:

1. Create 35 financially viable storefronts in self-supporting regional clusters.
2. Train 1,000 new leaders in the cooperative food movement.
3. Give 700,000 students the opportunity to actively and cooperatively participate in their food system.

CoFed consists of two core elements:

The Model

Selling prepared meals, groceries, and beverages that meet the highest ethical and sustainability standards, the CoFed model stays competitive through steady volunteer labor, uniquely effective branding, and tax exempt status as a non-profit.

The Training

Our training equips student leaders with the tools necessary to create the model. Programming builds student leaders' capacity as social entrepreneurs, community organizers and sustainable food advocates.

After providing training, CoFed supports students and helps develop a regional network.

Our Support Services

In order to bring a team from ideation to organization to operation of the storefront, we provide support services such as a consortium of pro-bono consultants, an in-depth student leader manual, and support interfacing with administrators and assistance dealing with workforce turnover.

Our Regional Network

In the winter, CoFed trains and stipends regional organizers to support students in a single region. By training the organizers to facilitate and own their regional networks, CoFed can grow multiply our impact and empower students with a sense of local autonomy over their projects.

CoFed is currently seeking \$220,000 in philanthropic capital over two years. Our grassroots giving campaign garnered 113 monthly donors and a sustainable pool of \$18,000 annually. Our fiscal year 2011 budget is over \$200,000 in cash and in-kind revenue with over two-thirds raised. Dues from student groups, operating storefronts and consulting services will provide future funding, and CoFed plans to be self-funded by year five.

INTRODUCING



Imagine a place where first-year college students can buy \$5 sustainable sandwiches

Now imagine a growing network of these models based on best-practices research, shared infrastructure and inspirational leadership training. Right now, across the West Coast, student leaders are launching triple bottom-line (people, planet, profit) food businesses and electrifying their campus food movements.

That's CoFed.

I felt called to action when UC Berkeley's first national fast food chain was set to open in the Cesar Chavez student union. I was lucky to be involved in a successful campaign that garnered a "no" vote on a Panda Express and raised over \$100,000 in funding for a student-led, sustainable alternative. The resulting Berkeley Student Food Collective was created as an educational local foods market and cafe.



In January 2010, a student from Seattle approached me about helping to start a similar model on his campus. Inspired by the success of the Arizmendi bakeries in the Bay Area, I felt that the cooperative model used to reproduce delicious, worker-owned pizzerias could also build thousand-person campaigns to shift entire campus cultures at colleges and universities.

CoFed's short history gives a phenomenal taste of what's to come. CoFed has completed over 100 training hours for over a dozens teams of students across the West Coast and distributed an in-depth best-practices guidebook. One of our teams has already secured a space rent-free from their university. We've raised over \$6,500 in speaking fees, gotten over 110 people to donate monthly, been featured by The Atlantic and Good Magazine, presented at Slow Money's National Gathering, and garnered support from folks like Michael Pollan.

As of Spring 2011, CoFed is a project of Inquiring Systems Inc., a 501c3 non-profit. CoFed runs out of the Bay Area's HUB, a co-working and networking space for social entrepreneurs. I'm completely indebted to the genius and generosity of this community and to co-founder Alex Stone, and our core staff and regional organizers, who made CoFed happen.

Yoni Landau,
Co-founder and Director

MISSION AND VISION

CoFed's mission is to inspire and equip future leaders to create a just and sustainable world through food.

CoFed imagines student-run cooperative cafés with a triple bottom line (people, planet and profit) providing healthy alternatives that successfully competes with fast food restaurants.

CoFed envisions a food movement that amplifies the creative energy of youth and gives it strategic direction. We envision a food movement that is intimately connected to its community.

CoFed inspires a new brand of organizers and entrepreneurs emerging from college campuses. Our leaders are equipped with experiences creating inspirational, community-based food movement solutions that are also scalable.

