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GOVERNOR LEE PROCLAIMS OCTOBER COOPERATIVE MONTH

NASHVILLE — October is Cooperative Month in Tennessee, celebrating the approximately 200 member-owned organizations that employ more than 6,000 individuals, impacts our state's economy by more than \$1.2 billion, and provides a wide array of products and services to member-owners.

"With the impact that Tennessee cooperatives have, we're proud to see Governor Lee recognize them by proclaiming October as Cooperative Month," said Tennessee Commissioner of Agriculture Charlie Hatcher, D.V.M. "Cooperatives have supported our agricultural industry for years. The economic benefits, insurance and financing opportunities, and increased access to broadband have been crucial for our rural Tennesseans."

Today, more than 75 percent of Tennessee's rural residents are served by a cooperative. Unlike other businesses, a co-op is owned by those it serves and exists to meet the needs of its members as economically as possible.

Tennessee cooperatives impact the well-being of rural residents and communities across our state by providing electric, internet, and telephone services. They also make significant investments in bringing broadband to the state's unserved areas.

Cooperatives provide financing for land, assets, and inputs as well as products and services, such as genetics, seed, crop nutrients, feed, crop protection and animal health. Additionally, cooperatives are a dependable source for equipment and fuel used to grow and market crops and livestock as well as insurance for individuals and family businesses.

The Tennessee Department of Agriculture's mission is to promote responsible use of our agricultural and forest resources, develop economic opportunities, and ensure safe and dependable food and fiber for the citizens of Tennessee. More information about Tennessee cooperatives can be found at tennesseecouncilofcoops.com.

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