

B4 – Membership Rights and Responsibilities (Formerly B-9)

The General Manager must not allow member-owners to be uninformed or misinformed of their rights and responsibilities.

The GM must not:

1. Allow any individual to become a member-owner unless that individual meets the eligibility requirements described in our Bylaws, and pays the current equity.
2. Create or implement a member-owner equity system without the following qualities:
 - a. Member-owners are informed that equity investments are a) at risk, and b) generally refundable, though the Board retains the right to withhold refunds when necessary to protect the Cooperative's financial viability.
 - b. Equity will not be refunded if such refunds would lead to a net decrease in total member-owner paid-in equity at the end of any reporting period, or would risk, cause or exacerbate non-compliance with any Financial Condition policy.
3. Implement a patronage dividend system that does not:
 - a. Comply with IRS regulations.
 - b. Allow the Board to examine a range of options and implications, so the Board can make a timely determination each year concerning how much, if any, of the Cooperative's net profit will be allocated and distributed to member-owners.
4. Fail to insure ongoing education program on cooperatives and nutrition and health, using established channels such as newsletter, website, forums, blogs.
5. Fail to insure ongoing communication program on co-op news using established channels such as newsletter, website, forums, blogs.
6. Fail to insure opportunities for member-owners to participate in the cooperative.