

# Cascadia Regional Co-op Resource Survey

Narrative compiled by  
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*A report submitted on behalf of the Cascadia Cooperative Network, a project of Strengthening Local Independent Cooperatives Everywhere (SLICE).*

Northwest Cooperative Development Center

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## Executive Summary

“Difficult times call for creative strategies. Time and again during periods of economic hardship and market failure, cooperatively owned businesses have emerged as a democratic, grassroots, and do-it-yourself response. It happened during the economic upheavals of the 19th century and again during the Great Depression. Today, as the current economic crisis deepens, co-ops are again coming to the fore as producers and consumers seek stable sources of employment, goods and services.”

*From Worker Co-ops: Green and Just Jobs You Can Own, by James Trimarco, Jill Bamburg in YES! Magazine, June 2009.*

Across the Northwest, hundreds of co-ops are providing communities with needed goods and services as well as livelihoods for local workers. The time is right to help these existing cooperative enterprises connect, support each other and form new co-ops. It’s critical that we build a movement with wider impact for social/economic equity and environmental sustainability.

In response to this opportunity, the NW Cooperative Development Center (NWCDC), Strengthening Local Independent Co-ops Everywhere (SLICE) and associated Northwest co-op developers joined forces under the initial title of Cascadia Cooperative Network (CCN) to assess the strength and help grow the cooperative economy in the Northwest.

This report presents findings of a regional cross-sector survey of existing and nascent cooperative businesses and the professional service providers there to assist those ventures. The survey grew out of a grassroots movement by people who desire to engage more deeply with the Cascadia cooperative community and to bring this model of doing business to the forefront of community development.

The project committee consisted of about 13 people, of which five participated in the final analysis. The group represented cooperative owners and members, students of cooperative business, cooperative technical assistance providers and project funders.

The findings support the notion that an active cooperative community exists in our region and that this community can be made stronger with increased access to resources.

A cross section of co-ops distributed throughout Cascadia, a region that includes Washington, Idaho and Oregon, responded to the survey. More than 55 percent of the respondents have been in operation for more than 10 years and have mature businesses. An encouraging 93 percent of co-ops responded that their business was holding steady or improving. This indicates substantial strength in the co-op sector compared with traditional businesses during these economically hard times.

The survey results indicate a need for cooperative development funds and support services. A majority of respondents were interested in assisting the creation of a development loan fund as well as being willing to mentor and share information with newly forming co-ops. The most common method of co-op

financing reported has been through equity support from members and using retained earnings to grow cooperative businesses.

A very strong interest – 92 percent – was expressed in supporting a regional cooperative economy. Eighty-seven percent of co-ops that responded are currently transacting business with other co-ops. Addressing sustainability and social justice principles were reported to be actively practiced by 80 percent of responding co-ops; 57 percent specifically budget for these commitments and 73 percent reported implementation of all seven of the cooperative principles. Seventy-seven percent said they would like to be included in a regional directory.

The top suggestions for assistance to newly forming co-ops are business planning, start-up financing and marketing. Ongoing educational training for leadership is desired by the cooperatives.

Quote from one respondent:

*“Keep up the good work. Co-ops provide real solutions to many of the issues we face in the world today. Communities know best what to do for themselves and just need a little help getting there, Co-ops are one of the ways human beings get to exercise our right to self-determination... Go Co-op, We do own it!”*

## Highlights

**Existing co-ops expressed the desire to assist newly forming co-ops. Ten percent are currently mentoring others:**

- Sharing lessons learned.
- Sharing documents.
- 77 percent would like to be included in a regional directory.

**Respondents overwhelmingly (80 percent) expressed actively supporting sustainability and social justice principles.** Fifty-seven percent specifically budget for that.

**Co-ops are accessible.** More than 50 percent of respondents have a member "buy in" of less than \$100.

**Business is strong in the co-op sector.** Ninety-three percent report their businesses are holding steady or improving. That is far higher than the national norm at this time.

**Co-ops offer longevity.** More than 57 percent of respondents polled have been in operation for more than 10 years.

**Interest in supporting and growing the cooperative economy was strong.** Eighty-seven percent of co-ops report currently doing business with other co-ops.

### **Funding:**

- 86 percent reported that members significantly participate in providing capital.
- 40 percent of respondents have used member loans.
- 53 percent have been able to secure traditional lending.
- Access to operating capital is reported to be a barrier.

**Participants were interested in forming and participating in a regional loan fund.** Seventy-four percent of respondents would like to see a co-op development fund made available.

### **Gap analysis – areas to immediately improve:**

- **Access to start-up money, business and strategic planning** were identified as highest priority/highest need.
- The top priority for new co-ops is a **co-op development fund**, followed by **marketing assistance**.
- Existing co-ops identified a desire for **stronger member involvement** and **on-going leadership training**.

**Items of interest – sampling of comments to the question, "What would enable your organization to better serve the needs of cooperatives?"**

- "More training, more time, more money, more co-op consultants, more co-op attorneys, more co-op accountants, more partnerships / networking."

- "Expanded and continuing education on legal structures and tax accounting to include lower-cost options for professional services in those areas. More educational events to improve individual/group understanding of the benefits provided in cooperative structures. More sources of capital to fund startups."
- "A stronger community of practice with other co-op expertise – more sharing of best practices – more regional /online training and access to info."
- "Database of existing cooperatives and perspective cooperatives in the state that are receiving technical assistance from service providers, who the providers are, what are the additional needs of the cooperatives and service providers beyond what we currently offer, and linkage to educate the cooperatives about our funding programs for future assistance."
- "More education of the legal community about cooperative business is sorely needed."
- "Collaborate work with similar organizations. Access to funding opportunities."

## Section 1: Background

Cooperative businesses have a long history in the Cascadia region, from worker-run plywood mills to large agricultural co-ops such as Cenex Harvest States, and from Group Health Cooperative to REI. The Northwest is also home to some of the largest credit unions in the country, including Boeing Employees Credit Union (BECU). In recent years, interest has surged in strengthening the cooperative economy through the establishment of new cooperative businesses and increasing awareness of the many cooperatives already in existence.

The SLICE 2010 Round Table, convened Oct. 22, 2010, in Seattle, is one effort to unite cooperatives in the region. Through a series of discussions, a work group was founded to explore the interest in a Cooperative Development Fund in Cascadia. This work group (SRT 2010) was composed of representatives from stakeholders in the cooperative movement, including co-ops, technical service providers and administrators of foundations. SRT 2010 met once a month from November 2010 to May 2011.

SRT 2010's discussions demonstrated a need for gathering additional data and comments from the larger cross section of co-ops in Cascadia. The additional data and comment sought included information on needs, available services and interest of pursuing a unified cooperative support network. That led to forming a subgroup within SRT 2010 to draft, distribute and analyze a survey.

The primary goals of the survey were to:

1. Assess the strength of the cooperative movement in Cascadia.
2. Assess the appetite of existing cooperatives to create a self-funded cooperative development fund.
3. Begin to better identify the Cascadia cooperative community through a directory.

Five questions were identified in the design of the survey to provide a framework. These essential questions were:

1. Who is the cooperative community?
2. What beliefs do cooperatives subscribe to?
3. Why do the cooperatives exist?
4. What do the cooperatives do?
5. What do cooperatives need to survive and thrive?

In addition, specific survey objectives included identifying:

- Technical assistance gaps.
- Financing needs.
- Adherence to cooperative principles.
- Willingness to contribute to a co-op development fund.
- Cascadia cooperative demographics.

During June and July 2010, invitations to respond to an online survey were electronically distributed to more than 1,000 recipients. Personal reminders were sent to cooperatives and organizations that SRT 2010 identified with the ability to add core content and benefit the results.

A survey analysis team met in mid-August with the purpose of identifying:

- Range of co-ops and services.
- Database/directory.
- Support for co-op principles.
- Support to expand support for social justice.
- Appetite for loan fund.
- Baseline metrics.
- Gap analysis.
- Where to focus to help build a co-op economy.

A preliminary report was distributed at the SLICE conference in October 2011 and made available on the Northwest Cooperative Development Center's website, [www.nwcdc.coop](http://www.nwcdc.coop).



## Section 2: Survey Methodology

The survey was drafted in a manner to solicit participation from co-op leadership, professional service providers, cooperative development specialists and educators throughout Cascadia.

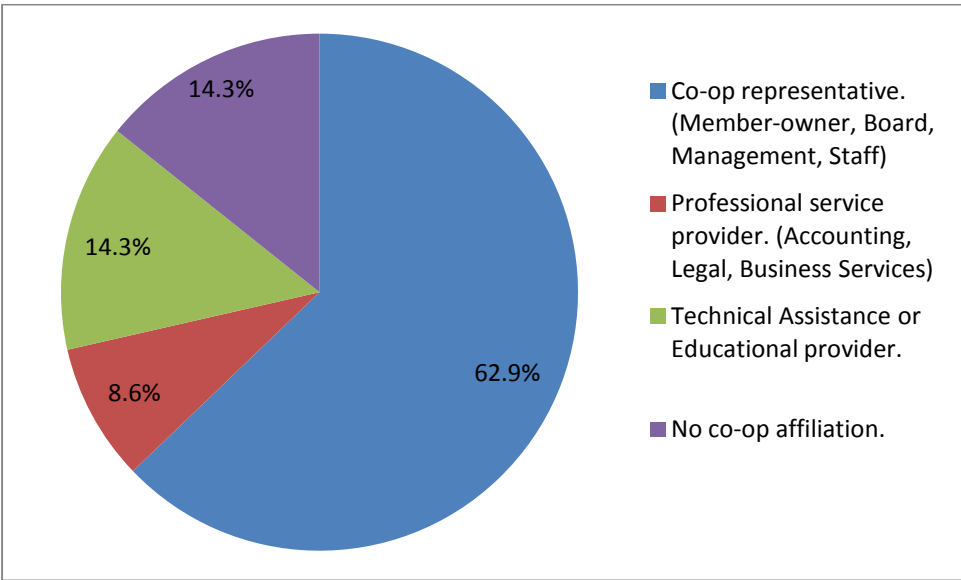
The survey was created using SurveyMonkey.com software and solicitations to respond to the online survey were distributed through email. Cooperatives in the Northwest Cooperative Development Center's database were the primary recipients and the CCN project committee was encouraged to distribute the survey request to its databases as well.

The responses were reviewed to exclude organizations not located or active in Cascadia and responses that were identified as duplicate entries. A total of 131 responses to the survey were received, of which 105 were retained.

The 105 responses are representative of unique responses businesses. The retained response from businesses identified with more than one response was determined by the known longevity of the respondent in the business and/or the individuals' comprehensive responsibilities within the co-op. Almost all of the respondents were known to the survey analysis team, which factored into the screening. However, the analysis team recognized the importance of each individual response to open-ended questions and this information was retained for qualitative purposes.

Of the 105 unique respondents, 66, or 62.9 percent, identified themselves as co-op representatives, while 24, or 22.9 percent, were professional service providers to cooperatives (e.g. accounting, legal, technical assistance or other business services). 14.3 percent of the respondents claimed no co-op affiliation but were responding to the survey because they had an interest in the cooperative movement.

**Figure 1: Reporting Status of Survey Respondents**



The response rate was too low for the purpose of reporting statistically significant results and the respondents were self-selected rather than randomly chosen. The analysis should be understood as only partially indicative of the makeup or views of the population of cooperatives in the region.

Nevertheless, the survey findings offer important insights into the region's cooperatives: who they are, why they exist, what they do, and their beliefs and needs. Generally, the findings reflect the range, if not the average or median values, for the general population.

Data was analyzed and drafted into a preliminary report distributed in October 2011. This report summarizes the analysis of the data.

