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# naae

## My Local Cooperative

**Learn about the opportunities cooperatives hold for you and your community.**



Need more notebooks?  
Scan here to download, or visit [naae.org/mylocalcooperative/resources](https://naae.org/mylocalcooperative/resources).

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My Local Cooperative is an initiative of the National Association of Agricultural Educators with funding support from the CHS Foundation.

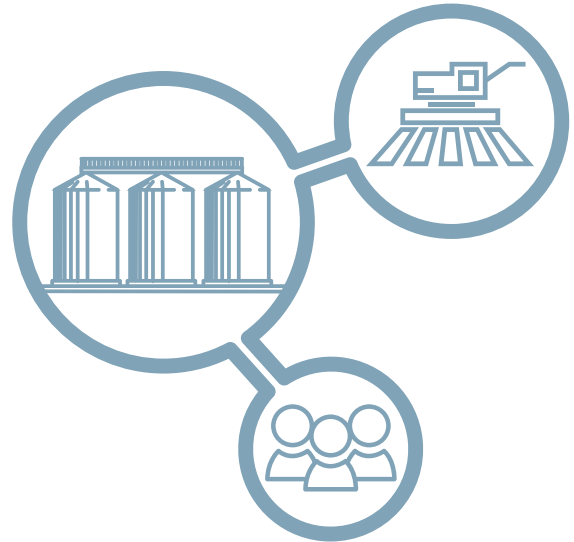
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# What is a **COOPERATIVE?**

**A cooperative** is a business organization that is **owned and governed by members who use its products, supplies, or services, rather than by stockholders.**

Cooperatives vary in type, membership size, and services, but all are formed to meet the specific objectives of members, and are structured to adapt to members' changing needs.

**Cooperatives adhere to a set of seven cooperative principles that guide how the business is run and how decisions are made.**



Although people have been working together for their mutual benefit throughout human history, the cooperative form of business organization began during the Industrial Revolution.

**Cooperatives are useful for promoting the interests of the less powerful members of society.** Farmers,

producers, workers, and consumers accomplish more collectively than they can individually.

# Know your Co-Ops

Today, there are nearly **30,000 cooperatives** in the United States, with more than 100 million members.

In nearly every part of the economy, people have joined together to do business more effectively or to get the products and services they need—from food to agriculture services and equipment to childcare—through cooperatives.

Circle the logos of the companies that are cooperatives, then unscramble the letters associated with each circled logo to spell out one of the Seven Principles of Cooperatives.

C      B      O      N      I  
 T      U      T      R  
 N      M      W      C      M  
 M      O      M      R  
 N      J      T      I  
 F      E      C      Y  
 K      I      C      Y

If you are unsure about whether a company is a cooperative, do some research online by going to that company's website. You may be surprised to find which companies are actually cooperatives!

**WHAT DOES THAT SPELL?**

# PRINCIPLES OF

# COOPERATIVES

01

## Voluntary and Open Membership

As a member, you can join, do business with, or leave the cooperative at any time.

02

## Democratic Owner Control

One member, one vote. All members have an equal voice in making policies and electing representatives.

03

## Member Economic Participation

The profit of the cooperative is returned to the members, reinvested in the cooperative, or used to provide owner services.

04

## Autonomy and Independence

Cooperatives are self-governed organizations and are controlled by their members. Only members can make changes to the cooperative.

05

## Education, Training and Information

Cooperatives provide technical training and education to members so they can contribute to the development and growth of the cooperative.

06

## Cooperation among Cooperatives

Cooperatives serve their members and strengthen the movement by working with local, regional, national and international structures.

07

## Concern for Community

While focused on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.

