

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Author's response to letter to the editor regarding Meter column

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I am always happy when a column I write sparks a deeper conversation, and I thank my colleagues Gutknecht and Stockinger for bringing important points into focus.

It is certainly true, as they point out, that local food trade in the Twin Cities has grown alongside, and has in part depended upon, shipments of food from warmer climates. I've written about this blending elsewhere, but my focus on "collective impact" in the column may have created the false impression that our co-op sector has grown solely on local food trade. The letter provides an important clarification.

It is also fair to point out that I did not cover some of the ways Twin Cities co-ops do collaborate, though I devoted two paragraphs to the sector's accomplishments. The purpose of my column was not to critique either the co-ops or the paper, but to use some of the material in the fine report [from Cooperative Development Services, entitled "Twin Cities Cooperative Local Food System"], as well as my own experience and analysis, to think critically about "collective impact." I believe my column did show that co-ops both collaborate and compete with each other, and I hope this insight will help us act more effectively in the future.

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