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CASE STUDIES IN RURAL CO-OPERATIVES

Three Studies of the Organisation and  
Management of Rural Co-operatives Providing  
Post-Harvest Facilities in the Kiwifruit Industry

A Research Report Presented in Partial Fulfilment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of  
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ABSTRACT

The co-operative ownership structure is one that is commonly encountered in New Zealand's agricultural industry. This type of organisation would appear to have a number of natural advantages that should make it very competitive in modern agri-business. However it is apparent at least some co-operatives have not lived up to their members' expectations. This research project has been undertaken to identify some of the problems of co-operative enterprise and to provide some possible strategies to improve their operation.

This report examines the management and organisational practices of three co-operative enterprises providing post-harvest facilities in the Kiwifruit industry. The research follows a longitudinal case study approach, with each co-operative described in terms of the six dimensions of history, facilities, shareholding, direction, operation and finance. The material generated by the study is discussed within a framework of central issues, established from evidence of other co-operative activity, both in New Zealand and overseas.

The report concludes with a description of some 14 common problems, and a discussion concerning the effectiveness of management and organisational measures

that have been implemented as possible solutions. It then goes on to outline 10 general strategies that could be of significance in the improved operation of rural co-operatives.

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