VALUES

Ethical Food

Work towards an ethical food system through community-based, fair, ecologically sound and humane food as defined by the Real Food Guidelines

Inclusive Empowerment

Create systems to engage all students, from consumers to career organizers, in paths of long term growth and leadership

Cooperative Economics

Exemplify the financial power of equitably and ethically pooled resources through operating cooperatively according to the ICA principles

The models working with CoFed will incorporate these values into their work.

Impactful Messaging

Shape the cultural conversation beyond established supporters by using effective, inspirational messaging

Movement-Focused Strategy

Support collaboration by focusing on network-driven strategies that prefer partnerships and common interests

THE FOOD COLLECTIVE MODEL

Jane, a first-year student at a large anonymous state school, smells a delicious aroma, hears friendly chatter and enters a colorful storefront to buy a tasty, affordable lunch. The storefront is her university's student food collective, and her lunch is local and organic.

Over the next year, Jane is transformed: she attends cooking classes and learns to cook; she meets the farmers her eating choices support. When she joins the core team, Jane participates in ownership of a business that articulates her values for the first time in her life.

Jane's interaction with the food collective changes her habits and values, and transforms her purchasing choices and food politics. Jane becomes an empowered individual, equipped to make an impact in her food system and her world after graduation.



CoFed storefronts reduce overhead up to 25 percent while meeting students' needs for hands-on leadership experience and vibrant community. This uniquely positions storefronts to meet a growing demand for healthy, sustainable and affordable food on campus.

Through sales at storefronts, CoFed will reach the minds and mouths of hundreds of thousands of college consumers during their identity-defining years.

The CoFed Model

| Aspect | 1. Student-led management teams | 2. Community-oriented work forces | 3. Sustainable food sources |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| Definition | Students fill leadership roles | Democratic, low barrier to participation | Environmentally and socially friendly |
| Advantages | Non-profit status, lower labor costs | Volunteer labor hours, effective marketing | Healthy for the body, society, environment |
| Challenges | Additional training | Lengthy decision-making | Higher price points |

CASE STUDIES



THE MARYLAND FOOD COLLECTIVE COLLEGE PARK, D.C.

Impact

- ▶ Anecdotal center of campus food movement
- ▶ \$700,000 annual sales of healthy, local food
- ▶ All 20 managers equipped to train volunteers

Model Attributes

- ▶ Incorporation as an educational non-profit
- ▶ Organizational and financial stability for nearly 40 years
- ▶ Sustainable food that successfully competes with nearby chain stores
- ▶ Student staff receiving living wages and operating with democratic workplace control and clear turnover solutions

Success Factors

- ▶ Established a volunteer program to keep staff costs low, built a customer base without compromising quality
- ▶ Paid core staff to reduce turnover
- ▶ Serves hot food and sandwiches

FOOD FOR THOUGHT CAFE

PORTLAND, OR

Impact

- ▶ \$300,000 annual sales of local, healthy food
- ▶ As many as 30 student managers gain experience with food preparation
- ▶ Successful venue space for student events

Model Attributes

- ▶ \$80,000 raised for pre-opening expenses
- ▶ 2 years from team formation to store opening
- ▶ University-owned rent-free space and access to commercial kitchen
- ▶ High level of customer satisfaction



Success Factors

- ▶ Do thorough market, menu and operations research and planning
- ▶ Build a diverse and committed team
- ▶ Get early buy-in from administration and faculty

TRAINING

CoFed offers a full summer-long incubation process, which includes training sessions interspersed with on-the-ground organizing. Participants begin the summer with a week-long boot camp filled with participatory learning and team-building. Participants return to their campuses, where they begin to plan and recruit. Two day-long follow-up sessions are held in the middle and at the end of the summer break.

