



Cooperative Notes

Northeast Cooperative Council

Information Education Collaboration

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YOU ARE INVITED.....

The Northeast Cooperative Council's 66th Annual Meeting and Leaders Forum

Monday, February 29, 2016, 9:00 am

Doubletree Hotel by Hilton, East Syracuse, NY

"Cooperatives, Bridging the Gap of Science and Society"

In collaboration with the CoBank Northeast Customer Meeting, March 1

FACING A NEW ERA IN AMERICAN AGRICULTURE

American agriculture has experienced major changes during the last few decades, but the pace of change is accelerating. In the future, farmers and their cooperatives will have to adjust to the changing role of government, shifts in consumer expectations, volatile weather patterns, the emergence of Big



Data in agriculture, trends in global trade, flat domestic demand for food, increased scrutiny about production practices, growing foreign demand for food, and new factors that we can't predict. Bob Ludwig of The Hale Group will address how farmer cooperatives and their members should prepare for a

very different future.

Bob began consulting with food and agribusiness clients in 1973. His career has focused on providing management counsel to companies close to the farm gate. He is well known for his work in strategic planning, trend analysis, opportunity assessment, and financial analysis.

UNDERSTANDING THE FOOD FIGHT AROUND GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOODS

Are current engineered crops safe and beneficial? Are they being used in a sustainable manner? Can they coexist with organic crops? And what do consumers really know about them? This talk will cut through the rhetoric espoused by proponents and opponents of GE crops and provide the facts surrounding the current GE crops grown in the United States. While answering each of those questions, Greg Jaffe will bring the Center for Science in the Public Interest's (CSPI) unique science-based consumer perspective to this topic in a way that will inform farmers and food industry companies about the facts, myths, and way forward with this controversial technology.



Jaffe is the Director of the Project on Biotechnology at CSPI, a non-profit consumer organization located in the U.S. He came to CSPI in 2001 after a distinguished career in government service as a Trial Attorney for the U.S. Department of Justice's Environmental and Natural Resources Division and as Senior Counsel with the U.S. EPA, Air Enforcement Division.

RETAILER REACTIONS TO CONSUMER CONCERNS: IMPLICATIONS FOR COOPERATIVES

The food retailing landscape is constantly shifting and the rate of change is accelerating. Consumers are changing too in many ways, not the least of which is a rising awareness, concern, and knowledge about issues related to food. Most food industry issues are multifaceted and often nuanced in ways that can create confusion amongst consumers. Advocacy and special interest groups have long been agents for change but the combined power of the Internet and social media has amplified their message and multiplied their influence. Retailers try to be on the right side of controversies while offering a full range of products that meet consumer expectations and avoid alienating some customers. Rod Hawkes will focus his remarks on the retailer reaction to food industry issues and the implications for supply chain partners such as agricultural cooperatives.



Rod Hawkes is a Sr. Extension Associate with the Cornell University Food Industry Management Program providing executive leadership programs for food industry leaders and managers.

TO 'B' or NOT TO 'B' - A PRIMER FOR THE BENEFICIAL CORPORATION

The goal of the traditional business model is to maximize profits to its owners. Some businesses have expanded their purpose to move beyond profit to consider how the activities of business can solve social and environmental problems. Trade-offs between profit maximization and social and environmental responsibility can create tension in fiduciary responsibilities as business leaders develop strategies and make decisions. A Benefit corporation can provide legal protections to the business and its leaders as they balance the financial and non-financial interests of the cooperative. In 2012 Agri-Mark Cooperative Inc. became the first dairy cooperative in the United States to become a Certified B Corporation.



Roberta MacDonald, SVP, Brands at Cabot Creamery Cooperative will share insights into the decision of the cooperative to seek B-Corp status, the process to achieve the designation and how it impacts issues related to governance and management of the cooperative.

