

# STRONGER TOGETHER: COOPERATIVE MODELS

**Wednesday, June 24, 2026**

**2:30 p.m. ET**



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**EDD CoP**  
Economic Development District  
Community of Practice





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- Please take a moment to complete the post-webinar survey to provide helpful feedback
- Contact Melissa Levy at [mlevy@nado.org](mailto:mlevy@nado.org) with any questions about the webinar or wealth creation



## EDD CoP

Economic Development District  
Community of Practice



**More info at: [www.nado.org/EDDCoP](http://www.nado.org/EDDCoP)**

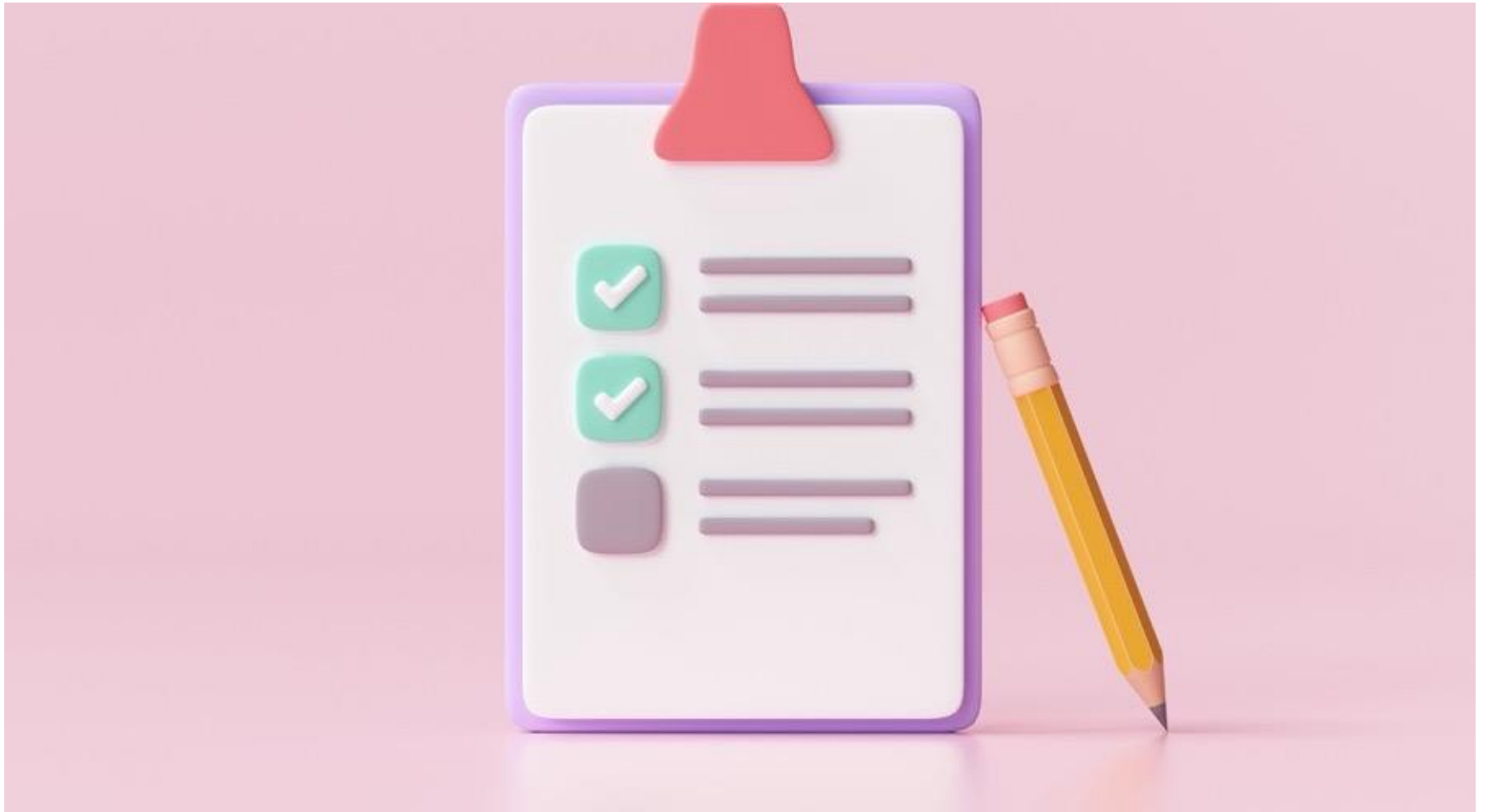
This webinar is offered through the Economic Development District Community of Practice (EDD CoP), managed by the NADO Research Foundation to build the capacity of the national network of EDDs. To learn more, visit: [www.nado.org/EDDCoP](http://www.nado.org/EDDCoP). The EDD CoP is made possible through an award from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce (ED22HDQ3070106). The statements, findings, conclusions, and recommendations in this webinar are those of the speakers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Economic Development Administration or the U.S. Department of Commerce.



