

LAND O LAKES: A COOPERATIVE CASE STUDY

INTRODUCTION:

The Minnesota Cooperative Creameries Association was founded by 320 dairy farmers in 1921. Their main purpose was to market butter to make the member dairy farms more profitable. A few years later, they changed their name to Land O'Lakes Creameries, Inc.

Today, Land O'Lakes has grown beyond just dairy products and includes Purina (animal feeds), WinField (seed and agronomic services), and TruTerra (sustainability services) brands, making it one of the largest cooperatives in the country.

GLOBAL IMPACT:

The Land O'Lakes cooperative has now expanded across the United States and has almost 4,000 members. This means that 4,000 farms have pooled their resources together to fund advanced research and technology to benefit them all instead of competing against each other in the market. Each member's operation gains more financial stability because of this, benefiting each of their local communities.

COMMUNITY IMPACT:

Though Land O'Lakes is now more far-reaching than Arden Hills, Minnesota, the city still benefits from holding the headquarters of the co-op. A benefit of a cooperative is pooling resources to allow for research and marketing staff. This creates jobs in communities.

Today, Land O'Lakes continues to be the second-largest employer in Arden Hills, employing 800 in the town and 10,000 people total.

SOCIETAL IMPACT:

Because of the pooling of member resources, Land O'Lakes has been able to create new dairy products that are now staples. Land O'Lakes was among the first to make butter from sweet cream instead of sour cream and to wrap butter in sticks. Today, they continue to be able to fund new research and develop value-added dairy products that benefit their farmer members.

SOURCES:

Arden Hills, Minnesota: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arden_Hills,_Minnesota

Land O'Lakes, Inc.: <https://www.landolakesinc.com/Members/Home>

USA's Top 100 Cooperatives: <https://www.thenews.coop/122959/sector/usas-top-100-co-operatives-year-named-national-cooperative-bank/>

Land O'Lakes: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Land_O%27Lakes#Corporate_affairs

Land O'Lakes, Our Company: <https://www.landolakes.com/our-company/>