

New Name, New Look:

National Co+op Grocers

BY NATIONAL CO+OP GROCERS

Since its formation in 1999, National Cooperative Grocers Association has been working on behalf of its member and associate food co-ops to strengthen purchasing power, optimize operational and marketing resources, and ultimately offer more value to food co-op owners and shoppers. As our industry continues to evolve and grow, we recognize that we must evolve and grow as well.

We are proud to launch a new brand identity: National Co+op Grocers (NCG). Although the name, look and feel is new, our commitment to being a dynamic and transparent organization with clear and meaningful ways for our co-ops to participate remains the same. As a business services cooperative owned by retail food co-ops, our new name is a better representation of who we truly are: more than 140 cooperatives, working together to strengthen our unique business model and reach more consumers in more communities.

A name that reflects who we serve

Trade association services are typically focused on public relations, marketing, and networking services for their membership. Although NCG also provides these services for its stores, we also negotiate nationwide-centralized purchasing contracts, execute promotional strategies, and more broadly support co-op development. All this makes our role truly that of a virtual grocery chain, not a trade association.

“Association” also doesn’t speak accurately about our relationship and level of engagement with our member and associate food co-ops, and eliminating that word prevents misperceptions and more accurately conveys our functions to the broader business community.

Particularly in Washington, D.C., where NCG spends time and energy advocating for food policies that support co-ops, as well as with our banking partners, identifying as National Co+op Grocers will be a greater asset to our business relationships on behalf of the co-ops we serve.

A strong, national brand

NCG designed and launched the “Co+op, stronger together” brand in 2010 to communicate all the great things co-ops offer. As a support brand, it is intended for use in conjunction with co-ops’ local brands while serving as a recognizable national brand for food co-ops. We actively encourage our co-ops to integrate this national brand into their own branding efforts, and we are very pleased to be able to adopt this practice ourselves, with our new logo.

In addition to a new name and look for NCG, we have rebranded the NCG Development Co+op to be consistent with Co+op, stronger together branding. Aligning our brands will better convey the connection between NCG, the NCG Development Co+op, our food co-ops, and our national consumer brand—a move that serves to strengthen the brand overall. ■