MARY McBRIDE, President, CoBank



Mary McBride will provide an update on the performance of CoBank over the past year. As CoBank’s president she is responsible for all of the bank’s lending units as well as Credit, Banking Services and Corporate Communications. She is a member of the bank’s Management Executive Committee. Ms. McBride joined CoBank in 1993. Prior to her current position, she was the bank’s chief banking officer. Ms. McBride has also served as the chief operating officer and as executive vice president for the bank’s Communications and Energy Banking Group, serving rural communications, energy and water customers across the United States. Before joining CoBank, Ms. McBride worked as senior vice president of Wells Fargo/First Interstate Bank of Denver, N.A.

MARCI ROSSELL, Economist



Economist Marci Rossell has a unique ability to take complex financial issues and make them relevant to people’s lives, families, and careers. She is best known for the time she spent in broadcast television as chief economist for CNBC. She has also served as a corporate economist and investment spokesperson for Oppenheimer Funds, one of the nation’s largest mutual fund companies. She began her career as an economist for the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas. Ms. Rossell earned a doctorate in economics from Southern Methodist University, where she was also named Young Alumni of the Year in 2002.

Register for the CoBank meeting via the CoBank website: Events and Meetings

Block of rooms at conference rate available until Jan. 31. Contact hotel at 315/432-0200

**Monday evening, February 29th
Northeast Cooperative Council Banquet
Featuring Kyle Petty
Sponsored by CoBank, ACB**



**CHARLIE COOK, Editor and Publisher
*The Cook Political Report***



For more than two decades, Charlie Cook has served as one of the nation’s most trusted and accurate political analysts. As publisher of *The Cook Political Report*, he provides election analyses and polling data on presidential, congressional and gubernatorial races. *The New York Times* has called the publication something “that both parties regard as authoritative.” Mr. Cook is one of the most called-upon sources in the nation for those who want to know what is happening behind the scenes in American politics. He has served as a political analyst for NBC News, and his balanced non-partisan insights have been featured on ABC, CBS, CNBC, MSNBC, CNN, C-SPAN, and National Public Radio.

KYLE PETTY, Former NASCAR Driver

Kyle Petty notched eight NASCAR wins and 173 top 10 finishes over his 30-year career. He is the grandson of stock car racing pioneer Lee Petty and the son of driving legend Richard Petty. He last drove the #45 Dodge Charger for Petty Enterprises, where he formerly served as the chief executive officer. Today he is a broadcaster for NBC Sports’ Network. He also co-hosts the weekly radio show, *Fast Talk*, on the Performance Racing Network. In addition to his broadcast career he is active in many charitable causes. He and his wife established the Victory Junction Gang Camp for terminally ill children in honor of their late son Adam. He is also founder of the Kyle Petty Charity Ride Across America, an annual charity motorcycle ride across the county, which as raised nearly \$15 million for charitable causes since it started in 1995.





FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

A year ago, the NECC was working through a strategic planning process. One of the identified goals was to build more awareness of the organization and cooperative business model to students within the service area. This goal was accomplished in two ways. First we developed the Cooperative Internship Recognition Award (CIRA). CIRA will recognize the outstanding work done by students who intern with NECC member cooperatives. We are partnering with NECC Associate member, the Cooperative Development Institute on this project. We look forward to making the first award at the upcoming NECC Leaders Forum and Annual Meeting.

The NECC is also working to build the understanding of the cooperative business model as it raises awareness of career opportunities for students with NECC members upon graduation. NECC members need to attract the best and brightest to lead their organizations in the future.

In October, the first “Talent Wanted: Cornell University Symposium on Cooperative Careers” was held. Topics at the Symposium included finance, global marketing, data analytics and corporate social responsibility. I thank Co-Bank, Ocean Spray, CHS, Inc. and Nationwide for their support of the event. Faculty of colleges and universities in NY, PA, and New England were notified of the event and asked to promote the event to their students. Students attended from Cornell University, Hobart William Smith and SUNY Cortland. “Talent Wanted” was a success.

The board and I look forward to continued implementation of the NECC strategic plan and meeting the needs of our membership. See you February 29th in Syracuse. Enjoy the winter wonderland.

