



March 2024

Dear Unit Kernels & Leaders,

Scouting is arguably the best character and life skills development program for youth in our nation and across the world. The Green Mountain Council is in the business of supporting units at the local level so they can deliver the kind of fun and exciting programs that keep our youth and their families engaged. For many years, the Council has organized a popcorn sales event as a fundraiser to provide the resources local units need to run their programs. I wanted to let you know about some major structural changes to the statewide popcorn sales program that are coming up very soon. The Green Mountain Council realizes that we need to make a change in order for scouting in Vermont to grow.

For many reasons we have seen a decline in the Fall popcorn sale both in terms of numbers of units participating and the volume of sales. At the same time, we are seeing an increase in the number of units and volume of sales in a Spring sale where both popcorn and peanuts have been sold. Many of you have shared your perspectives on what is and is not working about the two sales. We hear those messages and last week convened a group of unit leaders to see if there was consensus about how the sales program can be restructured to be more effective.

Without rehashing all of the reasons, the group agreed it would work better to move the primary sale to the Spring and make the Fall sale a secondary emphasis. A few of the themes that emerged to support this transition were:

- It avoids asking Scouts to sell as their first activity if they join a unit in the Fall
- Units will have more time to plan their sale and organize a kick-off event rather than just jumping into it as Fall program start up is happening
- The cash flow is better for units planning payments for Summer Camp
- Units can also sell peanut products in the Spring which have been very popular

Another consideration in making the shift to a Spring sale this year is a problem the Katahdin Council in Maine is facing. That Council ended up with a significant overage of popcorn product from their Fall sale that they are hoping to sell to the Green Mountain Council and would be immediately available. The “win-win” will be if we can help Katahdin and at the same time gain immediate access to a quantity of popcorn.

While there may certainly be a few tradeoffs.. The challenge is how to make the transition. There is probably not a “perfect” way to do this other than just doing it! Accordingly, the Green Mountain Council will be forwarding you information shortly with details about the sale happening this Spring. We know this means a “double step” for many units that already organized a successful Fall sale. We acknowledge the first year’s Spring sale may be a challenge. The timing of bringing this event to units is happening quickly and is unavoidable this year. Because we realize that we are asking a lot of units, in recognition, we are willing to provide an unprecedented incentive to the units that are making the spring sale their primary sale. There may be a need to increase in the Green Mountain Council program fee. The units will have a unique opportunity to lock in the current Council Program Fee of \$12 until December 31st, 2024, by participating in the spring sale and their sales are within 85% of 2023 Fall product sales or more.

We are committed to structuring the Spring popcorn/peanut sale in a way that offers incentives for the Scouts and the Units which hopefully will encourage participation. We plan to roll out training for unit Kernels in the next few weeks and have sales materials in your hands shortly.

You may have questions about what is happening and want to understand more about why this change is necessary. Please make an effort to attend one of the upcoming training sessions where hopefully we can give you more information in person. Also, feel free to be in touch with Laurie Sneed at the Council office or myself at any time.

Yours in Scouting,
Dan Manz
Council Coordinator
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2024 SPRING PEANUT & POPCORN KEY DATES
TAKE ORDER & SHOW DATES APRIL 5TH TO MAY 4TH
SHOW N SELL PICK UP DATE APRIL 5TH SELL THROUGH MAY 4TH
UNIT PRODUCT PICK UP MAY 24TH