October 26-29 Reno, Nevada



# Poll Questions



# Principles of Wealth Creation



#1 – **Create wealth**, broadly defined, and aspire to do no harm.

#2 – Root wealth in local people, places and firms through **local ownership, control and influence**.



#3 – Build **lasting livelihoods** by intentionally including people and firms on the economic margins.



## Key Concept

# Wealth Components: Eight Capitals

**Intellectual**

- Knowledge and innovation

**Individual**

- Skills, education, health

**Social**

- Trust and relationships

**Natural**

- Natural resources

**Built**

- Infrastructure

**Political**

- Influence on decision makers and shapers

**Financial**

- Savings and investment

**Cultural**

- Traditions, customs and ways of doing

Assessment  
Design  
Measurement

<https://www.nado.org/wealthcreation/>



CHICKEN BEFORE THE EGG:  
HOW CENTRAL VIRGINIA POULTRY FARMERS  
TURNED A CRISIS INTO A COOPERATIVE

PHOTO: ELLIOTT PRITCHARD BY NADO RESEARCH FOUNDATION

## Wealth Creation

### Keeping Wealth Close to Home:

How Economic Development Districts  
Can Promote Local Prosperity



May 2025 // NADO Research Foundation



# Today's Presenters

**Doug O'Brien** - President/CEO, NCBA

**Roxie Johnson** - Poultry Farmer

**Ken Risser** - Ag Specialist

**Tony Banks** - Senior Assistant Director, VA Agriculture, Development & Innovation Department.

**Christin Jackson and Lauren Pugh** - Executive Director and Planning Director, Commonwealth Regional Council

(Moderator) **Melissa Levy**, Wealth Creation Specialist, NADO Research Foundation



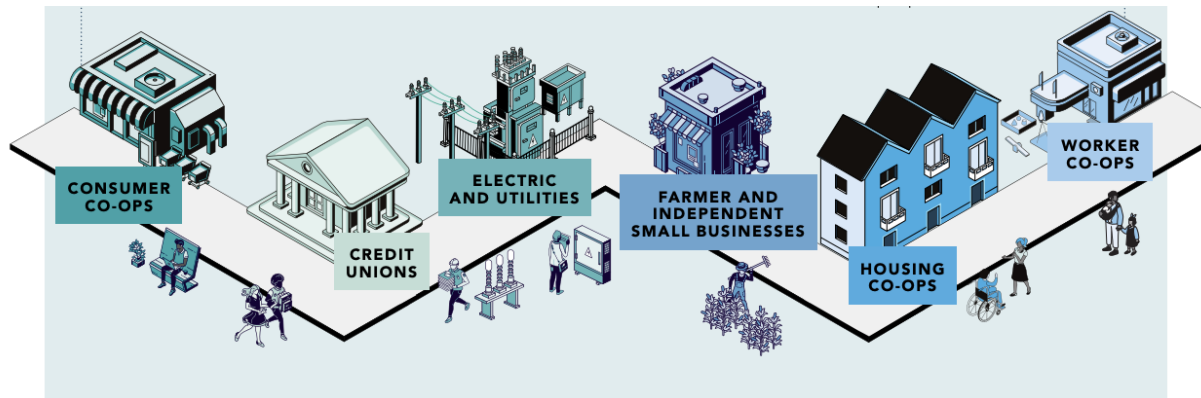
# Doug O'Brien



- President & CEO,  
National Cooperative  
Business Association  
(NCBA)

# What is a cooperative?

- Businesses that put the users (or members) in the center of the business
- Members own, control, and benefit from the business
  - Own: Members own the business
  - Control: Members vote democratically on the Board, who hire the CEO
  - Benefit: Any surplus (or profit) goes back to members based on use