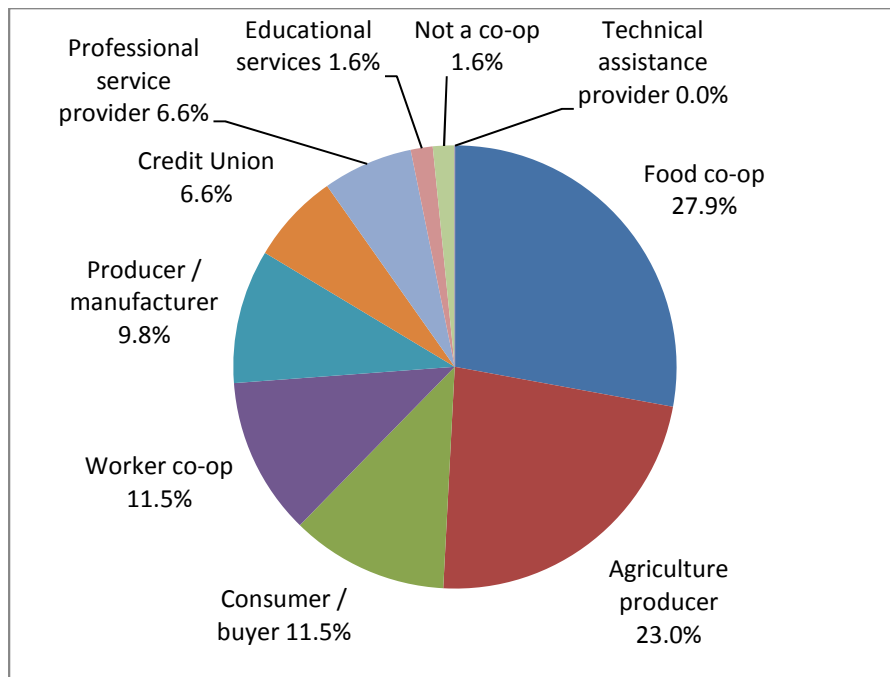
### Section 3: Who are Cascadia’s Cooperatives?

A range of co-ops represent Cascadia in terms of type, size, geographic location and reach, incorporation status, age and stage of development.

#### Types

The types of cooperatives by percentage of responses are shown in Figure 2, Cooperative Types. Consumer-owned cooperatives account for slightly less than half of the survey responses. By contrast, nationally, the vast majority of cooperatives are owned by consumers, with producer-owned cooperatives only making up about 6 percent of the total (University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives). Likewise, 11.5 percent of the survey responses came from worker cooperatives, even though worker cooperatives make up less than 1 percent of all U.S. cooperatives.<sup>1</sup>

Figure 2: Cooperative Types



The majority of professional service providers did not self-identify with any particular co-op sector.

#### Economic Sectors

With respect to economic sectors, cooperatives in the energy, housing, health care, household services, recreational equipment, and forestry sectors responded to the survey in addition to sectors specifically

<sup>1</sup> Survey respondents might not be reflective of the general population of cooperatives in Cascadia as discussed above under Section 2, Survey Methodology.

called out in Figure 2 (food, agriculture, banking and education). Food and agricultural producer co-ops account for more than half of the survey responses.

*Size*

Several measurements are typically used to describe cooperative size, including number of members and employees, and the amount of revenues. For this survey, data on the active number of volunteers was also collected as a measure of the significant role volunteers play in some cooperatives.

The aggregate number of employees for all survey respondents was 5,786 and the total number of part-time employees was 3,139. The aggregate number of members was 200,174. However, as individuals are likely to be members of more than one cooperative (e.g., a food co-op and a health services co-op), this number is likely higher than the number of unique individuals who are members of the cooperatives responding to the survey.

Table 1 gives the average membership and employee sizes for the survey respondents as compared with U.S. averages.

**Table 1: Size in Terms of Members and Employees**

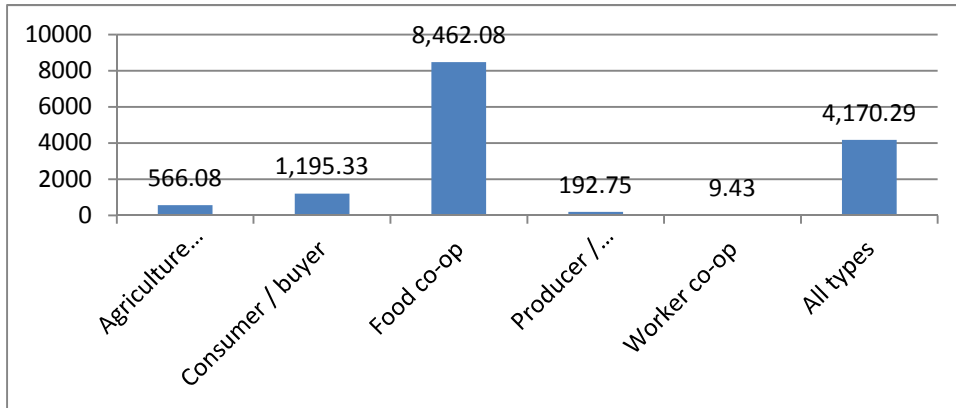
Economic Indicator	Cascadia average	U.S. average
Number of members	4,170	11,983
Number of paid employees	129	29
Number of part-time employees	73	--
Number of active volunteer members	23	--

Source for U.S. averages: University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives. 2005. Research on the Economic Impact of Cooperatives. Accessed at <http://reic.uwcc.wisc.edu/>.

While the average membership base is smaller in Cascadia compared with the U.S. average, the average number of paid employees is higher. This may be attributable to the greater representation of producer-owned cooperatives among the survey respondents than is the case for all cooperatives in the U.S.

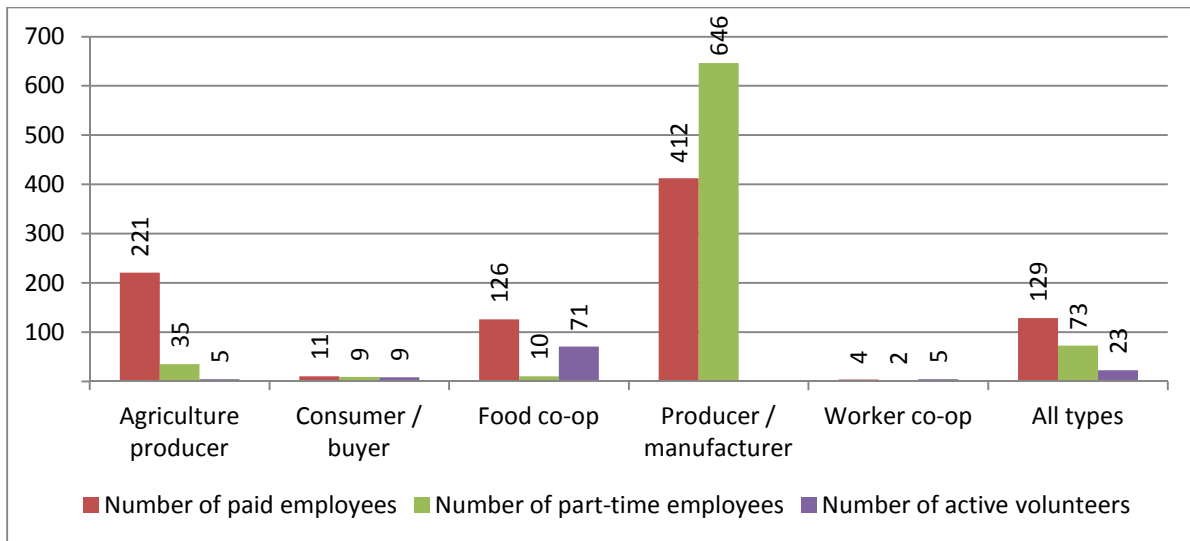
As seen in Figure 3, membership size among survey respondents varies significantly by cooperative type from a low of for-worker co-ops to a high of 8,462 members for food co-ops, on average. Likewise, agriculture and producer co-ops have more members than worker co-ops but less than consumer-owned cooperatives. (The figure gives the average size by type for the five types with the greatest percentage of responses in the survey as well as the average for all nine types.)

**Figure 3: Average Membership Size by Cooperative Type**



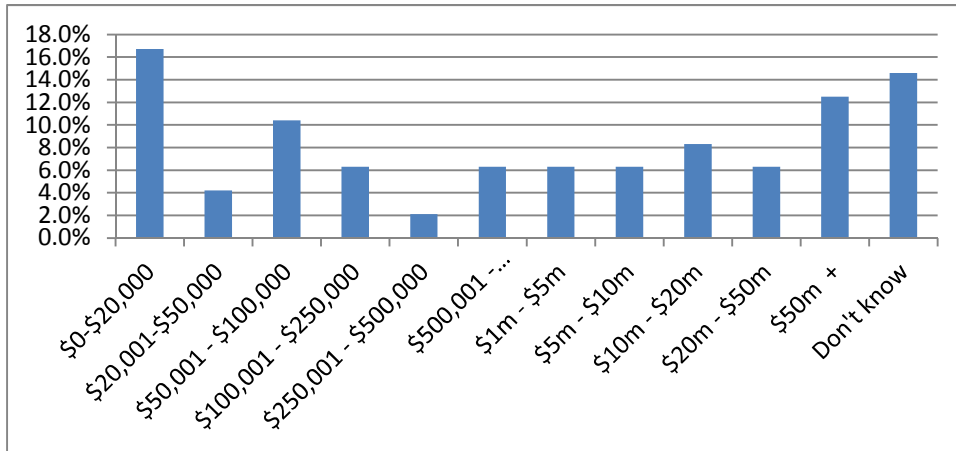
The average numbers of employees, part-time employees and active volunteer members are shown in Figure 4. Producer/manufacturing cooperatives have the highest number of employees but don't have active volunteers. The smallest employment averages are for worker co-ops. Food co-ops have the largest active volunteers on average.

**Figure 4: Average Employment Size by Cooperative Type**



The size distribution for the survey respondents by amount of gross annual sales (revenues) is shown in Figure 5. Worker co-ops are among the smallest co-ops by amount of gross annual sales. At the other end of the distribution, several agricultural producer co-ops have annual sales of more than \$50 million.

**Figure 5: Average Gross Annual Sales by Cooperative Type**



**Geography**

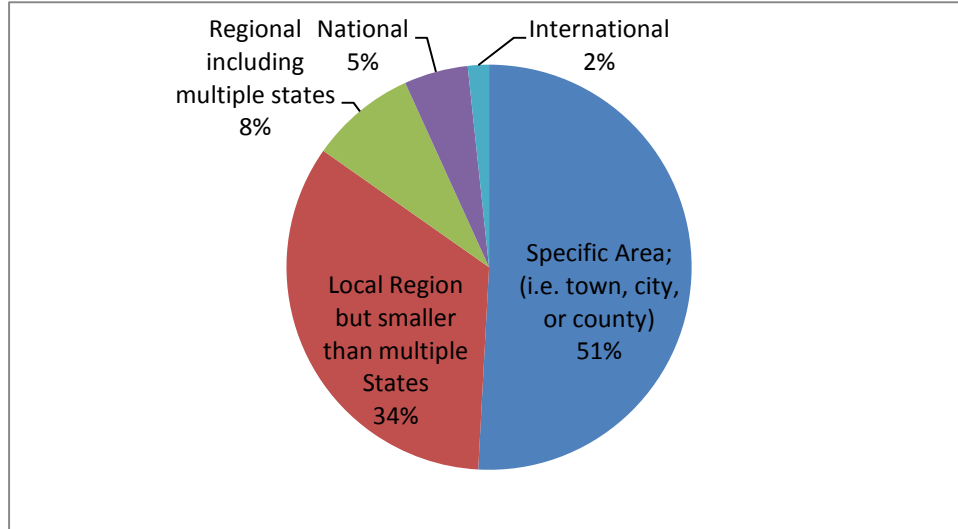
The geographic locations of the survey respondents are shown in Figure 6. The largest concentrations are in the greater Seattle and Portland metropolitan regions and along the Interstate 5 corridor in Washington and Oregon.

**Figure 6: Location of Survey Respondents**



Figure 7 indicates the geographical extent of service provision for the cooperative respondents.