# Co-Op Crossword

## Need help?

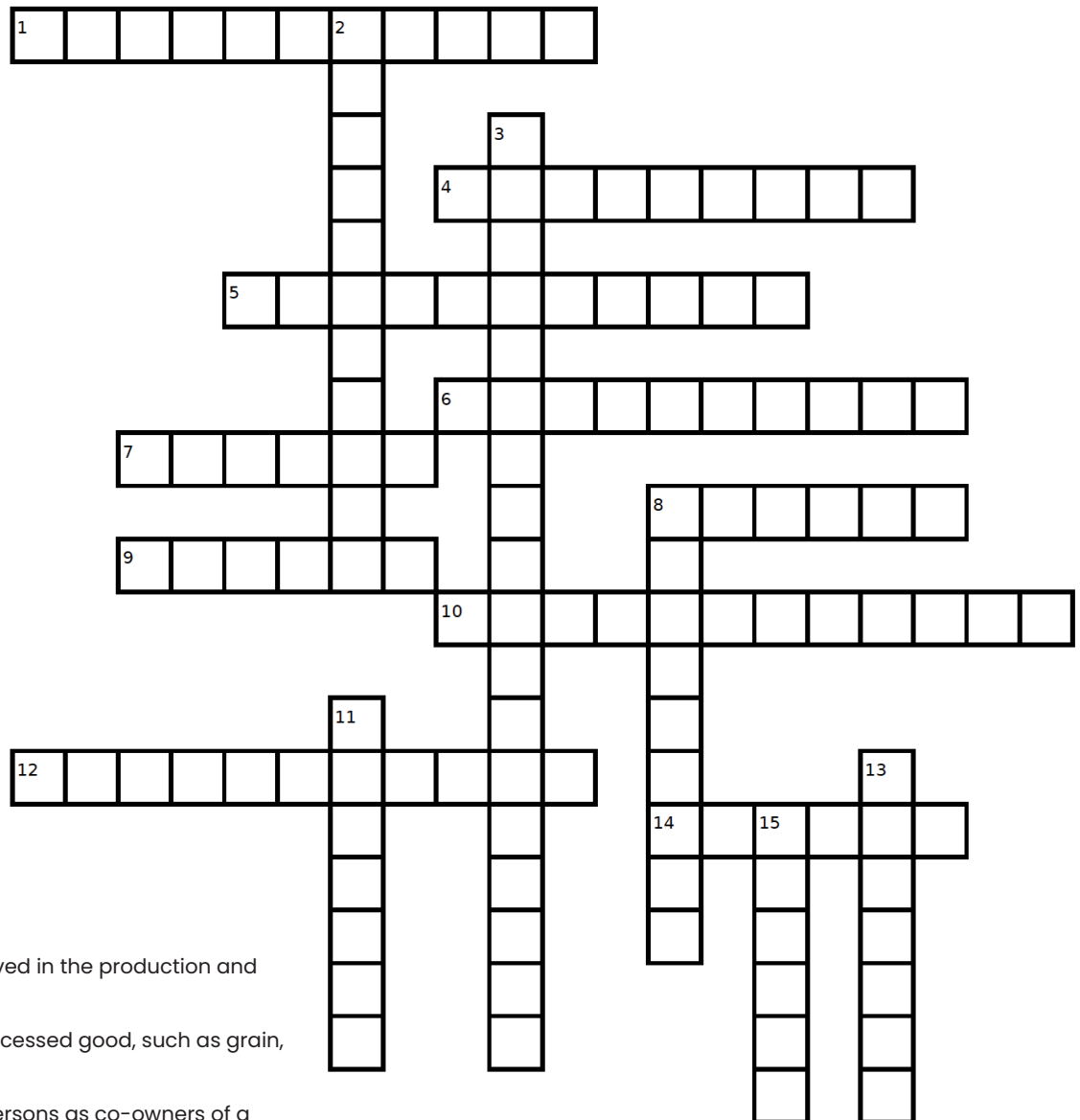
You can find a glossary of terms here:



[naae.org/MyLocalCooperative/Module1Glossary.pdf](http://naae.org/MyLocalCooperative/Module1Glossary.pdf)



[naae.org/MyLocalCooperative/Module2Glossary.pdf](http://naae.org/MyLocalCooperative/Module2Glossary.pdf)



