This is a view of the new service station of the Cloverbelt Cooperative Oil Association, Wausau, Wis., which runs a line of tank trucks throughout the surrounding country as well as a service station at one of the busy corners in Wausau. Manager Louie E. Doede declares that a “truck driver must be a salesman, collector, and diplomat” to render the best service to his association. The association has over 600 stockholding members besides 1,700 patrons whose dividends are gradually making stockholders of them by being applied on purchases of shares.

and hides. Supply and market transactions for the fiscal year ended April 30, 1940, amounted to over $290,000.

Patrons Mercantile Co.—Oldest of the locals is the Patrons Mercantile Co., organized in 1893—48 years ago. It operates a general retail store at Black Earth in Dane County. A wide variety of articles is handled, including groceries, feed, hardware, dry goods, seed, farm machinery and equipment, flour and sugar, coal, building materials, harness and other leather goods, petroleum products, salt and binder twine, and fertilizer. The co-op has more than 500 patrons. In addition to furnishing supplies to them it also markets as an accommodation some of their products such as wool, poultry, eggs, and hides. Sales of farm products in 1939 amounted to $5,000, and supplies sold at retail to almost $165,000. Between the spring of 1894, when it began operations, and the close of 1939, this local co-op did business totaling more than $6,000,000, and paid dividends—both stock and patronage—of over $200,000.

Greenville Cooperative Gas Co.—In addition to gasoline, kerosene, and other petroleum products, the Greenville Cooperative Gas Co. in Outagamie County sells coal, machinery, equipment and tires, hardware, fertilizer, and many other supplies. Sales made in the fiscal year ended August 31, 1939, aggregated more than $205,000. Since organization in 1931, the co-op has developed a membership of 1,600. This is one of the local cooperatives which makes purchases at wholesale through the Fox River Valley Cooperative Wholesale at Appleton.

Many Local Associations Affiliated with Wholesales

Many of the Wisconsin local cooperative purchasing associations are affiliated with wholesale supply cooperatives. The three largest of these are the Central Cooperative Wholesale at Superior, the Midland Cooperative Wholesale at Minneapolis, and the Farmers Union Central Exchange at
South St. Paul. These wholesales sell supplies amounting to millions of dollars annually. Petroleum products, automotive equipment and supplies, coal, paint, twine, and equipment for bulk and service station sales are some of the major supply items purchased from the Midland and Central Exchange. In subsequent paragraphs there is discussion of the services of the Central Wholesale, and also of the Wisconsin Cooperative Farm Supply Co. located in Madison, and the Fox River Valley Cooperative Wholesale at Appleton. By participating in the large-scale operations of the wholesales, the locals are able to increase their earnings.

A considerable number of dairy plants in Wisconsin purchase creamery machinery and supplies from the Land O'Lakes Creameries in Minneapolis in order to take advantage of its extensive supply services. In addition the locals may obtain assistance from Land O'Lakes in planning machinery installations, and in making and servicing such installations. Land O'Lakes also operates a feed department which is patronized by a large number of individuals and locals in Wisconsin.

Central Sells to 200 Associations

Central Cooperative Wholesale.—Of the wholesale supply cooperatives with headquarters in Wisconsin, the Central Cooperative Wholesale in Superior is the largest, transacting a 3½ million dollar a year business. It is a general wholesale organization, handling consumer merchandise and farm supplies. It sells to about 200 associations, mostly retail cooperative stores, approximately 130 of them being share-owning members. These locals have over 40,000 individual members and in addition about a third as many nonmember patrons. They serve a wide area in northern Wisconsin, the Michigan Upper Peninsula, northern Minnesota, and an eastern section of North Dakota. Although some of the locals are in cities, a large majority are in farming communities. Since organization in 1917, the Central has greatly increased the types of services that it renders. At Superior, it operates not only the main warehouse, but also a large bakery, a coffee roasting plant, and a feed mill. In Minnesota at Virginia, it has a branch warehouse and feed terminal. Limited wholesale stocks are maintained at Hancock in Wisconsin, at Ironwood and Trenary in Michigan, and at Wadena in Minnesota. Dis-