

Olympia Food Co-op Joins Boycott of Israeli-Made Products

On Thursday July 15th 2010 the Board of Directors of the Olympia Food Co-op decided to boycott Israeli made products and divest from investments in Israeli companies. The decision to boycott was made based on the Co-op's mission statement in accordance with our bylaws, and based on information from respected international sources.

Olympia, WA. (Olympia Food Co-op) July 21, 2010: The Olympia Food Co-op's Board of Directors has decided to boycott Israeli-made products and divest from investment in Israeli companies.

The boycott of Israeli-made products is part of a long-history of social justice work carried out by the Co-op in accordance with their mission. In addition to "provid(ing) wholesome foods and other goods and services" the Co-op "strive(s) to make human effects on the earth and its inhabitants positive and renewing and to encourage economic and social justice." The co-op also currently boycotts products made in China and Coca-Cola products, and has taken part in other boycotts in the past.

The decision to join the boycott of Israeli-products was based on credible information about human rights abuses from respected international groups such as the United Nations, Red Cross, and Amnesty International. The boycott asks that:

1. Israel end its occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and dismantles the Wall;
2. Israel recognize the fundamental rights of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality;
3. Israel respects, protects and promotes the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties as stipulated in UN resolution 194.

This decision does not represent any other opinions toward the nation of Israel nor does it indicate approval of violence used by either side of this conflict.

The Israeli-product boycott was presented to the co-op by co-op members who were also involved in the Olympia BDS (Boycott, Divest, and Sanctions) group. The boycott was in line with the Co-op's stated boycott policy. The Board made the final decision after members of the staff collective were unable to reach full consensus on the boycott.

The boycott is a non-violent tool for social change with a long history, from the Indian "Swadeshi" boycott of British goods, to the Montgomery bus boycott in the 1950s, to the California grape boycott in the 1960s, and the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions campaign on apartheid South Africa.

About the Olympia Food Co-op: The Olympia Food Co-op is a member-based, not-for-profit, natural foods grocery store with two locations in Olympia, WA. The Olympia Food Co-op has provided healthy, organic and local food to the Olympia area since 1977, with an emphasis on promoting social and environmental responsibility. The stores are collectively managed and largely volunteer-run.