

Meet Your Cooperative's Board Of Directors

Kimber Hansen: "Everything Will Change"

Kimber Hansen is a farmer, responsible for the day-to-day running of the family farm near Edmore, growing seed corn for Pioneer.

A 1982 graduate of Montabella High School, he is a member of the Montcalm County Farm Bureau, serving on its board of directors, and has completed the Farm Bureau Leadership Training Program. He has been a member of HomeWorks Tri-County Electric since 1993.

He has already earned both the Credentialed Cooperative Director and Board Leadership certificates through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) and is in his second year representing HomeWorks on the board of MECA, our statewide association.

How did you become involved with the co-op?

"I basically grew up knowing about the co-op, especially with my dad (Laverne Hansen) on the board. I can remember my Dad talking about it; he said he learned a lot from being on the board and I thought it was something I would like to try."

"I've learned how vital electric co-ops were to the development of rural America. And we're still vital to the stability and security of our communities."

What does it mean to you to be on the board?

"I feel fortunate to be representing my district on the board, because it's such an exciting time with all the changes that are coming. I'm privileged to be a part of seeing that happen."

What are the highlights so far?

"Learning how cooperatives work, and discovering the ins and outs of the cooperative business. We're part of a much bigger cooperative network, as I've learned through the courses I've taken. Everyone supports everyone else, and it makes each of our organizations stronger."

What do you think of member self-regulation?

"I'm impressed that this co-op was a leader in returning to self-regulation. Members should be able to regulate their own non-profit business. Anytime we can get away from state regulation, it's a better way to go."



Kimber Hansen preparing for spring planting at his family's farm near Edmore.

What challenges do you see ahead?

"Everything we do, and how we do it, will change in the next few years. How electricity is generated, for example, with the Clean Power Plan shutting down coal-fired generation plants. Possibly some aspects of our distribution business [will change], too, as more people put in their own solar systems. HomeWorks' Community Solar Garden at Portland is a big plus for us; we just need one up here [at the northern end of the service area] so all our members can see how a solar system works."

How can members get more involved?

"The first step is to attend District Meetings. There are volunteer positions to participate with, like being a delegate or a district officer. Second, ask questions, so we can answer them and respond to your concerns. Finally, attend the Annual Meeting in August as a delegate and become aware of the co-op's opportunities and challenges." ■



On your board of directors, Kimber represents District 4, which is Montcalm County, except Bloomer, Crystal, and Evergreen townships, which are part of District 5. He was elected to the board in 2014.