



# SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2020

Prairie North Co-operative Limited



## OUR VALUES

### Service

Exceeding Expectations

### Integrity

Honest and Trustworthy

### Unity

We are Better Together

## OUR VISION

To be the trusted first choice in our community.

## OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Our team is committed to excellence at every opportunity to serve our guests and our community.

We will consistently deliver a trusted, welcoming, and personalized experience.

SERVICE • INTEGRITY • UNITY

*You're at home here.*







You're at home here.

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Values, Vision, Mission

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WE ARE  
WE ARE  
WE ARE

MEMBERS  
OWNERS  
CO-OP

## about us

Prairie North Co-op operates out of 18 locations – from St. Brieux, Spalding and Naicam in the west; to Melfort in the north; and Archerwill and Kelvington in the east. We serve our members with products and services that help build, feed, fuel and grow the communities in which we live and do business.

As a co-operative, we are a different kind of business; we are not only working for our communities, but we are also owned by our community. Co-ops embed sustainability in their business by planning and investing for the long term, with the community and environment in mind; they work to create jobs; and they partner with other organizations and local businesses. Prairie North Co-op profits do not leave the community, they go back into it – and back to our members. We take pride in our community involvement and our commitment to providing quality products and services.

Prairie North Co-op employs 292 people and serves almost 13,000 members. We continue the tradition of giving back, not only in patronage refunds to our members, but also through financial support to a number of local organizations. In 2020, sponsorship and donations totalled almost \$115,000 Locally invested. Community-minded. Lifetime membership benefits. We are Co-op.

## YOUR PRAIRIE NORTH CO-OP



## FINALIST CRS EXCELLENCE IN HEALTH & SAFETY AWARD

**RANKED**  
**#51**  
ON THE TOP  
100 COMPANIES  
LIST IN 2020 BY  
SASKBUSINESS  
MAGAZINE  
(UP TO 25 SPOTS)



**\$115,314,746**  
IN SALES FOR 2020



# message from the General Manager



We are proud to present our 2020 Sustainability Report. For us, sustainability means looking through the lens of the social, economic, and environmental effects of our business as we plan and make decisions to ensure viable operations while having a positive impact on the people and communities we serve. This is also referred to as the triple bottom line. It represents shared value – the idea that the success of our Co-op and health of our communities are mutually dependent.

In Prairie North Co-op, sustainability drives the facilities decisions that we make around environmental practises, waste reduction and energy efficiency. Sustainability also drives our Ag Division's recycling

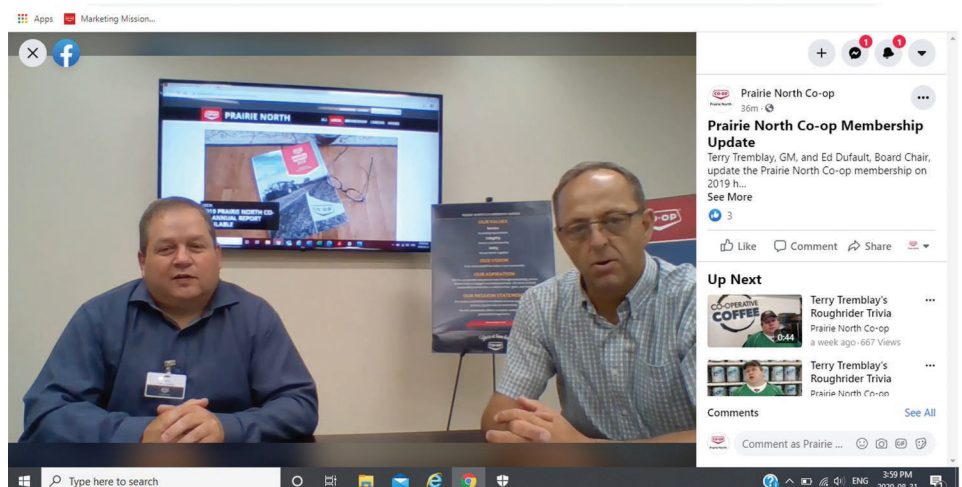
efforts for pesticide and seed containers, used oil containers, tires, and batteries. It is our Food Division's adoption of the LOOP program for food waste diversion and our commitment to sourcing local food suppliers to reduce the environmental impacts of transportation. Sustainability is the choice of chemicals we use in our car wash in Melfort and how the water used is treated before it returns to the municipal system. And sustainability is employing local people and supporting local projects and organizations so that our members take pride in being a part of our co-operative and our customers feel good about supporting us.