## Across:

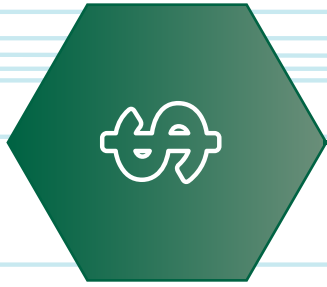
1. The sequence of processes involved in the production and distribution of a commodity.
4. Any unprocessed or partially processed good, such as grain, fruit, vegetable, or metal.
5. An association of two or more persons as co-owners of a profit-making business. Chief criteria of this business type are participation in management, sharing profits, sharing losses, ownership of assets together, and having a firm name, a single joint bank account, and a single set of records. No one factor is controlling.
6. A systematic series of actions directed to some end.
7. The surplus remaining after total costs are deducted from total revenue.
8. Difference between the cost price and selling price of a product.
9. A person's occupation or profession.
10. Placement, location, arrangement or disposition of terms.
12. A form of business organization in which the owners have shares in a separate legal entity that itself can own assets and borrow money.
14. Items purchased to carry on a farm's operation. Such items include fertilizers, pesticides, seed, fuel, and animal feed.

## Down:

2. A farm, business, or other organization that is owned and run jointly by its members, who share the profits or benefits.
3. Simplest, oldest, and most common form of business ownership in which only one individual acquires all the benefits and risks of running an enterprise. In this business type, there is no legal distinction between the assets and liabilities of a business and those of its owner.
8. The total of activities involved in the transfer of goods from the producer or seller to the consumer or buyer, including advertising, shipping, storing, and selling.
11. Money invested in a business to generate income.
13. A public service, such as telephone, electricity, transportation, or the like.
15. A person who is a customer, client, or paying guest, especially a regular one, of a store, hotel, or the like.

# COOPERATIVES

## CONTRIBUTE TO THE COMMUNITY



### PROSPERITY

Cooperatives enable owners to generate income, jobs and accumulate assets, allowing them to contribute to other businesses and organizations within their own communities.



### EQUITY

Cooperatives often fill gaps that private businesses do not. Examples include rural electricity in areas of low population, access to affordable credit and banking services, and quality affordable childcare.



### EDUCATION

Cooperatives support community members through educational programs, like community safety training days, grants, scholarships, internships and employee training programs.



### PHILANTHROPY

Cooperatives donate to causes in communities where they have a footprint. Examples include rural fire departments, 4-H and FFA, county fairs, and youth sports.



