The first two decades of the 21st century have seen a rapid realignment of the food and agriculture sectors with significant implications for cooperatives (co-ops). The pace of these changes are remarkable in terms of their breadth and depth. Consolidation has accelerated at each link in the value chain, from the producer all the way to the retailer; international markets have become the destination for an ever-growing share of U.S. agriculture; and consumer demands are driving change all the way down to the farm gate.

Co-ops have not been immune to any of these trends. As we look toward the 100th anniversary of the Capper-Volstead Act in 2022, co-ops are evolving as rapidly now as at any point in the past century. However, throughout this period, providing value to their producer-owners remains at the core of the co-op model. The essays in this volume put a spotlight on how co-ops are accomplishing this in the 21st century and form a valuable resource to help guide co-ops and their members going forward.