# Co-op Impact



U.S.  
Cooperatives

**64,000+**

U.S. co-ops<sup>1</sup>

**1 in 3 Americans**  
are members of co-ops<sup>2</sup>

**\$324+ billion**

in total revenue from  
America's top 100 co-ops  
in 2023<sup>3</sup>



Global  
Cooperatives

**3+ million**

total co-ops worldwide

**1+ billion**

people are members of  
co-ops worldwide

**\$2.4 trillion**

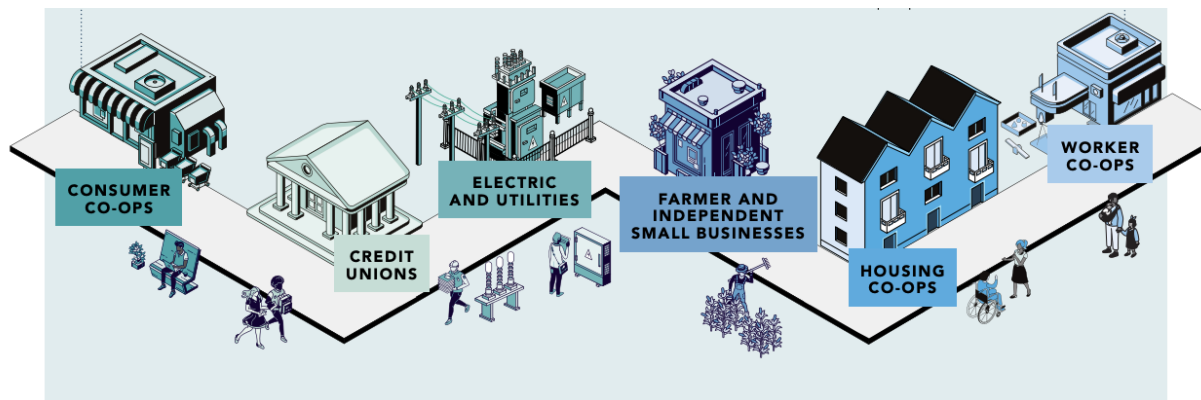
in turnover from  
global co-ops

## BY THE NUMBERS

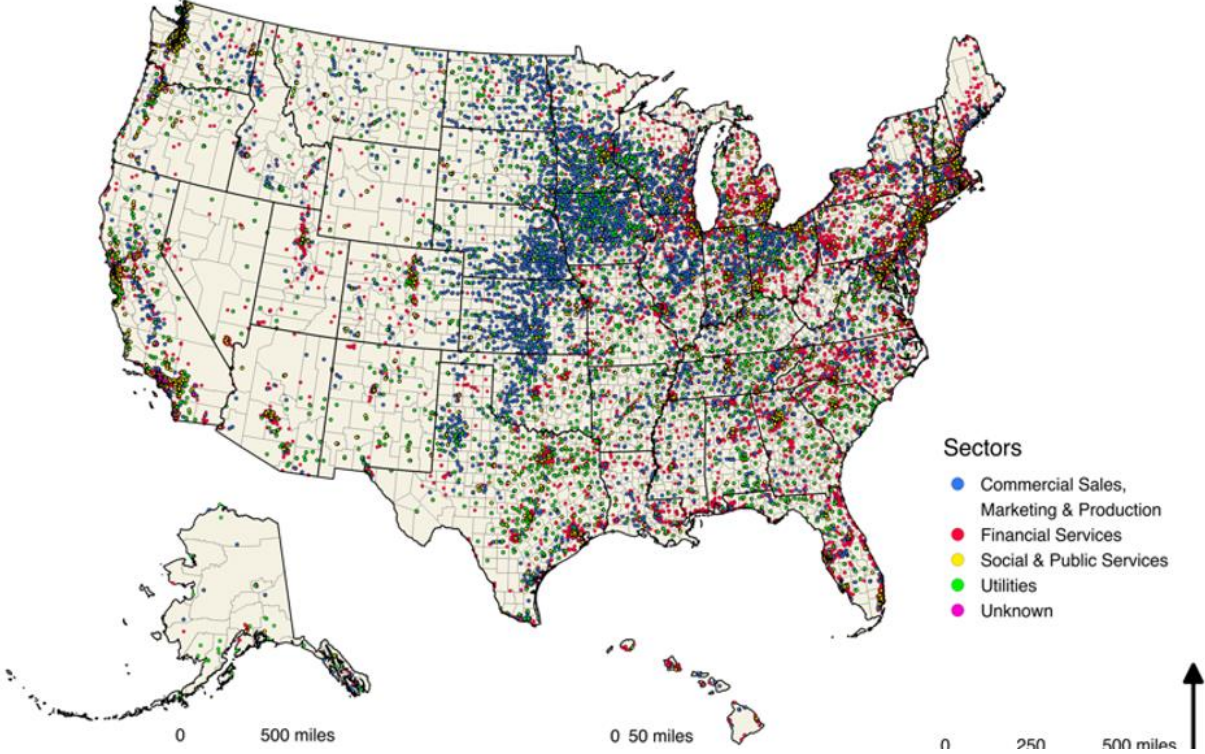
- Electric cooperatives power **22 million homes, businesses and schools** across 48 states.
- Credit unions provide **\$40+ billion** annually in total consumer benefits, including lower interest rates and fewer fees.
- More than half of farmers are members of at least one co-op that generate **\$301 billion in total sales** every year.
- Housing co-ops provide permanently affordable housing for more than **1.5 million Americans**.

