



## Kudos

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Congratulations to [Minnkota Power Cooperative](#) and their commitment to learn more about the emerging electric vehicle (EV) technology. They've recently hit the road in an all-electric vehicle to log their experiences, as well as offer rebates to new EV drivers.

## Calendar of Events

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**Oct. 22, 2018:**  
**Cooperative Network Open House | WI Office**  
Cooperative Network,  
Madison, Wis.

**Nov. 13-14, 2018:**  
**Cooperative Network Annual Meeting**  
Radisson Hotel, La Crosse,  
Wis.

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Do you have Co-op Kudos you'd like to see included in *Cooperative Network News*? Or does someone you know want to subscribe? [Click here](#) to let us know!

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## Cooperative Network News | October 2, 2018



*Kris Ackley*



*Kristin Olson*

### Staff Announcements

Cooperative Network is pleased to welcome Kris Ackley and Kristin Olson to the association's team.

Kris Ackley, a development professional with more than 20 years' experience leading associations, will serve as Membership Development Director in charge of membership attraction and retention.

Kris comes to Cooperative Network from her position as Director of Development for Easter Seals Wisconsin, where she developed and implemented membership strategies for the statewide association. Kris previously served as Special Event Coordinator for Summit Academy in Minneapolis. She formerly served as Director of Donor Relations and Events for the National Credit Union Foundation in Madison. Kris resides in Madison and will begin her duties on October 8th.

Kristin Olson brings her extensive experience in marketing and communications to Cooperative Network as Membership Support and Education Coordinator in charge of membership services, communication and educational programming.

Most recently, Kristin served as Media Relations Manager for World Dairy Expo, where she helped position the industry's largest trade show as a must-attend event through media and marketing initiatives. Kristin formerly served as the 66th Alice in Dairyland, the premier spokesperson for Wisconsin agriculture. She has extensive cooperative experience and knowledge from her previous position as Dairy Advertising Coordinator for Accelerated Genetics, and from her experience on her family's dairy farm near Fond du Lac, WI. Kristin lives in Windsor, WI and will begin her duties on October 22nd.

"I am extremely pleased to bring these two experienced and talented professionals to Cooperative Network", said President and CEO, Daniel Smith.



[Click here](#) to learn more about this Cooperative Network member benefit.

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"Our members will benefit greatly from their expertise, work ethic and commitment to the success of our cooperatives."

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*Dan Smith, Cooperative Network President and CEO*

#### **What's keeping you up at night?**

Over the past several months, I have driven across the Upper Midwest, through the cities and small towns of Wisconsin and Minnesota, not to present, or talk, or study, but to listen. I am new to my job as President and Chief Executive Officer of Cooperative Network. As you probably know, our members come from a dozen business sectors but share the common values of cooperative membership and governance. I could think of no better way to learn what you are facing every day than to take a seat in your office and ask,

"What's keeping you up at night?" Judging from the conversations that followed it is apparent that, regardless of business sector or size, coping with change is the cause of many a sleepless night.

I heard this from the agricultural cooperative general manager dealing with the four-year downturn in the farm economy while needing to invest in machinery and facilities costing millions of dollars. I heard it from the credit union manager facing declining population and business activity in the local community. And I heard it from the mutual insurance agent now competing with online insurance and mass marketing programs that downplay personal business relationships.

Fortunately, Cooperative Network has a solid track record of supporting cooperatives from nearly a dozen business sectors across Wisconsin and Minnesota. We remain uniquely positioned to protect and promote cooperative businesses and their shared cooperative principles. As a cooperative of and for cooperatives, we help our members deal with the challenges of change through advocacy, legislative lobbying, promotion and education.

Change is nothing new, and in the past, cooperatives have risen to the occasion. Cooperatives have taken on new forms, such as senior housing cooperatives, to meet the needs of an aging population determined to stay engaged and active. Worker cooperatives are being formed to address unmet needs for health care, social services, child care and transportation. And where government services, private enterprise or declining entrepreneurship have failed to adequately address needs, cooperatives have arisen to serve the common good.

October is National Cooperative Month, a time to celebrate the importance of cooperatives in building communities. Cooperatives span the business sectors of agriculture, finance, insurance, energy, food/grocery, communications, housing and retail. These are sectors we support and engage with daily at Cooperative Network. We are proud to play a role in their success.

Emerging trends in population, markets, consumerism, communication, technology and culture are changing our society. Indeed, change is the only constant we can count on. The cooperative system provides the means to overcome challenges and seize opportunities through communication, collaboration and cooperation. Today, just as in the past, cooperatives prove we are all better together.

Continue the conversation – [click here](#) to schedule a conversation with me, Dan Smith or to leave a comment.

