

29 C.F.R. § 780.133

Farmers' cooperative as a "farmer."

(a) The phrase "by a farmer" covers practices performed either by the farmer himself or by the farmer through his employees. Employees of a farmers' cooperative association, however, are employed not by the individual farmers who compose its membership or who are its stockholders, but by the cooperative association itself. Cooperative associations whether in the corporate form or not, are distinct, separate entities from the farmers who own or compose them. The work performed by a farmers' cooperative association is not work performed "by a farmer" but for farmers. Therefore, employees of a farmers' cooperative association are not generally engaged in any practices performed "by a farmer" within the meaning of section 3(f) (*Farmers Reservoir Co. v. McComb*, 337 U.S. 755; *Goldberg v. Crowley Ridge Ass'n.*, 295 F. 2d 7; *McComb v. Puerto Rico Tobacco Marketing Co-op Ass'n.*, 80 F. Supp. 953, 181 F. 2d 697). The legislative history of the Act supports this interpretation. Statutes usually cite farmers' cooperative associations in express terms if it is intended that they be included. The omission of express language from the Fair Labor Standards Act is significant since many unsuccessful attempts were made on the floor of Congress to secure special treatment for such cooperatives.

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