

COOPERATION IN NEBRASKA

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CO-OP EMPLOYEES ATTEND CREDIT WORKSHOP



On March 5th the Council hosted a Credit Workshop in Kearney (pictured at left). Forty-two (42) individuals representing 19 co-ops and 2 Supporting Members attended the workshop.

Bill Kutilek and Andrew Pease, attorneys with the Crosby Guenzel LLP law firm, and Ann Hinkle, Deputy Secretary of State, were facilitators for the program.

Due to the changing economic environment in agriculture, the Council determined that hosting a credit workshop would be beneficial for members. While a portion of the presentation was a refresher on credit issues, new issues such as the Unique Identifier Number and the use of the CD were incorporated into the program.

Because of the importance of credit issues, particularly in this changing economic environment, the program was highly rated by those in attendance. The evaluations show that participants found value in the workshop and would be able to utilize the materials and discussion to improve their practices regarding credit.

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE FOR 2015/16 ACADEMIC YEAR

Applications for the NCC Education Foundation Scholarships for the 2015/16 academic year are currently being accepted at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institute of Agriculture & Natural Resources and the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture at Curtis.



The application form and selection criteria are available on the home page of the Council's website at www.nebr.coop.

Completed applications must be returned to UNL and NCTA by April 15, 2015.

2015 LEGISLATIVE SESSION IS UNDERWAY



The 2015 legislative session convened on January 7 and is scheduled to adjourn on June 5. Committee hearings concluded in mid-March at which time all-day floor debate began. Senators, committees, and the speaker have identified their priority bills for the session. As the name indicates, these bills, along with the state budget, will have priority status on the legislative agenda. Other items yet to be resolved that would impact agriculture and rural Nebraska are ag land valuations, funding for infrastructure improvements (roads and bridges), the Livestock Growth Act, and the Livestock Operation Siting and Expansion Act.

To date, the Council has provided 14 *Legislative Updates* which provide information on bills of interest. Please refer to these updates for specific details regarding legislative bills that the Council is tracking.

COOPERATIVES CLASSES



University of Nebraska-Lincoln - UNL has announced that pre-enrollment is open for the “Role of Cooperatives in Agriculture” class. This class will be conducted during the fall 2015 semester. It was offered for the first time last fall and proved to be a successful addition to the Ag Economics Department class offerings. In addition to the class, UNL will also be hosting a cooperative study tour to be held at the end of the 2015 spring semester. This tour will be a 2-3 day event which will allow UNL students the opportunity to travel to local and regional cooperatives and view first hand how these cooperatives serve their members. Student sign up is currently open for both the fall 2015 class and the May 2015 study tour.

Community Colleges - The Council continues to work with community colleges throughout the state to provide Co-ops 101 presentations for agricultural students. This project, which is funded through the CHS Foundation’s 2015 Cooperative Education Grants Program, allows us to provide cooperative information to post-secondary ag students in all areas of the state. Since January 1, the Council has presented programs at CCC-Hastings, NCTA-Curtis, and CCC-Columbus. Later this spring, programs will be conducted at NCC-Norfolk and SCC-Beatrice.

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA STAFFING PROPOSAL

The University of Nebraska Ag Economics Department has submitted a funding proposal to the Council to establish a “cooperative” staff position within the Department. The Council’s Board of Directors and Excellence in Cooperative Education Committee (ECEC) held a joint meeting on February 25th to discuss the proposal and seek clarification on the pro’s and con’s of such a position.

The Board and ECEC will continue to study this proposal and seek further clarification on several aspects of the proposal. We will keep you informed as this study progresses.

DIRECTOR EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The Council’s education programs concluded in late February. Programs offered this year were the Director/Manager Workshop, Director Certification Program, Cooperatives For Tomorrow Seminar, Cooperative Issues Symposium, and the Board Officer Seminar. A total of 337 directors, managers, and staff representing 67% of our members attended at least one of these programs. This is excellent attendance and shows the commitment our members have to the cooperatives they represent.



Dr. Mike Boland from the University of Minnesota addressed the group at the Cooperative Issues Symposium on February 5 in Lincoln.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

April 2015

15 Application Deadline for NCC Education Foundation Scholarships

November 2015

19 Annual Meeting - Kearney, Holiday Inn
20 Director/Manager Workshop - Kearney, Holiday Inn

January 2016

5-6 Director Certification Program - Kearney, Hampton Inn
6 Nebraska Legislature convenes
25 NCC Legislative Advisory Committee meeting - Lincoln, Embassy Suites

February 2016

TBA Cooperatives For Tomorrow Seminar
TBA Cooperative Issues Symposium
25 Board Officers Seminar - LaVista, Embassy Suites

NCC RADIO SPOTS

The Nebraska Rural Radio Network provides the Council with complimentary network air time to present updates on current cooperative issues. These messages are aired every other Friday if there is information of significant importance to share.

The radio spots air at approximately 1:15pm MT on KNEB and at 2:17 pm CT on KRVN and KTIC.

NCC MISSION STATEMENT

To defend, protect and enhance the agricultural cooperative movement through pro-active programs in education, legislation, government affairs, communication, and regulatory issues.