2020 presented its challenges for Prairie North Co-op. COVID-19 tested our ability to pivot and respond quickly to the consumer guidelines and practises mandated by the public health authority at the onset of the pandemic. As the year unfolded, we were asked to adapt to changing regulations and public health orders. Some of the decisions made from necessity during the pandemic, we have adopted as "better practises" for our business going forward. Some examples of this are offering an online grocery ordering and online payment option; and embracing Zoom technology for meetings.

There were bright spots in 2020. Despite the challenges, we were successful in meeting a number of our strategic priorities related to long term value add and economic viability. Additionally, we were proud to be in a position to partner with local organizations and community groups to soften the blow of the pandemic for our community's most vulnerable.

Co-ops have long believed in being a responsible business – protecting our members' investments while also considering our people, our communities and our environment. We are Proud. We are Local. We are Co-op.

-Terry Tremblay, General Manager



## environment

One of the effects of social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic is that greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions have decreased around the world. In part, this can be attributed to the transportation sector, with fewer personal vehicles on the road as people work from home and fewer planes in the air as countries close their borders to non-essential travel.

Sourcing food from local producers reduces the distance from farm to table. This means less distance travelled to transport the goods and less time spent in refrigerated storage units, resulting in fewer GHG emissions. Supporting local producers can give consumers peace of mind when they know where their food comes from, and that it was picked at the peak of freshness.

A new agronomic program called GROWN WITH PURPOSE™ helps push yields and increase efficiency with on-farm practices that are mindful of air, soil and water quality. The cornerstone of the program is 4R Nutrient Stewardship, a set of principles that promote using the right product, in the right place, in the right rate (quantity) at the right time. Local producers can sign up for the program through our Agro Team.

## I ♥ Local.

Hundreds of products that we offer for sale in our retails are grown, produced, and manufactured in Saskatchewan. From the meat, fresh fish and produce in our food stores, to the Just Bite Me bug bite and sting treatment and rubber mulch and landscaping products in our home and building centres. Our liquor departments in Archerwill, Kelvington, Spalding and St. Brieux stock wines, spirits and beer from a number of local Saskatchewan distilleries and vendors and Prairie North Co-op cardlocks, gas bars, and bulk petroleum departments fuel our trading area with product from the Co-op Refinery located in Saskatchewan.

### FOOD WASTE DIVERSION

The amount of food lost or wasted in Canada every year is staggering – an estimated \$49.5 billion is considered avoidable according to one report.



1. We take 100% of the potentially wasted food from ANY retail grocery and ensure that it goes to its highest and best use:
  - Feeding People
  - Feeding Animals
  - Feeding the Soil
2. We can do this anywhere in Canada without the need of expensive infrastructure, or lengthy turnaround.
3. We do it in a way that benefits all participants, providing ongoing support to stores and farms to ensure best use of the surplus.

## OUR FIVE STEPS FOR WASTE REDUCTION



1. Source reduction
2. Diverting edible food to humanitarian organizations (if requested by the store)
3. Diverting food waste as feed
4. Diverting food waste as fuel
5. Diverting food waste as composting material





This is a significant challenge for the Co-operative Retailing System (CRS) too, one that has environmental, economic and social consequences. This is why reducing food waste is a priority.

