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COOPERATIVE ENTERPRISES BUILD A BETTER WORLD.

CCW Connection

Official newsletter of Consumer Co-operatives Worldwide (CCW)
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2012 International Year

Festival highlights strength of co-operative movement

From 29th October to 2nd November, co-operators from around the world met in Manchester to round out the United Nations International Year of Co-operatives with the Co-operatives United World Festival and ICAEXPO.

The festival included:

- An extraordinary General Assembly of the ICA, at the which the Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade was launched;
- A Co-operative Living exhibit demonstrating the role co-operatives play in everyday life;
- The announcement of the Coop'Art contest winners at the International Dinner;
- Conferences on Fair Trade, values and principles and gender;
- A fringe festival of workshops, trips to Rochdale, tastings and film screenings.

753 co-operatives from 88 countries were represented at the festival, which received approximately 11,800 visits.

CCW and Euro Coop hosted a successful workshop on 1st November under the title "Loyalty programmes and consumer data: Maximising the co-operative experience", at which participants learned how to tailor information about consumer-members' wants and needs to create valuable and relevant loyalty schemes and benefits.

Experts from The Co-operative Group (UK), Coop Italy, SOK Corporation (Finland) and Coop Marknad (Sweden) animated the workshop and shared their best practices for increasing loyalty. Check out the speakers' presentations [here](#).

UN closes International Year in New York

The United Nations held its official closing ceremony for the International Year of Co-operatives on the 19th and 20th of November in New York, where the theme was 'Promoting co-operatives beyond 2012'.

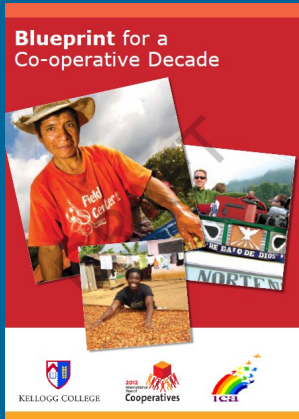
The Division for Social Policy and Development in the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs organised the events in collaboration with Rabobank and the Permanent Representation of Mongolia to the UN.

In addition to several panel discussions, officials elaborated the International Co-operative Youth Statement and presented a statement from the Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Co-operatives (COPAC).

The UN also announced the winners of the IYC Short Film Festival. The National Cooperative Grocers Association was named one of the seven winners. You can watch the video [here](#).

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Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade: the potential for consumer co-operatives

During Co-operatives United, the ICA unveiled its ambitious strategy to make co-operatives the fastest growing business model by the end of the decade: [the Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade](#).

In order to realise this vision, the Blueprint identifies five areas of action:

- Increasing membership and participation in the governance process;
- Positioning co-operatives as builders of sustainability;
- Creating the co-operative message

and securing the co-operative identity;

- Ensuring the implementation of a legal framework that supports the growth of co-operatives;
- Securing reliable co-operative capital while guaranteeing member control.

How exactly can consumer co-operatives contribute to this strategy in the years to come?

Participation

Being consumer-owned, consumer co-operatives have relatively easy access to a varied audience of potential members. Where the challenge lies is in turning consumers into active and engaged members in the co-operative. In line with the Blueprint, consumer co-operatives can invest in developing their outreach to young people (through online presence or professional development opportunities for young employees, for example) in order to identify their future leaders. Using the lessons from the workshop in Manchester, consumer co-operatives can also study the trends and backgrounds of their members to create a more engaging co-operative experience and encourage further commitment to the co-operative.

Sustainability

Consumers are already leaders in this area, as evidenced in Euro Coop's 2012 report on the project "Climate change and consumer co-operatives: Taking the challenge forward". Where consumer co-operatives can improve is their communication of their commitment to sustainability to members, non-cooperative enterprises and policymakers. Consumer co-operatives can use the messages laid out in the Blueprint to create stronger communications that not only explain how consumer co-operatives contribute to environmental, economic and social sustainability, but also convince others outside the movement to take on the challenge as well.

Legal framework

More often than not, national legislation lacks any specific reference to consumer co-operatives. The goals laid out in the Blueprint can serve as motivation for individual consumer co-operatives to work together in order to identify the legislative challenges they face and lobby as one voice to change them.

Capital

While consumer co-operatives are powerful forces in many countries, there are still movements around the world struggling to get off the ground. In order to realise the Blueprint vision, consumer co-operatives must be willing to assist fledgling movements by advising them on ways to increase financing and working to improve funding mechanisms locally and nationally.

Identity

Thanks to the existence of high-quality own brands, many consumer co-operatives have a unique line of products that specifically convey the co-operative difference. The opportunity lies in the capacity for consumer co-operatives to educate and inform the general public about that difference and the principles that guide it. Consumer co-operatives can therefore further develop the messages that they use to communicate the co-operative identity and consider contributing their expertise to training programmes developed by the wider co-operative movement, on national or international level.

Member Activities

Japanese co-operatives take IYC message on campus

To help young people learn about co-operatives and get inspired by the co-operative business model, the IYC National Committee in Japan has organised lectures at a number of universities.



The lectures define the distinct co-operative identity and emphasise co-operatives' role in economic and social development.

This course will be given 15 times through March 2013, and speakers from both consumer and agricultural co-operatives will participate.

The courses include a visit to a consumer co-operative store and a farmers' market.

Coop Brazil recycles cooking oil

Strengthening its environmental commitment, Coop Brazil, through Planet Coop, is supporting the Triangle Institute's 'Junte Óleo' Campaign, which collects unused cooking oil to make soap.

During four Saturdays in October, collection points in Coop stores raised awareness about how to properly dispose of cooking oil and its environmental significance.



Coop Norway sponsors ski team

Coop Norway has recently sponsored its own long-distance ski team, Team Coop, in an effort to further promote its message of healthy living and fitness.