**Figure 7: Geographic Scope of Services for Cooperatives**



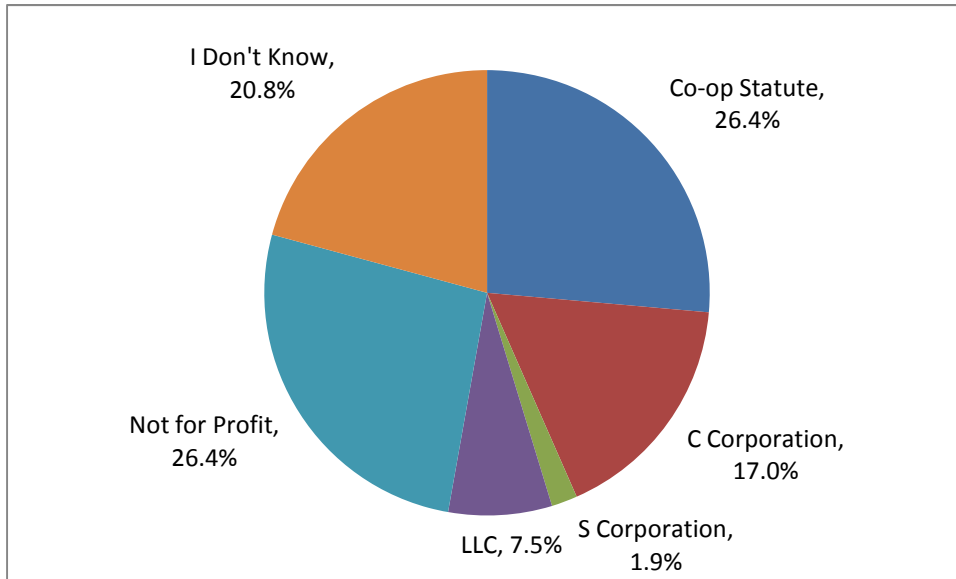
The service area for just more than half of the cooperative respondents is local, that is, targeted to a specific geographical location. Only 5 percent are national in scope and 2 percent are international. The rest have a regional service area. In comparison, the professional service provider respondents to the survey are not as tied to specific locales. Only 23 percent provide services locally and another 45 percent have a regional service area.

### *Incorporation Status*

The incorporation status of a cooperative provides some indication of its structure and governance.

Figure 8 shows that about a one-quarter of the cooperatives surveyed are registered as a cooperative under the state's cooperative statute. About an equal number of cooperatives are registered as not-for-profit corporations. It should be noted that a large percentage of the respondents (21 percent) did not know their cooperative's incorporation status.

**Figure 8: Incorporation Status**

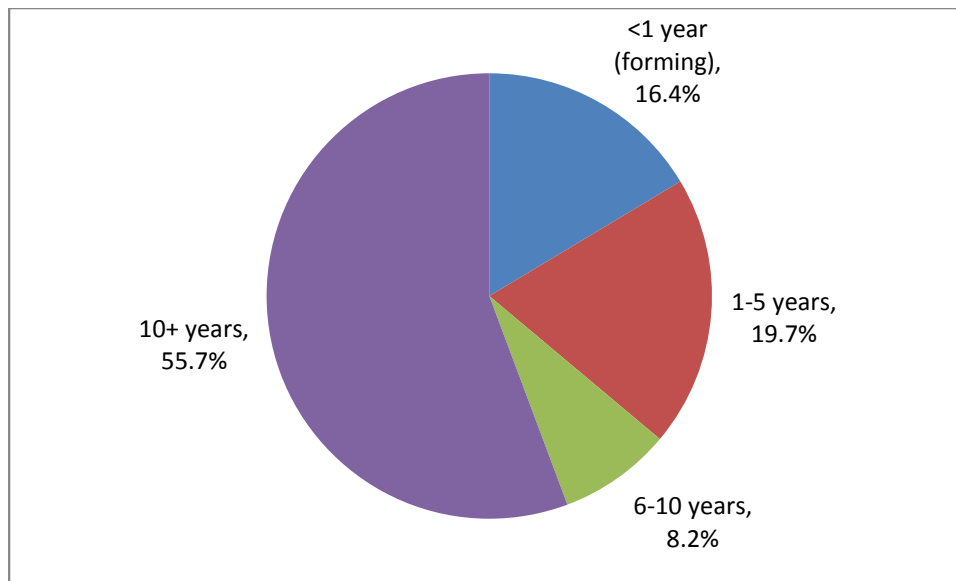


***Age of Cooperative***

The number of years a cooperative has been in business and the state of its development are important indicators of its needs and what resources it has to offer.

A majority of the cooperatives in the survey have been in business for more than 10 years, as seen in Figure 9.

**Figure 9: Number of Years in Business**

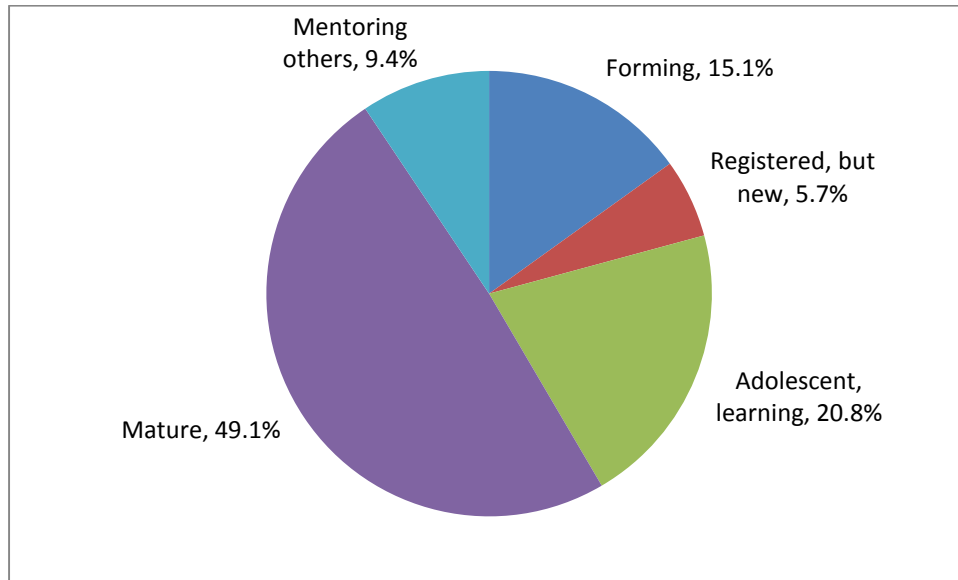


Like cooperatives, the majority of professional service providers have been in business for more than 10 years.



Survey respondents were also asked to identify their cooperative’s stage of development (see Figure 10). Almost half reported their cooperatives as “mature” or “mentoring others,” including all of the respondents for co-ops that had been in business 10 or more years. The majority of cooperatives aged 1 to 10 years reported their status as “adolescent, learning.”

**Figure 10: Stage of Development**



### *Language of Service Provision*

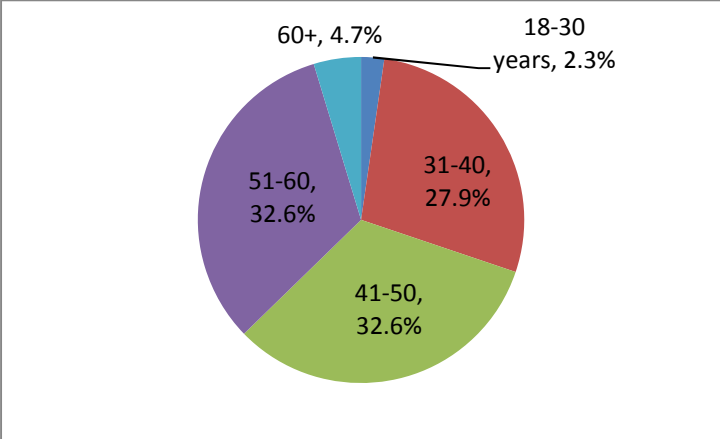
All of the cooperatives provide service in English. The second most reported language was Spanish at 11.7 percent. Other languages also included French, Japanese, Vietnamese, Tigrina, Amharic and Tagalog.

95.5 percent of the professional service provider respondents also reported providing services in English, with Spanish following at 22.7 percent. Eighteen percent indicated they had translation services available and one respondent provides services in "many" languages.

### *Age of Membership*

Figure 11 shows the average age of the cooperatives’ membership.

**Figure 11: Average Age of Membership**



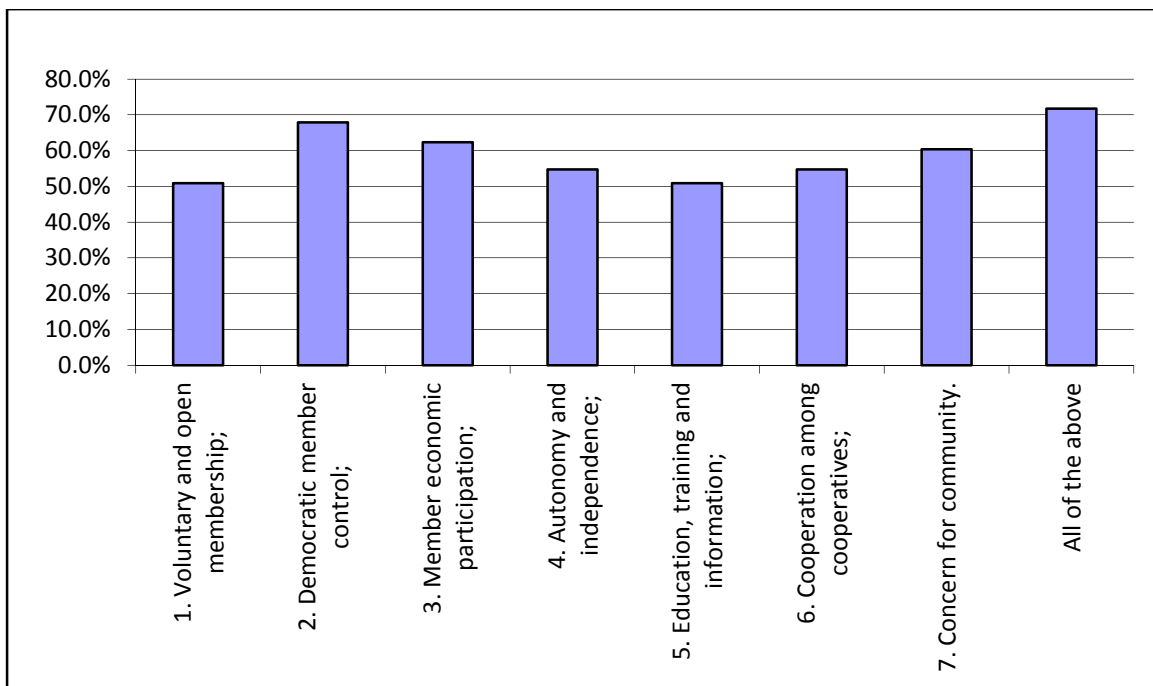
## Section 4: What Do Cascadia Cooperatives Believe?

To better understand cooperative values in Cascadia, the survey asked respondents to identify which cooperative principles their cooperatives follow and to rate the importance of the cooperative movement, environmental sustainability and social justice to their cooperatives.

### *Cooperative Principles*

Survey respondents were asked to identify which of the internationally recognized seven cooperative principles were actively embraced in their co-ops. More than 70 percent of the cooperatives embraced all of the principles as shown in Figure 12. Democratic member control was the highest-ranked principle while voluntary and open membership and education, training and information had the lowest rankings.

**Figure 12: Percentage Embracing Cooperative Principles**

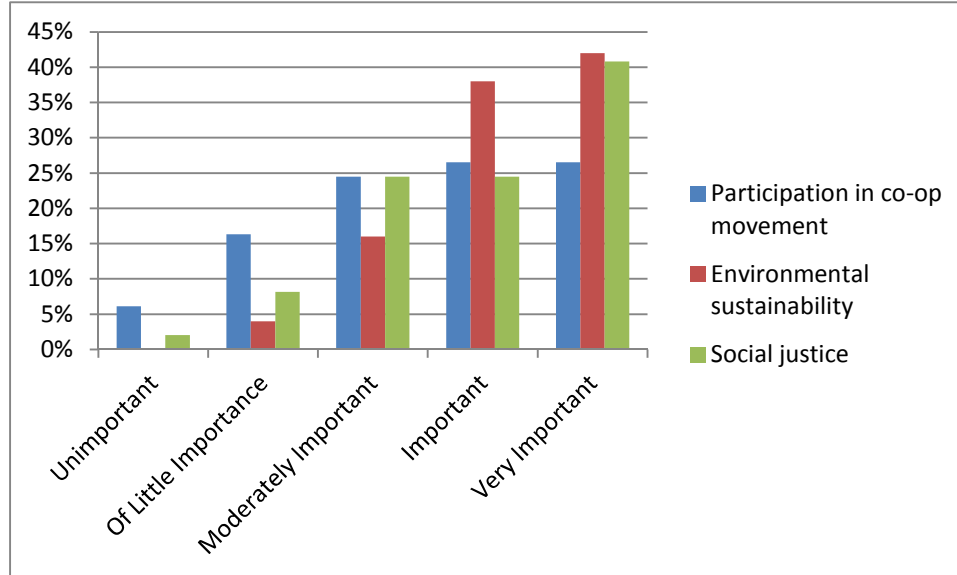


Several examples in the ways co-ops actively carry out the cooperative principles were given, the majority in support of cooperation among cooperatives and concern for community. (See Appendix B for the full list of examples.)

