

MCGG coop beneficial to farmers, says long time member



O.W. Cutsforth

Formation of the Morrow County Grain Growers cooperative "was immensely beneficial to the farmers in Morrow County," says long-time wheat farmer, and one of the few people still around who participated in the co-op since its infancy - O. W. Cutsforth.

Prior to the co-op, Cutsforth recalls that wheat farmers were often shortchanged, and sometimes outright robbed, by private grain dealers. "We were pretty much the victims of individual buyers," he says. He recalls one year when a buyer collected almost every-

one's crop, sold it and skipped town with the money. "Just about everyone around lost their crop that year," he says.

"I don't know what happened to that guy, if he ever got caught and went to jail or what."

Cutsforth remembers other instances when the weight farmers were paid for in Heppner ended up much lower than the weight when dealers sold the wheat in Portland. "The co-op was immensely beneficial to the farmer in Morrow County. It saved them money on storage and gave

them collective bargaining when they sold," he says. He also recalls that the

Grain Growers got into the storage business mainly in the 1940s, when World War II

caused a shortage of burlap sacks, which were then used for grain shipment.

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