



***A Local Voice at
the National Table***

New England Farmers Union Resolution on 2012: The International Year of Co-operatives

Whereas, The United Nations General Assembly Resolution 64/136 on Co-operatives in Social Development proclaims the year 2012 as the *International Year of Co-operatives*;

Whereas, The theme of the International Year is *Co-operative Enterprises Build a Better World*;

Whereas, The Resolution recognizes that co-operatives “in their various forms, promote the fullest possible participation in the economic and social development of all people, including women, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples, are becoming a major factor of economic and social development and contribute to the eradication of poverty”;

Whereas, The Resolution encourages all relevant stakeholders to take advantage of the *International Year* to promote co-ops, to raise public awareness of the contribution of co-operative enterprise to social and economic development and to promote the formation and growth of co-ops;

Whereas, The co-operative business model has empowered people around the world to improve their lives and communities through economic and social progress;

Whereas, Millions of co-operatives operate in every nation of the world, owned and governed by more than 1 billion members and employing 100 million people worldwide;

Whereas, More than 29,000 co-operatives operate in the United States, securing 2 million jobs, generating annual revenues of \$652 billion and possessing assets of \$3 trillion;

Whereas, Co-ops operate across the economy, finding a broad range of expression in areas including food, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, employment, finance, insurance, housing, healthcare and the arts;

Whereas, A majority of our country’s 2 million farmers are members of about 3,000 agricultural co-ops, helping them to sustain their farms, livelihoods and communities; and

Whereas, The National Farmers Union (NFU) has since its founding in 1902, been an advocate of the co-operative business model, supporting the development of farm,

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fishery and forestry co-ops as an effective means of increasing producers' bargaining power in the economy and farm systems. Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the New England Farmers Union commits to

1. Join with the Neighboring Food Co-op Association, the National Cooperative Business Association, the International Co-operative Alliance and other organizations in supporting and celebrating the year 2012 as the *International Year of Co-operatives*;
2. Recognize and promote the vital role of co-ops in the economic and social well-being of communities in New England, across the United States and around the world;
3. Celebrate the *International Year of Co-operatives* by engaging in efforts to raise the profile of co-operative enterprises, to demonstrate the benefits of co-ops in building local ownership and wealth, and to apply the co-operative model to new challenges and opportunities in New England communities; and
4. Encourage other Farmers Union divisions, agricultural co-operatives, and allied organizations to become involved in efforts to support, celebrate and promote the *International Year of Co-operatives*.

Be It Further Resolved,

That the New England Farmers Union will distribute this resolution among policy makers, food system advocates, community development organizations, the press and co-operative associations across the New England region.

**Adopted by the New England Farmers Union (NEFU) Board of Directors
27th May 2011**