# The Co-op Difference

- Access to critical markets and affordable, high-quality services
- Act in the best interests of their members and communities in which they operate
- Keep wealth and profits circulating in the community



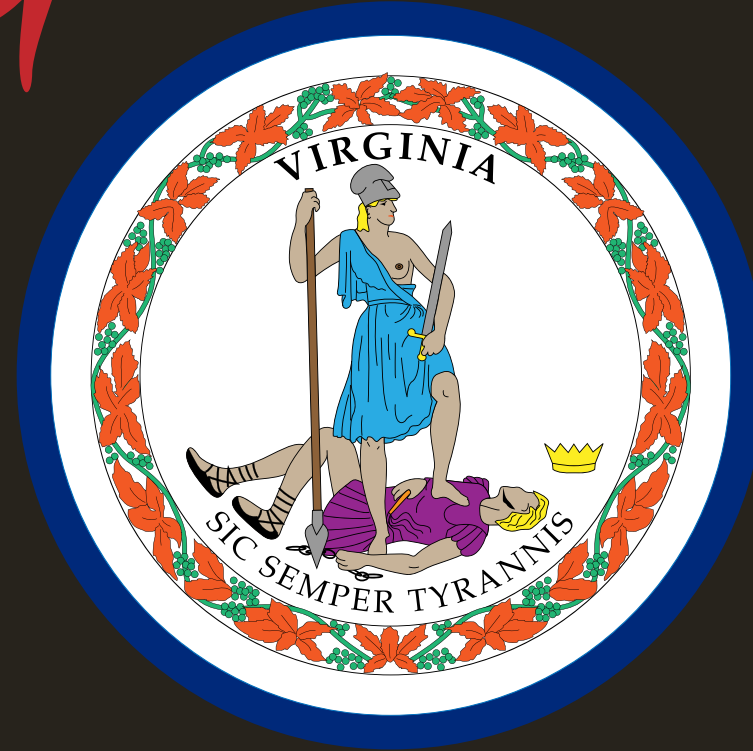
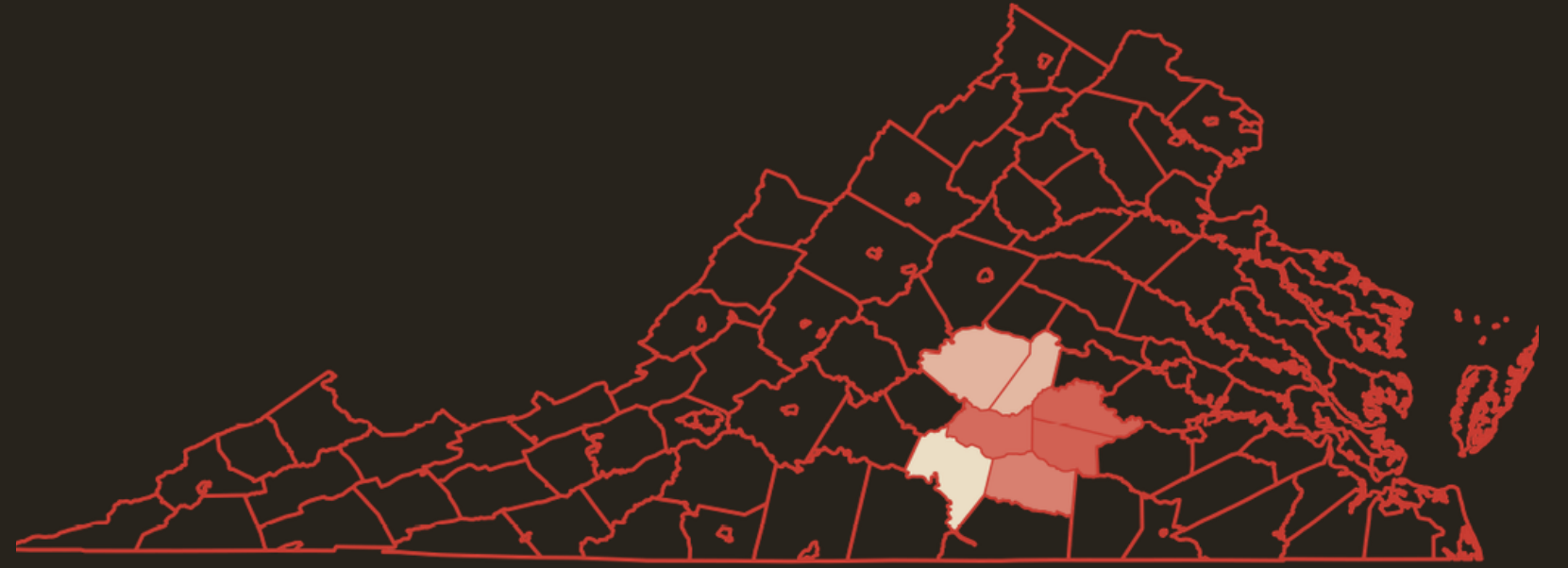
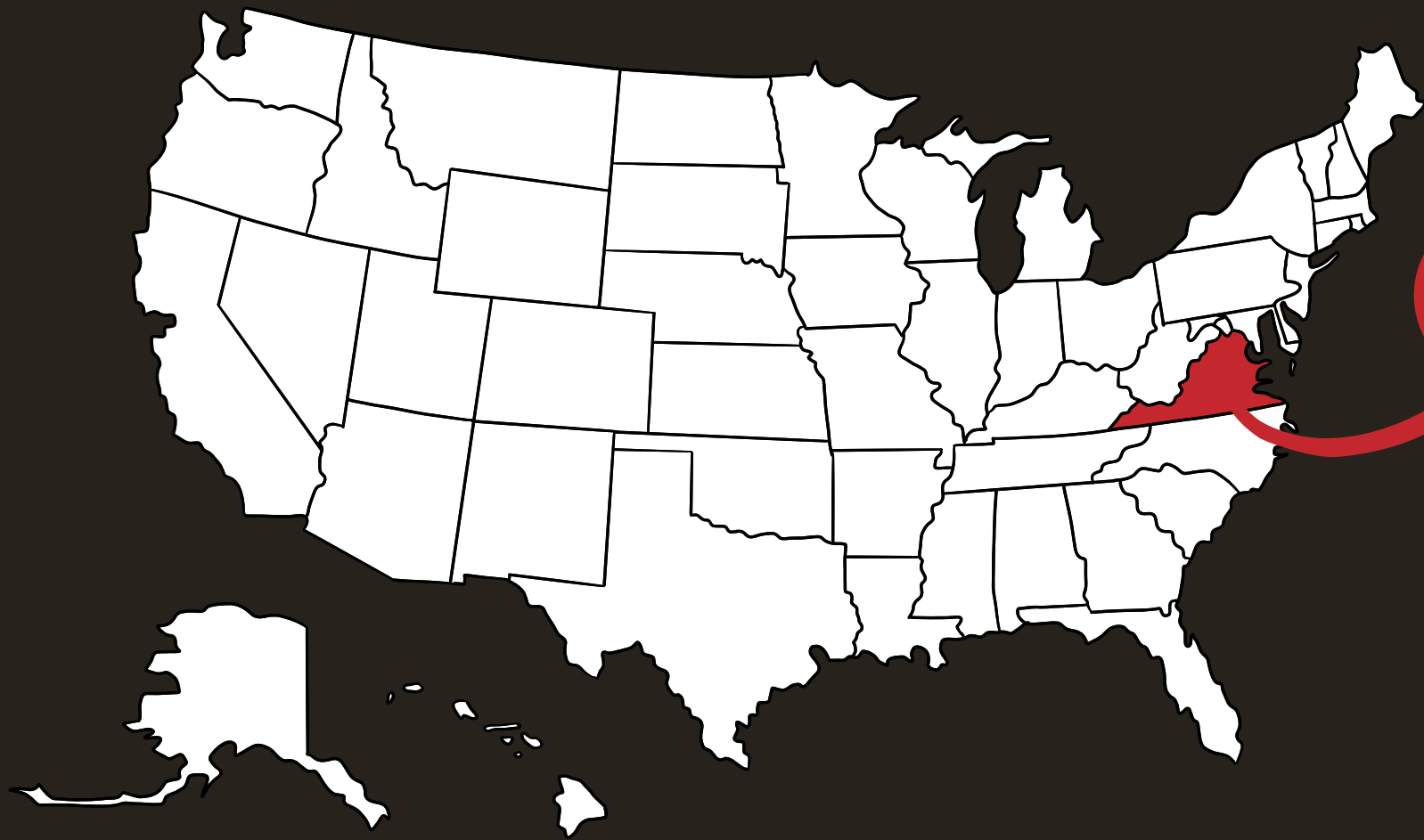
# Co-op Locations: Sectoral Composition





# CREATION of the Central Virginia Poultry Cooperative

# LOCATION



# BACKGROUND



May 2023

## 1 Tyson Plant Closure Announced

Closure of the Glen Allen Plant caused contracts for many farmers to be terminated. In May 2023, the Plant officially closed. Estimated economic loss due to the Tyson plant closure is \$358 million loss annually. In response, a letter to the Governor of Virginia was written.