Cyndy Van Lieshout

Cyndy Van Lieshout, President

THE POWER OF THE PEOPLE

Social movements are not a political party or special interest group characterized by formal leadership and organization; nor are they a fad or trend characterized as fleeting and without goals. They are somewhere in the middle. They can be focused on a specific policy change or cultural change. Some of the social movements that are most familiar include the Women’s Suffrage Movement, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Environmental Movement. The United States is the result of a social movement, a few colonists who became disenfranchised with the policies of England and sought change. Early scholar works focused on mass social theory. Why people get caught up in and what conditions are necessary to incubate social movements from the experience of the Industrial Revolution. People became alienated as society moved from rural to urban and from agrarian to industrialization resulting in the break down of traditional social structures (small towns to large cities) and support networks (families distanced from one another). Communication and transfer of information is key to a social movement. Communication between the colonists and the King of England was much slower than today’s email, Instagram, and social networks.

As everyone is well aware, the farm and food system seems to be swept up in persons who are concerned about environmental issues—nutrient loading, crop protectants, rain forest degradation, animal welfare issues—tail docking, dehorning, cage-free, labor issues—living wage, hours of work, working conditions, nutrition issues—fats, artificial ingredients, fast foods, superfoods along with local, fair trade, and natural, just to name a few.

Social movements have a life cycle that consists of 4 stages. The 4 stages include emergence, coalescence, bureaucratization, and decline. The first stage of development is emergence. The person will express disfavor to family, friends, a letter to the editor or legislative representative, or post something via the Internet. This early discontent can also be made known through membership of an existing organization that might choose to embrace the concern in its policy platform. The issue may not have sufficient support to move it to the next stage of coalescence.

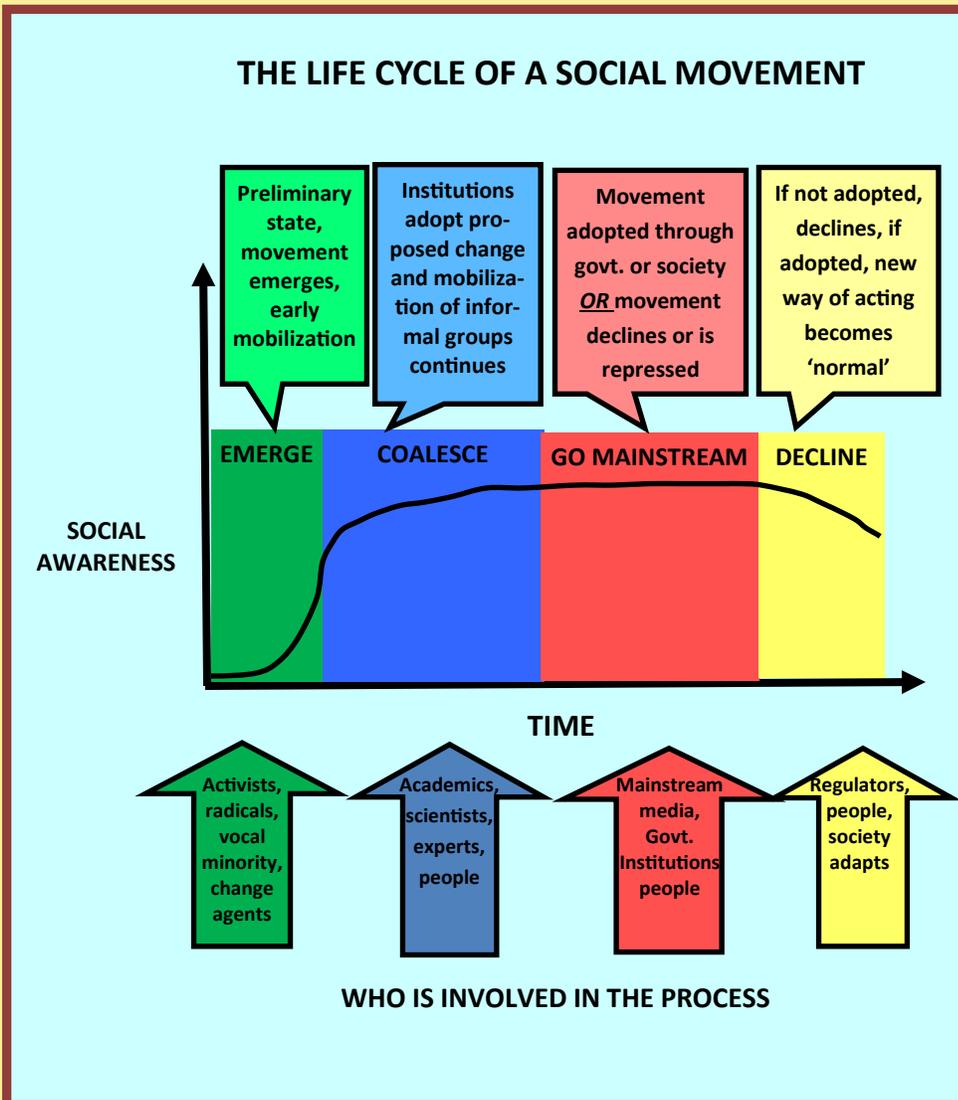
Coalescence is the “popular” stage, which is characterized as a defined sense of discontent. More understanding has been gained about what the issue is and who is responsible. Discontent moves from a lack of coordination to become focalized and collective. More people come to understand that they have similar concerns. Leadership emerges and the group becomes more organized and strategic in their outlook. Fundraising occurs to support the effort. Formalized groups might amend their messages. A group focused on animal welfare for dogs and cats might incorporate farm animals into its platform. Two formalized groups with polar opposite viewpoints such as pro-life and pro-choice could agree that young teenagers should not become par-



