

The 100
Most Frequently Asked
Questions
and Their Answers



Natural Foods Market
A COMMUNITY COOPERATIVE SINCE 1973

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Welcome to the 100 Most Frequently Asked Questions and Their Answers.

Providing truly great customer service is one way that Oryana stands out in the community. Not only does it keep customers coming back, make for a nice place to work, and yield better bottom line results, it is fundamental to who we are in our relationship to the community. Providing great service means that we go the extra mile for our local farmers, vendors, and for every customer who walks in the door. Giving through great service to ourselves, the customers and to the community is a wonderful way to create the positive changes that we want to see happen.

At Oryana, we define great customer service like this: A shopping environment that is clean and easy to navigate, staffed by knowledgeable people who exceed customer expectations.

The 100 Most Frequently Asked Questions and Their Answers was created to help you feel confident answering these most basic questions. It was created to empower knowledgeable staff. These are the questions that we expect everyone who works at Oryana to easily answer.

On your orientation day, you will receive a copy of this booklet. Over the next couple of months, study it until you feel comfortable answering all of the questions. During your third month, you will be asked to take a 25 question quiz based on questions in this booklet. Passing this quiz is one of the requirements that moves you off of your initial three month probationary status.

We hope you find these questions and answers helpful. If you have any questions, just let us know.

Sandi McArthur Joan D'Argo
Oryana Education and Outreach

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About Oryana and Food Co-ops

What is Oryana?

Oryana, a community cooperative since 1973, is a full service natural foods grocery store that is member-owned.

What does Oryana mean?

In 1973, the original founders of Oryana chose that name because it refers to a South American goddess of fertility, harvest and abundance.

What is the Oryana Mission?

Our mission is to provide high quality food produced in ecologically sound ways at fair value to member-owners and the community. Oryana members and staff are committed to enhancing their community through the practice of cooperative economics and education about the relationship of food to health.

What is the definition of a Co-op?

A cooperative is a democratically run enterprise owned equally by its members who come together voluntarily to meet a common need. In Oryana's case, high quality food at fair prices.

Do I have to be a member to shop at Oryana?

No, everyone is welcome to shop at Oryana, however there are great advantages to being an Oryana Member. Check out the Member Benefit Card at the Customer Service Desk.

What are the Top 10 Reasons to be an Oryana Member?

You support a socially responsible, locally owned business.

You have voting privileges and opportunities to participate in governance.

You get a 5% discount on 6 transactions of your choosing every year. A potential savings of \$30 on just six \$100 average purchases.

Case discounts that average 20% on most pre-orders.

You have access to discounts and incentives from Oryana's Community Partners.

Four times a year, we hold Member Appreciation Days when we offer unique discounts and give-aways to our valued members.

Access to Patronage Refund - At the discretion of the Board, Oryana will share a percentage of the year-end proceeds with active members.

You help select the Oryana Community Grant Recipient each year.

You get the Natural Food News delivered to your home or business.

You can special order items that Oryana doesn't stock as long as they are available from our distributors.

How much does membership cost?

A membership costs only \$20 a year. Membership is risk free since you can ask for your equity (\$15) back at any time. The remaining \$5 is an administrative fee.

How old do you need to be to be an Oryana member?

You need to be 16 to be an Oryana member.

What is the role of the Board of Directors?

Oryana is governed by a voluntary Board of Directors. The Board has adopted Policy Governance as its means of operation. This basically means that the role of the Board is to focus on vision and goals rather than on store operations.

How is the Board elected?

The Board is elected directly from the membership by the membership at the Annual General Meeting.

How many Board Directors are there?

There are 9 Board Directors with 7 Directors elected from the general membership and 2 directors elected from the staff (one from management and one general). Directors serve 2 year terms and as of 2008 there are no term limits. Staff serve one year terms at this time.

When does the Board meet?

The board meets once a month on the third Thursday of the month at 5:30 pm at the TC District Library. Board meetings are open to anyone who wishes to attend.

Oryana's Purchasing Policy

Does Oryana have a Purchasing policy?

Yes. A large poster of it is located up by the front registers. Oryana is committed to selecting the highest quality products to meet a variety of customer needs.

