Credit Card FAQs

1. **Why is the Co-op accepting credit cards?** Customer convenience. It adds to the payment options available to the customer. With more people relying on "plastic" instead of cash or check, it is a logical next step for the Co-op to meet the needs of customers.

2. **What cards are accepted?** Mastercard, Visa, Discover, American Express, Square, Apple Pay, and Google Pay. Debit cards, even run as credit cards, are not accepted.

3. **May I use something like Apple Pay on my phone?** Yes. The terminal accepts contactless payment methods such as Apple Pay or Google Pay.

4. **Why is there a 3% surcharge?** The Co-op is set up to be not-for-profit (which should not be confused with a non-profit charitable organization). The membership fees and current upcharge cover expenses such as income tax, repairs and maintenance, capital improvements, office expenses, etc. Credit card processing fees are an added expense. The 3% credit card surcharge covers that expense.

5. **Why doesn't the Co-op accept debit cards?** Credit card processors charge a fee even for debit cards. Federal and State laws prevent the imposition of a surcharge by a retailer to recoup those fees for debit cards. As stated before, the fees are an added expense that is not covered by the current membership fees and upcharge.

6. **Could a discount be offered instead of adding a surcharge? Would that solve the debit card problem?** No. Debit cards are considered the same as a cash or check. If a discount was offered for using cash or check, it would also have to be offered for debit.

7. **Why doesn't the Co-op raise prices, fees, or upcharges across the board to cover the credit card processing fees?** The survey results from the annual meeting indicated that members were not in favor of paying more or increasing the membership fee. Adding the credit card surcharge passes the expense on to those actually using the convenience.

8. **How is the 3% surcharge calculated?** The credit card terminal automatically adds it to the total amount charged. The terminal clearly shows the transaction total from the register, the surcharge added, and the resulting total charged before you will be asked to "Confirm & Pay." In addition, the credit card receipt has a line item showing the surcharge.

9. **Can I use multiple payment methods and, if I do, will the 3% be added to everything?** You can use multiple methods. Cash, check, and gift certificate will be subtracted from the transaction total on the register first. The remainder, which would be the amount you wish to put on a credit card, will be the only portion subject to the 3% surcharge.

10. **Why would I want to use my credit card when I could get cash from an ATM?** Method of payment is a personal decision. Some factors in the decision might be convenience (what do I have in my purse or wallet?), willingness to pay the surcharge, comparison of the amount of the 3% surcharge to ATM fees, credit card rewards programs (for example, 4% in rebate rewards or airline miles), security, etc.

11. **What about returns?** If you need to return something that you purchased with a credit card, it will be processed as a cash return and the surcharge refunded. Please have your receipt showing the credit card purchase available.

12. **Is the system used secure?** SquareUp, the system the Co-op uses, is one of the most prevalently used by merchants—meaning it's just as safe to use your card at the Co-op as it is to use any other retailer. SquareUp's privacy and security is described here: https://squareup.com/help/us/en/article/3796-privacy-and-security

13. **Could any of this change? Could the surcharge go away? Will debit cards eventually be accepted?** Although the Board of Directors researched and planned this endeavor for several months, it is still a new endeavor for the Co-op and therefore will experience some growing pains. The Board will monitor things like amount of credit card usage, changes in amount of sales, customer feedback, etc., and adjust policies and procedures as necessary.