

Farmers Empowered



By John Andresen

May 25, 2024 11:38PM

Global Grange Boosts Agricultural Associations

According to the American Farm Bureau Federation, over 90% of farms in the United States are family-owned, highlighting the critical role individual farmers play in our food system. But they don't go it alone. Agricultural associations are essential partners, championing the needs of farmers, ranchers, and everyone in agriculture by providing crucial support and a wealth of

benefits. Recognizing their importance, Global Grange Inc. has launched a new initiative to empower these essential organizations.

"Agricultural associations are the backbone of rural communities," says John Andresen, CEO of Global Grange Inc. "They provide essential support to farmers and ranchers, and their role has become even more critical in recent times."

The Many Hats of Agricultural Associations

Agricultural associations play a vital role in the success of farms by providing a range of benefits:

- **Knowledge Powerhouse:** They offer educational programs and training opportunities to help producers stay ahead of the curve on new technologies, best practices, and farm business management skills.
- **Network of Support:** They foster a sense of community and connection, allowing farmers and ranchers to share best practices, troubleshoot challenges, and learn from each other's successes. Regional and national conferences provide opportunities to network with industry experts and build relationships.
- **Market Mavens:** Some associations assist members in finding new markets for their products, helping them connect with distributors, retailers, and even consumers directly.

Farmer-Focused Events

The agricultural world thrives on a vibrant ecosystem of events catering to a wide range of interests:

- **Livestock Shows:** These showcase different breeds of animals competing for conformation, performance, and market value.
- **Farmers Markets:** These connect consumers directly with local producers, offering fresh, seasonal products and fostering a sense of community.
- **Field Days, Conferences, and Seminars:** These delve deeper into the science and business of agriculture, showcasing cutting-edge technologies, educational sessions by experts, and discussions on new crop varieties, pest management, and economic trends.
- **Agritourism Events and Harvest Festivals:** These invite the public to experience agriculture firsthand, offering farm stays, educational tours, family-friendly activities, and locally-sourced food.

Beyond the Farm Gate: The Widespread Impact of Associations

The positive impact of agricultural associations extends far beyond the farm itself:

- **Secure Food Supply:** By supporting farmers, these associations play a crucial role in ensuring a safe, reliable, and affordable food supply.

- **Economic Engine:** A healthy agricultural sector is a significant contributor to the nation's economic well-being. Associations play a role by promoting innovation, fostering economic growth in rural areas, and creating jobs.
- **Connecting with Consumers:** Many associations bridge the gap between farmers and consumers through farm-to-table events, educational tours, or promoting locally sourced products. This fosters a better understanding of agriculture, strengthening the connection between producers and consumers.

COVID-19 Impact

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the critical role of agricultural associations in supporting farmers' resilience. Disruptions to traditional market channels and a surge in demand for local produce underscored the need for strong networks and innovative solutions. Associations stepped up by facilitating new market opportunities, like online platforms or direct-to-consumer sales. They also provided crucial information and resources to farmers navigating new safety protocols and supply chain issues. This experience solidified agricultural associations as essential partners, ensuring the continued success and adaptability of the agricultural sector in the face of future challenges.

Global Grange's Support

While numerous resources exist to support agricultural associations, including programs and grants from the USDA and university centers dedicated to agricultural development, Global Grange Inc. is offering a new initiative with a three-pronged approach:

- **Free Advertising:** Recognizing the power of visibility, Global Grange offers free advertising to agricultural associations. This will broaden their reach, attract new members, and strengthen their influence within the agricultural landscape.
- **The Harvest Circle Affiliate Program:** This program is the cornerstone of the initiative. Through it, 10% of all membership fees from Global Grange are directed to associations chosen by participating members. This financial boost empowers associations to further their mission and amplify their impact within the agricultural community.
- **AAW Directory Website:** Global Grange's Agriculture Associations Of The World (AAW) website serves as a central hub for agricultural associations worldwide. Featuring directories for livestock associations, food hubs, and farmers' markets, the platform aims to facilitate collaboration and resource sharing among industry stakeholders.

John Andresen, CEO of Global Grange Inc., emphasizes the critical role of agricultural associations, calling them the bedrock upon which farms thrive. "Our mission is to support farmers and ranchers," Andresen says, "and that means we need to support the folks that support them."

Looking Ahead: A Vibrant Future for Agriculture

Agricultural associations have a rich history of advocating for progress and innovation. They will continue to adapt and evolve, ensuring that agriculture remains a vibrant and successful sector

for generations to come. Their unwavering commitment to their members and the future of food makes them truly the backbone of our food system.

For agricultural associations eager to seize these opportunities, Global Grange encourages them to visit www.AgricultureAssociations.world and express their interest.

Together, through collaboration and innovation, they strive to cultivate a resilient and prosperous agricultural sector for the future.