

Workshop: Careers in Agricultural Cooperatives

Time – 60 minutes

Target Audience – ages 12 to adult



Workshop Outcomes:

- Participants will be able to describe their own interests in potential career fields.
- Participants will be able to explain opportunities for careers in agricultural cooperatives.
- Participants will be able to articulate the value of cooperatives in serving the agricultural industry.

Materials Needed:

- PowerPoint “Agriculture Cooperatives Careers”
- Computer with projector/display technology
- Internet Access for participants’ devices (this may be smartphone or other device-dependending on the situation)
- Easel Post It Sheets – 6 pre-made questions around the room
- Stickers (dots/stars/etc) and post-it notes, writing utensils (markers, etc)
- Handout A – “Careers in Cooperatives” (one per participant)
- Handout B – Cooperative Profile Slips (five per page – need a minimum of 8 slips per every 24 participants)

Introduction (2 minutes)

Welcome and set context as is appropriate for your situation. It is highly recommended that you get into the first activity as quickly as possible.

Suggested context for the first activity:

Welcome friends! We are fortunate today to be in just the right place to discover a world of opportunity that we may not be aware of! Each of us has our own plan and path where life will take us – school, careers, and communities we will live in. But around us exists some great career fields that we may not know exist. And even more importantly, these aren’t just good opportunities for well-paying jobs but also ways to positively impact our communities and the agricultural industry! With all these possibilities, let’s get to know what careers in agricultural cooperatives could mean for us in our future!

Opening Activity: What Do We Know? (12 minutes)

Have the six prepared question Easel Sheets/tear sheets hanging around the room already (see examples below). Provide participants with stickers (dots/stars/etc) to post on the various posters with their answer. Some posters require written thoughts; post-it notes work best for this.

Suggested Directions:

While we’ve said we may not be aware of all these opportunities, the truth is we may not even know what is meant when we say ‘agricultural cooperatives’. Then again, perhaps some of us actually have a great deal of experience and knowledge. Let’s find out what we all know and are bringing to the conversation today!

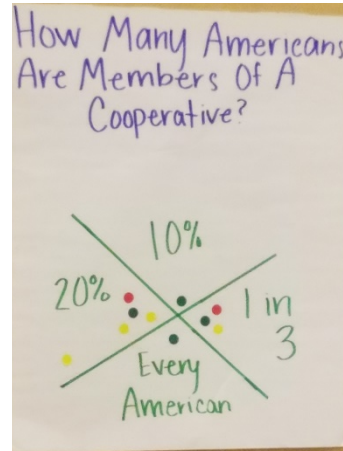
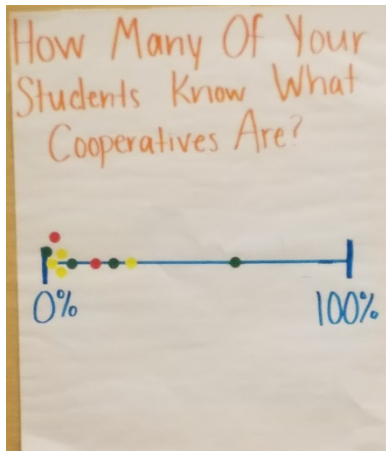
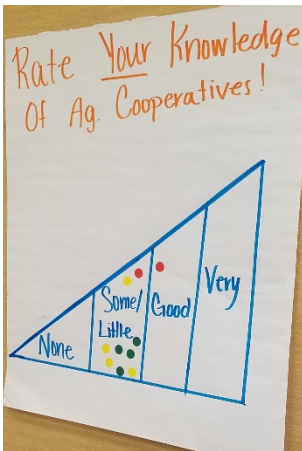
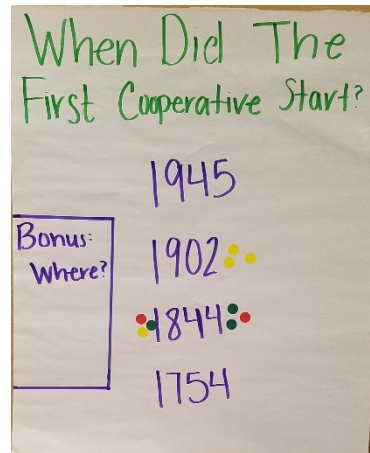
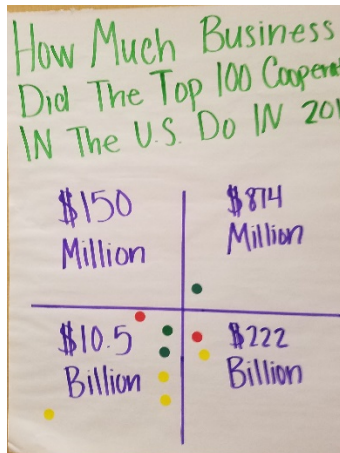
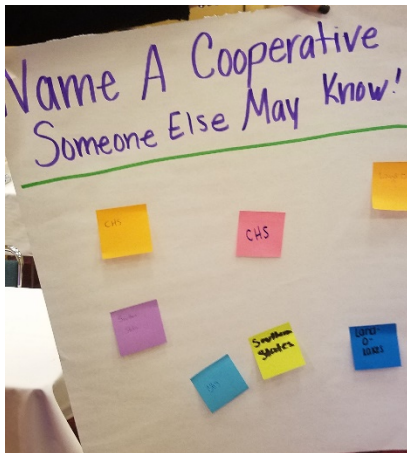
When we hear ‘Stick It’, we will:

- 1) *Get up and visit every poster.*

- 2) For many posters, we will use one of the stickers to mark our answer. For a couple posters that require a written answer, use a post-it note.
- 3) Be sure to hit all six stations!
- 4) When done, review what your peers have marked, and we will see what we know in this room.
- 5) What questions are there? Stick it!

