



UKIAH
NATURAL FOODS CO-OP

Become A Board Member

Growing Community - Growing Together

2026



Dear Member-Owner,

Thank you for considering service on the Board of Directors of the Ukiah Natural Foods Cooperative. This is an important time for our co-op. We're moving through big changes—both within the organization and in the wider world—and strong, engaged leadership helps us stay rooted in our values while adapting to what's ahead.

We always look for board members who work well with others, think strategically, and stay committed to the co-op's mission. This year, we'd especially welcome candidates with backgrounds in law, retail business, or farming and food production, as well as those who bring lived experiences that reflect the diversity of our community, to round out the strengths we already have.

If you're ready to share your skills, perspective, and dedication, we encourage you to apply. Serving on the board is a meaningful way to help shape the future of Ukiah Natural Foods and strengthen the cooperative for everyone it serves.

In cooperation,

Gideon Burdick

Gideon Burdick
President, Board of Directors
Ukiah Natural Foods



Board Commitment and Expectations

Each year, three Directors are elected to serve three-year terms. The Board is made up of nine members in total, with terms staggered so that three seats come open each year in a regular rotation.

Time Commitment

- Board Meetings: Monthly meetings are held on the 3rd Monday from 5:30-7:30 PM, either in person or via Zoom.
- Committee Involvement: Each Director participates in at least two committees, with meetings usually held via Zoom. Current standing committees include the Board Development Committee, Owner Relations Committee, Finance Committee, and General Manager Evaluation Committee.
- Ad Hoc Committees: The Board may establish ad hoc committees to address specific issues or initiatives as needed. At the time of the upcoming election, the Farmer Loan Committee is expected to be active. Past ad hoc committees have included Strategic Planning and Executive Search.
- Total Time: Most Directors can expect to dedicate about six hours to meetings, preparation, and other board activities each month.

Annual Agreements

All Directors are required to sign a Board Commitment Agreement and a Confidentiality Agreement at the start of each board year. These agreements affirm each member's responsibilities, participation, and obligation to maintain confidentiality in board work.

Technology

Board members must be able to participate in Zoom meetings and use Google Suite (Docs, Sheets, Drive, Gmail) for board communications and materials. A reliable internet connection, computer or tablet, and basic digital literacy are required. Training and support can be provided as needed.

Self-Evaluation

Board members participate in an annual self-evaluation process to ensure a high standard of governance and to identify opportunities for improvement.

Discount Benefit

Board members receive a 15% discount on purchases at the Co-op.



Current Board Members

These are our current board members. To see their photos, visit our website at www.ukiahcoop.com/board.

- Gideon Burdick - President
- Angie McChesney - Vice President
- Tim Dolan - Treasurer
- Christine Rodrigues - Secretary
- Thomas Chandler
- Stephen Groff
- Kyle Mayers
- Larry Mayfield
- Stephen Turner

Desired Qualities for New Board Members

We seek individuals who bring skills, commitment, and diverse perspectives to the UNF Board. The following are general qualities that make an effective board member:

- Availability, dependability, and a commitment to being an active board member
- Collaborative spirit and positive attitude
- Alignment with UNF's mission and values
- Ability to think critically and strategically

This year, we are especially interested in candidates who bring specific skills or perspectives that complement our existing board members, including:

- Legal expertise
- Experience in retail business
- Experience in farming or food production
- Diversity in demographics and lived experiences

A still life photograph on a light-colored, weathered wooden surface. In the upper left, a clear glass vase holds a pink rose with green leaves. Several rose petals are scattered around the vase. In the lower right, a white plate holds several ripe, dark purple blackberries. The text "LET'S SUPPORT LOCAL TOGETHER" is overlaid in the bottom left corner.

**LET'S
SUPPORT
LOCAL
TOGETHER**



MISSION

We join together for a common purpose: to sell trusted food and goods for the health of our community.

VISION

We envision a thriving, healthy community in which we are a vital link in the local food system.

PURPOSE

Provide and promote organically grown, sustainably produced food, goods, and services that are locally and regionally sourced whenever possible.

Promote the health and wellness of our community by providing facilities, resources, and information, and by offering effective, positive community education and services.

Embody and model sustainable, humane, equitable, green ways of working and living, creating and maintaining an ideal workplace.