UPDATES FROM OUR PILOT TEAMS

- ▶ **UC Santa Barbara** raised more than \$4,000 through fundraisers.
- ▶ The team at **Cal Poly San Luis Obispo** grew from two to thirty students, and 150 interested students receive their mailing list.
- ▶ **City College of San Francisco** started a farmers market and secured a spot on the decision-making committee for a cafe space in their new student union.
- ▶ **UC Davis** leadership is running for senate on a platform to bring a student-run co-op to campus.
- ▶ **Humboldt State University** garnered major financial and political support from key faculty.
- ▶ **University of Washington** secured a rent-free café space from their administration.

KEY PROGRAMMING

Social Entrepreneurship

- ▶ business planning
- ▶ sales and margins
- ▶ grant writing
- ▶ in-person fundraising
- ▶ market research
- ▶ budgeting
- ▶ bookkeeping

Food Movement Advocacy

- ▶ environmental stewardship
- ▶ mapping the food system
- ▶ cooperative history
- ▶ factory meat farming
- ▶ slow food ideology

Activism and Organizing

- ▶ recruitment and campaigns
- ▶ campus power-mapping
- ▶ creating mission/vision/values
- ▶ non-violent communication
- ▶ anti-oppression techniques
- ▶ effective meeting facilitation

WHAT STUDENTS ARE SAYING:



"CoFed transformed 21 strangers into future leaders. Living as a family for seven days, the strangers bonded by sharing their leadership, public speaking, constructive criticism and team work. Each member became a part of CoFed — wherever we go we carry a little piece of CoFed, our family. "

- **Edher, CCSF**

"CoFed not only taught us and provided us with the resources to start a student run food collective on our college campus, but created an inspirational atmosphere that left everyone with the determination and empowerment to make our vision a reality!" - **Brooke, UCSB**

SUPPORT SERVICES

In order to bring a team from ideation to organization to successful operation, CoFed provides services tailored to each phase of development. Services include staff support, static documents and regional networks.

| PHASE | COFED STAFF SUPPORT | REGIONAL NETWORKS | STATIC DOCUMENTS |
|---|--|--|--|
| Phase 1: Ideation Student leaders organize on their campus. | Training | Shared grant writing support Mentoring relationships with existing co-ops | Templates for fundraising, recruiting, and organizing Student Leader Manual |
| | Check-ins following agreed timeline | | |
| Phase 2: Organization Committed coordinators formalize the process. | Support when interfacing with administration | Online regional forums for solutions and support | “What Sells Well,” a guide to effective stocking and inventory |
| | Access to consultants cabinet | | Financial budget and projections |
| Phase 3: Operations Storefront opens and operates. | Annual retreats to renew team energy and inspiration | Pooled insurance | Storefront operations manual Volunteer training guide |
| | | Wholesale prices | |

THE NEED FOR COFED

The greatest ecological destruction of our planet approaches just as diversity and economic disparity is at its highest in America. To address issues like climate change and our obesity epidemic, it will take more than green-washing from businesses or campaign promises from politicians — we need organizations that create a powerful, grassroots movement of leadership that brings people together.

Universities have historically been centers of cultural shift - fast food and ad agencies understand this. During college, students are searching for powerful learning experiences and vibrant communities that will cement the habits and values of their adult lives.

Food is a watershed issue that connects your lunch meeting directly to a billion pounds of pesticides in our drinking water annually and 30% of greenhouse gas emissions in the US, to issues like modern-day slavery in Florida tomato-growers and the fact that 1 in 2 minorities born today will develop diabetes.

As students change the food they eat and the institutions they eat it in, they gain the tools to shift our economy and transform our culture.

OUR GROWTH PLAN

This past summer CoFed piloted a successful training with six teams. This upcoming summer, new organizers will train 6-10 campuses in their region, multiplying the successes of our initial training. Regional organizers will then help administer CoFed support services in their regions.

