

# Cooperative Markets— Walls Optional

Innovative Approaches to Food  
Access in Rural America

# What are Cooperatives?

A co-operative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.





# What are Cooperatives?

- Self help, not charity; empowerment, not aid
- Job creators— more than 100,000 worldwide
- Some of the largest (and smallest!) businesses in the world
- Enterprises with a soul
- Community-based, locally-owned

# Co-ops Take Many Forms

- Brick and Mortar
- Buying Clubs
  - Traditional (bulk, dry goods)
  - CSA (fresh produce & farm goods)
- Mobile Markets
- Kiosks
- The English approach



# Buying Clubs

## Buying Clubs Provide:

- Access to bulk and packaged foods
- Possibility of including fresh foods
- Very low capital requirements to start
- Lower prices (very limited overhead costs)
- Opportunities for volunteerism and social connection



(C) 2010 Cris Melo

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[Drop Points](#)  
[How to Join](#)  
[Read about Producers](#)

55 Products listed

Delivery Day: *June 7*

Opens: **Jun 3, 12:01 AM**

Closes: **Jun 5, 12:30 PM**

Username:

Password:



### Browse the Product List Webpages

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[New Products Since Last Order Cycle](#)  
[Changed Products Since Last Order Cycle](#)  
[All Organic Products](#)

[Products by Category](#)  
[Products by Producer](#)  
[Wholesale Products](#)  
[The Entire Product List](#)  
[All Products by Product ID#](#)



# Mobile Markets

## Traveling retail stands

- At scheduled venues and times
- On a mobile platform



# Mobile Markets

## Mobile Markets Provide:

- Broader food access to communities
- Modest start-up costs
- Moderate to high operating costs
- Relatively limited inventory capacity



Photo: Courtesy of Steve Casey

*Troubled by the lack of fresh produce available in his corner of Chicago, Steve Casey dreamed up a fruit and veggie market—on wheels.*



**MO GRO DELIVERS IN NEW MEXICO**

# What is MoGro?

## **PARTNERS**

Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health *provides community education, ongoing market research analyses, and marketing to local communities.*



[www.jhsph.edu/caih](http://www.jhsph.edu/caih)

La Montañita Co-Op *purchases, stores and transports the food and manages inventory.*