May 2023

## 2 Meeting with Secretary Lohr

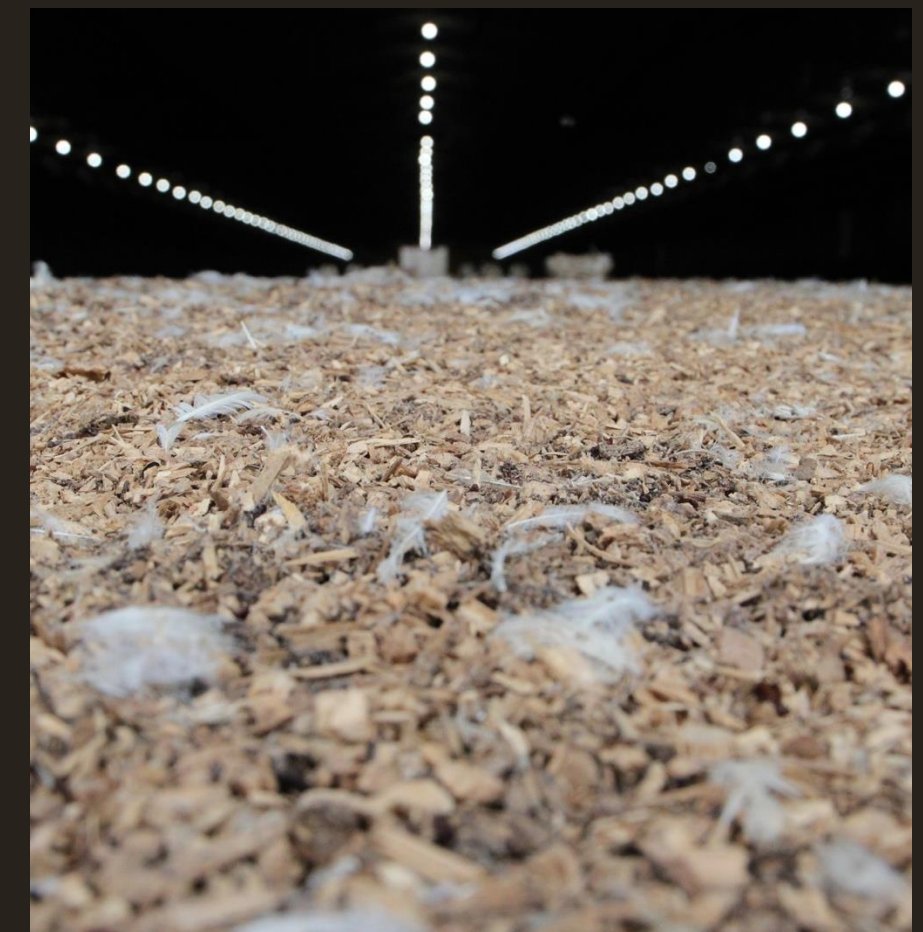
The Commonwealth Regional Council hosted a meeting with all the major players to brainstorm ways to assist these displaced farmers.



June 2023

## 3 Poultry Farmers look for Integrators

Industry leaders displaced by the closure called every broiler company in the United States. Unfortunately, no one was interested at that time. Allied industry person shared an opportunity with a table egg producer for an conversion opportunity.





# BACKGROUND

4

## September 2023 Partnership arises

The Commonwealth Regional Council region agreed to partner with the Poultry Farmers to apply for grant opportunities at the state level.



5

## October 2023 Grant applications

The Virginia FAIRS and the Commonwealth Regional Council assists the Central Virginia Poultry Cooperative with several applications.



6

## December 2023 Central Virginia Poultry Cooperative (CVPC) Established

The CVPC was founded in December 2023. The business started up a month later in January 2024.



# BACKGROUND



January 2024

## 7 Dutch Country Organics, LLC Commitment

CVPC has a 13-year contract with Dutch Country Organics, LLC to sell them cage-free, free-range, and pasture raised eggs. This company is based out of North Main Middlebury, Indiana.



February 2024

## 8 Grants Awarded

The Commonwealth Regional Council was awarded \$1,791,750.00 in grant funds from the Virginia Tobacco Commission and the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services for funding of start-up costs for the CVPC.