Over the past nine months, FCL and a number of local Co-ops, have been working on a food waste diversion pilot program. This program aims to help local Co-ops divert food waste such as trimmings and past best-before dated foods from the landfill while also reducing waste disposal costs. The program utilizes a partnership with Loop Resources, a social enterprise that helps connect food stores with local farmers and redirect the food waste to feed animals.

**WE ARE MEMBERS. WE ARE OWNERS. WE ARE CO-OP AND WE ARE COMMITTED TO . . .**

Reducing our environmental footprint through:

- Increasing recycling and re-use efforts through waste minimization
- Promotion of the Love Local reusable bags and charging a nominal fee for plastic bags to encourage reusable bag use
- Committing to efficient renovations and upgrades to facilities and equipment
- Putting a priority on partnering with those that are considerate of environmental effects and accountability
- Installation of energy efficient lighting and refrigeration

Supporting Sustainable Development by:

- Collaborating with Federated Co-operatives Limited, Engineering Associations and communities to grow sustainably, considering social, economic and environmental effects
- Building and incorporating innovative infrastructure to support operations and minimize resource use

Engaging in Sustainability Issues

- Communicating with our team members, members, and communities on sustainability issues, goals and efforts through newsletters and meetings



# LOOK FOR LOCAL!

Look for these stamps in-store today!



**made in SASKATCHEWAN**



**MADE IN WESTERN CANADA**

# locally invested community-minded



## 2020 AT A GLANCE



At Prairie North Co-op we strive to make our communities better places to live, work and play through sponsorship and donations.

In the face of the pandemic, many community events were cancelled that had typically been supported in past years. School programming, graduations and sports team were also negatively impacted; however, from the onset of COVID-19 we made an effort to reach out and partner with those organizations providing services to the individuals and families hardest hit by the pandemic.

Just one example of this was Fuel Good Day which saw 10 cents from every litre of gas pumped donated to a local charity. On September 15th, the communities of Archerwill, Kelvington, Melfort, Naicam, Spalding and St. Brieux fuelled up in support of North East Outreach and Support Services (NEOSS). In addition to the over 50,000 litres of fuel sold, 700 hamburger lunches and over 100 Co-operative Coffee and Big Cool drinks were purchased that day which resulted in a donation of \$10,000.

Says Louise Schweitzer, Executive Director of NEOSS, as she reflects on the donations, the day and what it means for her organization, "We, as an organization, have seen the pandemic create fundraising challenges which has left our



**SCHOLARSHIPS GIVEN IS \$2,000**



**FUEL GOOD DAY - \$10,000 RAISED**



**RETURNED TO MEMBERS IN EQUITY & CASH BACK \$1,698,128**





You're at home here.

programming and services in a vulnerable state. To have Prairie North Co-op, provide us with this type of assistance means the world.”

Other examples can be found in the donations that were made to local food banks in the communities of Kelvington and Melfort, the donations of funds and kitty litter to the NE SPCA, and the donation of materials for the North Central Health Care Foundation Melfort Hospital Heliport build.

Sometimes donations and/or sponsorship take the form of dollars and sometimes they are materials and/or volunteer hours. Communities in Full Colour is a program that gives us an opportunity to freshen up community spaces by donating CO-OP® Imagine Paint to public projects and initiatives. In 2020 we donated 150 gallons of paint throughout our trading area.

Fridays tend to be a bit more “casual” at Prairie North Co-op as the majority of our team members sport red Casual for a Cause t-shirts. Casual for a Cause is a voluntary program in which employees can opt to have \$1 deducted from each paycheck. Almost 95% of employees participated in 2020 which resulted in \$5694 raised. A call was put out for charity suggestions and staff voted STARS Air Ambulance as the recipient for the funds collected in 2020.

In 2020, Prairie North Co-op donated \$109,000 to over 220 community organizations and non-profit groups.