### *Importance of Cooperative Movement, Environmental Sustainability and Social Justice*

Seventy-seven percent of the survey respondents ranked a regional cooperative movement as moderately important to very important to their cooperatives, whereas 96 percent gave environmental sustainability and 90 percent gave social justice the same importance. Figure 13 shows the breakout of how important the respondents ranked the three beliefs to their cooperatives.

**Figure 13: Beliefs Ranking by Percentage of Survey Respondents**



In addition, 85 percent of the respondents indicated that they actively carry out their beliefs. However, only 48 percent of the cooperatives budget for these commitments. Examples of follow-through included:

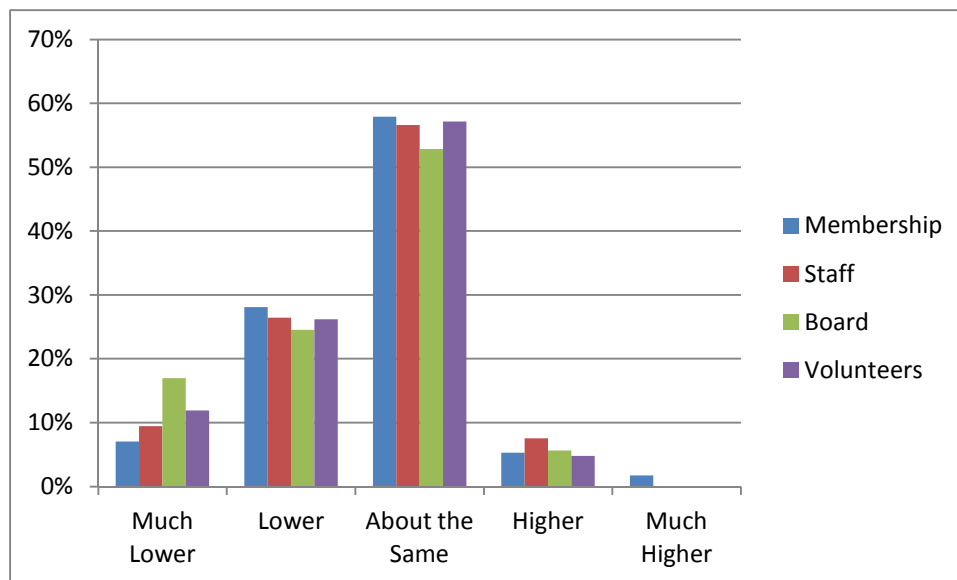
- **Cooperative movement promotion activities:**
  - Seek help from other co-ops.
  - Sponsor of SLICE and other co-op events.
  - Mentor other co-ops.
  - Conduct business and source product with other co-ops.
  - Membership and participation in co-op trade organizations.
  - Contribute to co-op development and emergency funds.
  - Bank with a credit union.
  - Developed a co-op business academy (New England response).
  - Try to support other co-ops through consumer purchases.
- **Environmental sustainability activities:**
  - Ongoing refits/replacements of equipment and structure to improve energy efficiency.
  - Major recycling program.
  - Commitment to local farming/land preservation/food distribution.
  - Offer environmentally friendly product options.
  - Sell local foods and other local products.
  - Have a dedicated committee.
  - Bylaws have requirement to consider environmental impact in all decision-making.
  - Invest in energy audits
  - Product guidelines emphasize organic, local and minimal packaging.

- **Social justice activities:**
  - Support integration and ethnic/racial diversity.
  - Cross-language signs.
  - Donate to local groups working for social justice.
  - Host community social justice workshop.
  - Product sourcing standards.
  - Committed to Fair Trade.
  - Mission to support social and economic justice.
  - All services/pricing/product equal to everyone.

### Diversity

The cooperative respondents were asked to gauge the extent to which their membership reflected the demographic diversity of their service area on a scale of “much lower” to “much higher.” Figure 14 provides an indication of how well Cascadia cooperatives carry out diversity in their cooperatives. Boards identified themselves as the least representative of their demographic diversity. This could be a reflection of the homogeneity of co-ops. In general, the average rating of “lower” to “about the same” suggests that cooperatives have to work to become more diverse.

**Figure 14: Diversity Ratings by Percentage of Cooperatives**

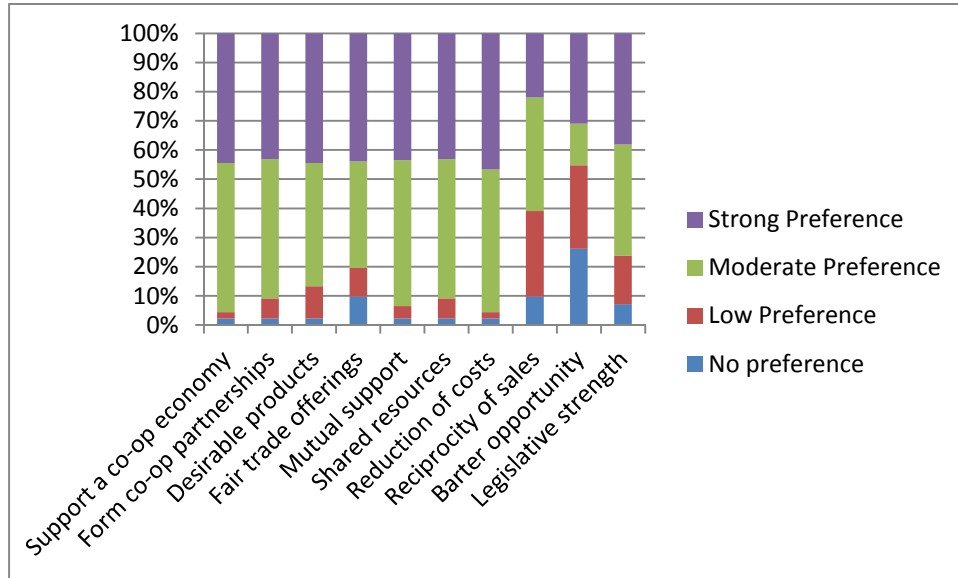


### Cooperation among Cooperatives

As one assessment of the strength of the cooperative movement, the survey asked whether respondents did business with other cooperatives and their preference for doing so.

85.4 percent of the cooperatives indicated they did do business with other cooperatives and 84 percent indicated that it was their preference to do so. Figure 15 gives the percentage of respondents that showed varying degrees of preference for working with other cooperatives on different issues.

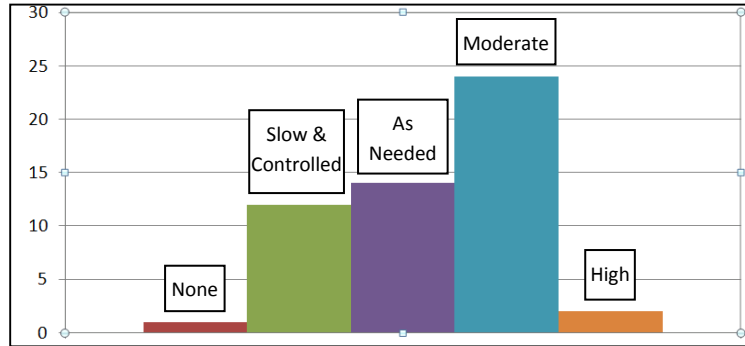
**Figure 15: Preference for Working with Other Cooperatives**



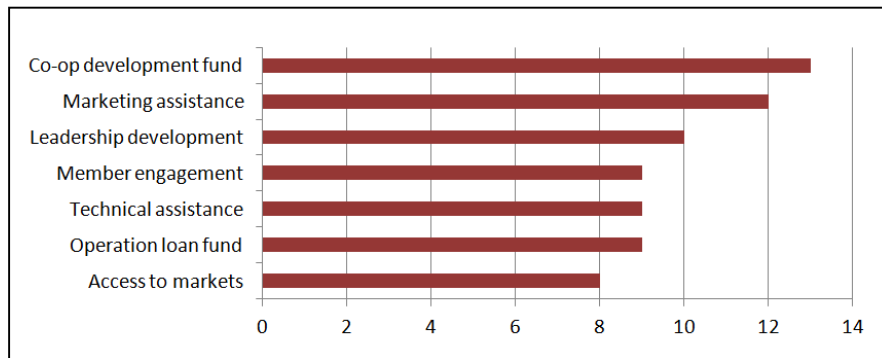
“Reducing costs” had the highest percentage of moderate to strong preference ratings, closely followed by “supporting an integrated co-op economy” and “mutual support.” “Barter opportunity” had the highest percentage of “no” to “low preference rankings.”

## Section 5: What Do Cooperatives Need to Survive and Thrive?

### ➤ What growth goals does your co-op have?



### ➤ Which of the following types of assistance would help your co-op to be more successful? (This information will enable us to develop strategies to better address needs of existing co-ops.) 1 (low need) 5 (high need).



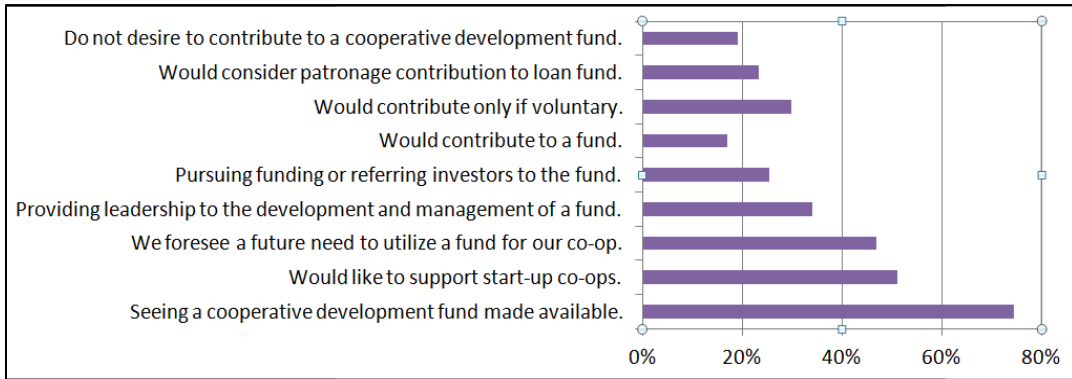
The chart above depicts the top five assistance needs identified by co-ops (“Member engagement,” “Technical assistance” and “Operation loan fund” were tied).

### ➤ Which resource would be most critical to the success of your co-op in the next three years?

Member engagement	20.41%
Co-op development fund	18.37%
Leadership development	10.20%
Membership growth	10.20%
Marketing assistance	6.12%

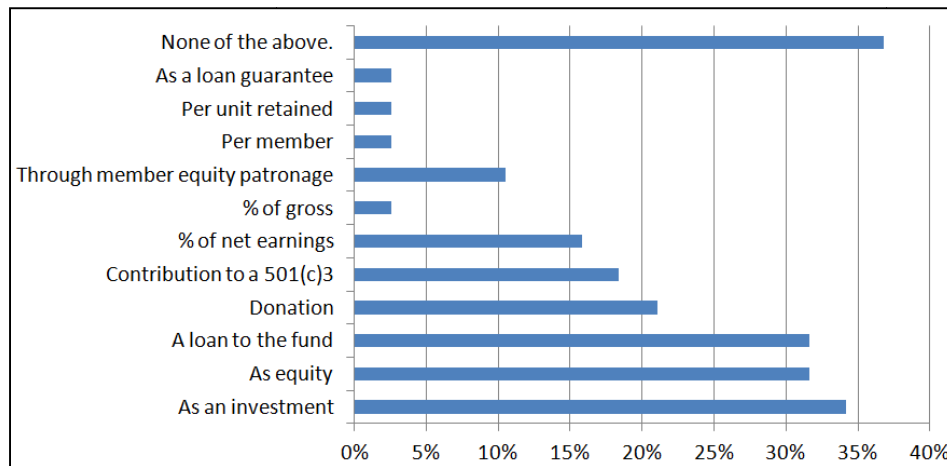
This table reflects the top five selections for a full list of potential options see appendix A.