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COOPERATIVE NETWORK  
ANNUAL MEETING  
NOVEMBER 13-14, 2018

### **Cooperative Builder Award honorees announced**

Congratulations to the following individuals who have selected to receive the 2018 Cooperative Builder Award:

- Tim Diemert, nominated on behalf of Allied Cooperative
- Wade Hensel, nominated on behalf of BENCO Electric Cooperative
- Joan Wade, nominated on behalf of CESA Statewide Network (Wisconsin Cooperative Educational Service Agencies)

Join us in honoring these recipients at the Cooperative Builder Award banquet on November 13 in conjunction with the Cooperative Network Annual Meeting. [Click here](#) to learn more about the award and see a list of past recipients.

### **Register now for the Cooperative Network Annual Meeting**

New this year! Register and pay by credit card online. [Click here](#) to register online or download the agenda, board nomination and registration materials. You still have the ability to register via email/mail/fax. Please contact [Dawn Bausch](#) or call 608-258-4390 with any questions.

### **We want you! Cooperative Network board nominations being accepted**

Cooperative Network is accepting nominations for the board of directors. [Click here](#) for nomination information. Please contact [Dawn Bausch](#) or call 608-258-4390 with any questions.

### **Donated items needed for PAC auctions at Cooperative Network annual meeting**

Cooperative Network's annual meeting will once again feature activities to raise funds for the organization's political action committees. Live and silent auctions will be held at the Cooperative Network annual meeting November 13-14 in La Crosse, Wisconsin. For Co-op PAC (MN) donations, please contact [Patrick Murray](#) or call (651) 280-4901 and for COOP (WI) donations please contact [David Ward](#) or call (608) 258-4414.

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## **Regional & Federal**

### **Dayton and Walker declare October as "Co-op Month" in Minnesota and Wisconsin**

Minnesota Gov. Mark Dayton and Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker both recently proclaimed October as "Co-op Month" in their respective states, recognizing the role cooperatives play to meet a wide-range of essential needs throughout the Gopher and Badger states.

Both governors recognized the role cooperatives play in improving economic opportunity and the quality of life. The proclamations stated cooperatives in Minnesota and Wisconsin provide agriculture marketing and supply services, financing, electricity, transportation, health care, food, housing, insurance and more to millions of member-owners.

Co-op Month has deep roots in both states, with Minnesota being the first state to make the official proclamation back in 1948 by then Gov. Luther Youngdahl. The celebration became national in 1964 when U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and former Minnesota Gov. Orville Freeman proclaimed October as Co-op Month. Minnesota is one of the leading states in numbers of

cooperatives with over 800, as well as the number of memberships in cooperatives, with over three million co-op member-owners.

Wisconsin was one of the first states to enact a law to authorize cooperatives in 1887. Like Minnesota, Wisconsin is also one of the leading states in numbers of cooperatives, with over three million co-op member-owners belonging to over 700 different cooperatives from all different sectors.

This year's Co-op Month theme is "Cooperatives – See the Future" and promotional materials, facts, and figures can be found at [Cooperative Network's website](#). Cooperative Network initiated this annual proclamation request with both the offices of Gov. Dayton and Gov. Walker. We are appreciative of their cooperation in recognizing the importance that co-ops and their member-owners have in both states.

### **Deal struck on NAFTA between United States, Mexico and Canada**

Trade officials for the United States, Mexico and Canada struck a deal late Sunday night for a [three-way trade pact](#) to replace the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) that includes significant changes to dairy import rules.

The preliminary deal marks a major step toward fulfilling one of President Donald Trump's signature campaign promises. Trump administration officials said the new framework eliminates Canada's "Class 7" pricing system for milk ingredients. It also opens the Canadian dairy market to U.S. exports at an additional 3.59 percent — more than the 3.25 percent share the Obama administration negotiated under the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

In a joint statement, U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and Canadian Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland promised the pact would bring "freer markets" and "fairer trade" for farmers, ranchers and other workers.

National Council of Farmer Cooperatives (NCFC) President Chuck Conner commented, "Today's announcement that an agreement has been reached on a new United States-Mexico-Canada Trade Agreement is welcome news for America's farmers and their co-ops. Ensuring continued trade with two of our most important partners is especially important as agricultural producers continue to face low prices across a broad swath of commodities. We look forward to reviewing the details of the new agreement over the course of the next few days."

### **Department of Revenue to offer classes on Minnesota and Wisconsin sales and use tax laws**

The Minnesota Department of Revenue and Wisconsin Department of Revenue will be partnering to host classes designed to provide an overview of Minnesota and Wisconsin sales and use tax laws for companies that do business in both states. These upcoming classes are free and open to the public. [Click here](#) to learn more.

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## **Minnesota**

### **CU Forward Day set for next Monday, October 8**

Minnesota's credit unions will be participating in a statewide day of spreading kindness in the communities they serve next Monday, October 8. Minnesota credit unions are invited to participate in [CU Forward Day](#) by selecting a giveback opportunity that means the most to their staff and community.

