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## No More Plastic or Paper Grocery Bags at Weaver Street Market

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Posted by Sam Bermas-Dawes, April 19, 2019

### *Chapelboro*

Weaver Street Market will no longer provide single-use bags, plastic or paper, at its stores starting Monday, to coincide with Earth Day celebrations.

Ruffin Slater, Weaver Street general manager, says the goal is to encourage customers to use reusable bags.

“The key to do it is doing it in a way that’s convenient, so our shoppers and workers work together to come up with a creative solution with three choices.”

Customers can bring their own bag to the co-op or purchase a reusable bag there for a dollar.

Weaver Street will also offer Bring-It-Back Sacks made from recycled plastic and available for purchase for 15 cents. Bring-It-Back Sacks will also be free at the store from a collection of returned bags, which are available with the idea that shoppers will return the bags when they come back to the store next time.

“So those three options together is what’s going to allow us to eliminate 1 million single-use bags a year,” Slater said.

Slater says the importance of switching to reusable bags became apparent after research published last year by the Danish Environmental Protection Agency showed that both plastic and paper bags have harmful effects on the environment. The study found that the re-usability of a bag was an important indicator in determining its eventual impacts on climate change.

Weaver Street Market is considering next steps with other pieces of consumer packaging, according to Slater. Staff is looking at reusable produce bags and returnable deli containers.

“So, we see this as one part of a bigger mission to look at all of the packaging that we have.”

The North Carolina General Assembly in recent years has been hostile to plastic bag bans handed down from municipal or county governments, leaving the decision on store owners to take steps individually.

Slater says recently his customers have been demanding bolder steps to combat man-made changes to the Earth’s climate.

“They are ready to try something big that no one else has tried before, and I think once we demonstrate the success, it’s just going to point out other opportunities where if we work together,” he said, “there are solutions to these big problems. We can break them down and really work on them here in our community.”