



About NCBA

Background

NCBA is the lead national U.S. membership association representing cooperatives of all types and in all industries. We are democratically organized and operate according to internationally recognized cooperative principles.

Through our comprehensive education, co-op development, communications, public policy, and member services programs, NCBA helps co-ops strengthen co-op businesses so they can better serve their members, and provides a unified voice on Capitol Hill.

Dedicated to both domestic and international cooperative development, NCBA works to develop co-ops in the U.S. and abroad. NCBA serves as the national partner in CooperationWorks, a network of 17 cooperative development centers that help communities and individuals develop cooperatives that help build income and opportunity in the U.S.

NCBA founded the Cooperative Development Foundation, which provides grants and other resources to cooperatives and others seeking to enhance economic opportunity. NCBA coordinates its development activities with the Foundation.

For more than 50 years, NCBA has worked in the developing world helping empower local communities through cooperative development. NCBA receives funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development and other donors to operate 20 development projects in 15 countries in Africa, Central America and East Asia.

Our Mission

To develop, advance and protect cooperative enterprise.

Our Vision

All Americans will have the opportunity to become a member of a cooperative.

Our Goal

To make cooperatives a strong, distinct and unified sector, recognized by the American public

Our Members

NCBA membership is open to all cooperatives and associations of co-ops in the U.S. Our members co-ops operate in the areas agricultural supply and marketing, childcare, energy, food distribution, processing and retailing, financial services, health care, housing, insurance, purchasing and shared services, and telecommunications, among others.



Our History

Background

Founded in 1916, the National Cooperative Business Association was known as the Cooperative League of the USA (CLUSA) until 1985. It was the first, and remains the only national organization for all types of co-ops in the United States.

Though NCBA's name has changed over the years, its primary mission never has. Dedicated to developing, advancing and protecting cooperatives, for nearly 80 years NCBA has been the national voice for U.S. cooperatives, helping them compete in a changing economic and political environment.

Early History— Consumer Co-ops Only

Its founders created NCBA to help consumer-owned co-ops to share best practices and improve management. Today, NCBA's membership has expanded to include all types of cooperatives across all industries—consumer, producer, shared services, and worker-owned co-ops. Our comprehensive program offerings have been adapted to meet the modern-day needs of cooperatives.

Co-ops as Engines Of Economic Growth

Throughout its history, NCBA has worked to make cooperatives a key component of this nation's economic development policy. Its first president, James Warbasse, served on the Consumer Advisory Board, established under the National Recovery Act during the depression. NCBA's leaders continue to serve on national advisory boards and councils that set the economic direction for this nation and propose legislative and regulatory changes that enhance cooperative businesses.

A New Source of Credit

Over the years, NCBA has sought legislative solutions to the challenges facing cooperatives. For example, in the 1970s, as lack of access to credit inhibited the growth of the co-op sector, NCBA successfully lobbied to create the federally chartered National Consumer Cooperative Bank in 1977, now owned by its member co-ops and known as the National Cooperative Bank. It provides lending and other services to the nation's non-agricultural cooperatives. Today the bank has more than \$1 billion in assets and more than 1,800 member-owners.

Strengthening Rural & Urban America

In the 1990s, NCBA worked with the National Rural Development Task Force to create a new funding source for cooperatives in rural areas and build the development infrastructure. The Task Force successfully lobbied congress to authorize the Rural Cooperative Development Grants program in 1991, which has provided more

than \$35 million dollars to a network of development centers that help communities enhance economic opportunity. NCBA is replicating its development expertise in U.S. cities through its new Urban Cooperative Development Initiative.

Over the years, NCBA has played a prominent role in making co-ops a key component of U.S. international development policy.

International Leadership—A Founder of CARE

In 1944, NCBA formed the Freedom Fund to help cooperatives recover in war-torn Europe. The following year, NCBA played an integral role in creating the Cooperative for American Remittances to Europe, which provided economic relief to war-torn Europe. NCBA's President Murray Lincoln was the first president of that cooperative, now internationally known and recognized as CARE.

In 1953, NCBA continued its international work by providing technical assistance to India's farmers, helping them build the agricultural cooperative infrastructure in that country that has helped it become the world's largest producer of milk and dairy products and created a strong, integrated agricultural sector. NCBA also helped develop the Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative, now the largest fertilizer business in Asia.

Since then, in partnership with the U.S. Agency for International Development, NCBA's CLUSA International Program has carried out 89 long-term projects in 45 countries in East Asia, Africa and Central America with an annual budget that tops \$15 million.

Creating New Support Institutions

In the U.S., NCBA has played a key role in creating new organizations to support the cooperative sector. It helped form the North American Students of Cooperation, an organization for student owned housing cooperatives (1946); the National Association of Housing Cooperatives (1950); the American Travel Association (1953); Parent Cooperative Preschools International (1960); the Continental Association of Funeral and Memorial Societies (1963); Cooperative Business International; CooperationWorks, a network of co-op development centers; and the Cooperative Grocers Information Network (1999), an online network for food cooperatives.

Putting Co-ops on the Cutting Edge

In 2000, NCBA brought co-ops to the cutting edge of technology by creating a new top-level Internet domain—.coop—exclusively for cooperatives that would join .com and .org at the end of web and e-mail addresses. One of only seven new domains approved, .coop distinguishes cooperatives from investor-owned businesses and charitable organizations on the worldwide web. The .coop registry, launched in January 2002 has registered more than 8,000 .coop Internet addresses.

The Future

As it looks to the future, NCBA continues to address existing and emerging challenges facing cooperatives, and identify self-help and legislative solutions that will help co-ops overcome them.



National Cooperative Business Association

Executive Bio



**Paul Hazen,
CEO and President**

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Paul Hazen is the President and Chief Executive Officer of both the National Cooperative Business Association (NCBA), the leading national cooperative membership association in the United States, and dotCooperation LLC (dotCoop), and NCBA subsidiary and the sponsor of the new top-level Internet domain-- .coop.

Widely known for his detailed knowledge of, and extensive experience in the domestic and international co-op sector, Hazen is called upon to speak in national and international fora on the role of cooperatives in economic development. In 2001, he was named CEO Communicator of the Year by the Cooperative Communicators Association.

Hazen has led several important new NCBA initiatives, including the Urban Cooperative Development Initiative, an enhanced cooperative education program including an online co-op university, and the new top-level Internet domain .coop. Under his direction, NCBA's CLUSA International Program has grown to over \$15 million, with development projects in 15 countries.

Hazen held the position of Chief Operating Officer of NCBA prior to his selection as CEO in 1998. Hazen serves on the boards of directors for the Consumer Federation of America, Arlington Food Cooperative, United Seniors Health Cooperative, Telecommunications Cooperative Network, and the NCB Credit Corporation. Before joining NCBA, Hazen was Executive Director for Rural Housing, Inc., a statewide developer of cooperative housing in Wisconsin.



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