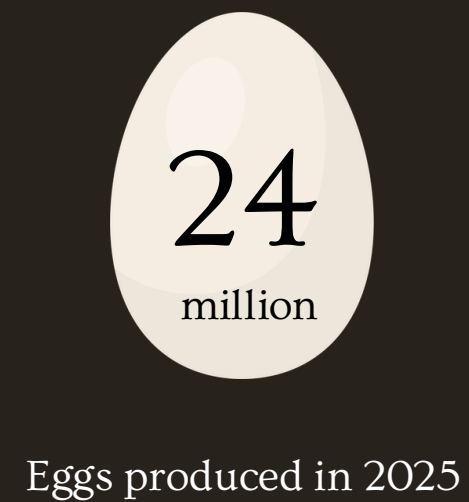
April 2024

## 9 First Chicken House Converted

Plantation Road Farms located in Nottoway County converted one of their broiler chicken houses into a egg laying free-range house.



# THE STATS



# WHY A COOPERATIVE?

- Combines resources and expertise.
- Strengthens partnerships and collaboration.
- Reduces duplication and improves efficiency.
- Maximizes limited funding and resources.
- Addresses challenges more effectively.
- Expands regional impact and benefits.
- Builds trust and organizational capacity.
- Creates sustainable, long-term outcomes.





# CHALLENGES OF COOPERATIVE

## Capital Challenges

- No other layer company in area
- New Company
- Banks were cautious to loan due to the high volume of capital needed to remodel the houses.

## Land Pricing

- Farm Equity - layer houses requires higher farm equity

## Grant related challenges

- Farm language barrier
- acronyms
- timelines

## Eggs pricing

- Commodity pricing

# OPPORTUNITIES

- Avian influenza (AI) created an opportunity for replacement birds (pullets) to meet the demand for farmers that experienced AI.
- 50% of the nations population is within 500 miles of the CVPC region.



# LOCAL ECONOMIC BENEFIT OF ESTABLISHING COOPERATIVE



## Local Economy

- Farm operators and allied industries have disposable income to spend money within the local economy
- \$2,500,000.00 in Layer house conversion Investment
- \$750,000.00 in Pullet house conversion investment
- \$3,250,000.00 Total Farmer investment

## Jobs

- CVPC has hired 5 full time employees to operate the cooperative. 15 Farms stayed in business. Many of which have employees of there own.
- Trucking company used from Rice to haul feed, a trained local labor crew to conduct injectable vaccinations and moving birds.

## Purchasing Virginia Feed

- From Shenandoah Valley and Roanoke. Feed purchased on average 10,000 tons of feed for pullets and average 4,000 tons for layers



# EDD INVOLVEMENT

## **Liason between Stakeholders**

The CRC served as the liason between partners including the poultry farmers, state agencies and local governments. This included meeting coordination, advocating for the project and project communication.

## **Fisical Agent**

The CRC is serving as the fiscal agent on the five awarded grants from the TRRC and VDACS. These grant funds 'run' through our books to reimburse the Cooperative for expenses.

## **Grant Applicant**

The CRC served as the Grant applicant for all five applications to the TRRC and VDACS. This allowed for the Poultry Cooperative to be eligible for grant applications.

## **Grant Administrator**

The CRC is serving as the grant administration on the five awarded grants. This includes submitting reimbursement request, filing required reporting, ensuring grant compliance, and managing budget requests.



# FUNDING STREAMS USED



## 1 Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission

The CRC received two grants from the TRRC totaling \$1.4 Million. Grant eligible expenses include:

- Virginia FAIRS consulting services
- Bird purchases
- Transport Expenses
- Feed Purchase for Layers and Pullets
- Grower Pay for Pullets and Layers



## 2 Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

The CRC was awarded three grants from VDACS totaling \$426,750.00. Grant eligible expenses include:

- AFID, Planning Grant (\$35,000.00) - legal, audit and financial services.
- AFID, Infrastructure Grant (\$50,000.00) - Egg shuttles and Washers
- Rural Rehabilitation Grant (\$341,750.00) - Egg shuttles and Washers



## 3 Local Government Investment

Two of the three VDACS grants required a local cash match to assist with the start-up costs of the Cooperative. The seven counties within our region agreed to contribute a total of \$56,000.00 in cash match.