CoFed will target more than 70 universities and colleges that have student green fees — student-administered funds that are likely funding sources for our projects. By anchoring a region with several green-fee schools, and securing funding for organizers from other regional sources, we will recruit and retain qualified organizers in any region in the United States.

| Projected Growth | | | | |
|------------------|----------|-------|-------------|---------|
| Year | Students | Teams | Storefronts | Regions |
| 2010 | 30 | 6 | N/A | N/A |
| 2011 | 100 | 20 | 2 | 3 |
| 2012 | 300 | 35 | 8 | 5 |
| 2013 | 600 | 60 | 20 | 8 |
| 2014 | 1,000 | 100 | 35 | 12 |

KEY PLAYERS

The Real Food Challenge (RFC) does powerful grassroots education and organizing with a goal of moving 20 percent of campus dining dollars to "real" food as defined by their guidelines. After RFC programming, student leaders have experience interfacing with administrators and lobbying campus dining towards sustainable food, but lack the public leadership and social entrepreneurship abilities which CoFed offers. CoFed began as a training service offered by the Real Food Challenge.

Slow Food On Campus is interested in creating ethical food businesses, but lacks clear programming around campus food movements, as well as the flexibility to give students ownership over their part of the food movement. CoFed is currently working with Slow Food on Campus groups in partnership with Slow Food USA.

The Food Co-op Initiative manages resources to create community-based grocery co-ops, but does not work with students or worker-owned cooperatives. We will share best-practices, data and outreach. Their director Stuart Reid has committed his staff time to support our programming.

Nasco is an umbrella organization for thousands of "students of cooperation" and helps college students create effective housing cooperatives but it doesn't work in the food sector. CoFed is working with Nasco as an outreach and education partner.

Campus InPower trains students to lead campaigns for campus green fee initiatives. The funding sources created are key partners for CoFed teams.

THE COFED ALLIANCE

These are a few of the organizations that CoFed has partnered with:



STAFF

Sara Eddison

Program Coordination

Cory Bensen

Development and Admin

Yoni Landau

Director

Didi Xie

Web Master

Ethan Genauer

Online Campaigns Manager

Enosh Baker

Regional Organizer -
Northern California

Megan Meo

Regional Organizer -
North East U.S.

Jake McCollum

Regional Organizer -
Southern California

Marcia Sitcoske

Consulting

Paula Kieko

Regional Facilitator -
Northwest U.S.

Liz Ciavolino

Regional Organizer -
Mid-Atlantic U.S.

Matt Steele

Regional Organizer -
Mid- Atlantic U.S.

ADVISORS

As a fiscally sponsored start-up, CoFed does not legally require a board of directors to operate. So, for the next year, CoFed plans to leverage its extensive network without creating a formal body that would slow decision-making or create unnecessary burden on staff. By staying flexible during this formative phase, CoFed will take full advantage of opportunities, ensuring that it follows a fully sustainable course of growth. Those listed below have been and will continue to be informal advisers to CoFed staff:

Alex Michel, Manager of The Hub Bay Area

Amy Tobin, Executive Director of The David Brower Center

Amy Wilson, Founder of Bay Area Ashoka Youth Ventures

Ari Derfel, Founder of Gather Restaurant and Back to Earth Catering;
Executive Director of Slow Money

Fred Ross, Union Organizer and Founder of Neighbor to Neighbor

James Kalin, Founder of Virtually Green

John Yuasa, Consultant

Melanie Kubo, Founder and Principal of See Change Evaluation

Michael Dimock, Executive Director of Roots of Change

Michael Strauss, Strauss Communications

Mollie Katzen, Author of numerous New York Times Best-Selling Cookbooks

Rebecca Trobe, Impact Consulting

Scott Hawkins, Board Member of Eco-Farm

Tim Freundlich, Founder of Calvert Giving Fund

Tim Galeurnau, Food Systems Education Specialist at UC Santa Cruz

Tim Huet, Co-Founder of Arizmendi Association

Tom Pierson, Executive Director of North American Students of Cooperation

Woody Tasch, Founder of Slow Money