



Stronger Together: How Cooperative Power Builds Bigger Markets

(90 Minute Session)

Curious about joining a co-op? Hear directly from Mountain State Co-Hops cooperative members and leadership about how collective marketing, shared infrastructure, and pooled buying power are opening new opportunities in 2026.

Thanks to Our Funders and Partners!



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"Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this presentation are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the U.S. Department of Agriculture."



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Appalachian
Regional
Commission



Meet the Panel

Facilitator



Natasha Zoe-
Appalachian Cellar



Audra O'Dell-
Appalachian Cellar



Jennifer Brown-
Appalachian Cellar



Spence Moss-
West Virginia
Food and Farm
Coalition

Presentation Roadmap

- Who Mountain State Co-Hop is
- How a cooperative works
- Benefits of being part of a cooperative
- Benefits of cooperative aggregation and distribution
- What is aggregation and distribution
- Efforts being made for collaborative partnerships for aggregation and distribution and how can you be involved

Housekeeping

- 90 minute session
- Please hold questions to the end
- Parking Lot

Who is Mountain State Co-Hop?



Vision & Values

At Mountain State Co-Hop, we envision a thriving agricultural community where farmers are empowered through collaboration, sustainability, and shared prosperity. By fostering access to resources, markets, and decision-making, we aim to create a resilient and transparent system that benefits farmers, producers, and customers, ensuring long-term economic growth and financial stability.

What does the Mountain State Co-Hop Do?



Vision & Values

Through our cooperative model:

- We aggregate/distribute, market, and sell member products
- Enable producers to reduce operational costs while accessing new markets and achieving greater economies of scale.

Who is Mountain State Co-Hop?



Vision & Values

The core values of the co-op include:

1. **Sustainability:** Through collaboration, we empower a system built on shared ownership, enabling members to create pathways for future success by taking an active role in the business.
2. **Transparency:** We provide full traceability from farm to product, building trust with consumers who value knowing the origins and journey of their goods.
3. **Community Building:** By championing West Virginia-produced products, we strengthen community food systems and cultivate a circular economy where consumers play an integral role.

How Does a Co-op Work?