**QUESTIONS?**

**Christin Jackson, Commonwealth Regional Council**  
**[cjackson@commonwealthrc.org](mailto:cjackson@commonwealthrc.org)**

**Lauren Pugh, Commonwealth Regional Council**  
**[Lpugh@commonwealthrc.org](mailto:Lpugh@commonwealthrc.org)**

# Discussion Questions

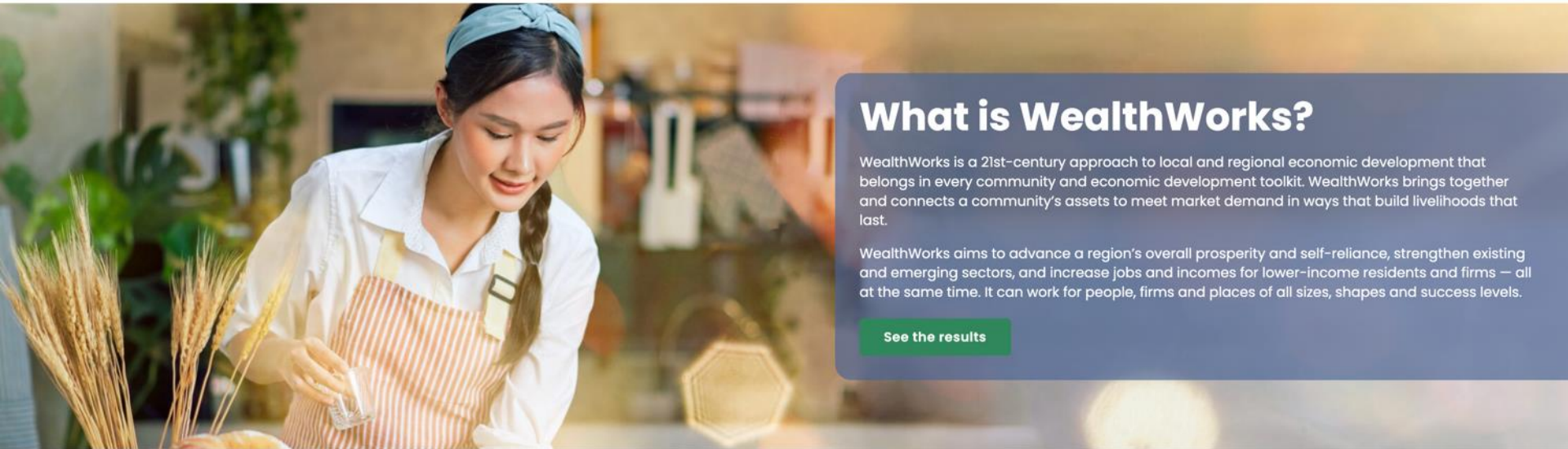
- Are there areas that may benefit from a discussion of cooperative development in your region?
- Are there good resources for EDDs to consult as they think about supporting cooperative development in their regions?

# [WealthWorks Website - www.wealthworks.org](http://www.wealthworks.org)

Connecting community assets to market demand to build lasting livelihoods.



[About](#) [The Basics](#) [Success Stories](#) [Resources](#) [Connect](#)



## What is WealthWorks?

WealthWorks is a 21st-century approach to local and regional economic development that belongs in every community and economic development toolkit. WealthWorks brings together and connects a community's assets to meet market demand in ways that build livelihoods that last.

WealthWorks aims to advance a region's overall prosperity and self-reliance, strengthen existing and emerging sectors, and increase jobs and incomes for lower-income residents and firms — all at the same time. It can work for people, firms and places of all sizes, shapes and success levels.

[See the results](#)

[The Basics](#)

[Resources](#)

[The Hubs](#)

# NADO Wealth Creation Website –

[www.nado.org/wealthcreation](http://www.nado.org/wealthcreation)

## Wealth Creation



Wealth Creation Home

Wealth Creation Reports

Blog ▾

Training Materials and Resources

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For several years, the NADO Research Foundation has trained EDD staff and partners on a wealth creation framework known as *WealthWorks* that seeks to build multiple types of capitals or assets in a community or region. This approach, recognized as a best practice in EDA's CEDS Content Guidelines, emphasizes support for local ownership and control of businesses and assets in order to root wealth in a region. It is also intentionally inclusive, seeking ways to incorporate a variety of voices as planners and owners, not only as intended beneficiaries or consumers. A handful of EDDs are using wealth creation in CEDS and other EDD regional planning efforts, demonstrating that this approach can influence EDD operations, including improving consideration of equity and access when designing stakeholder participation or even procurement and hiring. Through the Economic Development District Community of Practice (EDD CoP), made possible through an award from the Economic Development Administration, the NADO Research Foundation is coordinating with EDD practitioners and other rural and regional development practitioners to incorporate this wealth creation model where appropriate.

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Wealth creation is an approach to economic development that connects a region's assets to market demand in ways that build rooted wealth for local people, places and firms. It brings together a range of public, private and non-profit sector partners who have self-interest in the outcomes and an openness to discovering shared or common interests.

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