### ➤ Please indicate your co-op’s interest in a regional cooperative development loan fund to help grow and support the economy.



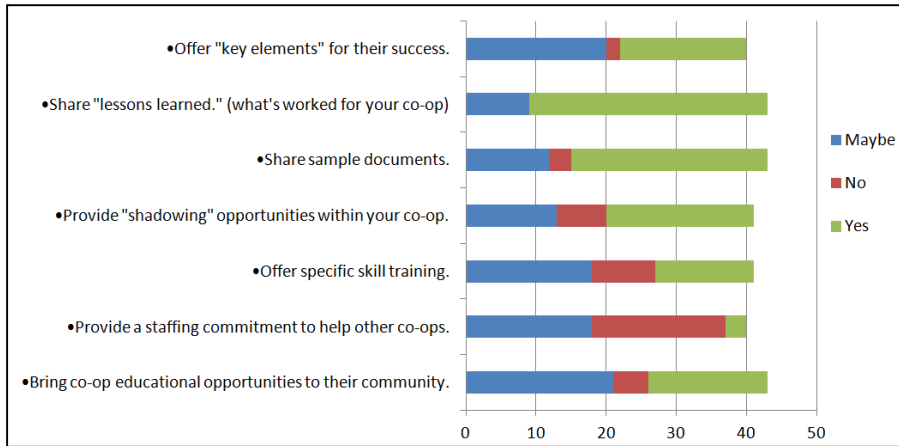
There appears to be a strong desire to explore and create a cooperative development fund for the Cascadia region. 74.1 percent indicated a preference to see a fund made available. 19 – 43 percent of the respondents – indicated they would provide leadership to the development and management of a fund.

- **There are many ways to structure a cooperative development fund. If structured in a way that worked for your co-op, would you consider contributing with other co-ops to a regional loan fund?**

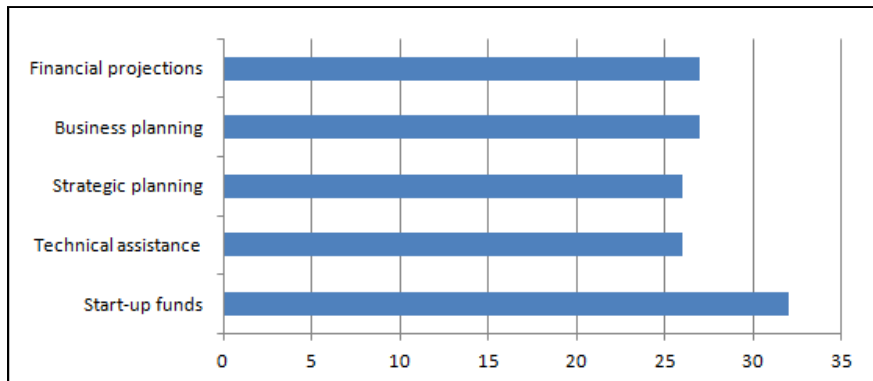


- **Can your co-op offer the following support to assist other co-ops in development?**



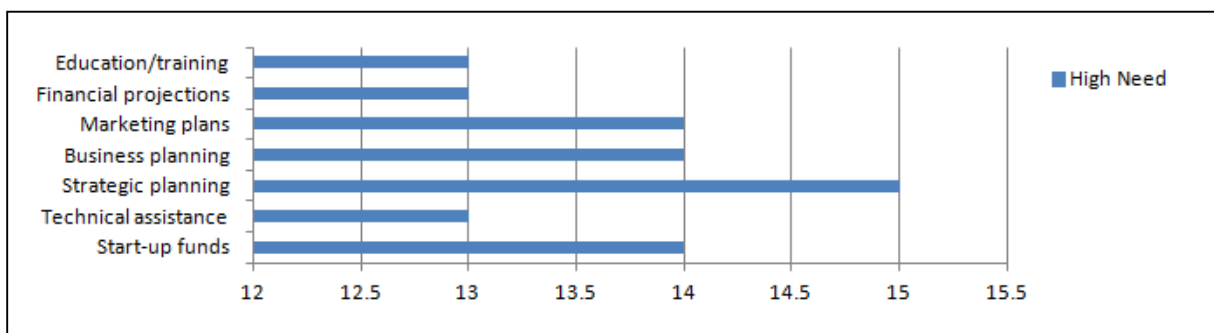


➤ From your experience, what additional resources would help new co-ops get started?



The items above were the top five selections recommended by co-op respondents.

➤ From your experience, what additional resources would help new co-ops get started?



The above items were cited by professional service providers as the top resource needs for start-up co-ops.

➤ Support services available to cooperative business enterprises.

Answer Options	Yes	No
----------------	-----	----

Are you aware of cooperative development resources?	37	10
Have you used the services of a cooperative development organization?	27	20
Have you used government funded service providers?	15	30
Are adequate educational resources available for cooperatives?	16	27
Does your co-op budget for, and provide member training?	23	23
Does your co-op use professional services?	36	6
Are such professional services readily available?	30	10

➤ **Identify ways you are able to provide professional service to cooperative business entities. (Professional service providers)**

Answer Options	Response Percent
We desire to serve cooperative businesses.	75%
Our services have been sought for forming or meeting the needs of existing cooperative businesses.	70%
We would like to participate in a service directory for cooperatives.	70%
Our company can provide specific co-op related services.	60%
We can refer cooperative businesses to colleagues who may better serve them.	50%
Our company understands patronage dividends.	40%
We provide pro-bono service to qualified entities.	25%
We are familiar with Subchapter T.	20%
We would like to acquire the expertise to serve cooperative businesses.	20%
We do not serve cooperative businesses.	0%

➤ **Our [professional service provider] organization offers the following services to cooperative businesses. (check all that apply)**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Curriculum specific to cooperative business structures	38.9%	7
Group learning programs	55.6%	10
Group facilitation	61.1%	11
Organizational mentoring	44.4%	8
Conflict resolution	27.8%	5
"One-on-One" mentoring for cooperative development	38.9%	7
Aid in developing training for cooperative education	33.3%	6
Grant writing for cooperatives	27.8%	5
Technical feasibility studies	33.3%	6
Financial feasibility analysis	55.6%	10
Financial mentoring for cooperatives	44.4%	8
Business management operations assessment	38.9%	7
Resource referral	55.6%	10
Network of cooperatives and resources	27.8%	5
Grant funding	38.9%	7

Lending to qualified cooperatives	27.8%	5
Referral to cooperative lending resources	33.3%	6
Cooperative formation	50.0%	9
Cooperative development	50.0%	9
None of the above	11.1%	2

**Other services identified included:** International volunteer opportunities, marketing, communications, focus groups, facilitation and meeting facility rental, public relations, event planning, advertising, mock-up projects and modeling for co-op brands and impact design concept.

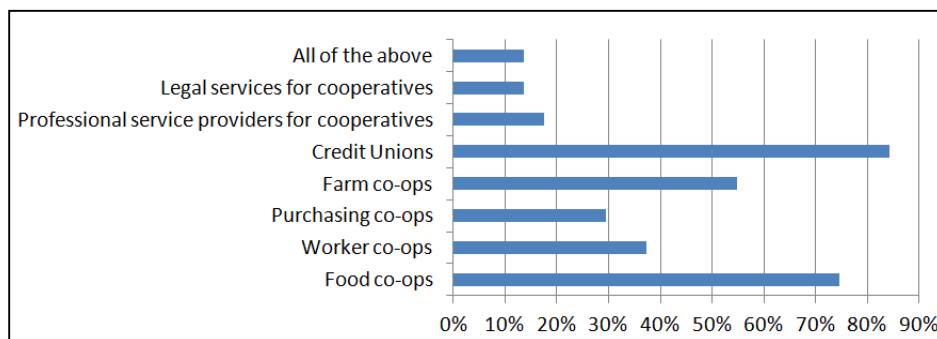
➤ **What will enable your [professional service provider] organization to better serve the needs of cooperatives?**

- Communication, marketing, outreach, education and networking.
- Database of existing and prospective co-ops receiving technical assistance, who the providers are, and what their needs are.
- Expanded and continuing education on legal structures and tax accounting to include low-cost options for professional services in those areas.
- More educational events to improve individual and group understanding of the cooperative business model benefits.
- Education links to inform co-ops of USDA funding opportunities.
- More sources of start-up capital.
- Collaborative work with similar organizations.
- Cooperative directory of resources.
- Stronger community of practice with other co-op expertise; more sharing of best practices; more regional/online training; and access to information.

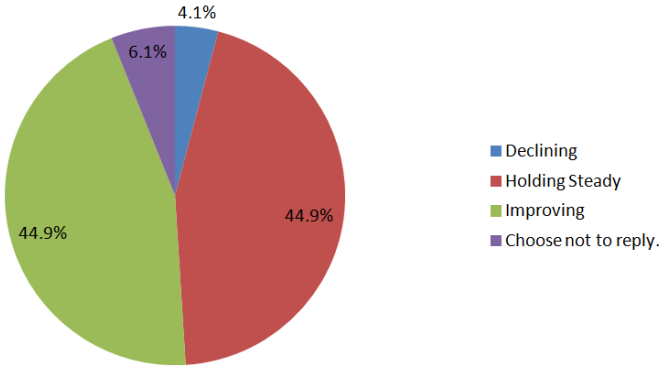
### What Do Co-ops Do?

Anecdotally, the survey committee was aware that raising capital is often the most challenging aspect of running a co-op business. With this in mind, many of the questions in this section dealt with that issue.

➤ **Which of the following cooperative businesses are currently represented in your area?**

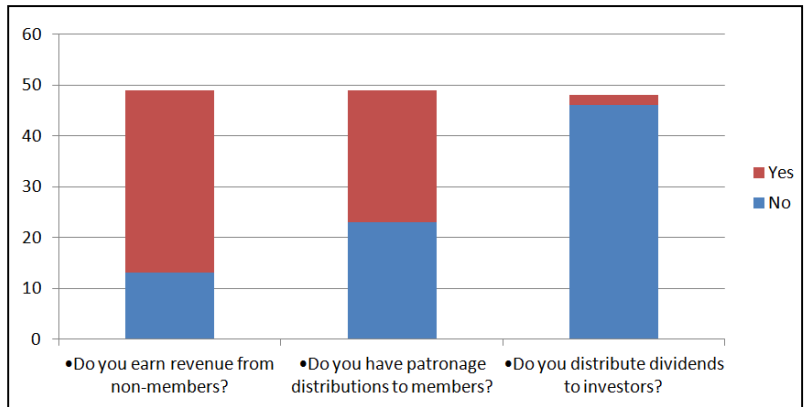


➤ **How would you assess the market your co-op serves?**



It's encouraging to note that in these hard economic times, the vast majority of cooperative respondents are either holding steady or improving, which indicates they are meeting the needs of their membership.

➤ **Your cooperative's financial considerations:**



➤ **What methods have your cooperative used to raise capital?**

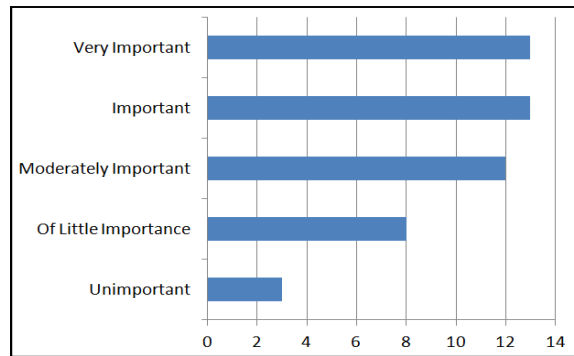
Answer Options	Yes
Membership has provided capital.	43
Co-op has used retained earnings.	30
We have obtained loans from traditional lenders.	22
Co-op has used member loans.	17
We have debt secured by assets.	17
Co-op has an investor class of shares.	5
We have debt secured by personal guarantees.	5
Our co-op has NOT raised capital to date.	7

Several other methods were described for raising capital. The top three were grants, donations and fundraising events.