How A Co-Op Works



Co-Op Offers



Services to



Members

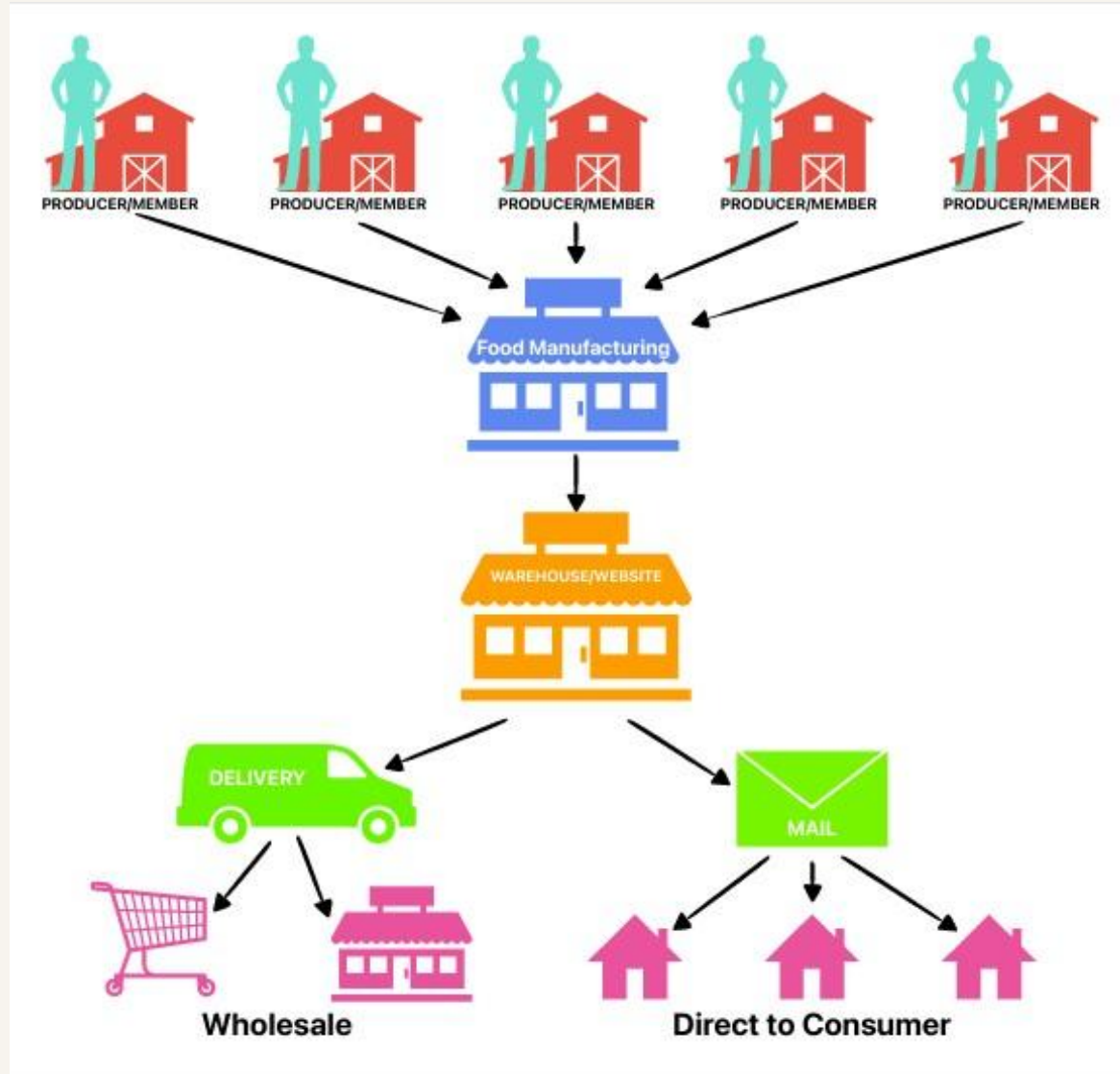


1 Member
= 1 Vote



Individual Business
Growth & Profit Sharing

How the Co-op Works



- Aggregate raw and finished goods from producers
- Raw product is processed at the co-packers
- Finished goods are added to warehouse inventory and Appalachian Cellar website
- Customers place orders
- Appalachian Cellar delivers directly to wholesale customers
- Appalachian Cellar ships smaller quantities direct to consumers

Benefits of the Co-op

- **Member ownership:** every member is a owner of the cooperative and has an equal voice in the development of the cooperative
- **Profit sharing:** A cooperative is a business that provides services to it members and operates at a net 0. Members will annually receive a % of profit based on the usage (annual sales) of that member.
- **Collective funding:** Ex. We are more competitive in grant applications because of our memberships. We are able to show a broad impact for our co-op community and our local and state community.
- **Educational resources/workshops:** We all bring niche knowledge with us and are open to sharing with one another and the community.

Benefits of the Co-op

- **Shared use equipment:** larger and more costly pieces of equipment are purchased as a collective and available for member use.
- **Shared warehousing:** product is managed more efficiently and in greater volumes while reducing cost, tracking, regulatory requirements, and spatial needs of the individual members.
- **Bulk purchasing:** by identify shared needs amongst members we can order at higher volumes to reduce unit costs
- **Economic savings:** through these and additional collaborative efforts we can reduced operational and overhead costs for the individual member leading to increased income

Benefits of the Co-op

- **Shared marketing & branding:** Through collective branding we can establish a trusted brand that encompasses all members while reducing time and cost of the individual member. Appalachian Cellar has become the unifying brand for all where you can find an array of Appalachian products while telling the story of our members and elevating transparency to the customer.
- **Wholesale & direct-to-consumer sales:** We are able to reach larger markets by offering larger volumes and diversity of products while reducing cost to the individual member through shared efforts, a unified voice, and simplified customer interfacing.

Benefits of the Co-op

- **Co-packing services:** We are under construction for two food manufacturing co-pack facilities. This will allow our members ability to sell into interstate commerce and scale their businesses.
- **Shared aggregation & distribution:** By sharing aggregation and distribution efforts we are able to reduce the individual members' time commitments and cost in fulfilling orders, consolidate product tracking and storage needs, and reduce the logistics burden for both the members and the customers.

Collaboration & Cooperation

- **Interested in becoming a Mountain State Co-Hop member:** please contact Jenn Brown @ sales@appalachiancellar.com or 681.332.0707
- **Interested in scaling your product (including raw product):** please contact Audra O'Dell @ aodell@wvfoodandfarm.org or 304.669.8973

Please Complete Our Survey- Thank You!