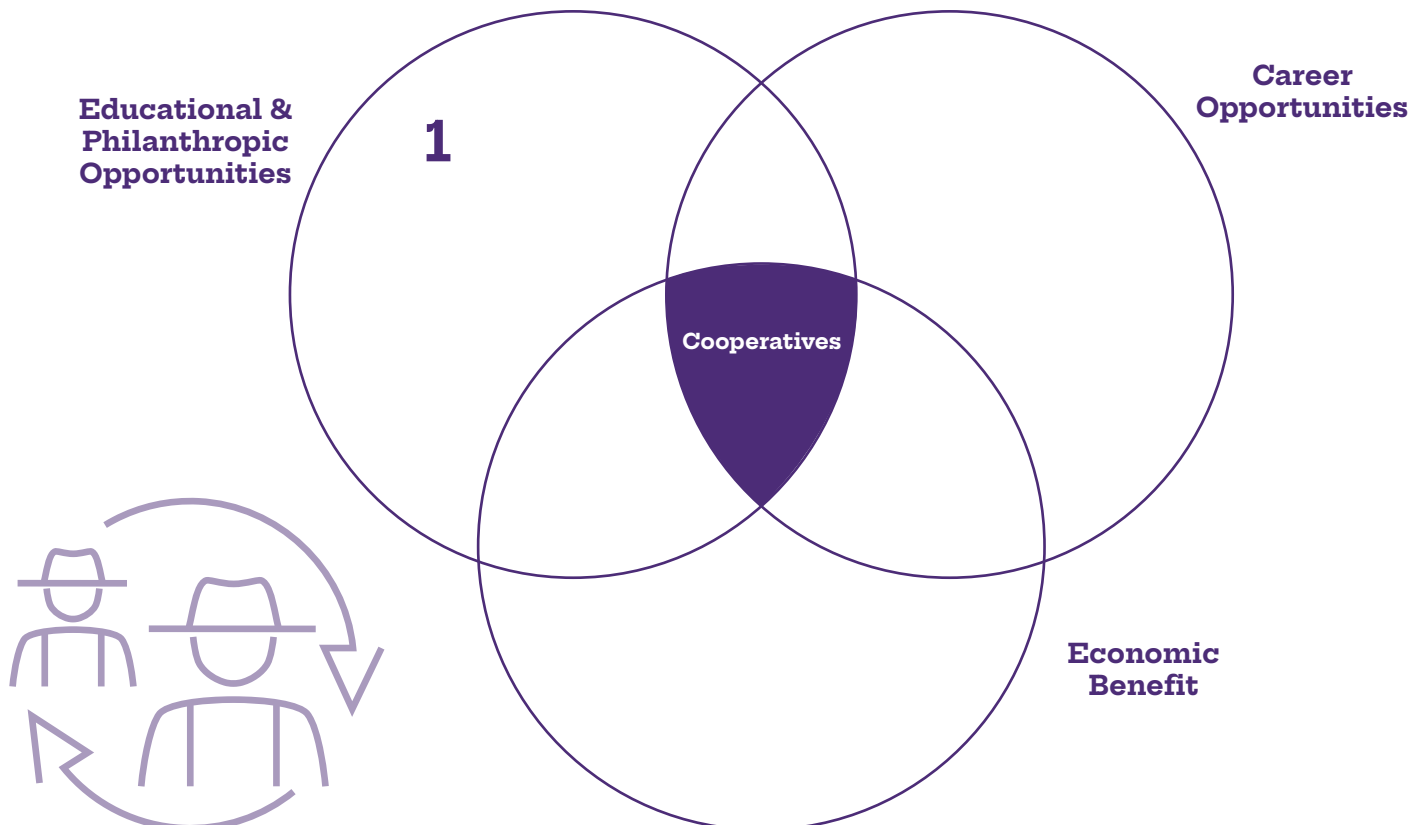
### MARKET ACCESS

Cooperatives help link farmers to markets, providing a collective platform for negotiating higher prices for their commodities. They also provide training, business planning, and capacity-building services.

# Cooperatives Venn Diagram

Cooperatives benefit their communities in so many ways! Read each item below and place its number into the area where it fits on the Venn Diagram. (Don't forget the overlapping areas!)

- 1** *Example - see below for placement. Donate \$5,000 to local fire department for grain bin rescue equipment.*
- 2** Award a 4-year scholarship to five students each year.
- 3** Offer a management track for employees who want to advance their careers.
- 4** Paid each member an average of \$10,000 in patronage last year.
- 5** Negotiated a contract with a new buyer for their members' grain.
- 6** Purchase the grand champion steer at the annual 4-H and FFA Show and Sale.
- 7** Sponsor annual Chamber of Commerce event to attract new businesses to community.
- 8** Invite top FFA members to join their employee training program after high school.
- 9** Kylie was hired at the grain elevator making well over the average income for the area.
- 10** Use local cleaning service to maintain offices.
- 11** John has a job typically found only at large corporations, but can still live on his family ranch.
- 12** Hosted a digital ag workshop to train farmers on new innovations.





# Explore Careers in Cooperatives

Visit [naae.org/MyLocalCooperative](http://naae.org/MyLocalCooperative) and select three career profiles with job titles that interest you. Watch/read each profile and fill out the answers to the questions below.

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

What does this person do?

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---

What kind of education did they have beyond high school?

---

---

How did they suggest that someone pursue a similar career?

---

---

What is one new piece of information you learned from this profile?

---

---

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

What does this person do?

---

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What kind of education did they have beyond high school?