Easel Sheet Questions (correct answers underlined):

- 1) How much business did the top 100 cooperatives in the US do in 2018? (\$150 million/\$874 million/\$10.5 billion/\$222 billion)
- 2) When did the first cooperative start? (1945/1902/1844/1754)
- 3) Rate your knowledge of agricultural cooperatives (answers vary)
- 4) How many of your peers know what cooperatives are? (0-100% scale – answers vary)
- 5) How many Americans are member of a cooperative? (10%/20%/1 in 3/Every American)
- 6) Name a Cooperative someone else has heard of (Answers vary)



Give five to eight minutes for participants to put their answers up. When done, have everyone return to their seats and analyze the results. Ask for observations, surprises, or results that were expected.

End with highlighting the number of Americans who are part of a cooperative, and the level of business activity. This leads to the observation that clearly there is a lot happening in cooperatives, and therefore a great deal of potential opportunities.

***Transition to purpose:** there are numerous careers available in a wide range of cooperatives in agriculture. Today we will look at what those opportunities are, and why we would want to consider a career path that is part of agricultural cooperatives!*

That's Me! (<10 minutes)

Display the slide titled "That's Me!" from the PowerPoint presentation. Participants will review the list of traits and descriptions and select the top five that apply to them. Give the following directions:

Let's start with acknowledging what WE want and who we are. When we hear "That's Me", we will do the following:

- 1) Grab five post-it notes*
- 2) Review the list of factors up here on the screen. Pick the five statements or descriptions that best describe you. Be quick and don't overthink it – just grab the ones that speak to you!*
- 3) Be ready to share what spoke to you. That's Me!*

Move to the next slide of factors. Give 3-5 minutes to allow everyone time to choose and capture onto the post-it notes.

When done, have participants do a pair-share and then take responses from the crowd. When you take an answer, have anyone else who also had that one on their post-it raise their hand. Continue to take 3-4 unique answers, repeating the hand raise. When done, connect back to the purpose:

We all found statements or words up here that spoke to us, intrigued us, and described what we might want to accomplish. Some of us have similar topics; many of us had very different ones. The great thing is that all of these describe potential careers in agricultural cooperatives; clearly there are a great deal of options! The next step is to uncover what those specific career paths are.

Agricultural Cooperative Business Profiles (20 minutes)

Transition to the slide of business names on the board. If you are teaching this workshop as a follow up to the Ag Cooperatives 101 workshop, you can call on prior knowledge and have participants review which businesses were cooperatives. If you are teaching this workshop as a stand-alone module, then proceed to the following:

Check out this list of businesses. Which ones have you heard of? Where did you hear of them (either through marketing or are sitting in your kitchen cabinets)? Elicit responses.

Some of these businesses are cooperatives. What makes them different than other business types? Points of information may include that it is made of members, has a board, etc. Process

to the following definition: *a farm, business, or other organization which is owned and run jointly by its members, who share the profits or benefits.*

Now which ones of these businesses do you think may be cooperatives? Elicit some responses. If any were on the tear sheet at the beginning of the workshop that participants submitted, highlight those.

Move to the next slide that shows which of the businesses are cooperatives. Seek any surprises or affirmations from participants whether this is what they expected.

Divide up participants into groups of three. Provide each group with an agricultural cooperative profile link page (see handout). This will require an Internet-connected device (at least one per group so this may affect your grouping strategy) – a smartphone, tablet, or laptop will all work great. Each participant will also need the handout “Careers in Agricultural Cooperatives” to record onto. Provide the following instructions:

Right now there are several different agricultural cooperative groups in the room. Our task is to dive into what this cooperative does and what careers they must have in order to serve agriculturalists – which are opportunities that may fit what we each want to accomplish in our own future. In order to do this:

- 1) Read through the cooperative profile page you are assigned*
- 2) Use the website to find and record what this cooperative does for agriculturalists at the top.*
- 3) Then dissect what types of jobs and people this cooperative must have in order to complete this function. Example – if a cooperative is marketing products, they must have marketing staff, they may have advertising agents and layout specialists, etc. If they consult with producers, they must have agronomists/crop specialists, scientists, etc.*
- 4) Record the jobs you come up with in the appropriate column on your handout!*

All of these websites have Careers pages – you might advise participants not to rely on just this page, as they often only list what positions are open right now – not necessarily all of the careers and possibilities within the company. We will also have participants check out the Careers page later anyway.

