

Yahara River Grocery Cooperative

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Yahara River Grocery Cooperative Eligible for a \$30,000

Dane County Agricultural Enterprise Grant

Stoughton, Wisconsin – The Yahara River Grocery Cooperative (YRGC) is eligible for a \$30,000 Dane County Agricultural Enterprise Grant as recommended by the Dane County Agricultural Advisory Council in support of the cooperative's start-up phase. The grant is a matching fund grant, so the cooperative must raise \$30,000 itself to receive the grant funds.

“We're thrilled with this news,” said cooperative spokesperson Eric Borchardt.

“With a fundraising goal of \$100,000 and the enthusiastic response we've been receiving from the community, we're confident we can raise the funds necessary to receive this grant.”

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Membership in the Yahara River Grocery Cooperative is available now, by visiting the organization's web site at www.yaharagrocery.coop. Investment opportunities are also available on the web site for those interested in loaning money to the cooperative.

Fundraising efforts will get into full swing at the "Make It Yours: Yahara River Grocery Kickoff" event this coming Sunday, April 29th from Noon – 4:00pm at the proposed site of the new store, 229 E. Main Street in Stoughton. Area residents who come to the Make It Yours event can express their ideas for the store, ask questions and learn about the benefits of a grocery cooperative, ask farmers and suppliers about their products and practices, and learn more about the benefits of becoming a member. Those interested can sign up to become members at the event with the immediate benefit of using their membership card at participating area retailers for special discounts. There will also be activities for the entire family including face painting, take-home flower planting, grain milling, storytelling and more.

The proposed Yahara River Grocery Cooperative is a full-service grocery cooperative where area farmers' produce also will be sold to aid the individual profitability of local farmers and producers by providing them another market.

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According to Borchardt, the funds from the grant will be used to organize and manage the start-up phase necessary for the project to become reality. He noted that area resident Caroline Werner was instrumental in applying for the grant last September, serving as grant writer and information liaison with the cooperative's business planning. "Without the commitment and efforts of community members like Caroline, we wouldn't be where we are today, on the cusp of opening a new grocery in Stoughton," said Borchardt. "It truly has been a cooperative effort."

The YRGC also received a \$1,000 County Development Block Grant for having submitted its business plan by December 1, 2006.

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