

News Release
For Immediate Release

FUTURE LEADERS ATTEND COOPERATIVE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

GENEVA, NY.-- There were 39 participants sponsored by their cooperatives to attend “Cooperatives—They’re Your Business,” the Thirty-third Cooperative Future Leaders Conference held July 15-17 at the Lakefront Ramada in Geneva, New York. National Grape Cooperative was this year's host cooperative for the conference.

The Cooperative Future Leaders Conference is sponsored by the Northeast Cooperative with support from the Farm Credit Ag. Enhancement Fund and the Warren Teaching Fund at Cornell University. The conference provides an excellent opportunity for members and staff who are likely to be in leadership positions in their cooperatives to learn more about the unique operating features of cooperatives and current issues affecting their organizations.

Featured speakers included: Brian Henehan, Sr. Extension Associate in the Dept. of Applied Economics and Management, Cornell University who addressed “How Cooperatives Create Value for Members”. Brent Roggie the General Manager of National Grape Cooperative discussed “Are Cooperatives Still Relevant?” Joe Falcone, President fo National Grape Cooperative and Chairman of the board of directors of Welch’s and James Militello, a delegate of National Grape Cooperative reviewed “Building Cooperative Leadership”

Dr. Todd Schmit, assistant professor of agribusiness management and marketing in the Dept. of Applied Economics and Management, Cornell University reviewed “Developing Cooperative Strategy”. Bob Egerton, Regional president with COBANK discussed "Cooperative Finance."

The participants enjoyed a Thursday afternoon tour of the Geneva Ag. Experiment Station and the Lakewood Vineyard. The day ended with dinner at the Anthony Road Winery. The Friday morning session began with a presentation from Marc Rosen, Manager of Latin American sales for Welch’s who discussed “Serving a Dynamic Market”. The program wrapped up with small group discussions with cooperative management and directors from: Agri-Mark, Dairy Farmers of America, Dairylea, DairyOne Cooperative, CoBANK, First Pioneer Farm Credit, Stueben Rural Electric Cooperative, National Grape Cooperative/Welch Foods, Upstate-Niagara Cooperative, and O-AT-KA Milk Products Cooperative. More information and a link to photos can be found on the NECC website at <http://cooperatives.aem.cornell.edu/index.htm>

The Cooperative Leadership Conference has, over the years, provided past participants with a solid foundation for becoming today’s cooperative leaders. This conference provides a productive investment towards insuring informed future leadership.

The Northeast Cooperative Council (NECC) is a regional membership organization serving cooperatives in New York and New England. Council members represent a variety of cooperative businesses including: rural electric, service, supply, credit and marketing. The mission of the NECC is to enhance the overall effectiveness of member cooperatives through improving the understanding of directors, managers, employees and members about cooperative principles and business practices. Through NECC, member cooperative businesses can leverage their own resources by working together to address common issues and develop solutions to their informational and educational challenges.