

## BriarPatch Food Co-op Merchandising Policy

"We strive to offer high quality, healthful products at fair prices. We emphasize foods that are nutritious, minimally processed, organically grown, and free of artificial additives. Whenever possible we stock food and other household goods that are grown and/or manufactured in ways that support good health for people and the environment."

- BriarPatch Marketing Plan "Product Offering"

BriarPatch Food Co-op strives to provide high quality produce and merchandise for our owner-members and customers at all times. The following guidelines represent criteria for choosing and retaining product inventory that meet the standards set by the Merchandising Policy (Revised 1/15/2007), approved by the General Manager and the Board of Directors and in accordance with the Mission Statement of the BriarPatch Food Co-op.

The Merchandising Policy is a general guide for decisions regarding product selection for sale at BriarPatch. Product selection, purchasing and display will be conducted by department managers and staff as directed by the General Manager.

### PART 1: PREFERRED CRITERIA

### PART 2: PRODUCTS THAT MAY BE SOLD AT BRIARPATCH UNTIL BETTER ALTERNATIVES ARE FOUND OR MADE AVAILABLE

\* Note: BriarPatch currently offers some products that reflect customer preference including several popular processed, convenience, and snack foods that may be less healthful but possibly a better choice than brands offered in general supermarkets.

### PART 3: PRODUCTS TO BE AVOIDED

### PART 4: PRODUCTS NEEDING MORE RESEARCH

1) **Preferred Criteria:** Ideally all products on BriarPatch shelves would meet these standards. Products that fall into one or more of these categories may be highlighted by promotional display, signage or shelf location – as determined by department managers – to emphasize BriarPatch product preference. Sale price promotions (ongoing or temporary) may be initiated to emphasize products meeting "preferred criteria" – as determined by General Manager and/or department managers. Products meeting "preferred criteria" may also be featured in special promotions (listed below).

- a. Produce and products produced using sustainable practices including organic agriculture.
- b. Products produced from ecologically responsible processes.
- c. Products that are locally produced and/or locally grown.
- d. Products of small independent companies.
- e. Products with minimal, recycled or recyclable packaging.
- f. Products from companies that are socially responsible, including those that treat their employees fairly.
- g. Products from collectively or cooperatively-owned businesses.
- h. Products from countries with good human rights records.

- i. Foods that are whole.
  - j. Foods that are sold in bulk.
  - k. Foods that are 100% organic including both certified organic and functionally organic.
  - l. Foods that are minimally processed.
  - m. Foods that have few or no artificial additives.
  - n. Foods that are healthy alternatives to mainstream products.
- 

Promotions to be developed through a cooperative process including department managers, Merchandising Committee, and Marketing staff, with approval of the General Manager to emphasize “preferred” products may include:

- 1) These items may be marked as preferred items on the shelf.
  - 2) Pricing at a lower markup than more undesirable products.
  - 3) Giving samples of the product.
  - 4) Promoting the item by featuring it in advertising and the newsletter.
  - 5) Carrying several sizes, brands, or varieties of the product.
  - 6) Arranging volume discounts and other discounts from suppliers when possible.
  - 7) Providing information about the product and ways to use it.
  - 8) End cap displays.
  - 9) Items meeting several “preferred criteria” may be added to the “BriarPatch Preferred Items” list/brochure, which may be made available to BriarPatch shoppers.
- 

## **2) Products that may be sold at BriarPatch until better alternatives are found or made available:**

Products falling into these categories are considered to have undesirable qualities and will be reviewed periodically by department managers or by the Merchandising Committee with the cooperation of department managers or General Manager, and may be replaced by more desirable products if available. Products with “undesirable qualities” may be sold by BriarPatch under the following circumstances: customer demand, staple item with no desirable alternative currently available on the market, seasonal replacement for more desirable product, temporary vendor promotional item, substantial pricing difference when more desirable product is only available at a high price.

The Merchandising Committee and Marketing staff may provide ongoing education for customers about possible health or environmental benefits from reducing consumption or using alternative ingredients.

Customer education coordinated by department managers, the Merchandising Committee, and the Marketing staff will be provided if changes in availability result in removing a current item from the shelves.

- a. Products in non-recyclable packaging.
- b. Items that are produced under situations with questionable human rights records.
- c. Products with genetically modified or engineered material listed as minor ingredients or GMO status unavailable for minor ingredients.
- d. Items from companies in transition to “no-GMO” status.

- e. Non-organic foods.
- f. Products made with refined white sugar or white flour.

**3) Products to be avoided:** These products are considered undesirable and BriarPatch will make every effort to avoid products with these criteria. As labeling and ingredient standards and certifications change, BriarPatch will continue to actively screen products with the intent of providing only the best available selection for our customers.

- a. Products with shelf-packaging made from styrofoam (shipping packaging materials are an exception when no alternative is available).
- b. Items that are produced under situations that violate human rights (determined on individual case basis).
- c. Products from companies that use animals for testing.
- d. Products from companies that have been determined to raise or treat animals inhumanely (determined on individual case basis).
- e. Products containing genetically modified or engineered material listed as a main ingredient.
- f. High fructose corn syrup.
- g. Products containing artificial flavors, colors, sweeteners or other artificial ingredients.
- h. Products containing nitrates.
- i. Irradiated products.
- j. Processed tobacco products.
- k. Dairy products containing rBGH.
- l. Meat products treated with hormones or antibiotics.
- m. Products containing trans fats/partially hydrogenated oils.

**4) Products needing more research:** Ongoing research on these products will be conducted by the Merchandising Committee and reported to the General Manager. Educational materials and/or a change in policy related to these items may result from research findings. Products containing these ingredients are currently on the shelves at BriarPatch.

- a. Fractionated oils.
- b. "Natural" flavors / colors.

This policy is a fluid document. Periodic review by the Merchandising Committee and store management is advised to keep the policy current.

**Proposed:** 1/15/2007

**Adopted:** 1/11/2007