➤ **Does your co-op have a member "buy-in" requirement?**

Answer Options	Response Percent
Donated labor/volunteer hours	4.7%
\$0-\$24	14.0%
\$25-\$99	34.9%
\$100- \$249	14.0%
\$250 - \$499	4.7%
\$500 - \$999	14.0%
\$1,000 - \$2,499	2.3%
\$2,500 - \$4,999	4.7%
\$5,000 - \$9,999	2.3%
\$10,000-plus	4.7%

➤ **Rank the importance a regional "cooperative movement" to your co-op?**



➤ **Are you, or is your co-op, interested in networking with other cooperative businesses?**

This question received a resounding 90.3 percent support.

## Deliverables

- Survey results and demographic information for Cascadia co-ops;
- Findings summarized in a Results and Recommendations Presentation (PDF), including a summary of survey findings, conclusions, next steps for action and involvement information. The survey will be shared with all interested parties.
- An electronic directory of existing co-ops in the Pacific Northwest, accessible to all, to help promote formation of new co-ops and a cooperative economy. It will be a living database, updated regularly.

## Closing Notes

Percentages in this report are based on number of respondents to each survey question.

The survey was conducted by SLICE Roundtable and the Northwest Cooperative Development Center. Survey analysis and preliminary report were developed by SLICE Roundtable members Jan Boldt, Diane Gasaway, Derek Hosiko, Rae Levine, Elaine Nonneman and Webster Walker.

Many thanks to everyone who contributed their time, effort, expertise and financial support to make this project possible.

### About Cascadia Cooperative Network (CCN)

CCDN is a project fiscally sponsored by the Northwest Cooperative Development Center, based in Olympia, Wash. It consists of a working group of representatives throughout Western Washington, including:

- Northwest Cooperative Development Center
- Brian Allen, Xchange Stewards
- Marc Bowman, Enterprise Cascadia
- Kristin Costello, Seattle Good Business Network
- Derek Hoshiko, Web Collective, SLICE
- Michael Geoghegan, Columbia Legal Services
- Rosalinda Guillen, Community to Community
- Erin Thompson, Community to Community
- Claudia Kienholz, Central Co-op
- Caple Melton, SLICE, Central Co-op
- Aaron Waldkoetter, SLICE, Central Co-op
- Webster Walker, SLICE, Central Co-op
- Rae Levine, cooperative developer
- Shaula Massena, Massena Foundation
- Elaine Nonneman, Co-op member and investor
- David Pauling, Main Street Values
- Rick Riehle, Pangaea Organica
- Michael Skinner, StartZone
- Carolyn Stockell, cooperative developer
- B Strand, Jigsaw Renaissance

## Appendix A      Answers to Open Ended Questions

<b>Q2 My reporting status for this survey:</b>
<b>Please Specify</b>
various interests / activities
Board
Member-owner, Board
Work collaboratively with other community-based organizations
Executive Director/Manager
Board Member
Interested in creating a cooperative network.
Steering committee coordinator
General Manager
Renewable Energy Coordinator and Business Program Specialist for Rural Development
Provides economic and business development services through several programs to Tribal co-ops
Coordinator
co-founder and manager
management
Community development planning consultancy, including funding and grantsmanship
board president
Outreach/Owner Services Manager
Manager
President and CEO
Federal government agency
Advocate and education for residents of Manufactured/Mobile Home Parks
economic development director
We are really a LLC that is operating as a Co-op
Member of the coop
Planning team lead, former Board secretary
technical and financial
President/CEO
Caregiver Coordinator
Association President
Member
Federal Funding Resource for cooperative development and cooperative businesses, as well as educational literature and assistance
On steering committee of coop, which plans to incorporate in 2012

collective staff member
Staff-Cheese Department Manager/Buyer
Finance Manager
We are a benevolent society, which will be a membership organization under IRS 501c10 status. We will offer a lodge system, which will provide social gathering spaces for the creation of cooperatives in the Pacific Northwest.
Co-op staff and owner
manager
Bookkeeper
Local manager
member of our intentional living community and project
I am the outreach and membership coordinator, full-time staff.
Preschool Teacher and Parent Educator
NCBA Farmer-to-Farmer Program
co-op staff/ wellness manager
We are an association of farmers markets in Washington State.
Staff
Collective Staff member for 26 years. Staff rep to the Board for 20 of those years
staff
Small Farm Program Coordinator
Federal Government
General Manager
Govt. Lending & Grant Program Administration
Federal government agency
Credit Union
Past president and current VAPG Project Leader
We are an incubator of coops, so we also provide TA and education
Cooperative Development Trainer/Consultant
Board President
OR Employees Federal Credit Union (member)
Manager
<b>Q3 What type of co-op are you speaking for? (select the answer that most applies)</b>
<b>Other (please specify)</b>
non-profit
I am not speaking for a coop. I am answering as a public interest planning consultant and as someone who favors cooperative forms of enterprise.
I work with and encourage a number of coops- think it's a tremendous asset for rural economies
Housing



<b>Q5 Geographic scope or service area</b>
<b>Please specify</b>
Washington State
Pacific and Inland NW + CA + BC
Puget Sound region
Generally, my work is close to home, in northwest Washington state.
Washington State (also affiliated with National MHOAA - in 22 states)
US
Snohomish County
USDA- All rural areas in the country
Washington State
Washington & Oregon
Walla Walla Valley
WA statewide
Central Oregon - 3 counties
300 Mile radius from 98072
Washington State
We provide communication services (PR, advertising, branding, internal communications, digital media services) at a national level
Latin america-Spain - USA
<b>Q6 In what language(s) do you provide services?</b>
<b>Other?</b>
Sometimes Spanish
Many with the use of interpreters
There are a number of credit unions that provide services in many languages.
we have translators who translate our volunteers work into French and other languages
<b>Q7 What type of co-op are you speaking for? (select the answer that most applies)</b>
<b>Other (please specify)</b>
Consumer Food Co-op
(Housing) Asset Management Cooperative
fishermens cooperative
informal biodiesel producer/consumer coop
grain storage and marketing
Electric Utility
Marketing company
Seafood Producer and Processor

Grain Warehouse cooperative
Food, energy, professional service, tech. assistance
consumer co-op
housing collective
processing and marketing
Agricultural Bargaining
we are w worker co-op that provides TA
Electrical
<b>Q9 Geographic scope or service area</b>
<b>Please Specify</b>
Seattle, WA
Greater Seattle/King County
Seattle
Central Seattle
Baker County, Oregon
Property acquisition and management in South Sound of Washington
Corvallis, Oregon and surrounding county
San Juan Island, WA
washington and oregon
4 counties in Northeast Washington
Seattle
Okanogan County WA
Western WA
area around Endicott and St. John, WA
Ashland, OR + "State of Jefferson"
Seattle, Wa. to Springfield Or along I-5 interstate.
Two county rural electric with some residential
WA, OR, Northern CA, MT, ID, UT
Neah Bay, Sekiu, Clallam Bay and Forks in Clallam Bay, WA
Whatcom
we market in Wash, OR, ID and CA
Skagit County
Mount Rainier area (primarily Eatonville, Graham, Ashford, Morton)
olympia area
South Sound
Alaska, California, Oregon, Washington
PUGET SOUND
Puget Sound

Whatcom County
Washington State
Yakima, Seattle and Tri- Cities
Corvallis, Oregon and surrounding county
Olympia Washington USA
Olympia/Lacey/Tumwater
We are only 8 miles from Washington state, so get customers from there. Approx a 4 county area
Seattle/King County in Washington
Central Seattle
walla walla
Olympia and South Sound
Primarily Thurston County but surrounding Counties as well
seattle
Palouse region and Lewiston/Clarkston valley
Most of our business is in the Seattle WA and Portland OR areas
Olympia/thurston county and surrounding counties
Olympia
Primarily Thurston County
south puget sound
regional producer with global sales
Skagit, San Juan and Island Counties in WA state
Puget Sound Region
North Olympic Peninsula- Jefferson and Clallam Counties, Washington State
Oregon only
seven counties in north central Oregon and two in south central Washington
greater Seattle
King County, WA
State of Oregon
Spokane Washington
Most of the State of Washington
northeast connecticut
Puget Sound Region
5 mile radius of Palouse, WA
Western WA
Focus on central Puget Sound. Field of memberships is Washington State
Southern Idaho
California

<b>Q10 In what language(s) do you provide services?</b>
French
many
Japanese
Depends on market
Vietnamese, Tigrina, Amharic, Tagaleg
Developing spanish capacity
<b>Q12 How is your co-op registered at the state level?</b>
<b>Other (please specify)</b>
RCW 24.06 corporation
soon to be a co-op
We are not formed
we're not
Not for Profit Cooperative Corporation
31.12 RCW
MISCELLANEOUS & MUTUAL CORPORATION
(nascent)
The balance of this survey should be completed by our home office 800-232-3639
not yet incorporated but plan to be non-profit
T Corp
Co-op...?
<b>Q13 What is the size your co-op? (Do not include commas)</b>
<b>Number of active volunteer members</b>
12
8
25
9
30
20
10
25
5
0
25
0
0
30

0
0
0
41
7
6
200
0
4
0
350
4
300
2
150
200
100
4
250
300
0
0
0
0
7
5
13
30
8
0
1
0
0
20
0

**Q17 Of the internationally recognized 7 cooperative principles, which ones are actively embraced in your co-op? (select all that apply)**

Please cite an example(s).

We host regular educational events, and actively cooperate with the local community gardens, farmers markets, etc. We educate people about co-ops and why their economic and volunteer participation is important. We embrace basic co-op principles, while seeing ourselves as a unique grassroots project.

S.L.I.C.E. (Serving Local Independent Communities Everywhere)

We support the work of SLICE, NWCDC, The Capitol Hill Chamber, The Greater Seattle Business Association, The Seattle Good Business Network, Washington State Hospice and Palliative Care Organization and the Alzheimer's Association. In addition we invest in wind and solar energy through the Bonneville Environmental Foundation to offset the carbon produced by each cremation and donate to American Forests to plan a tree in honor of each person we serve.

P7, We have expanded our community donations program by 100% over the past two years as well as augmented it by our internal fundraising program.

Cooperative management principals provide for inclusion of non-profit housing cooperative tenants input in decisions that impact them directly. Tenants have the opportunity for member development education to develop their skill as effective, participating members in the non-profit housing cooperative .

Mission Statement: We are a community market aspiring to be a model for environmental sustainability through our purchasing and workplace practices. We seek to honor our traditions and build upon our potential. We are committed to cultivating tolerance and diversity in our operations. We strive for excellence in our products and services, including wholesome organic foods, innovative education, and community outreach, while offering high quality, local, organic, and minimally packaged products whenever possible. We will act ethically and appropriately in our pricing practices. We seek to provide a democratic business climate, fostering worker and owner participation, according to the cooperative principles.

Our main goal is to make sure our fishermen are receiving fair market value for their fish.

Everyone paid a small fee to join. Everyone can make suggestions for improvement. We support restaurants that provide oil by patronizing them occasionally.

P1: Anyone can shop, anyone can join; P2: Regularly contested board elections; P3: Equity investment of \$100 required, Patronage Dividend paid; P4: We let owners know that they own us; P5: Co-op education for all new staff, culinary & wellness programs, information center in the store, continuing education for staff; P6: Mentor to new and emerging co-ops; P7: Food Cooperative Community Fund (Twin Pines), Co-op Community Grants, community involvement by managers and staff.

An employee of the Coop participates in the city's Main Street program from the National Historic Trust, working with other citizens to revitalize the small city through historic preservation principles.