ents. If enough people galvanize behind a leader, the movement can become a political force, which leads to the fourth stage or bureaucratization or formalization. Bureaucratization requires a formal organization to be created or an existing organization to formally act in support of the issue of concern. Paid staff are necessary to carry out the goals of the movement, i.e. someone had to support the effort to get 2008 California Proposition 2, Prevention of Farm Animal Cruelty Act on the ballot. Another example is an advocacy group applying pressure to a business to adopt change. No formal leaders or organization means that the movement can die.

The final stage of a social movement is decline. Decline occurs in one of four ways. One way is that it is repressed. The authorities or power-brokers adopt laws, policies or regulations that make it exceedingly difficult for the movement to continue lawfully. The second way a movement declines is through co-optation. Movement leaders might be hired by the movement's opponents to "affect change on the inside" as a means to reduce the pressure of the movement. The movement may become a success and there is no longer a need for the movement. Laws might be passed or society adopts the movement as the "new status quo."

More recent social movements may not fit neatly into the steps described above. These movements emphasize lifestyle changes rather than public policy or economic change. They can be supported through social media. For example, the Slow Food movement suggests an alternative to a fast-food lifestyle. Slow Foods is a global volunteer network that encourages lifestyle changes and consumer habits adopted on an individual level.



Cornell University student bulletin board

They provide training opportunities to prepare their members when they are confronted by representatives of organizations concerned about the farm and food system.

What is the life expectancy of a social movement? It depends. In some cases the length of time transcends the generations. For example, the early environmentalists took their children to various rallies and meetings and those individuals carry on where their parents left off. The Women's Suffrage Movement died when women got the right to vote. However, the Women's Rights Movement emerged in the 1960s. Social movements may emerge and coalesce through art—political cartoons, plays, poems and songs, etc. They can emerge through faith communities or academic institutions. One thing for sure is that the next movement is already here, it is visible, in the margins, waiting to be discovered.

Cooperatives are an economic outcome of a social change. The Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers was the first cooperative formed to "improve their [members] working and living conditions and sell honest food at honest prices." (Rochdale Pioneer Museum). NECC member co-ops play a key role in addressing the social issues confronting production agriculture and the food system. Co-op staff monitor the issues and work with others along the supply chain to address consumer concerns. When necessary they provide expert testimony and interact with policy makers and regulators. They tell the story of their cooperative and their member farms

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