



Friends & Farmers is a consumer-owned cooperative business and a community of over 525 members that operate on online market that features over 300 items, is open to the public, and offers home delivery. The co-op was founded in State College, PA, in 2013 by a group that consisted of farmers, and friends of farmers which gives the co-ops a strong emphasis sourcing food and items from local farmers and producers as well as sustainably produced goods. The co-op is open to all people and seeks to strengthen the community and local economy with good food.

KDC began working with Friends and Farmers in 2012 delivering education, consultation, and technical assistance to bring the co-op to fruition. Over the next six years, the co-op has grown to an idea to a meaningful community resource for good food. With KDC's support the community was engaged in focus groups and education, and the co-op defined their mission, incorporated, formed an interim board, passed bylaws, examined a feasibility study, engaged in strategic planning, wrote a business plan, launched a membership campaign, elected a Board of Directors, raised funds through a grant from USDA, hired their first employees, and launched the Online Farmers Market that includes other grocery staple items.

The co-op is governed by a 9-member Board of Directors (all volunteer). Co-op operations are managed and orchestrated by a team of 5 part-time employees: Outreach Coordinator, Online Market Manger, Assistant Online Market Manager, Grant Administrator and a Marketing Manager, with the support of a team of very dedicated volunteers. Thanks to the efforts of this team, the co-op and its market have been well received by members of the Centre Region community who value healthy, high-quality food produced by local farmers, and the co-op has earned their support in creating and sustaining a thriving co-op.

The co-op operates on a weekly delivery cycle. Orders may be placed through an online market portal during a four-day ordering window. The day after the ordering closes, product is available for home delivery or pick-up at one of three convenient locations. The co-op currently processes an estimated 50 orders per week. Poised for growth the co-op is welcoming new shoppers, both members and non-members alike.

Visit their website to learn more and if you're in the area give it a try yourself!



Multi-Stakeholder Co-op est. 2013	
Industry:	Grocery, Ag-Marketing
Member-Owners:	525 Consumer & Producer
Jobs:	5
Revenues, Annual:	\$150K
KDC's Role	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility Study 2013, 2014 • Business Plan 2013 • Incorporation 2013 • Member Survey 2013 • General Consulting 2013-present • Fundraising 2014 	



Mission	Fostering a culture of personal and community empowerment through democratic leadership of cooperatively owned enterprises that successfully leverage economies of scale.
Work	Consulting, technical assistance, and research support for new and established co-ops (producer, consumer, worker, shared-services) in rural and urban communities in the multi-state area of PA, NJ, DE, MD, & DC.
Funding	A 501c6 non-profit organization, our work is made possible through grants from the USDA Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program and the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.