



UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Office of the Secretary  
Washington, D.C. 20250

NATIONAL COOPERATIVE MONTH  
October 2010

---

By the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States of America

---

A PROCLAMATION

**WHEREAS** the Nation's 29,000 cooperatives have an impact of more than \$650 billion annually on the U.S. economy and are operated for the benefit of their members, rather than outside investors; and

**WHEREAS** cooperatives are a highly flexible, self-help business model that enable producers and consumers to engage in activities as diverse as processing and marketing crops and obtaining farm supplies; developing renewable energy projects and providing financial services, electricity and telecommunications services to their members; and

**WHEREAS** cooperatives own more than \$3 trillion in assets and employ more than 850,000 people and are especially effective at adding value to the goods and services produced in rural America, helping to keep more dollars "at home" and support local job creation; and

**WHEREAS** one of the key guiding principles of the cooperative movement is service to community; and

**WHEREAS** the United States Department of Agriculture supports agricultural and utility cooperatives with financial programs, educational materials, statistical information, research, technical, and development assistance;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, in recognition of the vital role cooperatives play in the Nation's economy and the impact they have on improving economic opportunity and the quality of life in rural America, I, Thomas J. Vilsack, Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture, do hereby proclaim October 2010 as National Cooperative Month. I encourage people everywhere to learn more about cooperatives and celebrate their accomplishments.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand this 1st day of October 2010, the two-hundred thirty-fifth year of the Independence of the United States of America.

  
THOMAS J. VILSACK  
Secretary