---

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How did they suggest that someone pursue a similar career?

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Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

What does this person do?

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What kind of education did they have beyond high school?

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How did they suggest that someone pursue a similar career?

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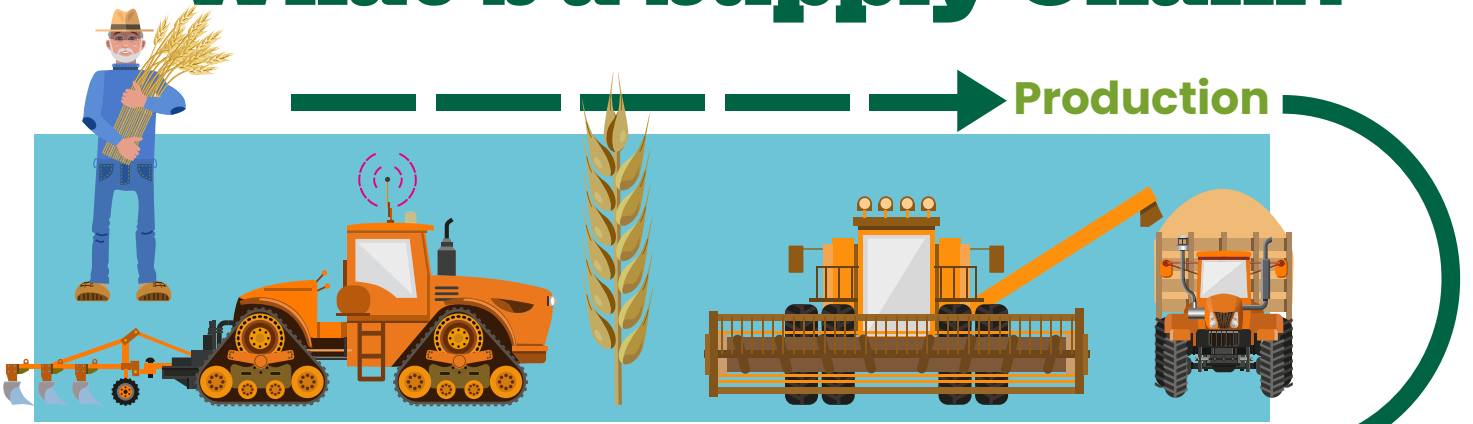
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What is one new piece of information you learned from this profile?

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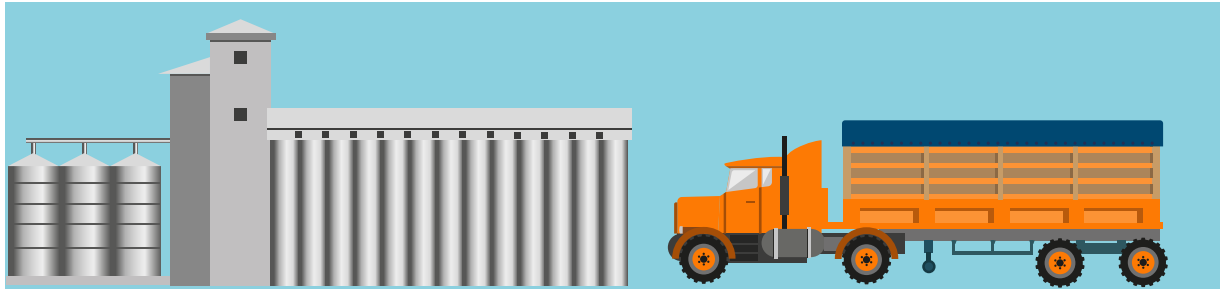
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# What's a Supply Chain?



