



NEWS 1 | The Inaugural Assembly of COOP STORE Ulsan



iCOOP Korea’s specialized store management company, ‘COOP STORE Ulsan’ was established to carry out one of the iCOOP KOREA’s key policies, ‘the centralization of businesses and differentiation of activities’.

On Sep 22, about 40 delegates celebrated its establishment at the inaugural assembly. Following the report on the proceedings and congratulatory messages, the inaugural assembly approved the agendas including the constitution, the payment for stocks, the election of board members, the 2013 annual business plan and budget.

CHO Hyangsuk (auditor of iCOOP Ulsan citizen co-op) was elected to represent the company. As board members and auditor, LEE Kyoungsook (iCOOP Ulsan co-op), HWANG Hyeju(iCOOP Ulsan citizen co-op) and LEE Jeongkyu (iCOOP Ulsan co-op) were named.

“Efficient store operation of COOP STORE Ulsan will lead to the stabilization of co-operatives in Ulsan region, providing them solid foundation for practicing other activities and cooperation among co-operatives.” Cho said.

Located in the office of iCOOP Ulsan citizen co-op, COOP STORE Ulsan was invested by iCOOP Ulsan citizen co-op, iCOOP Ulsan co-op, COOP STORE and iCOOP UNION, the business part of iCOOP KOREA.

NEWS 2

2013 Workshop for iCOOP Women Producers

The first workshop for women producers in Jeju region was held from 26 to 28 in September. Total 25 participants including 16 producers and 9 employees shared their experiences and challenges in farming, strengthened the relationship between producers and employees, and learned iCOOP KOREA's production policy more precisely.



As the first program, they visited the Gurye Natural Dream Park as a field trip. Looking around factories manufacturing noodles, Korean traditional snacks and rice wine, they heard the detailed explanation on the expected effects and competitiveness by getting the factories, logistic centers and experience centers together. Also, they found the industrial complex would benefit all stakeholders by allowing members to purchase safer food and producers to secure stable production and extra income.

On Sep 27, to introduce iCOOP KOREA's system designed for members and producers, various lectures were delivered with the themes of 'iCOOP KOREA's history and members' activities', 'Case study: members' activities on products', 'The journey to establish iCOOP Namwon community center' and 'Member-loan for pre-purchase of domestic grains fund'. Especially, the lecture on 'iCOOP KOREA's production policy' by KIM Kyunseob, the executive director of iCOOP UNION, could give them opportunity to build new awareness and understand sustainable production. After lectures, women producers discussed prospects of iCOOP KOREA and producers' roles in iCOOP KOREA's production policy by groups.

One producer said "Some parts of the policy had been a little hard to understand for me, but this workshop helps me understand it more thoroughly. We took the first step toward strong interaction among members, producers and employees, with this opportunity."

NEWS 3

Having Grown with Communities Together - 20th Anniversary of iCOOP Incheon Coop and 10th Anniversary of iCOOP Busan Coop

iCOOP KOREA's 2 member co-ops celebrated their anniversaries, respectively.

iCOOP Incheon coop marked 20th anniversary. In 1992, Incheon co-op, first started as the Bupyong co-op with 50 members and divided into 3 member co-ops, Incheon, Incheon Michuhol and Gyeyang. Currently, Incheon co-op has grown to 1,579 members and operates 3 Natural Dream stores.



At the 20th anniversary celebration on Sep 28, members and community people attended to celebrate. Performances by Korean traditional music band and special choir for the anniversary composed of members and employees, congratulatory message and members' funny video messages recorded over 6 months were presented.



SIN Bok-su, the former chairperson of Incheon co-op and current chairperson of iCOOP UNION was awarded an achievement award. "Today reminds me of the good old days. Those who strived for cooperative movement together are still with me as executives, employees and active members in iCOOP KOREA. And it makes me very proud that we could continue to dream together." Another awardee, JUNG Youngsil who was a chairperson of Incheon co-op and is currently working as a board member delivered an address of thanks saying she was moved to see the fruit of 20 years' hard work and felt deep solidarity and affection once again.

"As senior co-op in iCOOP KOREA, we will communicate more closely with the community to solve problems in our lives and make a better world. ", concluded BAE Heesu, the chairperson of Incheon co-op.