As a producers coop we have accepted new members as we demonstrate need for more product and as markets develop or farm division.
I am a member of two different coops, one that allows anyone who buys a share (\$500+), and another which has annual dues and meets more of the 7 than the meat producers.
Membership depends on produce needed from year to year. As the market expands the co-op grower membership will expand.
We exist to provide cooperative commerce for the greater good of our community which includes: Owners and Shoppers; Staff; Local Farmers and Producers; Community Members; Community Organizations; Other Co-ops.
We honor memberships from other food co-ops, unlike many others. We offer information about food in the store and through classes. We offer occasional anti-oppression trainings to our membership. etc etc
Members vote on organizational initiatives; local pricing structure for local producers; active outreach and education programs (co-op classes); allotted hours for co-operative development.
My position and duties directly relate to principle #7. We have yearly democratic elections for our BOD for principle #2. We share our expertise with other co-ops and actively seek out the expertise of other co-ops in accordance with principle #6. On and on ad nauseum!
We focus on the three core principals in our bylaws (members own, govern and benefit) yet practice all seven.
all seem applicable but not sure of what autonomy implies. We have an interdependence between us and a low income credit union and many other co-ops through the NCGA. We are very involved in numerous community organizations, most recently we encouraged members to 'round up' at the registers to support the legal defense of the duawamish tribe which is fighting for recognition in the pacific northwest.
Member Initiated Ballot Process for overturning decisions by Board or for creating policy Have offered lots of help to other food coops, particularly collectives
5) Very active workshop/class program for community and members 6) Ongoing Loans and advice to other regional Co-ops 7) Well over \$20,000/year contributed to community organizations
The mission and goals of our association members (owners) clearly state these values and are followed without exception.
We strive to provide affordable financial services and to help members build assets through services and financial education and coaching.
A variety of member-based, value-added product ventures, along with educational events, professional service providers

The Co-op endeavors to always support and raise awareness about the benefits of cooperative business and we do our very best to support and reinforce the cooperative business principals. We make regular donations to support community events that benefit members in our community, we underwrite with local independent radio stations, we work with other co-ops including a credit union, ag co-ops, distribution co-ops. we provide free tours regularly for educational purposes. we do a variety of other public outreach efforts, we do not allow large outside interests to dictate what happens in our co-op. member ownership is voluntary and open to the public- we do a variety of options to increase access. we do practice "one member one vote" in our director elections.... and so much more!

The coop actively promotes a peer support network in our region, to better fulfill principle 6; we also - as part of principle 7 - partner with local community groups to create living wage opportunities, esp., for low income residents.

We continually get calls from other Co-ops looking to set up other online food Co-ops. We help them as much as we can and continue to develop the software for others to use.

**Q18 Which of the following types of assistance would help your co-op to be more successful? (This information will enable us to develop strategies to better address needs of existing co-ops.) 1 (low need) 5 (high need)**

**Other (please specify)**

Movement building: sales and purchasing networking among co-ops.

On line legal consultation

ability to provide for grants

so far connections in the coop are for few members

I think the managers and board of our co-op would be better able to answer this question. We already have great resources available to us and we are definitely using them.

none of the above

development of local funding resources and strategies, along with other forms of peer support

**Q19 Which resource listed above would be most critical to the success of your co-op in the next three years?**

**Other (please specify)**

Depending on technical differences among development fund, operation fund, and commercial lending: We want access to a co-op source of money if we determine to go ahead with expansion or opening a second store.

Marketing assistance and access to markets

We may need many kinds of help becoming formalized entity, but most members not interested.



To clarify, access to markets for all members, not just a few members who have connections with the bottleneck service providers, ie USDA cut/wrap sites.
Though not for us, a development fund might be useful in conjunction with NCGA's Development Coop to better deliver support to new and growing coops.
Technical assistance
Opportunities to share operational practices by supporting "exchange programs" and or internships amongst like kinds of Co-ops. An example...Cheese Monger internships at Rainbow Grocery!
Because a focused marketing effort is a new task on my plate, and something our Co-op has not really tackled before, I can definitely see the need for assistance with this project, above and beyond the NCGA's resources, which are already proving helpful.
we are planning on opening a third store sometime in the next couple years.... so any resources in regard to a large expansion, including lending, marketing, etc.
we are brand new really, just having our one year anniversary and I am certain we will continue to make great progress as we make our way. I do think there are things that we could do that would swiftly improve our ability to grow our Co-op and serve our community better. The biggest challenge of course being time and money. Our directors would benefit from Board development, training. our staff would also benefit from additional training. The building we lease is wonderful, but could use some moderate retro fitting or remodel in key spots- like the freezer space for the retail side of things. and so on...
assistance in forming a strong and collaborative peer network
<b>Q 24 Does your co-op have a member "buy-in" requirement?</b>
Other (please specify)
\$60 lifetime membership
fishermen must sell all fish to the cooperative for one year to become a full member
none yet
If this is equity investment.
\$10 membership fee; min. volunteer hours/year to retain co-op store discount
Annual contribution based on budget
No buy in requirement
monthly financial contributions based on hourly wage and labor requirements
Payable in yearly installments of \$10 up to \$150 total lifetime investment.
\$5 Share deposit
nothing is in place as yet, but donated labor is highest on our list
Now, annual \$10 / year membership

**Q25 Which of the following cooperative businesses are currently represented in your area. (select all that apply)**

Other (please specify)
Housing co-ops.
not clear on all services from NWCDC and those are not represented in my answer
Parent cooperative preschools
probably all of the above
Not sure about last two
We are the only Food Co-op in the area.
commercial cooperative kitchen; many arts/artisan co-ops of different sorts; housing co-ops
Not 100% sure on this one...

**Q26 Rank the importance a regional "cooperative movement" to your co-op?**

Please provide an example from your co-op
cooperation with like minded organizations, our local WSU extension, farmers markets and community gardens, as well as help from WA and Portland co-ops has been essential in getting our project off the ground and running.
We are primary sponsor of the annual SLICE conference.
When looking for an attorney I was unable to find anyone except the one attorney attached to the NWCDC who even knew what a cooperative association or business structure was. Another attorney was "willing to learn" but had no academic training in law school about cooperative business.
Mentoring a food co-op
Actively communicates with other regional coops
As a member of this coop who had been involved with other worker coops I believe in regional collaboration such as coops honoring membership in other coops for discounts, etc.
We are a vendor to retail co-ops.
Northwest Credit Union Association
NCGA is the primary vehicle through which we participate with other coops, both in the NW region and nationally.
We have assisted other co-ops to form through financial and time contributions
Members of Provinder Alliance
sponsoring SLICE to promote cooperative movement. Contributions to CDF emergency fund. Sourcing products from cooperatives. Sense of value is not consistent across organization, however.
Our mission statement contains a section about 'providing information about collective process and consensus decision making.'

we are part of local "collective of collectives"- organization of housing collectives, and the national Federation of Egalitarian Communities. We try to support other co-op businesses through our consumer purchases
I will be attending the national cooperative grocers conference in a couple weeks along with two of my coworkers, attending workshops and reporting back. We love gatherings of this nature and attend whenever possible.
we provide trainings in consensus process to other collectives and coops and make an effort to buy product from cooperatives and collectives. we accept membership of other coops.
Tight bonds with other food co-ops in Western Region (NW Coast)
We are aligned with/members of various local, national, and international alliances.
Mutual support for member growth and marketing, as well as shared expertise and infrastructure costs
We have worked hard to spread the word about why Co-ops matter, worked closely with other Co-ops, and worked to educate our member owners about the "Year of the Co-op 2012" the movie "Food for Change" and so on....
We are partnering with two regional co-op development organizations, to coordinate a co-op business academy. This is something we could not have designed or implemented on our own.
<b>Q27 How important is environmental sustainability to your co-op?</b>
Please provide an example from your co-op
We support our local farmers and want to encourage organic and sustainable practices by providing a market for them.
We invest in wind and solar energy to offset the carbon produced and plant a tree in honor of each person we serve.
We instituted our own 10-cent charge for all disposable shopping bags, leading to a 50% reduction in use.
Bylaws include requirement to consider environmental impact in all decision making.
We are interested in providing a very sustainable fuel source for our members.
We have a sustainability vision for 2030 with annual goals that we are working toward on a regular basis. For 2011, we are reducing out solid waste by 50%. We are also engaged in a pilot program with three local farms to eliminate the need for waxed boxes by providing reusable and recyclable plastic containers.
Offers local products and produce where feasible.
Recycling
Water and soil conservation
LEED Platinum and Gold in recent stores and Salmon Safe Certification at one.
Have invested in energy audits and improvements
We have a committee of the board dedicated to it.

Creation of a Sustainability Squad to research and develop sustainability initiatives. Not consistently active. Sustainability reflected in Product Guidelines (emphasis on organic, local, and minimal packaging). Boycott of single-serving bottled water.
We are continually trying to decrease our carbon footprint by making energy efficient changes to our buildings; we purchase locally produced items for sales to reduce the distance our products travel to get to us.
Being a model of sustainable practices turned out to be one of the top five strategic goals of our co-op when we went through the strategic planning process 3 years ago. Sustainability was a big part of our considerations when we moved into a remodeled location 5 years ago. We recently launched a huge Bag It campaign to reduce the use of plastic bags at our store, and we ended up discontinuing the use of plastic grocery bags at the cash registers, permanently.
we recently purchased a property which we are cleaning up various environmental contaminants. We recently replanted trees and native plants to create a butterfly/herb garden.
We have an eco planning committee but we sell too much packaged grocery which generates waste. I feel our product selection guidelines should include guidelines for when something is offensively over packaged. We also have no bag charge policy or bring your own bag credit and we provide plastic produce bags for use. I'd like to see us aggressively market our plastic bag alternatives all over the store. We can do better.
Ongoing refits/replacements of equipment and structure to improve energy efficiency. Major recycling program Major commitment to local farming/land-preservation/food distribution
Offering environmentally friendly products with the traditional farm input products we sell
Wherever possible, we support and offer ecologically friendly options and services, such as carbon offsets, tree planting, biodegradable products, and "green" services.
Our Co-op is built on a shared commitment to sustainable forest management - which also requires sustained economic viability for members
Our building was refurbished with our Co-op in mind and is certified by the U.S. Green Building Council LEED Construction to be Gold. We endeavor to always make our Earth a priority.
we are supporting the development of an organic composting co-op,.
Most of our clientele is extremely educated, in that way we are conscious of environmental sustainability. Additionally, without good environmental practices, farming will not be able to continue. All of the farms that we allow in the Co-op must practice sustainable farming methods.
<b>Q28 How important is social justice to your co-op?</b>
Please provide an example from your co-op
We support the "little guys" over the giant corporate conglomerates. We are consciously growing a local food supply system to take back control of our food, farms and choices.

Our community partnerships, providing \$1,500 in direct or in-kind contributions to each partner, include the Community Coalition for Environmental Justice, the Community Alliance for Global Justice, the Clean Greens Farm and Market Project, the Seattle Tilth Association, and the Moving Together in Faith and Health project.
Mission is to provide equity access for people who would otherwise have option for home ownership and building equity.
Supports integration and ethnic/racial diversity. Displays cross language signage
Depending on the meaning of social justice from your view point.
"First Friday" % collected for selected nonprofit each month.
We rely on and treat fairly all workers some are migrant.
Entire compensation package provided to staff, both union and non-union, as well as many sourcing standards for products in the stores.
Ongoing donations to local groups working for social justice
We recently raised funds to support a local tribe to get recognition.
Support of social justice organizations via Community Outreach donations and Co-marketing program.
We support through donations to local organizations focused on strengthening aspects of social justice and have in our mission statement, 'support efforts to foster a socially and economically egalitarian society.'
it is in our mission statement to support social and economic justice
This is a thornier topic especially on a local level. It's very important to some of us but it hasn't yet gained enough traction to be support by everyone. However, our customers are very committed to Fair Trade. And, another strategic goal turned out to be "Creating the best work environment." Our members care very much about how our employees are treated.
Next week we are hosting/paying for a workshop downtown that is open to all coop members "interrupting jewish oppression and anti-arab racism" facilitated by two amazing women, which we hope will help to bridge some major rifts in the community.
Many boycotts and support of progressive organizations and values
we operate by consensus, offer training to staff and members in anti-oppression, honor boycotts, create forums for discussion around various issues, donate food to groups with similar mission/values
Contributions to NO-GMO and GMO-labeling movements
Participating with the Center for Latino Farmers in education and training programs
Ongoing outreach and diversity projects are continuously a part of our activities.
We believe everyone, no matter what their income level is, should have access to fair financial services and opportunities. All our services and loan products/pricing are equal to everyone.
Co-op supports all the Social Justice projects we can through donations, awareness, access to resources and association memberships.

virtually all of our emerging co-ops have sought low income members, and our mission includes the empowerment as well as the employment of those who now lack living wage jobs.