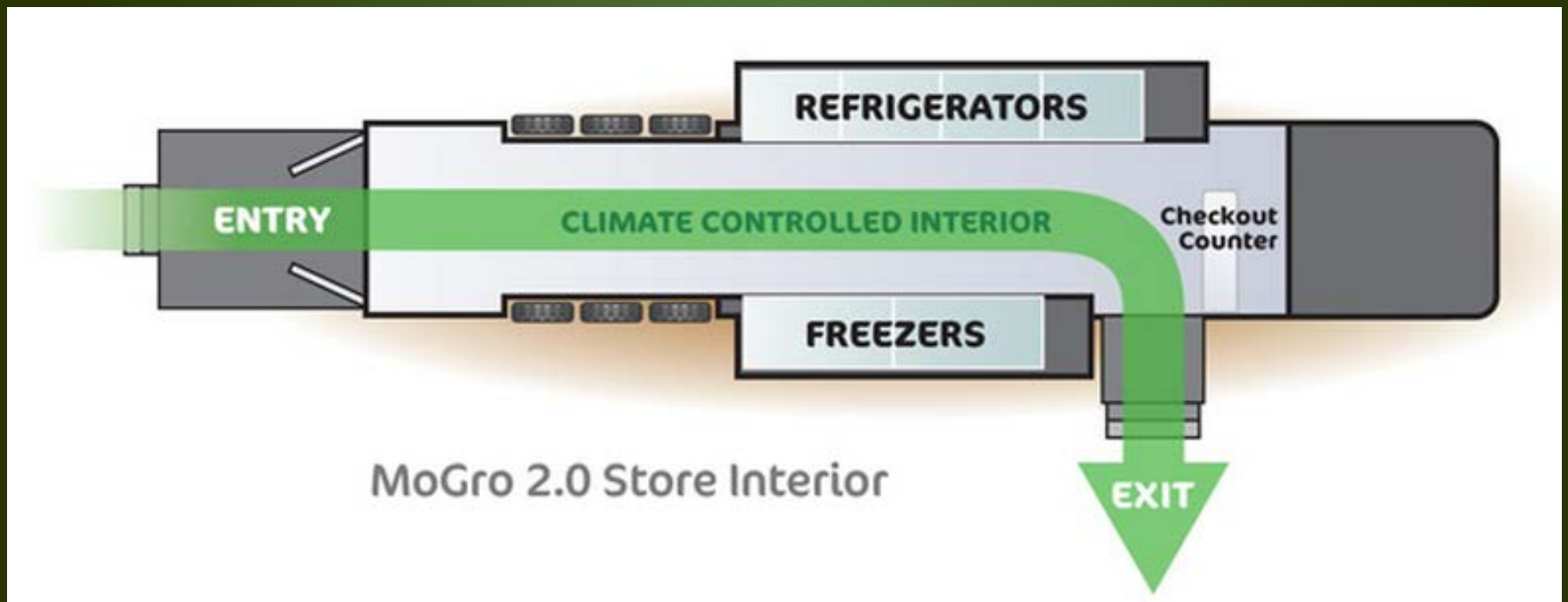
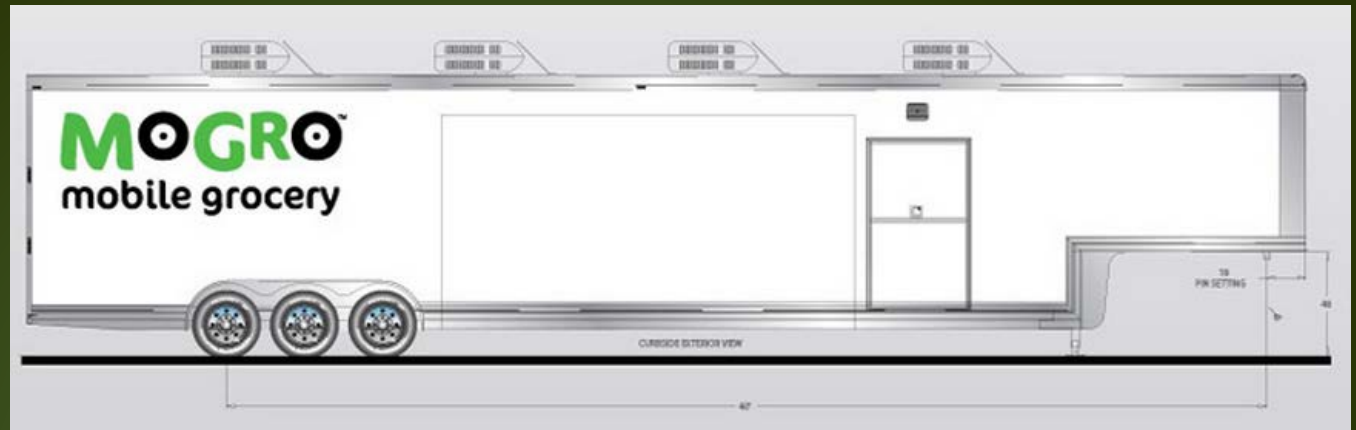


[www.lamontanita.coop](http://www.lamontanita.coop)



## Our Vision

Elimination of “food deserts” in New Mexico: that all communities have access to healthy, affordable, and sustainably sourced foods.



# Kiosks- Small Satellites



# Village Shops, English-style

## Almondsbury Community Shop





# What Makes them Work?

- Funded support
- Advisors and consultants
- A structured systems approach
- Over 280 village shops now open
- Largely dependent on volunteer labor
- Often co-located with a Post Office or pub

<http://www.communityshops.coop/>

# Finding the Best Approach

- What are the community's unmet needs?
  - Healthy food choices
  - More convenient access
  - Jobs
  - Support for the local economy
  - Education and social connection



# What is Feasible?

## *Support & Capital*

- Member-owners of the co-op
- Community partners
- Business development and other civic funds
- USDA (for rural development)
- Non-profit partners
- Angel investors\*
- Food Co-op Initiative Seed Grants
- Cooperative Loan Funds

# Tell Me More!



*[www.foodcoopinitiative.coop](http://www.foodcoopinitiative.coop)*

Food Co-op Initiative is a non-profit foundation that was created to provide resources and support for communities that want to start new food co-ops. We can offer you support, referrals, and access to training material so that you will have the best chance for a creating a successful co-op.

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