

FOOD FOR CHANGE

A DOCUMENTARY FILM

Press Release: For Immediate Use

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New Film **Food For Change** Examines Food Co-ops As Political & Economic Movement

NATIONWIDE—A provocative new film looks at the current resurgence of food co-operatives in America, and their unique historic place in America's economic and political landscape---somewhere between Adam Smith & Eugene Debs.

Food For Change, a feature-length (85 min.) documentary from Home Planet Pictures, tells the story of the co-op movement in the U.S. through a combination of interviews, rare archival footage, and commentary by co-op leaders and historians.

No other film has examined the key role played by consumer-led food co-ops during the decades-long debate over profit-driven capitalism vs. locally-controlled economic enterprises. Born in the heartland, cooperatives were seen as the middle path between Wall Street and Socialism.

Filmmaker Steve Alves describes his documentary as "one part food, to two parts politics, to three parts economics." Alves tracks the co-op movement's quest for whole and organic foods, and the dream of sustainable food systems. The film profiles several current food co-ops that have revived neighborhoods and entire communities---right in the shadow of corporate agribusiness and national supermarket chain stores.

"Today we're experiencing a renaissance of American food co-ops," says Sean Doyle, General Manager of the Seward Co-op. "These are not marginal enterprises—they are successful and dynamic businesses that are revitalizing communities across the United States. People are once again taking more control over the economic forces in their lives."

But there were darker days for co-ops after World War II, Alves adds. "Big business regained an influential role within the government, laying the groundwork for a post-war culture based on mass-production, corporate consolidation, and rampant consumerism."

"Food Co-ops were a byproduct of the Great Depression," says co-op historian David Thompson, who is also featured in **Food For Change**. "The disparity in wealth between the haves and the don't haves was the spark that ignited co-ops. As co-ops grew, they restored hope to millions of Americans who began to gain some economic control over their lives and their communities just as co-ops are doing today.""

The World premiere of **Food for Change** will take place at the legendary Fitzgerald Theater, in St. Paul, Minnesota, on October 20, 2013 with simultaneous webcast to roughly 50 co-op communities across the country. A 15-minute excerpt from **Food for Change** was screened at the United Nations last year, where it was given an award.

Steve Alves is an award-winning documentary filmmaker based in western Massachusetts. Among his documentaries is Talking to the Wall: The Story of an American Bargain, about one New England town's battle against the world's largest retailer.