What is Oryana's purchasing preference?

Oryana is committed to purchasing local products when available with our preference on local products that are certified organic.

What is a whole food?

A whole food has one ingredient: itself. It is either grown or raised and is unprocessed or minimally

processed and retains all of its nutritional components.

How does Oryana define local?

Oryana defines local as a 9 county area that includes Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford.

What does a Fair Trade designation on a product mean?

A Fair Trade designation ensures that farmers and artisans are paid a fair and just wage for the products they produce. Fair Trade principles promote environmental sustainability, safe and healthy working environments, gender equity, payment of fair prices, accountability and creating opportunities for economically disadvantaged producers. For more info, check out our fair trade brochure located near the Customer Service Counter.

How can I tell which items in the store are Fair Trade?

Items in the store that are fairly traded have a small fair trade symbol on their packaging. Oryana carries fair trade coffee, tea, chocolate, cocoa, sugar, quinoa, rice, yerba mate, jams some Dr Bronner's soaps, and bananas when we can get them.

Organic Certification

Which sector of the food industry is the fastest growing?

The organic sector; it has grown at about 20% or more every year since 1990.

What does certified organic mean?

According to the USDA National Organic Program, organic food is produced by farmers who emphasize the use of renewable resources, and the conservation of soil and water to enhance environmental quality for future generations. Organic meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy products come from animals that are given no antibiotics or growth hormones. Organic food is produced without the use of most conventional pesticides; fertilizers made with synthetic ingredients; sewage sludge; bioengineering; or ionizing radiation.

How does the USDA identify products that are organic?

The USDA has identified three categories for labeling organic products:

100% Organic: Products labeled 100% organic must contain 100% organically produced ingredients and may display the USDA organic seal.

Organic: Products must contain at least 95% organic ingredients. These products can also use the USDA organic seal.

Made With Organic Ingredients: The product has 70 percent to 95 percent organic ingredients.



The label may include the words “Made with (listing up to three organic ingredients)” on the front panel or main label. This label may not display the USDA Organic seal. Products with less than 70% organic ingredients may only list the organic ingredients on the side ingredient label, not on the front panel, and may not display the USDA Organic seal.

Is the USDA symbol mandatory for organic products?

No. In fact some companies have 100% certified organic ingredients and choose not to use the symbol.

Is Oryana a certified organic retailer?

Yes. Oryana was the first co-op in the country to become a certified organic retailer.

What does being a certified organic retailer mean?

It means that all of the organic products we carry are indeed organic and in compliance with the National Organic Standards. There is a specific set of storewide and departmental procedures that we must follow in order to maintain our Certified Organic Retailer standing.

As a certified organic retailer, is Oryana required to carry all organic products?

No. It’s the procedures we follow and the third party inspection that make a store a certified organic retailer. At Oryana though, we place a very high priority on carrying as many certified organic products as possible.

Oryana Soyworks

How many food co-ops in the country make their own tofu?

Only one: Oryana. We are unique in that we are the only food co-op in the country to make our own tofu in a certified organic kitchen.

Is the tofu certified organic?

Yes. We buy certified organic soybeans grown right in Michigan.

What is tofu?

Tofu is a soybean product made by coagulating soy milk, and then pressing the resulting curds into blocks. Making tofu is similar to making cheese.

How often is the Oryana Tofu made?

Oryana tofu is made fresh every week right here at the Co-op.

Soy Related Questions

What is Tempeh?

Tempeh is a tender, chunky cake made of cooked soybeans that have been inoculated with a culture and then fermented for 24 hours.

What's the difference between tofu and tempeh?

Tempeh is made from the *whole bean* and a *culture*. It has a firmer texture and stronger flavor than tofu. Tofu is made from soymilk and has a mild, bland flavor which lends itself to many different types of dishes. Tempeh must be cooked whereas tofu is ready to eat.

Which has more protein tempeh or tofu?

Tempeh. It has 16 grams in ½ cup compared to tofu that has 10 grams in ½ cup.

What is Edamame?

Edamame is a name for whole soybeans that have been harvested when they are still green and sweet tasting. Edamame is a great source of vegetable protein with 8 grams of protein in a ½ cup.

