

Director Candidates: Region 3 - Ill. (4-year term), Candidate 1 of 2



Kurt Hohenberger

36 years old
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Farm Credit Member Since: 2011

Family: My wife, Lauren, teaches high school English in Serena, Ill. We have three daughters: Natalie (7), Sarah (5) and Millie (6 months). My parents and mentors, John and Susan Hohenberger, are my business partners in Shady Lawn Farms, Inc. Our family enjoys 4-H, youth sports, fairs, travel and attending church together.

Brief Description of Agricultural Operation and Employment/ Business experience for past five years:

I am the president of Shady Lawn Farms, Inc., our family farm in Leland, Ill., that raises approximately 1,700 acres of corn and soybeans. Shady Lawn Farms is also active in custom spraying application and drain tile installation, and has developed a grain storage and drying facility and center pivot irrigation since my return to the farm in 2011. I am also a technology consultant for In-Field Ag, Inc. in Kewanee, Ill. where I develop planting prescriptions and assist in data management. Previously, I was an engineer for Case New Holland specializing in Advanced Farming Systems specific to in-cab technology and planting applications.

Boards or Committees in the past five years (and principal business):

Compeer's Client Advisory Board; Agricultural Leaders of Tomorrow, Advisory Committee; Spiritual Life and Mission Committee, Chairperson, Federated Church of Sandwich

Community Involvement/Government Service:

Dekalb County Farm Bureau, member; Highway maintainer, Victor Township; Life Group Leader and Volunteer, Harvest Chapel; Harvest Chapel, Sandwich Illinois, member

Education:

Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy Graduate; Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering with an Economics minor, Purdue University; The Executive Program for Agricultural Producers (TEPAP), Texas A&M; Agricultural Leaders of Tomorrow (ALOT)

What is your vision for the future of agriculture?

Agriculture is a diverse and capable community of problem solvers and entrepreneurs. I envision a future filled with opportunities for all ages and demographics ranging from urban farmer's markets to producers supplying the worldwide markets with the most reliable source of food, fuel, and fiber. I envision a marketplace that rewards hard work, ingenuity and innovation. I envision an active, informative conversation between customers and suppliers that moves our agricultural community forward. I believe it is as important to share as it is to listen. I envision a bright future for agriculture that will be adaptive to the ever-changing needs of humankind.

What do you believe are the primary issues facing agriculture and Compeer Financial?

I believe change continues to be the largest issue facing agriculture and Compeer Financial as we look forward into the future. Change can offer opportunity for organizations and individuals willing to be nimble and teachable. In the last few years, we have seen mergers and acquisitions across all the spaces in the economy, and agriculture is no different. While consolidation can be tempting by offering increased capacity and offerings, it can sometimes lead to a lack of local responsibility and service. Listening to the local challenges and creating a strategy specific to the rural community is going to be how Compeer stands out amongst the crowd. How fast and precise Compeer can react to the needs of our customers is going to dictate how successful we can be.

Why I want to serve on the Board of Directors of Compeer Financial?

For the last three years, I have had the privilege of serving on the Compeer Client Advisory Board. During those meetings, ideas, challenges and experiences have been discussed and debated, all with the betterment of Compeer Financial and its members in mind. Serving on the Board of Directors would allow me the opportunity to expand on what I have learned and contributed thus far and convert ideas into action. Directorship to me is about educating, optimizing and committing to an effective solution for the betterment of our cooperative. I feel my experiences and knowledge has me uniquely qualified for this position, and I am confident that I will be a positive contributor to the board.