

Task 2.1 Business Connections

Purpose

You may have heard the term “farm to fork.” Farm to fork refers to the process of a food product moving from a farmer’s field to a consumer’s table for consumption. This process is also called the supply chain. The supply chain for raising a raw commodity and then processing and distributing it to consumers is a daunting process for any one individual.

Additionally, in today’s market, a farmer needs to think globally and sell his product to a wide range of consumers. It is very difficult for a farmer to market a crop across the world individually. What is the process of getting crops from farmers’ fields to forks around the world?

The process starts with the production sector. Before a farmer plants a crop, he or she needs to determine which crop to plant based upon the market and environmental conditions. After planting season, a farmer needs to manage the crop while it grows. Management includes irrigation, monitoring and treatment for insects and diseases, and fertilization. After reaching maturity, farmers harvest the crop for sale or storage.

Marketing is another sector of the supply chain that a farmer needs to consider throughout the year. A farmer studies markets to decide when and where to sell a crop. When sold, a farmer will need to transport or distribute his or her crop to the point of sale. The distribution sector of the supply chain may be by truck, rail, or boat, depending on the distance needed to travel for processing. Most commodities need to be processed into a final product for sale and then distributed to consumers. Processing could be as simple as washing and packaging vegetable crops, or considerably more complex, such as pasteurization of milk and baking of bread. Finally, after a product is processed, it once again must be distributed to local retail stores around the world for sale to consumers.

How can a cooperative connect producers to international markets?

Materials

Per group of four students:

- Poster paper
- Assorted color markers

Per student:

- Pencil
- Computer with internet access
- *Commodity Card*
- *Task 2.1 Evaluation Rubric*

Procedure

View a video explaining how a cooperative connects agricultural producers to the world. Then follow the path of an assigned commodity from a farm to a consumer’s plate.

Part One – International Connections

Your teacher will play *CHS Corporate Overview – Growing Value, Farmer-owned with global connections* from the following URL. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HS_kWVYQ3Ag After viewing the video, discuss the analysis questions on the student worksheet and record answers in the space provided.

Part Two – Cooperative Supply Chain

1. Obtain a *Commodity Card* with the name of a cooperative, commodity, and product made from that commodity.

Work within your group to assign each person one of the following supply chain sectors.

- Production
 - Distribution
 - Marketing
 - Processing
2. For your assigned sector, research services the cooperative provides to deliver the final product to the consumer. Record the services for your assigned sector in Table 1 on the student worksheet.
 - Use a computer with internet access to start your research. Use the cooperative name, sector, commodity, and final product as your keywords when doing your research.
 3. Take turns within your group, sharing the services for each assigned sector. Record the services found by your group's research in Table 1 on the student worksheet.
 4. Work with your group to draw and label a flow chart showing the movement of a product from the farm to a consumer in another country. The flow chart should include the following and will be assessed using *Task 2.1 Evaluation Rubric*.
 - Information about where the commodity is produced, cooperative providing supply chain services, and final products from the commodity delivered to the consumer
 - All four sectors of the supply chain with three services provided for each sector
 - A destination where the processed commodity is consumed
 5. Display your group's flow chart as instructed by your teacher.
 6. Complete a gallery walk to observe the supply chains and answer the analysis questions on the student worksheet.

Conclusion

1. Which supply chain services does a cooperative provide to its farmer members?
2. What advantages does a cooperative member have for selling their products?
3. How can a cooperative connect a farmer to consumers around the world?

Task 2.1 Student Worksheet

Part One Analysis Questions

- What does a cooperative provide to its local patrons?

- How does a cooperative connect farmers to world markets?

- What do cooperative employees do to serve patrons locally and connect them globally?

Table 1. Supply Chain Services

Production	Distribution	Marketing	Processing

Gallery Walk Analysis Questions

- To which countries do cooperatives distribute agricultural goods?

- What processing services do cooperatives provide?

- What distribution methods do cooperatives use?

- Why would a farmer want to be a member of a cooperative that processes her or his products?