After about 8-10 minutes, provide groups with a tear sheet to list their findings. Facilitate each group sharing out their results, and have other groups Jigsaw the results onto their page. As some groups have the same business, they can confirm or expand the results of other groups.

When done the Jigsaw sharing activity and participants have filled out the recording page, provide the following next steps. Display the slide ‘Career Connections’ that has links to the various websites.

NOTE: If time is getting tight, this activity could be dropped and focus on the Connect it to Me Activity (next).

Now that we’ve uncovered some examples of the jobs we could be engaged in if our futures included working in agricultural cooperatives, let’s see what is out there right now.

- 1) Choose two of the cooperatives we have heard about (realizing there are so many others out there too!) and follow their Career links that are displayed up here on the screen.*
- 2) Hit the search button (you can leave it blank to see all the possible jobs currently, posted or you can narrow it by various means). Check out some of the jobs they are currently trying to fill.*

- a. *NOTE: these are not all the jobs they have, just the ones that are currently unfilled RIGHT NOW!*
 - b. *Focus on the type of job, not necessarily the geographic location/etc.*
- 3) Record two or three of these you find interesting on your page in the Search Results of Interest spaces.

Connect it to Me! (8 minutes)

Now that everyone has both the Jigsaw possible careers data, and potentially the careers found on the various website Careers and job openings pages, the next step is to connect these results with the answers participants gave in the *That's Me!* Activity.

Have participants retrieve their five post-it notes. Have them select their top three choices and rank them. Record this onto their page under the "That's Me! Top Three" heading in the table on page 2. Then provide the following directions:

At this point, we've identified what possible careers these cooperatives and other agricultural cooperatives offer – both in all the jobs we brainstormed and the ones that are posted right now. Before that, we identified the factors about potential careers that spoke to us.

Now, let's connect the opportunities that we might consider with the qualities that we are looking for in a career:

- 1) *There are three rows now in the table that begin with your top choices from That's Me.*
- 2) *Put two possible careers that you've found or heard on that row that would fit that quality you identified.*
- 3) *In the last column, put 1-2 reasons why you made that connection.*

Give a few minutes for participants to finish this and have them share with one other person who is done. Elicit some responses from the group.

Why Work for Agricultural Cooperatives? (8 minutes)

Wrap up the workshop by connecting the learning from the last hour to the value and benefit of working in agriculture through a cooperative.

By now, we've identified what interests us in a career, and we've amassed a great sample of some of the many careers available within agricultural cooperatives. But what we haven't talked about are the value and impact of being engaged in an agricultural cooperative.

If time allows, play the two-minute video "CHS Stronger Together". The video highlights the ways a cooperative (CHS Inc – the largest cooperative in economic activity in the US) and all local cooperatives impact and benefit their communities as well as owners.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jPXtwWK4lkc>

When done, direct participants to the final two reflection prompts on their handout. Have them use their discoveries and considerations from the day as they answer the two prompts:

*What is the importance of agriculture in the world today?
How could being part of an agricultural cooperative allow you to be part of impact of agriculture?*

Give a few minutes of quiet reflection and writing. When done, ask for a few people to share their responses as works best (small groups or whole group). Process responses to arrive at the following close:

It is clear to us the value of agriculture, and the importance of what agriculture provides to everyone. Today, we have clearly identified ways to be part of that valuable mission through numerous career fields and opportunities that are available in agricultural cooperatives. This is true for anyone who is going to move directly into the industry after high school, or who is going to seek out college or university pathways as well. There truly is a place and a way for everyone to consider being part of contributing to the agriculture industry through an agricultural cooperative!

Acknowledgments



funded by



Handout B – Cooperative Profile Link Slips (need one slip per every 3 participants)



<http://www.welchs.com/our-story>



<https://www.chsinc.com/about-chs>



<https://www.landolakesinc.com/What-We-Do>



<https://www.sunkist.com/our-story/>



<https://www.oceanspray.com/en/Our-Story>

Handout A – Careers In Agricultural Cooperatives (prints in landscape orientation – recommended to be printed double-sided, one for each participant). See next two pages.

Careers in Agricultural Cooperatives



CHS Inc	Land O' Lakes	Ocean Spray	Sunkist Growers	Welch's
Role in Agriculture:	Role in Agriculture:	Role in Agriculture:	Role in Agriculture:	Role in Agriculture:
Potential Careers/Jobs Involved We Thought Of: - - - - - - -	Potential Careers/Jobs Involved We Thought Of: - - - - - - -	Potential Careers/Jobs Involved We Thought Of: - - - - - - -	Potential Careers/Jobs Involved We Thought Of: - - - - - - -	Potential Careers/Jobs Involved We Thought Of: - - - - - - -
<i>Search Results of Interest:</i>	<i>Search Results of Interest:</i>	<i>Search Results of Interest:</i>	<i>Search Results of Interest:</i>	<i>Search Results of Interest:</i>

Connect it to Me!

That's Me – Top Three!	Potential Jobs/Careers	Reasoning?

Final Reflection

What is the importance of agriculture in the world today?

How could being part of an agricultural cooperative allow you to be part of impact of agriculture?