"We are proud to be identified with a winning team that competes in a large Norwegian national sport, and that this also supports young talent. Our focus on an international team reflects our work with Coop enterprises in other countries", says Svein Fanebust, CEO of Coop Norway Trade.



FDB promotes healthy eating habits

Danish co-operative FDB is teaching children to prepare and appreciate tasty, healthy meals through its 'GoCook Taste Checkout' project.



Through the project, a total of 5,700 free 'taste boxes' containing raw ingredients, teaching materials and recipes was sent to schools throughout Denmark.

The theme for this year's flavour box was packed lunches and more than 135,000 school children participated in the programme.

Coop Italy removes foie gras from shelves

Coop Italy recently became the first chain of supermarkets in Italy to eliminate foie gras from its range of products.

A 2012 recipient of the European Leader Award presented by Compassion in World Farming, Coop Italy made the decision as part of its animal welfare strategy.

The co-operative additionally does not sell cosmetics tested on animals, clothing made with natural furs and eggs from chickens that are not free range.



KF High School to gain 750 more students

Swedish consumer co-operative KF will now merge Fryshuset High School with its own high school, in order to make more students job ready.

The high school run by youth-centred organisation Fryshuset has 750 students and will become part of KF High School beginning

in January 2013.

KF High School currently offers coursework promoting entrepreneurship and job training to its 250 students. Students also complete apprenticeships at Coop, a programme that will now include positions at Fryshuset.



Centrosojuz helps plan Congress of Rural Co-operatives

Evgeny Kuznetsov, President of Centrosojuz, was recently appointed deputy chairman of the working group on consumer cooperation organised by the Russian Department of Agriculture.

Along with the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, the working group will help plan the first All-Russian Congress of Rural Co-operatives.

The participants of the working group discussed the general concept of co-operatives in rural areas, as well as the potential resolution to come out of the Congress.

NCCF diversifies business

The National Cooperative Consumers' Federation of India (NCCF) has undertaken a variety of projects to diversity its business.

In Uttar Pradesh, the co-operative is investing in the construction of a modular operation theatre and intensive care, orthopedic and emergency units, as well as in the renovation of the existing medical infrastructure.

NCCF will also complete housing projects in Kolkata by the end of the year.

These activities show how co-operatives can collaborate with public authorities to provide services to the general population.



iCOOP KOREA launches mobile site

iCOOP KOREA recently created a custom [web-site](#) for smart phone users.

The site provides member announcements, news and product and store information.



Co-operative Group scheme to protect consumers' savings

The Co-operative Group will become the first retailer in the UK to launch a Christmas savings scheme trust, in order to protect consumers' Christmas spending money.

Set to be launched in 2013, the scheme will allow shoppers at Co-operative Food to buy £1 stamps throughout the year that they can cash in when they do their holiday shopping.

Customers who buy stamps before the new scheme goes into effect can redeem them like normal.



Issue Spotlight: Sustainable fishing

Sustainable fishing and consumer co-operatives

The need to protect our planet's marine resources has become a pressing issue in the field of sustainability. Consumer co-operatives, as values-based retailers, have long promoted sustainable fishing and endeavoured to better inform consumers about the importance of supporting sustaina-

ble options.

Only 3% of the world's oceans are currently protected marine areas, and the global fleet of fishing boats is 2-3 times larger than what the seas can sustainably support. The following describes the status of overfishing in the world today.

Americas

In Latin America, pressure is being put on the East Pacific Ocean tuna fishery, the Peruvian/Chilean anchovy fishery, the southern ocean tooth-fish and squid fisheries and the shrimp and lobster fisheries to seek more sustainable management policies. Aquaculture is growing slowly in the region and in the Caribbean.

The Grand Banks of North America are still suffering since the 1992 collapse of the cod fishing industry and experts are still unsure as to whether the fish population can recover. Salmon fishing in Alaska (United States) is now being managed strictly in order to protect fish stocks. In the United States, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Office of Sustainable Fishing works to control overfishing on a national level.



Asia/Pacific

Asia has the world's largest fishing fleets and is struggling to manage illegal fishing practices, such as the use of dynamite or fine mesh net. In Hong Kong, there are increased efforts to regulate fleets and to ban fish trawling near the shore. South-east Asia is particularly affected by dwindling fish stocks. China accounts for two-thirds of the world's aquaculture production and is increasingly taking sustainability concerns into account.



Africa

In West Africa, overfishing by European fleets has devastated the local ecosystem, and NGOs like Greenpeace are collaborating with government officials to address the issue and lobby for more sustainable partnerships.

In South Africa, efforts are being made to better conserve marine resources. Roughly 20% of the coastline is designated as a Marine Protected Area, and governments are encouraging local fisheries to adopt more sustainable policies.

Europe

The role of Europe in adopting more sustainable fishing practices is paramount: 88% of European stocks are overexploited, with 30% in danger of collapse.

The Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) of the European Union is currently under reform, and all legislative bodies are working to make the regulation more sustainable. The European Union will also create a European maritime and fisheries fund (EMFF) for the same period to be covered by the reform, 2014-2020.

The European Parliament recently postponed its vote on the proposal presented by the Council of Member State fisheries ministers, claiming that the Council's suggestions would allow fisherman to continue exploiting fish stocks and create further incentives for overfishing.



Co-operative History

Coopfed was registered on 15th September 1989 as the apex federation for the consumer co-operative movement in Sri Lanka and commenced its business operations on 7th March 1990. The organisation existed to import, procure and supply the many consumer co-operative retail outlets at fair and reasonable prices.

Today, Coopfed goes even further by running its own co-operative points of sale.



Please do not hesitate to contact us for further information on any of the issues mentioned in this publication.



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