



Education is the Key

Co-op Education in the High School Curriculum

In 1979, the Newfoundland Co-operative Society (NCS), the former name of the Newfoundland & Labrador Federation of Co-operatives (NLFC), was looking into the possibility of adding some co-operative educational materials to the High School curriculum. At that time, co-operative educational material did not exist in schools, and the NCS wanted to prioritize educating youth on co-ops.

“It seems that if co-operatives are to grow and prosper in our province, it is the young people who must be reached by our educational programs and this is what the Co-operation Kit was designed to do.”

– Cyril Folkes, NCS President, July 1979.

- **Manual:** A User’s Manual
- **07 Study Guides:** History & Development, Philosophy & Principles, Comparative Business, Types of Co-operatives, Credit Unions, Contemporary Problems, Case Study.
- **Presentation:** A 22 Minute slide-tape presentation
- **02 Audio Cassettes:** “The Fredericton Direct Charge Fun Show” (a radio style documentary), and “Red Bay” (a docu-drama)
- **02 Authorized Reprints:** “Consumer Co-operation” and “The People’s Banks of Alphonse Desjardins”
- **Co-op Atlantic Publications:** What Does Co-op Mean? You and the Co-op (comic).



The “Co-operation Kit” was designed by Co-op Atlantic in collaboration with the Co-op College in 1978. The NCS obtained a copy of the kit which contained colour slides, teacher manuals, and a variety of other materials. The NCS gave it to a High School teacher to use on a trial basis and the Co-operation Kit was positively received.

As a result, the NCS sought the permission of the Department of Education to have the kits placed in all High Schools for grades 7-11 in the province. The Kit then became the property of the Department and was periodically updated to ensure that it did not become obsolete.



Consequently, on March 1979, NCS planned to publish a number of educational pamphlets dealing with co-operatives in Newfoundland and Labrador. First effort of publication was titled “How to form a cooperative in Newfoundland?” The pamphlet publication aimed to set out a number of steps explaining how an interested group might go about forming its own co-operative, and it was in the curriculum in the new academic year of 1980. These initiatives prove that along with other problem-solving approaches, NLFC emphasized on educating people about co-operatives because,

“A co-operative with no educational program is in mortal danger.”