**IN ADDITION TO THOSE MENTIONED, LISTED ARE JUST SOME OF THE COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS TO HAVE RECEIVED OUR SUPPORT OVER THE LAST YEAR:**

Archerwill Centennial Centre  
Archerwill Rodeo Grounds  
Habitat for Humanity  
Kelvington Grow Field Project  
Kelvington Swimming Pool  
Kelvington KidSport  
Kelvington High School  
Kelvington Rodeo  
Klinger's Trail  
Lintlaw Memorial Christmas Tree  
Melfort Canada Day Fireworks  
Melfort Museum  
Melfort Mustangs  
Melfort Crokicurl  
Naicam Golf Course  
Naicam Playground  
Naicam Senior Vikings Hockey  
Naicam Curling Rink  
Okla Community Hall  
Salvation Army  
St. Front Curling Rink  
Spalding Library  
St. Brieux Theatre

## team member engagement



By living our values of service, integrity, and unity, Prairie North is proud of the entire team for working together and supporting each other throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. This level of support enabled our business to respond quickly to changing circumstances. Kudos go to those team members who were willing to move from our gas bars and home centres to support our food store staff. When we added online ordering and curbside pick-up to our existing free deliver service, deliveries increased from less than 100/week to about 1500/week in the early days of the pandemic. By our team pulling together, Prairie North is proud to report zero involuntary layoffs in 2020.



In 2020, all Prairie North team members were invited to offer their feedback, feelings, and thoughts on a variety of workplace topics through an employee engagement survey. Our last employee engagement survey occurred in 2018. We are pleased to report that this time around, we realized an improvement in all eighteen engagement dimensions illustrated in the recent survey. The biggest positive increases came from the dimensions of Talent & Staffing (+12), communication (+12), Diversity & Inclusion (+10) and Safety (+7).



WE HAVE SOME REMARKABLE PEOPLE WORKING FOR US, FOLLOWING ARE THE ONES WHO ARE CELEBRATED WORK ANNIVERSARIES IN 2020:

Angie Paynter, Melfort (5)

Vic Angelo Baes, Kelvington (5)

Terry Horan, Kelvington (20)

Kyle Ledger, Melfort (5)

Landon Rookes, Kelvington (5)

Dolsie Rupps, Kelvington (25)

Bobbie Torrie, St. Brieux (5)

Denise Weir, Naicam (5)

Kelly Romaniuk, Naicam (30)

Patti Biehn, Kelvington (5)

Crystal Elmy, Kelvington (10)

Krista Gorkoff, Melfort (5)

Crystal Lee, Melfort (5)

Shelly Mortenson, Melfort (20)

Patrick Schmidtheisler, Melfort (5)

Lorraine Wilk, Melfort (40)

Librado Baes, Kelvington (5)

Celeste Skiftun, Melfort (10)

Shawn Dotschkat, Melfort (5)

Marilyn Pigula, Naicam (20)

Crystal Patterson, Archerwill (5)

Kevin Johnson, Kelvington (10)

Jacob Hart, Archerwill (5)

Blaize Lipinski, Archerwill (10)

Kalvin MacDonald, Archerwill (30)

Shylo Nemeth, Melfort (30)

Lisa Sharpen, Archerwill (25)