Where are they located in the store?

We carry Edamame in the pod and shelled; both are located in the freezer section by the frozen vegetables.

What is Miso?

Miso is a fermented (cultured) soybean paste made from cooked soybeans to which a koji (culture) has been added. It has a savory, salty taste that is high in protein and beneficial digestive enzymes.

What do the different colors of miso mean?

Miso can range in color from creamy tan to dark red/brown. The difference is the type and amount of koji used and the length of time it was allowed to age. The longer the aging process the darker the color and heartier, richer flavor.

What is one of the best ways to use miso?

Miso is a very healing food that can simply be used as a broth. Mix 1 teaspoon of miso to 1 cup of water. Be sure to never boil miso because high heat will destroy the beneficial live enzymes in it.

Where is miso located?

Miso is located in 2 places: In the refrigerated case near the cheese and it is also available non-refrigerated in the ethnic food section.

Is there a difference between the refrigerated miso and the non-refrigerated miso?

Both contain the beneficial enzymes, but the non-refrigerated miso goes through a process of heat bathing which slows down the fermentation process. This prevents the package from exploding during shipping. It also prevents undesirable yeasts and bacteria from forming.

What is the difference between tamari and Shoyu?

Shoyu is made from an equal blend of soybeans and wheat where as tamari is made primarily from soybeans to which a small amount of wheat has been added. Traditionally tamari was only made from soybeans. Tamari is characterized as having a rich aroma and very smooth flavor that is well-balanced. Shoyu is described as having a complex, aromatic, slightly sweet taste.

What is Nama Shoyu?

Nama Shoyu is an organic, raw (unpasteurized) soy sauce full of live enzymes and beneficial organisms. It is made from soybeans, water, wheat, salt and koji. It must be refrigerated after opening.

What's the difference between tamari and soy sauce?

Most commercial soy sauces are made using enzymes or an acid to produce a hydrolyzed soy protein liquid which has a very salty, chemical taste. Tamari (and shoyu) are traditionally brewed and fermented made by first soaking then cooking soybeans, adding cracked roasted wheat in various amounts and a koji (culture). It is then placed in vats to age for 5-6 months, after which it is pressed, pasteurized, filtered, and bottled.

Does Oryana sell a wheat free tamari?

Yes. We sell San-J Wheat Free Tamari and San-J Low Sodium Tamari. Both tamari and shoyu are located in the ethnic food section near the rice.

Bulk - Non-packaged Foods

Does buying food in our Bulk Department mean you have to buy huge quantities?

No. Purchasing foods in our Bulk Department means you are purchasing them unpackaged. You can buy as much or as little as you like.

Can customers bring in their own bags and containers for use in the Bulk Department?

Yes. They are encouraged to! For every container or bag they bring in they get a 5 cent discount at the register.

Why buy foods in the Bulk Department?

Buying foods in the Bulk Department allows you to stock a healthy pantry, purchase the quantity you want, reduce packaging, save money and purchase more whole foods.

What does that 3-digit number on each Bulk bin mean?

Each item in the department has a three digit PLU (price look up number) that makes it easier for cashiers to ring these items up at the register. Customers are encouraged to put this PLU # on their item for checkout.

Does Oryana carry packaged spices in individual jars?

We carry a very small number of packaged spices located in the ethnic food and in the baking sections. Oryana has a comprehensive herb and spice section in the Bulk Department where customers can purchase as much or as little of the spice as they want.

What's the advantage of buying spices in the Bulk Department?

3 things: less packaging, you can buy the quantity you want, and fresher spices.

Are any of our spices irradiated?

If the spice is certified organic, the USDA National Organic Program prohibits the use of irradiation for all certified organic products. However, Oryana does carry some non-certified herbs and spices when we can't get an organic source.

Where is wheat bran and wheat germ located?

The bran is located in a large bin in the Bulk Department by the flours. The wheat germ is located in the nut cooler. We also sell packaged wheat germ and wheat bran in the grocery aisle by the cereals.

What is quinoa?

Quinoa (pronounced keen wa), is a light, fluffy, mild flavored grain that is easy to digest. It is very high in protein as well as other vitamins, minerals and fiber.