Most of our clientele is extremely educated, in that way we are conscious of social justice. Additionally, many farmer workers are not justly treated, but with the type of farms that we allow in, we believe that the workers have better working conditions.

**Q29 Does your co-op actively carry out these purposes?**

Please provide an example from your co-op

We actively support the local community gardens and farmers markets, and they reciprocate.

They are important and we are learning/working to expand these purposes more effectively within our ownership and community at large.

Co-op has joined the Food Trade Sustainability Leadership Association, which commits us to monitor and report our impact up and down the supply chain and make ongoing improvements in 11 areas of operation including energy use, carbon footprint, treatment of workers and treatment of animals.

As we form we are applying cooperative principals as stated.

We provide a community recycling area staffed by our employees for all types of recyclables.

Oil collected from small independent restaurants as feedstock for fuel.

Member wages are above average for our area.

New energy efficient cooler doors.

Some of our staff travel to help other food co-ops collectivize; we have a very successful local farm purchasing program.

we distribute a percentage of profits each year (should we have profit) to local social justice organizations and we sponsor social justice trainings

we are activists in many arenas of social justice, we weigh home renovation and purchasing decisions on environmental sustainability as one criteria

Sustainability committee, Best Workplace committee

As far as possible.

Consistent reinforcement of sustainability as basis for Co-op

Well, not directly. We work only with farmers who have sustainable practices so in that way we work toward these goals.

**Q30 Does your co-op budget for these commitments?**

Please provide an example from your co-op

Our support is in the form of individual voluntary action.

Yes and no. We do not have a "sustainability and justice" budget line per se, but we do have a donations and contributions line, and we fund our membership in the FTSLA and our community partnerships.

Budgeting for annual and long term goals incorporating sustainability.
we strive for environmental sustainability in our purchasing actions, and operational activities.
Done as course of business on each farm.
Entire Staff Expense line, capital investments in physical plants, extensive community involvement in store trade areas, including nutrition education.
We have job descriptions for internal AntiOppression coordinators
Eco Planning Committee has a budget.
Community donations, co-marketing, SLICE support, Sustainability Squad hours. Room for improvement, especially in internal justice evaluations and sustainability improvements that are not targeted at purchasing practices.
We budget for lower produce margins during the second and third quarters of each year because we pay more directly to local farmers and make less for their produce than we do to conventional distributors.
we provide a discounted membership and discount on purchases for low income members and budget for this in our projected sales growth
spending on these are included in our budgets, and members can gain credit hours for labor they do on these
We pay a staff member to maintain our Earth Tub composter and donate the compost to the community gardens. We provide excellent employee benefits including a free \$5 lunch for every 6 hour shift.
we have an anti-oppression committee that has labor hours and projects budgeted for.
all of these things are reflected in our labor budget-paid trainings, committee work around each of the issues listed above, etc.
No specific budget allocations, but commitment looks to be ongoing
No specific budget; built into each member's activities
As the general manager, I have a budgeted a percentage of our projected sales to the "promotions" bucket. We do not buy advertising that is simply advertising. We raise awareness about our Co-op by supporting like minded events and organizations in our community. So, every gift basket goes out with a member owner information tri fold, for example. We underwrite local community owned and operated radio. The only printed ad we run is in a local independent newspaper that writes about our community. This approach has worked well. We are coming in under budget on the "promotions" expense and we are growing our sales and membership and a steady and desirable rate.
we are now working without a formal budget, but our volunteer time, and work within the CCBA, reflects these commitments
<b>Q33 What is your perceived preference of doing business with other co-ops?</b>
Other (please specify)
Skills sharing, mentoring



fair trade if its domestic and not supporting 3rd world instead of local

**Q34 Please indicate your co-op's interest in a regional cooperative development loan fund to help grow and support the economy. (check all that apply.)**

Other (please specify)

We are currently a start up without money to give, but would give in the future once we're established. We support developing co-ops with our information and experience.

Our future use would depend on the parameters of the fund, if loans to existing co-ops for expansion or development were an option.

Create a grant source for non-profits, micro lending for cooperative businesses and revolving loan fund for business operations to allow cooperative business to avoid mainstream commercial lenders and create a closed system supporting cooperative business principals.

I believe we already fund something like this.

I want to understand how this would work

We don't have sufficient and consistent revenue to contribute funds on a regular basis.

Agricultural production loans for small farms is greatly needed and in many cases a viable farm has no borrowing options besides personal assets. Life insurance, retirement investments, family, credit cards, and bank lines of credit at minimum of 12% now.

This type of question needs to be directed to managers of coop, to borrow from, not individuals So far, for my membership, I have gotten few services. It's a good idea to have the coop but with little benefit to me, and poor organization of working for small producers, I am not contributing to a loan fund.

Not certain how to engage

Not clear what several of the above options would or might entail.

Not based in Cascadia; filling this in so I can see rest of survey - sorry for spam :-)

I don't know what we would be willing to do. I am filling out this survey as one worker of a large co-op. These are group decisions.

We might be interested in more; depends entirely upon management and board priorities.

Would consider contributing to a fund

control over our own funds is essential for establishing co-ops as a viable alternative to the currently entrenched and exploitive economy

**Q35 There are many ways to structure a cooperative development fund. If structured in a way that worked for your co-op, would you consider contributing with other co-ops to a regional loan fund? (check all that apply)**

Other (please specify)

don't know at this stage

Not certain what "per member" or "per unit retained" mean.



possibly if we ever get formed
Don't know
Why do we need a cooperative development fund regionally when there are other existing funds on a national level?
This would be a question for our membership to answer.
Would consider some of the above after study.
I don't know
I don't know. See above.
I can't answer this question; the board or management would have to consider it.
If either of my cooperatives were in a stronger financial position we would consider contributing; however, our goals are larger than our means for the foreseeable future.
just guessing on these. this would have to be a whole collective decision I would imagine, with special attention from the finance committee.
Not sure
Our current level of operation does not allow participation (contribution) to a fund
Not sure, would need to discuss with board.
Until we starting balancing our own books, I do not think we would be able to contribute much to the fund.
<b>Q36 Can your co-op offer the following support to assist other co-ops in development?</b>
What other help would your co-op be willing to offer newly forming co-ops?
We are sponsors of the SLICE project which may lead to increased regional resources for co-op development.
Out of the box thinking about how to apply cooperative principals to fit 21st century needs. 1930's cooperative model is a beautiful thing and needs to incorporate new forms and approaches encourage more cooperative business development.
We are fairly isolated and do not yet have a strong infrastructure or capacity to offer support
We have participated in many workshops as presenters.
I doubt if any services for coops can be provided by our coop as it barely works for its members and has little member support except for those able to use bottleneck services.
We've visited with multiple start up credit unions.
Referral to NCGA would be one primary contribution.
Training in collective management and consensus decision making.
meeting space, facilitation support, many structural documents for housing co-ops, networking
We have done these things in the past and I assume we would do them in the future, although we will soon have a new GM and things could change.
At this time, phone consults and document sharing
training in collectivism

research into successful co-op models
<b>Q37 From your experience, what additional resources would help new co-ops get started?</b>
Other (please specify)
Technical Assistants and Consultants work to move forming cooperatives past philosophical discussions in contemplation of "how to" form with strong recommendations and boilerplate templates for organizational and financial structure concurrent with loan applications to facilitate quick movement toward registration with Secretary of State and beginning operations with funding.
I am not sure why you sent this to me, as a member of a coop. I am not managing services.
Not too clear how to deal with the headers in this question.
Watching a possible start-up book co-op in our community has made me painfully aware of the help they need; it is for many folks a quite new way of considering doing business, even if they've been a member of a food co-op for years, it's entirely different when thinking about creating a new one. Our area is in dire need of some producer co-ops as well, in our opinion, but we lack the time and expertise to advise them, even if they got to the point of asking us for help.
membership education; group meeting skills; positive communication and conflict resolution/prevention
<b>Q38 Support Services available to cooperative business enterprises.</b>
•What other resources are available for your co-op to develop and grow?
Document "kits" so that cooperatives are not starting from scratch. Legal consultation to modify and individualize boilerplate documents to fit.
peer support networks elsewhere; we do not budget for, but do provide, member training
<b>Q39 Identify ways you are able to provide professional service to cooperative business entities. (check all that apply)</b>
Other (please specify)
Some of my experience, skills and expertise may be useful to cooperative businesses.
financial program offerings
We provide technical assistance to businesses and individuals in the region including those interested in forming a cooperative.
Reorganization and Continue Educational related with Coop and Business Plan

**Q40 From your experience, what additional resources would help new co-ops get started?**

**Other (please specify)**

Boy, interesting way to break down things-- what about medium need??? what about a likert scale of 1-5, I selected the ones where I thought your organization could have the biggest impact

Certification and Solidarity Economy links and network

**Q41 Our organization offers the following services to cooperative businesses. (check all that apply)**

**Other (please specify)**

international volunteer opportunities

Marketing, communications, focus groups facilitation and facility rentals, public relations, event planning, advertising

Mock Up projects and model for cooperatives Brand and impact Design Concept

**Q42 What would enable your organization to better serve the needs of cooperatives?**

**Open-Ended Response**

Not sure

Expanded and continuing education on legal structures and tax accounting to include lower-cost options for professional services in those areas. More educational events to improve individual/group understanding of the benefits provided in cooperative structures. More sources of capital to fund start-ups.

I am particularly interested in networking and collaborating with others who are interested in cooperative housing corporation and affordable housing development.

Better relationships with organizations locally and nationwide to provide education, assistance and financial help for residents in Manufactured/Mobile home parks to be able to purchase their park and form a homeowner's association to own and operate the park.

A stronger community of practice with other coop expertise-- more sharing of best practices- more regional / on line training- access to info

Communication, marketing, outreach, education, & networking.

More money for development and operations. Grants, Loans.

Database of existing cooperatives and perspective cooperatives in the state who are receiving technical assistance from service providers, who the providers are, what are the additional needs of the cooperatives and service providers beyond what we currently offer, and linkage to educate the cooperatives about our funding programs for future assistance.

Collaborate work with similar organizations. Access to funding opportunities.

Cooperative directory of resources, research

Organization and Evaluation

**Q47 Thank you again for responding to this survey. Your participation is valued. We look forward to reporting the completed results later this year. Feel free to leave any additional comments or suggestions.**

**Open-Ended Response**

Still finalizing location.

Majority of questions look like they pertained only to cooperatives so I just kept rolling over to the end. I probably could identify a number of local food economy co-ops if you need some help with that.

More education of the legal community about cooperative business is sorely needed.

Thank you.

Since we are an informal underground group, my answers may not fit many of your questions. Some members of our group are interested in the possibility of becoming a formal coop, but many prefer our present informal arrangement which has worked well for over 4 years.

Thanks for doing the survey. Please share my contact info with others who are working on housing cooperatives. Thanks.

Before I put this out in a regional directory I would have to get our management team approval. My first reaction is no.

Since I am an individual coop member and do not know specific details of the coop, I left several questions blank. But I have been involved with coops for 30 years and personally world network with others on behalf of coop business practices and building coop community.

Questions were difficult to respond to given the structure of the survey. Should have provided room for comments.

I think this survey was sent to me in error. I am not clear how my lack of involvement in my coop will help you. I would be more enthusiastic about my coop if it was actually helping me market.

To number 3 above, we need to agree to this as a collective before I offer info for the directory.

We are not a cooperative. I am not sure why we were included in your survey. We definitely support cooperatives in all forms. The survey was not developed for our organization. Best of luck to you.

Keep up the good work. Co-ops provide real solutions to many of the issues we face in the world today. Communities know best what to do for themselves and just need a little help getting there, Co-ops are one of the ways human beings get to exercise our right to self determination... Go Co-op, We do own it!

Many thanks for putting this together, it's a great model! And for including us.

Thank you for including us! My work with credit unions has sparked my interest in the cooperative model and I truly believe in it and want it to thrive. I know there is lack of understanding the important role that cooperatives serve in our communities and part of my goal as a communications professional is to help co-ops spread that awareness and educate.