In the past, credit union staff has spent the day delivery gift baskets to local law enforcement, volunteering with Habitat for Humanity, hosting a community shred day, volunteering for park cleanup, helping at a local food shelf, and much more. This year, 47 Credit Unions and partners across the state will dedicate more than 5,000 volunteer hours to community service projects that will impact over 335,000 people.

For more information please contact MnCUN Director of Engagement [Ben Hering](#) or by phone at (651) 288-5519.

### **State of Minnesota and Taiwan sign letter of intent to purchase soybeans from farmers**

Last week, the State of Minnesota and Taiwanese trade officials signed a letter of intent to purchase millions of tons of soybeans from farmers in Minnesota – as well as Iowa – over the next two years. The Taiwanese Agricultural Trade Goodwill delegation plans to purchase up to \$1.56 billion of Midwestern soybeans in 2018 and 2019. Taiwan is Minnesota's sixth-largest export market, and a key trading partner for the state's agricultural products.

"We have worked hard to establish relationships with the people of Taiwan," said Minnesota Department of Agriculture Commissioner Dave Frederickson. "Those relationships are paying off in the form of market opportunities for Minnesota's farmers which are critically important given our current Ag economy."

Taiwan and Minnesota have a strong history of agricultural trade agreements. In January 2013, Commissioner Frederickson led a mission to Taiwan to personally extend an invitation to the 2013 Taiwan Agricultural Trade Goodwill Mission to visit Minnesota and sign letters of intent to purchase soybeans.

### **President Trump to hold rally in Rochester this week**

This Thursday, President Donald Trump will make his second appearance in Minnesota since being elected to office in 2016. His visit coincides with his "mid-term campaign tour", to be held at the Mayo Civic center in Rochester in support of Minnesota's republican candidates who are on the ballot this fall. Among them is Jim Hagedorn, the GOP-endorsed candidate for the First Congressional District, which covers the southern part of the state from the Wisconsin border to the Iowa border. The seat is being vacated by longtime DFL Congressman Tim Walz, who resigned from Congress earlier this year to run for the open governor's seat. Hagedorn will be facing the DFL-endorsed candidate Dan Feehan. The election for the First Congressional District is expected to be a very close race, and an area that Trump performed very well in during his 2016 election. However, Walz has performed very-well against GOP gubernatorial candidate Jeff Johnson in recent polls in the district as well. Trump's appearance will be seen as a boost for the GOP, while the DFL will contend it could bolster support for their Congressional and statewide candidates.

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## **Wisconsin**

### **DATCP accepting applications for Dairy Processor Grants until Nov. 2**

Cooperative Network took an active part in designing Wisconsin's Dairy 30/20 program. One important part of Dairy 30/20 program was providing dairy processors with tools they need to improve profitability and sustain the long-term viability of Wisconsin's dairy processing facilities.

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) is accepting applications through November 2, 2018 for its Dairy Processor Grants program. The [Dairy Processor Grant](#) is customizable for each processor and can be used to hire consultants to address a wide range of business needs including food safety, staff training or modernization. Eligible applicants must operate a licensed dairy processing plant located in Wisconsin which is engaged in pasteurizing, processing or manufacturing milk or dairy products. Recipients will be chosen through a competitive selection process.

A total grant up to \$50,000 is available per dairy processor per year. The dairy processor is required to provide a match of at least 20 percent of the grant amount. For more information on the grant program, please call DATCP's

Grow Wisconsin Dairy Team toll free at (855) WIDAIRY[(855) 943-2479] or email [GrowWisconsinDairy@wi.gov](mailto:GrowWisconsinDairy@wi.gov).

### **Broadband Expansion Grants award recipients include several Cooperative Network members**

Gov. Scott Walker and the Public Service Commission (PSC) recently [announced](#) \$7 million in new Broadband Expansion Grant Awards. The 37 new grants will extend high-speed internet access to as many as 1,100 business locations and 14,000 residential locations.

Several Cooperative Network members received grants, including Mosaic, Navardo, Cochrane Cooperative Telephone Company, LaValle Telephone Cooperative, Marquette-Adams Telephone Cooperative, Inc. and Vernon Communications Cooperative. The total received by these cooperatives is \$1.70 million. Rural Broadband Expansion Grants are awarded to public-private partnerships that design projects and work to expand broadband access within a specific community or area.

Cooperative Network supported legislation authored by Senator Howard Marklein (R – Spring Green) and Representative Romaine Quinn (R – Rice Lake) which funded the Rural Broadband Expansion Grant program.

### **Safety Training Symposium to be held at World Dairy Expo**

If you are attending the [World Dairy Expo](#) this week, please consider attending the [Farm Safety Training Symposium](#) on Thursday October 4th from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the Mendota 4 Ballroom at the Alliant Energy Center Exhibition Hall. The Symposium is sponsored by the Center for Dairy Farm Safety at UW-River Falls and by Cooperative Network associate member [M3 Insurance](#).

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