Following celebration, about 300 members and community people enjoyed various experience events such as food tasting, puzzle game and Korean traditional game at festival which was held outdoors to raise awareness of Incheon co-op.



The event to mark iCOOP Busan co-ops' 10th anniversary was held on Oct 1. With the slogan 'iCOOP changed the map of Busan', co-ops in Busan region celebrated it with greeting video messages, performance of Korean traditional percussion band, members' dance performance and members' storytelling of their 10 years' experiences. KIM Youngsook, the former chairperson of Busan Prunbada co-op, was awarded an achievement award.

After the event, the lecture of 'Sustainable social economy and co-operatives' by JUNG Tae-in, the director of Research Institute for New Society and its discussion session were conducted.

NEWS 4 2014 Business Plans and Key Policies of iCOOP KOREA

On Oct 15, about 300 members and employees attended at the briefing session of 2014 business plans and key policies of iCOOP KOREA held by iCOOP Consumer Activities

The consensus among presenters was that iCOOP KOREA should have competitive power through innovation under the current circumstances of the global economic crisis and climate change.



With 3 topics, 2014 business plan, reflection of co-operative and supply & demand policy, and autonomous work and wage policy, presentations and open discussion were conducted with the invited external specialists including MOON Bokyung, the executive director of Korea Social Economy Network.

KIM Misun, the chairperson of iCOOP Yangcheon coop and the chairman of promotion committee for 2013 business plans, explained, "For consumer co-operatives to survive in the competitive and rapidly changing market environment and market, we should focus on the 'new market' that can be the our brand products, which is ONLY accessible through our Natural Dream stores. Especially, we should create the platform to penetrate in the 'new market', being different from other conventional ones, as a springboard for iCOOP KOREA."

To perform the aim abovementioned, followings are confirmed as the iCOOP Korea's 2014 core tasks. :

- 1) strengthening cooperative values (monthly membership due reduction, increase in investment fee on purchasing products, active members funding and strengthening autonomous working environment);
- 2) cooperation among co-operatives (starting the product availability system at each store and supply chain management (SCM), starts-up iCOOP Community credit co-op, expanding iCOOP gift card usage to new territories, and stabilizing iCOOP credit card business);
- 3) enhanced implementation of 4th stage of development goal (product planning team for enhancing PB brand, commodity price stabilization and strengthening iCOOP KOREA's independent certification system, quality of products, cluster project and producer members) were developed.

Additionally, the independent businesses of member co-ops, provision of basic mutual aid services, and publicness strengthening activities were included as the core activities.

Specific business plans include 1) 40,000 membership increase (total 240,000 members); 2) KRW 480 billion of turnover (estimated turnover of 2013 is KRW420 billion); 3) new 25 stores to open (total 165 stores) .

With background explanation of climate change and economic crisis worldwide, Chairperson Kim said, "The business of iCOOP KOREA has focused on gaining confidence from members. However, we are to place priority to the ONLY image of our brand. By definition, our ultimate goal of 2014 business is to 'upgrade'."



Korea and Japan environmental activists have exchanged their experiences and knowledge on

the current states of environment and wetland through annual forum since 2008, the year the Ramsar Convention was held. This year's forum, subtitled as the 'Korea-Japan NGO forum for preparation of UNCBD-COP12 and biodiversity conservation' was to prepare for the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD) which will be held in Pyeong-chang, Korea two months later.



On Sep 18 and 19, the forum was held in Busan Univ. by Korea Wetland NGO Network and Ramsar Network Japan. Long-term marine bio research team of Busan Univ., KBON(Korea Biodiversity Observation Network), KNLTER(Korea National Long-term Ecological Research) and iCOOP Seed Foundation supported the event. Rice paddy wetland research team in iCOOP KOREA also participated in the forum.



Korean government made the proceeding report of preparing UNCBD-COP12 and assured that they will reflect various opinions from civil society activists for successful host of the international conference.

Including environmental issues, participants shared people's various efforts on the issues like the nuclear accident in Japan, GMO foods and their impact on biodiversity and the significance of biodiversity in agriculture. They made a joint statement for media and government after discussions so that UNCBD-COP12 could be a major step forward the conservation of biodiversity in the world.

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