How do I prepare quinoa?

It is easy to fix. Use 1 part quinoa to 2 parts water and cook for 15-20 minutes. Located in the bulk section near the other grains or in grocery aisle near pasta. Oryana carries pre-washed quinoa.

How do I cook dried beans or grains?

The Oryana Bean and Grain guide has basic cooking directions for all beans, lentils and grains in the bulk section. The guide is located near the grains and beans and in a pocket across from the customer service desk.

How much yeast in bulk equals a packet?

1 packet of dried yeast is equal to about 2 ¼ teaspoons of bulk active dried yeast.

Where is baking yeast found?

Baking yeast can be found in 2 locations: in the Bulk Department in the nut cooler and packaged yeast is found in the grocery aisle with the baking products.

Is nutritional yeast the same as baking yeast?

No. Baking yeast is different from nutritional yeast and brewers yeast. Nutritional yeast is grown on a sugar medium (molasses) and is a good source of vitamin B-12 as well as other B vitamins. It is a yellow flaky substance with a slightly nutty/cheesy flavor and is used in various dishes to enhance flavor and boost vitamin content. Nutritional yeast does not work for making bread. Brewers yeast is a byproduct of making beer and is similar to nutritional yeast although more bitter in flavor. Nutritional yeast is located in a large bin in the bulk department and brewers yeast is sold packaged in the Supplements Department.

Where are the flax seeds?

Both golden and brown flax seeds are located in the Bulk Department in the nut cooler. The golden seeds are just a tiny bit larger than the brown. Ground flax seeds are located in the grocery aisle near baking section. Flax seeds are a great vegetarian source of omega 3 essential fatty acids.

Where is the flax oil located?

Flax oil is located in the supplement cooler.

Do we carry medicinal herbs like nettles in the Bulk Department?

No. Bulk medicinal herbs are located in the Supplements Department.

Grocery - General Questions

Does Oryana have a sugar-free or diabetic section?

No, we don't. Many of the sugar free products available are sweetened with artificial, synthetic sweeteners. Our product guidelines prohibit us from purchasing products with artificial sweeteners. We're always looking for those products that contain stevia, a natural sweetener that has been shown to help regulate blood sugar levels.

What is Stevia?

Stevia is a naturally sweet herb. In its refined white state it is 100-300 times sweeter than sugar so you use a very minute amount. Stevia is sold as a powder in the bulk herbs/spices section and also in powder, liquid and packet form in the grocery section in the baking/sugar aisle. In the US it is sold as a supplement not as a sweetener. It has no calories.

Is there such a thing as a raw sugar?

No. Raw sugar cannot be sold in the US. We do sell some minimally processed sugars and they are

turbinado, rapadura or Sucanat which all retain some molasses. Turbinado more closely resembles cane sugar whereas the other two have more of a molasses flavor and tan color.

What is agave syrup?

Agave syrup comes from a cactus and is actually sweeter than sugar so you use less. In our bodies it is processed slower than sugar, which can help keep our blood sugar in balance. It has 17 calories per teaspoon.

What is the difference between grade A and grade B maple syrup?

Grade A is the first syrup of the season and is typically lighter in flavor. Grade B comes later in the season and is darker and tastes much like caramel. Grade B also contains more nutrients than Grade A.

What does whole wheat mean?

Whole wheat contains the whole wheat berry which includes the bran and the germ as well as the endosperm. It contains more protein, vitamins, minerals and fiber and is more nutritious than refined white flour which is simply the endosperm (the starchy center); the bran and germ have been removed.

What is the difference between hard and soft wheat flour?

Hard wheat flours can be red or white and have a higher protein content and stronger gluten forming proteins than soft wheat. They are used as bread flours and all purpose flours. Soft wheat flours are also known as pastry flours and can be either red or white. Soft wheat flours have a lower protein content and less gluten and are used in baked goods that don't need to rise such as cakes, pie crusts and cookies.

What's the difference between winter and spring wheat?

Winter and spring wheat are the same plant just planted and harvested at different times of the year. Hard, spring wheat has the highest protein content and makes the best bread flour.