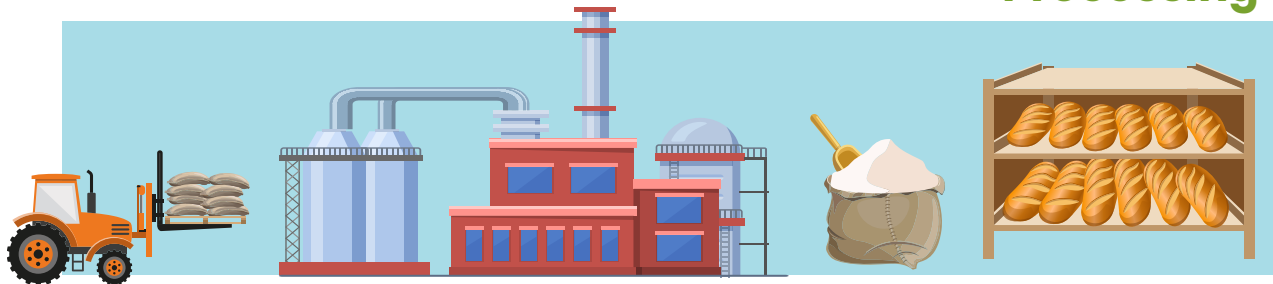
Cooperatives help in the production stage with seed & input recommendations, crop scouting, and even custom spreading, spraying and planting services.

## Marketing



By pooling farmers' commodities as well as having the ability to store them until market prices are at their most favorable, cooperatives give farmers more bargaining power for the price of their product.

## Processing



Some cooperatives handle processing from commodity to finished product, and others simply market the agricultural commodity to other entities for processing.

## Distribution



Once the commodity is processed into a finished product, it's delivered to the consumer. As you can see, there are many steps and many people involved in the supply chain of getting a commodity from the field to the market.

# Co-Op Careers Word Match

The process of a food product moving from a farmer's field to a consumer's table is called the supply chain. This process starts with production, or growing the crop, then moves through processing, marketing and distribution. These are all services agricultural cooperatives provide to their members, which means a lot of people have different responsibilities along the way.

*Organize the jobs into the supply chain categories by writing each job title in the correct box.*

Agronomist  
Warehouse Manager  
Sales Representative  
Digital Ag Team Lead  
Crop Insurance Specialist  
Lab Technician  
Price/Risk Manager  
Mechanic

Elevator Operations Manager  
Quality Control Inspector  
Director of Merchandising and Sales  
DOT Compliance Coordinator  
Marketing & Communications Specialist  
Transportation/Logistics Manager  
Truck Driver  
Grain Merchandiser

**PRODUCTION**

**PROCESSING**

**MARKETING**

**DISTRIBUTION**

**Other job titles that help with all the categories include...**

Director of IT, Accountant, Controller, Loan Officer, Office Manager, Chief Operations Officer, Vice President of Member Relations, Human Resources Manager...

The list goes on and on!

# Cooperatives in YOUR Community

Most communities have at least one cooperative, whether it's a grain elevator, a farm supply store, or a grocery. Research a cooperative in your community or a nearby community.

**Name of Cooperative:** \_\_\_\_\_

List three services provided or categories of items sold by this cooperative:

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List at least three career opportunities at this cooperative:

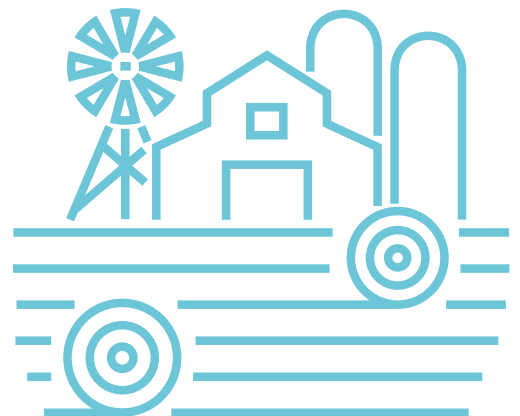
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# Cooperative Word Search

C A Q J Z M C Z C V S F S E M S H D  
O N G M M C O A Z A Q E H P E R I I  
M A O W P A A D R P P B R V Q A N V  
M S I Q S C N S U E A I Y V I F C I  
U S N A A E D A H W E V T Z I L O D  
N E K A R M Z H G K T R J A B C M E  
I T Y T W H Q R V E Q P S O L M E N  
T B O A R D O F D I R E C T O R S D  
Y W C H S F O U N D A T I O N U A W  
Q K V G O W N E R M E M B E R U K D  
U O L U K F K A M A R K E T I N G T  
M A R K E T A N A L Y S I S D Y X G

