

# WASHINGTON

ASSETS: **\$34 BILLION**

REVENUE: **\$6.8 BILLION**

MEMBERS: **6 MILLION**

JOBS CREATED: **23,430**



## WASHINGTON CO-OPS AT A GLANCE

Co-ops in Washington are working to build a better world by creating quality jobs, building community wealth, protecting the environment, reducing poverty and strengthening the local economy.

### REI

In October 2015, the nation's largest consumer co-op and specialty outdoor retailer, REI, embraced its cooperative identity by introducing a new corporate logo—the first to include the word “co-op” since 1983.

### CENTRAL CO-OP

Central Co-op is a natural foods co-op with two locations—Seattle and Tacoma—dedicated to sustainable practices, community accountability and the local food economy. Central Co-op recently became the first grocery store in the U.S. to shift from a member-owned store to what's called a “solidarity co-op,” where members and employees own equal shares of the business.



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## WASHINGTON TOP CO-OPS BY SECTOR

UTILITIES: **363**

CHILDCARE: **140**

CREDIT UNIONS: **132**

AGRICULTURE: **66**

HOUSING: **53**

ARTS & CRAFTS: **18**

ELECTRIC: **17**

## ABOUT CO-OPS

According to federally-supported research by the University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives, co-ops inject \$3 trillion into the U.S. economy every year. Located in every state and every Congressional district in the U.S., co-ops create millions of jobs and offer solutions to meet challenging public policy issues—from affordable housing to early childhood learning. They spur economic growth in underserved rural America; empower individuals, families and communities; and ensure that Americans have access to high-quality goods and services at competitive prices from businesses they trust.

## PROFILE: SEAFOOD PRODUCERS COOPERATIVE

During an era when corporations dominate the global food supply, Bellingham, Washington and Sitka, Alaska-based Seafood Producers Cooperative benefits small-boat fishermen and their families while protecting the health of coastal communities.

Seafood Producers was founded to ensure that small boat fishermen get the fairest price for their catches and have access to processing, packaging and markets that they couldn't afford individually.

In Sitka—where most of Seafood Producers' fishermen live—just about any resident knows a co-op member. The cooperative business model allows these fishermen to preserve their small-boat family fishing lifestyle rather than separating family members to accommodate extended length fishing tours.

An additional benefit is that fishing communities served by Seafood Producers are not overrun with factory boats that use mass extraction methods that deplete marine life and damage the environment. All Seafood Producers fish are line-caught.

Seafood Producers gives small-boat fishermen a say in the future of their business. The cooperative business model offers them autonomy and independence. Each fisherman has the sense of being part of



**The cooperative business model allows Seafood Producers Cooperative to preserve the small-boat family fishing lifestyle of their members, who also benefit from access to processing, packaging and markets that they couldn't afford individually.**

something much larger than they would have been able to achieve separately, thanks to the democratic principles by which cooperatives operate.

The co-op's biggest challenge is America's continued reliance on imported seafood—91 percent of the seafood Americans eat is imported from inferior sources. Virtually all nutritionists and health experts recommend eating fish with heart-healthy benefits, such as Seafood Producers' Alaskan salmon, line-caught by empowered small-boat family fishermen.

Founded in 1916, the National Cooperative Business Association (NCBA) CLUSA International is the trade association for cooperative businesses in the U.S. and an international development organization active in Africa, Southeast Asia and Latin America. For 100 years, NCBA CLUSA has advanced, promoted and defended co-op enterprise, highlighting the impact that co-ops have in bettering the lives of individuals, families and communities.

**NCBA CLUSA**  
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