

NEBRASKA THIRD ON USDA'S LIST OF TOP 100 AG CO-OPS

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LINCOLN, NE, Oct. 16, 2014 – Nebraska is home to nine of the U.S. top 100 agricultural cooperatives, third in the nation behind Iowa and Minnesota, according to recently released USDA data. The number of top 100 co-ops in Iowa, 16, is up from 11 a decade ago. Minnesota has 13 co-ops in the top 100.

These statistics underscore what most Midwesterners already know – Iowa, Minnesota and Nebraska are extremely important to the nation's agricultural economy, according to Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. Farmer-owned co-ops play a major role in making it an agricultural powerhouse.

USDA's annual [list of the nation's top 100 agricultural cooperatives](#), by business volume, indicates that Illinois and Wisconsin have five each, then California, Indiana, Kansas, Missouri and Ohio are all tied with four.

Looking at business volume where a cooperative has its headquarters, Minnesota ranks first among the states, with \$68.8 billion. Missouri is second at \$16.2 billion and Illinois is third at \$13.2 billion.

Like the nation's ag co-op sector as a whole, the top 100 cooperatives also enjoyed a third consecutive year of record sales. They reported revenue of \$174 billion in 2013, an increase of almost 9 percent over the \$166 billion reported in 2012.

Net income (after taxes) remained virtually unchanged from 2012, at \$3.5 billion. The previous records for sales and net income were set in 2012.

The largest co-op in Nebraska continues to be Ag Processing Inc. of Omaha. It remains in the number 5 spot in the nation, with revenue of \$5.678 billion, up from \$4.937 billion in 2013.

Other top 100 co-ops in Nebraska are:

7. Producers Livestock Marketing Association of Omaha.
8. Aurora Cooperative Elevator Co. of Aurora.
9. Cooperative Producers Inc. of Hastings.
10. Farmers Cooperative of Dorchester.
11. United Farmers Cooperative of York (up from # 52 in 2013).
12. Central Valley Ag Cooperative of O'Neill.
13. Frenchman Valley Farmers Cooperative, Inc. of Imperial.
14. Ag Valley Cooperative Non-Stock of Edison.

Twenty-three cooperatives improved their ranking by double-digits. Six of these are mixed co-ops (co-ops that handle grain and farm supply sales). Dairy and grain each had two co-ops make double-digit gains, while cotton, rice and sugar each had one co-op jump by at least 10 places.

Grain cooperatives have experienced the largest increase in top 100 representation during the past decade. There were 19 grain cooperatives in the top 100 in 2004. That number rose to 41 in 2013. Dairy cooperative representation in the top 100 fell from 28 to 21 during the same period, while farm supply cooperatives increased from 13 to 16.

The Sept.-Oct. issue of USDA's "Rural Cooperatives" magazine includes the top 100 list and an article that examines some of the financial trends it reveals.

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