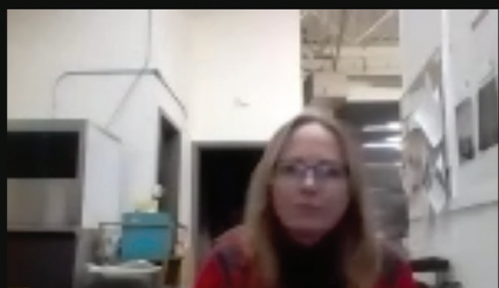
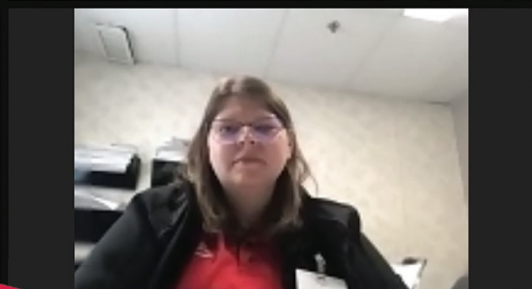
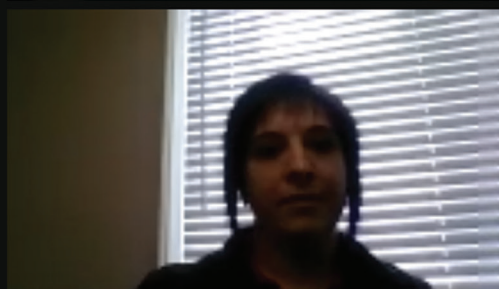
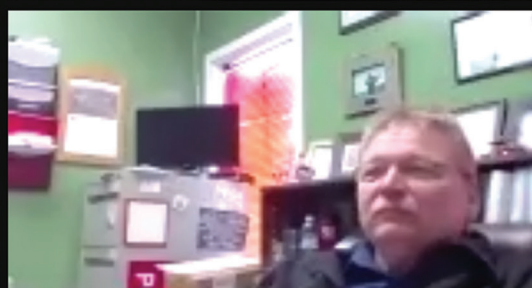
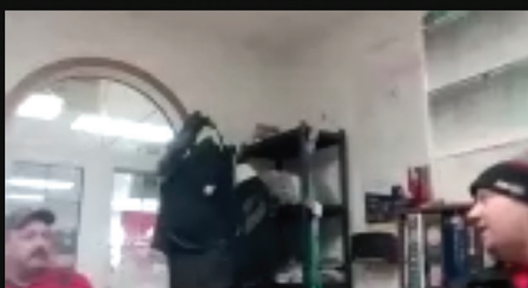
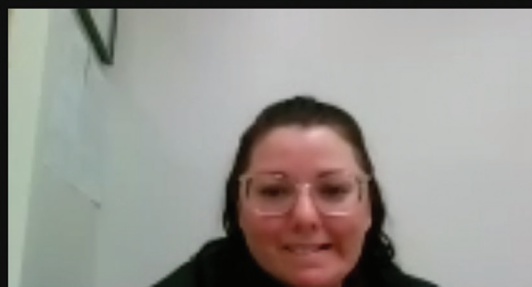
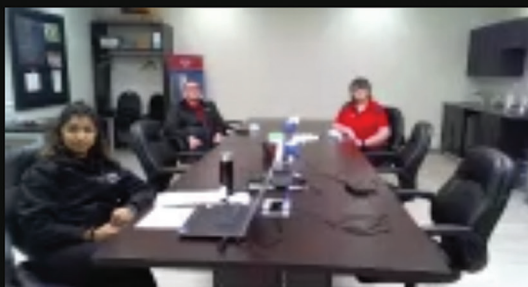
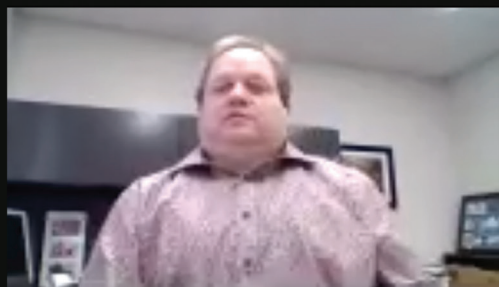
Carmen Willson, Kelvington (10)

Brad Guy, Kelvington (5)

Curtis Holmes, Naicam (20)

Rudy Althouse, Naicam (5)





**We Are Proud. We Are Local.**

**We Are Co-op**

*In a nutshell, sustainability comes down to profitability with a conscience. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the amazing Prairie North Co-op employees for all that they have done over the past year. This report reflects their hard work and dedication in a time of need and uncertainty.*

**- Terry Tremblay**

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**For more information, please contact:**

Box 1450

Melfort, SK,

S0E 1A0

PHONE: (306) 752-9381

FAX: (306) 752-5166

WEBSITE: [www.prairienorthco-op.crs](http://www.prairienorthco-op.crs)