WESTCO®

SERVICE | SOLUTIONS | SUCCESS

Our History

1940's

1942 – Consumers Cooperative Association is founded when ten individuals put up $10 each to form the equity used to purchase the gas station located at 3rd & Black Hills in Alliance. Joseph J. Kirchner is the company's first General Manager, serving in the position until 1978.

1948 – Kirchner served on the Farmland Board, helping establish the Coop Retirement Plan.

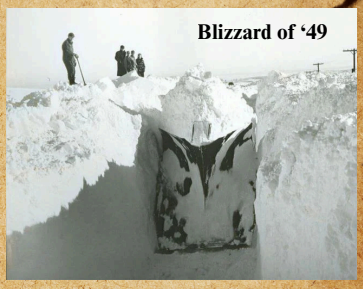
1949 - During the Great Blizzard of 1949, Consumers Cooperative Association, under the guidance and leadership of Joseph's son Harold, distinguished itself by making fuel deliveries at times and to places that other dealers were unwilling or unable to attempt.



Consumers Cooperative Association began in 1942 with the purchase of a gas station at 3rd & Black Hills in Alliance. The spot still services the cooperative today, as the location of the Corporate Office.



Joseph J. Kirchner



Blizzard of '49

1950's

1950 – Consumers Cooperative Association opens a grocery store, directly west of the gas station at 3rd & Black Hills.

1956 - Consumers Cooperative Association enters the fertilizer business (bags only). Joseph's son, Richard Kircher becomes the Fertilizer Manager, learning the fertilizer and chemical business from the ground up.



Full Service Gas Station attendant.

Grocery Store Grand Opening 1950.



1960's

1960 - After operating for a decade, Consumers closes the grocery store at 3rd & Black Hills in Alliance. According to the late Ray Crawford, who served on the Board of Directors from 1951-1974, the store was a tremendous struggle. However, the building would continue to serve the cooperative operating as its Tire Center until it was destroyed by fire in 2022.

1963 – Constructed first dry fertilizer plant and blender.

1969 – Consumer's reaches $1 million in sales for the first time.



Several vehicles pump fuel outside the cooperative's original gas station.



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1970's

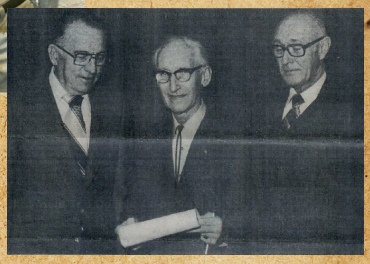
1973 – Fertilizer Division Manager Richard Kirchner was able to navigate Consumers through a national fertilizer shortage. Kirchner planned ahead, and not only had enough fertilizer for his customers, but was able to sell a significant amount to competitors so they could serve their farmers.

1977 – A merger with Hay Springs Oil, enabled Consumers to enter the propane business, adding many valuable customers in the Hay Springs and Mirage Flats area.

1978 – Harold Kirchner becomes General Manager, succeeding his father Joseph.



Roy Chelf, Joe Kirchner, and Ray Barry announce at the 1974 Annual Meeting, that Consumers Cooperative surpassed $3 million in Sales for the fiscal year.



Harold and Richard Kirchner.

1980's

1980s – Harold Kircher navigated the cooperative through the farm crisis of the 1980s, when collapsing food markets forced many farmers out of business.

1980's - Consumers builds a Tire Center next to the gas station at 3rd & Black Hills in Alliance. Eventually, bays are added onto the old grocery store building and Tire Center moves across the street.

1981 – Consumers purchases Martha's gas station.

1982 – Cooperative changes its name from Consumers Cooperative Association to Alliance Coop Association. The Alliance Coop Association Car Care Center is also built in 1982.

1983 – Company builds bean elevator.

1983 – Alliance Coop purchases Terry's Gas Station.

1988 – Harold & Richard Kirchner retire. Joe L. Kirchner is named General Manager. This is the same year that New Alliance Bean & Grain Co. is formed.





COOP®
ALLIANCE
COOPERATIVE
ASSOCIATION



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1990's

1992 – Mark Thompson becomes General Manager.

1993 – Cooperative changes name to WESTERN Cooperative Co. or WESTCO to better represent the growing trade area.

1998- Acquires Farm & Ranch Fertilizer of Oshkosh.

1999 – Acquires Hempel's of Alliance.

1999 - Joseph J. Kircher inducted into the Nebraska Cooperative Council Hall of Fame.



Mark Thompson



L-R: Mark Thompson, Robert Elliott, Shawn Nelson and David Briggs.

2000's

2000 – David Briggs becomes General Manager. Under Briggs' leadership, the cooperative would continue to grow and expand its territory, with over 30 acquisitions from 1998-2025.

