

Guiding Principles

OPEN MEMBERSHIP: Membership in a co-op is open to anyone willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political, or religious discrimination.

DEMOCRATIC CONTROL: It is the members who make the decisions and set policy for the co-op. Every member has equal voting rights. One member=One vote.

MEMBERS' ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION: Members contribute equally to and democratically control the co-op's capital. Profits are allocated for the good of the Co-op and its members as well as other activities approved by the membership.

AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE: Co-ops are autonomous. If they enter into agreements with other organizations or raise capital from external sources, they do so under the control of their membership and maintain their autonomy.

EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND INFORMATION: Co-ops provide education and training for their members and staff so that they can contribute effectively to the success of the co-op. They also inform the public about the nature and benefits of cooperation.

COOPERATION AMONG CO-OPS: Co-ops serve their members and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together at local, regional, state, national, and international levels.

CONCERNS FOR THE COMMUNITY: Co-ops work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.