Can I substitute whole wheat flour for white flour when baking?

Yes. When substituting whole wheat flour for white flour in a recipe use $\frac{7}{8}$ cup of wheat flour for every cup of white flour. This is because whole grain flour contains bran and will absorb more liquid than white flour. If you replace 1 for 1 your end result may be too dry.

What kind of wheat is used for making pasta?

Durum wheat is used for making pasta. Refined durum wheat (bran and germ removed) is known as semolina.

What is gluten?

Gluten is a protein found in certain grains. When it's combined with water it has a sticky, elastic texture. It reacts with yeast and helps dough rise as well as acting as a binder.

Which grains contain gluten?

Wheat, barley, rye, and possibly oats. Remember that wheat comes in many forms and includes (but is not limited to), bulgur, couscous, wheat berries, groats, semolina, graham flour, spelt, kamut, and triticale. All derivatives of wheat contain gluten.

Can a person eat spelt if they are gluten intolerant?

No, spelt contains gluten. Spelt does have a lower protein/gluten content than wheat so some people with wheat allergies can tolerate spelt if they are not gluten intolerant.

What is the most popular gluten free bread?

The most popular gluten free bread we sell is the Brown Rice Bread by Food For Life. It's located in the freezer section with other gluten free options. Remember to look for the red dots.

What do the red and blue dots mean?

Red dots on product shelf tags indicate that the manufacturer of the product claims the product contains less than 20 ppm of gluten. Blue dots indicate products that have less than 100 mg of sodium per serving.

What are steel cut oats?

Steel cut oats are whole oats (known as a groats), that has been sliced on a diagonal. They take longer to cook than rolled oats and have a chewier texture.

What is the difference between potato starch, potato starch flour and potato flour?

Potato starch and potato starch flour are the same thing. Both are fine white powders used as binders or thickening agents. They are made from the starch of the potato that has been separated, purified, dried and sifted. Potato flour is made from cooked whole potatoes that are dried and ground into a flour. It can be used with other flours in recipes, as a thickener, or to enhance the potato flavor in recipes. These products are located in the baking aisle and are often used in gluten free products.

What is guar gum and xanthan gum?

Both are used as thickeners in food. Oryana does not currently carry guar gum. Xanthan gum is a polysaccharide produced from a bacteria called xanthomonas campestris and is used in gluten free breads to help hold the dough together. Xanthan gum is located in the baking aisle.

What is agar?

Agar is a red algae and can replace gelatin in any recipe. If using flakes it is a 1:1 replacement. If using agar powder use half as much.

What are raw vinegars?

Raw or unfiltered vinegars are naturally fermented foods that are composed of beneficial yeast and bacteria. They should be used within a few months of purchase.

What is that “stringy thing” found in the raw vinegars?

That “stringy thing” is due to the presence of the yeast and bacteria and is sometime referred to as the “mother”. It is harmless and can be left in the vinegar or filtered out and discarded. The vinegars are located near the dressings and condiments.

What is kombucha?

The short answer is: a sweetened fermented tea. Kombucha is a fermented, slightly effervescent beverage that tastes a bit like apple cider vinegar. It is quite acidic (pH of 2.0-3.0). The basic kombucha recipe is simply green or black tea and sugar (although some add lemon juice or vinegar) to which the kombucha cultures are added. The brew undergoes fermentation for at least 7-14 days sometimes longer. The longer it incubates the more acidic or vinegary it becomes. The heart of the tea is its “mushroom” which is not really a mushroom but rather a large, living cultural mass of beneficial bacteria and yeast that forms during the fermentation process and to which its health claims are attributed. During the fermentation process essential nutrients are formed such as probiotics, enzymes and amino acids which can aid digestion and support overall intestinal health.

Dairy

What is the difference between homogenized and non-homogenized milk?

When milk is homogenized the fat molecules are broken apart which keeps the milk from separating. In non-homogenized milk the cream separates and rises to the top. Oryana has a great local dairy called Shetler Family Farms that provides us with fresh, non-homogenized milk and other dairy products.

What is ghee?

Ghee is clarified butter meaning that the milk solids and water have been removed. What is left is just butterfat. It can be used for high heat cooking.