2002 – Acquires Blu-Gas of Rushville and Pioneer of Chadron and Gordon.

2003 - Acquires Eberspecher of Harrison, Panhandle Coop Bulk Fuel in Crawford and Marv's LP Gas of Crawford.

2004 – Acquires Valley Tire of Oshkosh, Hix Oil of Gordon and Martie's of Lewellen.

2005 – Acquires Farmers Coop Petroleum of Hemingford, Rushville and Gordon, Slafter Oil of Scottsbluff, Haiston Oil of Scottsbluff, Didier & Moore of Harrison, Jirdon Agri Chemicals of Morrill, Gering, and Torrington and Anderson Oil of Torrington. The latter two acquisitions mark WESTCO's First properties outside of Nebraska.

2007 – Acquires Summerville Oil of Hay Springs.

2008 – Acquires Crossroads Mini Mart of Crawford, Bar 3 Feeds of Alliance & Ashby, Bartow Oil of Lusk.

2009 – Acquires Muddy Creek Oil & Gas of Chadron and 21st Century Tire of Alliance.



David Briggs



Jirdon acquisition Nov. 1, 2005. L-R: Bill Siegel Jr., Esther Siegel, William Siegel Sr & David Briggs.



Crossroads Mini Mart in Crawford, was acquired by WESTCO on May 19, 2008.



Slafter Oil of Scottsbluff was acquired by WESTCO on July 25, 2008 and operated as a Division of WESTCO until 2021.

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2010's

2010 – Acquires New Alliance Bean & Grain of Alliance. Today, New Alliance operates as of of six Divisions of WESTCO, with locations in Alliance, Bridgeport, Hemingford, and Gering.

2011 – WESTCO's Western Aviation Division is formed as WESTCO acquires Reisig Brothers Spraying, of Scottsbluff and Last Past Aviation, of Alliance.

2011 – Robert Elliott is inducted into the Nebraska Cooperative Council Cooperative Hall of Fame. Elliott served nine years on the WESTCO Board of Directors, five of which as chairman. He also served on the New Alliance Bean and Grain Board of Directors and CHS Board of Directors for 10 years.

2013 – Acquires Frontier Mart of Torrington.

2014 – Acquires KC's Short Stop of Alliance.

2015 – Acquires Stateline Producers Coop of Bridgeport and Gering.

2017 – WESTCO Celebrates 75-years with open houses at its C-Store locations and a $75,000 donation to the Box Butte Health Foundation.

2017 – Acquires S&S LP Gas Company of Hemingford.



WESTCO acquires S&S LP Gas Co., from the Shaver Family of Hemingford on Oct. 2, 2017.
L-R: David Briggs, Bruce Shaver, Doug Shaver and WESTCO Petroleum Div. Manager Jess Wimmer.



Sunset at New Alliance - Alliance.



Western Aviation was formed in 2011 with the acquisitions of Reisig Brothers Spraying and Last Pass Aviation.



WESTCO Donates $75,000 to the Bos Butte Health Foundation in 2017 in honor of WESTCO's 75th anniversary.

2020's

2022 – Acquires the fertilizer plant in Wheatland, Wyoming from Frenchman Valley Coop, creating a seventh agronomy location for the company.

2022 – June 28, firefighters battled a fire at the WESTCO Tire Center at 3rd and Black Hills. Despite the building being a total loss, they fought for 18 hours to protect nearby WESTCO assets.

2023 – A grand opening for the new Tire Center was held on November 6th, 2023 at the corner of 10th Street and HWY 385. WESTCO also broke ground on a Dry Fertilizer Plant on the northwest edge of Alliance.

2023 – WESTCO records the best year to date with $187 million in sales, $123 million in assets and $11.9 million in net savings.

2024 – WESTCO finished construction on the Dry Fertilizer Plant and used during the season.

2024 – WESTCO makes budget, finishing the year at $8.77 million in net savings. The seventh best year on record.

2025 - Opened the new Agronomy Center offices creating a convenient one-stop shop for our customers when needing Feed, Seed, Fertilizer and Agronomy Services.

2025 - Automated Bagging System implemented at the New Alliance Bridgeport facility.

2025 - Acquires LaGrange Propane & Grain Co.



Firefighters battle a blase at the former WESTCO Tire Center location at 3rd & Black Hills in Alliance, in the early morning hours of June 28, 2022.



Construction on a new dry fertilizer plant northwest of Alliance began in 2023 and the facility began operating in February 2024.



WESTCO complex completed. Tire Center, Agronomy Center, and New Alliance bringing together our 3 largest divisions at one convenient location.



Automated Bagging System at New Alliance Bridgeport.

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