

September 19–October 24  
**Board Elections**

October 1–31  
**Owner Appreciation Days**

October 7  
**Lawrence Mural Unveiling**

November 14  
**Annual Co-op Meeting**

November 23  
**Closed for Thanksgiving**



From main dishes to desserts, our Lawrence store offers a variety of made-from-scratch holiday options to satisfy your guests. Select from Everything But The Turkey packed with all the sides plus rolls, or individual traditional and vegan meals. Then, wrap up your meal with fresh pies, quick breads or a cheesecake — made with local eggs and Kansas flour! This season's holiday meals and desserts can be ordered through our online shopping portal. The last day to order is November 17 and pickup is at our Lawrence store on Wednesday, November 22.



# connections

AUTUMN 2023



The Merc Co+op has been selected to be the recipient of a fair trade themed mural, courtesy of Fairtrade America. Local artists, Rodrigo “Rico” Alvarez and Isaac Tapia, will install a portrait of Joselinda Manueles, a Fairtrade coffee farmer from Honduras, on the north wall of our Lawrence store. *Learn more inside!*

## Fairtrade Themed Mural Coming to Lawrence



October is Fair Trade Month. In celebration, Fairtrade America (FTA) will launch their annual “We Are Fairtrade.” campaign to generate broader awareness for Fairtrade certified products. FTA targets grocery co-ops belonging to National Co+op Grocers (NCG) as partners for mural installations. This campaign has already brought inspiring murals to nine metropolitan cities. Now in its fourth year, our co-op’s Lawrence store was selected to be one of three recipients of a mural, courtesy of the organization.

Employing local artists, these murals connect consumers to the origins of their food and the positive impacts of Fairtrade. By choosing Fairtrade, you are choosing a world where farmers and workers get a fair deal, women thrive and the environment is prioritized.

The Fairtrade farmer selected for this project is Joselinda Manueles. Joselinda has a coffee farm called Los Cascabeles in the south-western La Paz region of Honduras. She is a founding partner of the Café Orgánico Marcala (COMSA) cooperative since it helped them buy land 19 years ago. Sharing the land, Joselinda grows her own coffee while participating in a carbon footprint capture project. Her farm has been running on solar panels for 30 years and is committed to being a biodynamic farm and mitigating climate change.

Joselinda is one of the farmers who provide beans to Kicking Horse Coffee, a woman-founded specialty brand that uses only 100% certified Organic and Fairtrade Arabica beans. Coffee is one of the most-traded commodities in the world. The trade can be volatile, unpredictable, and subject to dramatic price fluctuations. Kicking Horse is interested in using coffee that is good and fair for both their coffee drinkers and for farmers, like Joselinda.

Bringing this project full circle, Kicking Horse Coffee is one of the Fairtrade products sold at our Lawrence store.

After determining the farmer and product, the co-op and FTA selected IT-RA Icons as the local artists for Joselinda’s portrait. IT-RA Icons is a collaboration of Kansas City muralists Isaac Tapia and Rodrigo “Rico” Alvarez. The duo began working together in 2017. Since then, they have painted over 60 murals in the Kansas City metro area and beyond, including several pieces at the new Kansas City International Airport. Their diverse body of work is united by vibrant colors, evolving designs and themes



Joselinda Manueles, Fairtrade Farmer  
Elana Rosenfeld, Kicking Horse Coffee



Rodrigo “Rico” Alvarez



Isaac Tapia, IT-RA Icons

that celebrate their communities and honor their identities as artists who migrated to the U.S. at very young ages.

For nearly 50 years, the co-op has been passionate about connecting our community with the farmers who

grow their food. This mural will serve as a vibrant celebration and reminder of how both good food and cooperatives help bring people together, locally and globally.

Owners and community members are invited to an official unveiling celebration on Saturday, October 7. Stay tuned to our website for details.

*Murals can create a sense of community by helping to express our values and to elevate an awareness of them to our neighbors and visitors. They can beautify spaces, express historical and cultural identity, raise awareness about social issues and inspire others. The Merc Co+op is pleased to serve as the canvas for murals created by local artists in each of the communities we serve.*



Good Local Food by JT Daniels is on the wall of our Kansas City store. Photos courtesy of Matt Kleinman



Seeds by Dave Loewenstein remains on our previous location at 9th & Mississippi in Lawrence. Photo courtesy of DaveLoewenstein.com



Thank you to Cottin’s Hardware for their generous donation of materials! Photo courtesy of CottinsHardware.com