If I’m allergic to milk can I use ghee?

It depends. If the ghee is certified casein and lactose free, someone allergic to milk can use it. Oryana carries a certified casein and lactose free ghee. It is found in the ethnic food section near the coconut milk.

What is kefir?

Kefir is a cultured product similar to yogurt but uses a different strain of bacteria as well as beneficial yeasts and is sold as a liquid. It is slightly effervescent.

What is the difference between organic and conventional dairy products?

On organic dairy farms, cows are fed 100% organically grown feed, are not given antibiotics or growth hormones, are treated humanely and spend time grazing on pasture. Organic dairy farms are third party certified which provides verification to the consumer.

How come there are different colors of eggs?

The color of eggs has to do with the variety of chicken and not their feed. The color of the eggshell has nothing to do with the nutritional value of the egg.

What is an omega egg?

High omega eggs have a higher percentage of a beneficial nutrient called omega 3, an essential fatty acid. Chickens produce these eggs because of the feed they are given not because they are a certain type of chicken.

Do we carry a dairy-free cheese?

Yes. In order to insure that a cheese is actually 100% dairy free it must contain no casein, a milk protein. Look for the package to say “vegan” or for a (V), vegan symbol on the packaging of the alternative cheese.

What does vegan mean?

Vegans eat a plant-based diet, with nothing coming from animals - no meat, milk, eggs or honey, for example.

What is rennet?

Rennet is derived from the stomach linings of calves and is used to make cheese. True vegetarian cheeses do not have rennet in them, but a substitute. These substitutes can be either from vegetable sources, or may be created in a lab.

Are there any alternative cheeses that are soy free?

Yes. There is a Rice cheese that is dairy, soy and gluten free.

What are cultured veggies?

Raw vegetables that have been fermented at room temperature for several days or longer. They contain a large amount of live enzymes, which can make digestion easier. Oryana carries a great local line of cultured veggies called Leelanau Culture Veggies. They are found in the Dairy Cooler.

Oils

What characteristics make an oil a high quality one?

The highest quality oils are exposed to the least amount of heat, light, pressure or chemicals in the extraction and refining process.

What does expeller-pressed mean?

The oil is extracted from its source (seeds, nuts, bean etc.) by means of chemical-free mechanical pressure. The amount of heat generated varies with the amount of friction needed to press the oil.

What does cold-pressed oil mean?

Oils that are cold pressed are expeller pressed in a heat-controlled environment to keep temperatures below 120 degrees F. Extra virgin olive oils are great examples of cold-pressed oils.

What oil should I use for frying?

A general rule to follow is to use refined oils for high heat applications (above 350 degrees). Refined oils include super high heat canola, refined high oleic safflower or refined avocado or almond oil.

How do I use an unrefined oil?

Unrefined oils are just that—left in their virgin state after pressing. They have the most flavor and are best used for light sautéing below 350 degrees, or for sauces, dressings, marinades and soups. Examples include olive oil, coconut oil and toasted sesame oil.

How come the coconut oil isn't liquid?

Coconut oil is a saturated fat and is solid at room temperature, just like butter.

Oryana Managers

Bob Struthers - General Manager
Jody Gagnier - Store Manager
Chris Jacobs - Produce Manager
Flo Christopher - Grocery Manager
Eldon Horner - Assistant Grocery Manager
Gabe Eriksen - Assistant Grocery Manager
Brian Bowman - Bulk Manager
Lydia Gallegos - Health and Beauty Manager
Lori Korb - Front End Manager
Elizabeth Hamilton - Lake Street Cafe Manager
Crystal Bartel - Kitchen Manager
Sandi McArthur - Education and Outreach
Joan D'Argo - Education and Outreach

Oryana Information Specialists

Staff members who have undergone additional training on the products we sell. Call on these people if you're stuck answering a customer's question about a particular product.

Dena Ames
Brian Bowman
Joan D'Argo
Kerri Dickey
Sean Dye
Gabe Eriksen
Lori Korb
Sandi McArthur



Natural Foods Market

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Hours: Monday - Saturday, 7:30 am - 8:00 pm, Sunday 10 - 6