

Nebraska Cooperative Council

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News Release

September 18, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Governor Signs Proclamation for Cooperative Month

LINCOLN, NE--A proclamation recognizing October as Cooperative Month was signed by Governor Pete Ricketts and presented in a ceremony at the State Capitol on September 16.

Cooperative Month has been celebrated nationwide and in Nebraska for many years to call attention to the economic benefits which come from cooperative businesses.

The proclamation signed by the Governor notes that agricultural cooperatives serve the needs of Nebraskans in 398 rural communities across the state and directly employ nearly 5,300 people statewide. In 2018 Nebraska's agricultural cooperatives invested nearly \$163 million in facilities and equipment to serve farmers and ranchers while also returning over \$57 million in patronage and equity redemption to their farmer and rancher owners. In addition, Nebraska's farmer owned cooperatives contributed \$1.17 million to local fire departments, local school and youth organizations, local and statewide FFA and 4-H chapters and provided numerous scholarships to help rural Nebraska students continue their educations.

In brief remarks at the signing ceremony, Rocky Weber, President & General Counsel of the Nebraska Cooperative Council, said "Nebraska's recognition of Cooperative Month coincides with national Cooperative Month as recognized by the United States Department of Agriculture. The 2019 national theme for Cooperative Month is "Co-ops: By the Community, For the Community." This theme is particularly appropriate for the cooperative system in Nebraska. Local farmer ownership and control. Local return of profits. Local investment in facilities and equipment to support their farmer patrons. Supporting their local communities. These are uniquely cooperative attributes. The partnership between Nebraska's farmer owned cooperatives, the farmers that own them and the communities they serve form the backbone of the rural economy in Nebraska."

The Nebraska Cooperative Council, a statewide trade association representing all types of agricultural cooperatives, coordinated arrangements for Governor Ricketts to sign the proclamation. Participating in the event were agricultural producer members of local cooperative Boards of Directors from across the State and the Nebraska Cooperative Council.

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Cutline for the attached digital photo:

Governor Pete Ricketts presented a proclamation declaring October as Cooperative Month in Nebraska. Pictured left to right are: Dave Beckman, Board Chair of CVA headquartered in York; Tim Rowe, Board Chair of Country Partners Co-op headquartered in Gothenburg; Neil Stedman, Board Chair of Frontier Co-op Co. headquartered in Lincoln; Rocky Weber, President & General Counsel of the Nebraska Cooperative Council; Governor Pete Ricketts; Galen Kuska, Board Chair of Farmers Co-op headquartered in Dorchester; Evan Brandes, Board Vice Chair of Aurora Co-op Elevator Co. headquartered in Aurora; and Jeff Loschen, Board Chair of CPI headquartered in Hastings.