

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Office of the Secretary  
Washington, D.C. 20250



NATIONAL COOPERATIVE MONTH  
*October 2015*

*By the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States of America*

**A PROCLAMATION**

**WHEREAS** producer- and user-owned cooperatives are essential to the U.S. economy and to rural America, delivering supplies to farmers and ranchers and helping them market their products, supplying telecommunications and energy to rural communities, and providing financial and other important services; and

**WHEREAS** cooperatives unite their member-owners, thus improving their bargaining power, increasing their marketing clout, and reducing costs based on volume purchasing of production supplies while adding value through pooled product marketing; and

**WHEREAS** cooperatives fill market voids by providing high-quality services and products that otherwise may be unavailable; and

**WHEREAS** member-owners manage their cooperatives through democratic governance processes, serving as a voice for their members on legislative issues and enhancing the viability of their communities by generating jobs and paying taxes;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, in recognition of the vital role that cooperatives play in 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 2015 as National Cooperative Month. I encourage all Americans to learn more about cooperatives and to celebrate cooperatives' accomplishments with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand this 23rd day of September 2015, the two-hundred fortieth year of the Independence of the United States of America.

THOMAS J. VILSACK  
*Secretary*