## Word Bank

ASSET  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
CAPITAL  
CASH  
MARKETING  
DIVIDEND  
INCOME  
MANAGER

MARKET ANALYSIS  
CHS FOUNDATION  
CAREERS  
NAAE  
COMMUNITY



# Create YOUR OWN Cooperative!

Cooperatives are formed by regular people who see a way to create more opportunities for themselves and others by pooling their resources. What is a need you and your classmates, friends, or others in the community could help fill by creating a cooperative? Be creative! Is it a way to sell the products of your SAE projects? A car-washing cooperative? A snack-purchasing cooperative? The sky is the limit! Create your own cooperative by answering the questions below.

Name your cooperative: \_\_\_\_\_

What will your cooperative do?

What is your mission statement?

How can someone become a member?

Who will be your cooperative's competition?

Draw your logo here!

List one of the seven principles of cooperatives and tell how your cooperative will meet this principle.

# Co-Op QUIZ

1. When did the cooperative form of business organization begin?
2. Is Whole Foods Market a cooperative?
3. What is the name of the cooperative principle that gives each member of a cooperative a vote and equal voice in making policies and electing representatives for the cooperative?
4. What is the oldest, simplest and most common form of business ownership?
5. List one way cooperatives fill gaps in access to services within communities.
6. List three ways cooperatives help members in the production stage of the supply chain.
7. A transportation/logistics manager's job falls within which part of the supply chain?

*My Local Cooperative is an initiative of the National Association of Agricultural Educators with funding support from the CHS Foundation.*

## MY LOCAL COOPERATIVE MISSION:

*To advance agriculture cooperatives by raising awareness of the cooperative business model, showcasing cooperative career opportunities, and highlighting the critical role that cooperatives play in strengthening agriculture and our local communities.*

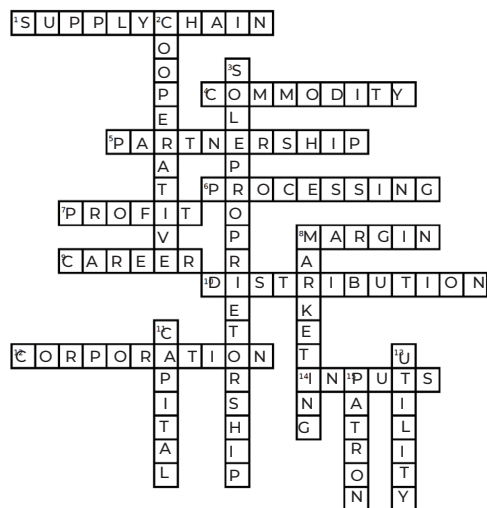
## MY LOCAL COOPERATIVE GOAL:

*To educate the next generation of leaders and entrepreneurs about the benefits and opportunities of agriculture cooperatives.*

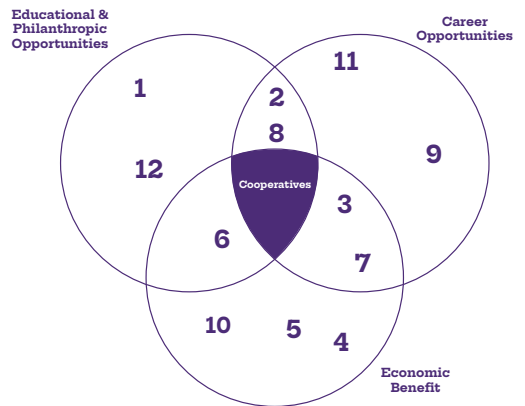
### ANSWER KEY

Page 2: Know your co-ops answer: CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY

Page 4: Co-Op Crossword



Page 6: Cooperatives Venn Diagram



Page 11: Cooperative Word Search