Add to the enjoyment and enrichment of our greater community ventures and networks.

VALUES

Integrity: We are committed to ethical, sustainable, and humane practices for the enrichment of our greater community.

Quality: We provide and promote organically grown, sustainably produced healthy food, goods, and services that are locally and regionally sourced.

Customer Service: We reach beyond basic customer service needs to deliver friendly and responsive service in an inviting environment.

Community: We promote education, services, and collaborative ventures and networks for the health and wellness of our members, staff, and community.

Leadership: We cultivate and develop our staff and board through leadership principles and practices that create and sustain a healthy organization.

Prosperity: We are a financially viable, well-managed organization that returns fair value to its members, staff, and community to accomplish our vision.

CO-OP PRINCIPLES

1. Voluntary and open membership
2. Democratic member control
3. Member's economic participation
4. Autonomy and independence
5. Education, training and information
6. Cooperation among cooperatives
7. Concern for the community

APPLICATION PROCESS AND DEADLINES

Owner-members who are interested in joining the board must apply by completing an online form by Friday, **January 31, 2026** [here](#).

If we receive more than three qualified applications for the three open positions, then we will submit the slate of candidates for an election by member-owners. If the number of candidates is equal to or fewer than the number of open seats, then candidates will be screened and the board may appoint qualified applicants without an election.

The online application form has two parts to complete:

- Part 1: Qualification – Applicants are required to meet specific membership qualifications to serve on the board, as defined in UNF's Bylaws (see below). Responses to these questions will determine if applicants meet the minimum eligibility requirements as outlined in the bylaws.
- Part 2: Candidate Statement – Applicants who meet the minimum qualifications will proceed to submit a personal statement about their motivations for joining the board, how their experiences and skills align with our cooperative's mission, and what unique perspectives they bring to enhance our community and governance. This statement is required for all candidates—regardless of whether a vote is held—to introduce themselves to the board.

BOARD MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS

Section 6.03 of the [2014 Amended Bylaws](#) describes the qualifications for board service:

(a) Directors shall be residents of California.

(b) Any natural person who is and has been a Member as an individual natural person for at least the one hundred-eighty (180) days immediately preceding the first day of elections, including the month of the elections, and who is not disqualified by any other provisions of these Bylaws, is eligible to be a candidate for the Board of Directors.

(c) A maximum of one (1) eligible Member who is a paid employee of the Cooperative may serve on the Board of Directors at any one time, if not disqualified by any other provisions of these Bylaws. (d) The following persons are excluded from serving on the Cooperative's Board of Directors at the same time they are also one of the following:

- (1) The General Manager and any manager of the Cooperative;
- (2) Persons of the same household or immediate family of a Director or of the General Manager or of any manager of the Cooperative;
- (3) More than one person of a household or family unit.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Candidates must submit their answers to the following questions online [here](#) by January 31, 2026.

Part 1: Mandatory Requirements

1. Have you been a co-op member of record (the membership is in your name) since at least September 2, 2025?
2. Are you a current employee of UNF?
3. Are you a manager of UNF?
4. Are you an immediate family member—or a person living in the same household as—a current board member or manager of UNF?
5. Are you available for board meetings on the 3rd Monday of each month from 5:30-7:30 PM?
6. Do you have the equipment, skills, and willingness to attend meetings by Zoom and access files on Google Drive?
7. Do you have the capacity to be an active participant in board meetings and activities as described in the application packet?
8. Please describe any concerns you may have.

Part 2: Candidate Statement

1. Tell us about why you are a member of the Co-op. (Maximum 750 words)
Your answer can include topics such as what inspired you to join, what you believe are the biggest benefits, and if there is anything you would change.
2. Which of the seven Cooperative Values and Principles resonates the most with you? Please describe why. (Maximum 750 words)
3. Tell us why you want to join the Board. (Maximum 750 words)
Your answer can include topics such as what you have to offer to the board, how your education, experience, training, or community involvement would be an asset to the organization, and how you would describe your working style as part of a collaborative team.
4. Photograph: Please submit a relatively recent photo of you to be included on the election ballot, if needed. If seated, your photo may also be posted to the UNF website with a brief biographical paragraph. Photographs should be in .jpg format.



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