

## WHY be a MEMBER of the UNITED COOP?

**JUST IMAGINE** that throughout the year you had accurate information on potato stocks by area. You'd know if there was really an oversupply or if you could safely demand a higher price.

**JUST IMAGINE** that you were part of a group growing tens of thousands of acres of potatoes, and you could stabilize this acreage so that there was always a sufficient supply for consumers and that this acreage would also earn the grower a decent return for his investment and labor.

**PIE IN THE SKY?** No. It's called cooperation: neighbors working with neighbors. Surely you have heard that there is [power in numbers](#), and this power comes from:

**LEVERAGE:** Imagine that conditions are ripe for a surplus of potato acres. Too many acres; too many cwt; a market glut; terrible prices; bankruptcies; hard times. What can one grower do? Not a thing. But by working together, each can contribute \$10 an acre and reduce the acres planted by 5%. Instead of losing hundreds per acre, the grower can now make a good profit.

Can't see how that works? Imagine that the nation-wide crop consisted of 100 acres, but that would be 5% too many. If each acre contributed \$10 into a pool, the pool would have \$1,000. Apply that to 5 acres, you could contribute \$200 per acre to encourage those acres to be planted with another crop. **So the \$10 per acre can be leveraged into \$200.** Add that \$200 to the expected income from another crop, and you can have an attractive alternative to potatoes.

The math works the same for a million acres. [The important element here is that all the acres can contribute a small amount to buy out an expected surplus.](#)

**HARD TIMES BECOME HAPPY TIMES.**

**GOOD INFORMATION** is a necessity. What are actual potato stocks on hand? What are the actual planting intentions? A good organization must be in place to collect the information and to act upon it in a timely manner. An individual grower is at the mercy of market forces, big buying organizations, nature, and even his fellow growers. Taking a "shot in the dark", "flipping a coin", or doing "what we always do" may not be profitable, and leads to wild market fluctuations.

The leverage we gain by working together works when applied to almost any problem facing our industry.

**MAKE AN INVESTMENT** in the future and stand united with your fellow growers. We regularly invest \$10 and \$20 per acre hoping to stave off blight or boost the yield slightly. Investing similar amounts can stabilize the potato markets and end the "boom and bust" cycles that we have grown so tired of. Numerous other coops such as the dairy and citrus programs have had great success. Why not potato farmers?