

**Minister of
Economic Development
and Trade**

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July 27, 2011

Ms. Denyse Guy
Executive Director
Ontario Co-operative Association
101-450 Speedvale Avenue West
Guelph ON N1H 7Y6

Dear Ms. Guy:

On behalf of Premier Dalton McGuinty, I would like to congratulate you on the declaration by the United Nations of 2012 as International Year of Co-operatives.

Our government recognizes the importance of co-operative initiatives. We also value the significant contributions that the many different co-operatives make to the economic and socio-economic well-being of the province.

I share your enthusiasm for this United Nations initiative as it provides an excellent opportunity to recognize how the co-operative business model helps promote economic development within Ontario, across Canada, and globally.

The Ministry of Economic Development and Trade has been working with the Ontario Co-operative Association over the past year to support co-operatives in Ontario. This work includes ensuring co-operative representation on the Small Business Agency of Ontario (SBAO). We are also working with our colleagues at the Ministry of Government Services and Industry Canada to ensure that the co-operative business model is being presented as a business model to those using key government websites such as One-Source for Business and Canada Business Ontario.

Supporting the International Year of Co-operatives means increasing awareness about the co-operative model in our communities. The efforts we are making to educate our network of Small Business Enterprise Centres and improve access to information on co-operatives with our communications are examples of how we can work together to support this objective.

Thank you for writing, and I look forward to the International Year of Co-operatives in 2012.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Sandra Pupatello'.

Sandra Pupatello
Minister

c: The Honourable Dalton McGuinty, Premier