

Cooperatives Matter!

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In honor of cooperative month, here are some more ideas for sharing our story:

Cooperatives Have Principles!

Cooperatives are guided by a set of principles that put their values into practice. Cooperatives are owned and controlled by the members using their services. Cooperatives are not focused on extracting profits for outside investors but rather creating value for customer-owners.

Cooperative principles give cooperatives their unique character and values.

Cooperatives Are Good Business!

A recent study by Oklahoma State University analyzed the economic impact of agricultural cooperatives. Oklahoma's agricultural cooperatives supplied farmers and ranchers with over \$120M in inputs and marketed over \$435M in commodities in 2014. Agricultural cooperatives distributed more than \$12M in profits back to their farmer member. Oklahoma agricultural cooperatives had over \$685M of expenditures and full time employment of 1,488. Their total economic impact was over \$1.1B and these farmer owned firms supported 5,340 jobs and \$242M in employment income.

Cooperatives Keep Markets Honest!

Cooperatives strive to enhance the prices members receive for their commodities and to reduce the cost of inputs and services. The presence of a cooperative in the market forces other firms to act more competitively. This is often called the "invisible benefit" of cooperatives!

Cooperatives Have Rural Roots!

The cooperative business model is uniquely rooted in our rural communities. Cooperatives are locally owned, locally controlled and share their profits with members in the rural community. Cooperatives help us to build a more participatory, sustainable and resilient rural economy.

Cooperatives are People Helping People!

Cooperatives members help each other by working together. The cooperative board comes from, and is accountable to, the membership. Cooperative members invest in their cooperative so that it can serve the next generation of producers. Cooperative employees are committed to the highest level of service. One in every three Americans is a member of some type of a cooperative. Cooperative members are the best people and the best of people comes out through cooperatives!

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