

## **Darrell Henkenius Named Next CEO of FAC**

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*Arcadia, Iowa –Jan. 7, 2021*—When Darrell Henkenius becomes the next CEO of the farmer-owned FAC on March 1, he will become the fourth general manager in the cooperative’s 84-year history. The FAC board selected Henkenius to fill this role after current CEO Dave Leiting retires at the end the co-op’s fiscal year in February.

“Although a lot has changed since I started working with the co-op 42 years ago, farmers still need places like FAC,” said Henkenius, who currently is FAC’s operations manager. “Offering speed, space for grain and great service help you stay competitive.”

Farms continue to grow larger, but farmers still need a place to purchase high-quality inputs at a competitive price and market their products efficiently. “For FAC, that means having enough capacity to handle this grain,” Henkenius said. “It also means providing high-quality, reliable service, from grain to seed to feed.”

Through the years, FAC’s general managers, including Art Diers (1937-1970), Denis Leiting (1970-1999), and Dave Leiting (1999-2021), have helped the co-op adapt to meet farmers’ changing needs. “I knew all these guys and worked with Denis and Dave,” Henkenius said. “They taught me a lot about leadership at the co-op.”

The biggest lesson? Never lose touch with the members. It’s essential to build and maintain trust. “Everyone talks about technology, and it’s vital, but you’ve also got to know your customers,” Henkenius, said. “Listen to your members, so you can better serve their needs.”

FAC has also been fortunate to have knowledgeable directors on the co-op board through the years. “These leaders have made solid business decisions to keep the co-op strong,” Henkenius says.

The board decided to promote from within to fill the CEO position. “Dave Leiting has done a good job of training the managers under him to do their job successfully and take on new roles,” said Dale Lenz, FAC board president and Vail-area farmer. “As a result, things have been working well at the co-op. Darrell has many years of experience at FAC and strong people skills, so it will be a smooth transition from Dave to Darrell.”

### **Rooted in local agriculture**

Henkenius began working at FAC part-time at age 17. His father, Jerome, was the assistant manager at FAC at the time. “I remember coming home from school one day in 1978, and Dad said, ‘Change your clothes. We’re busy at the co-op, and you’re going to work.’”

FAC was a one-location cooperative in Arcadia at the time. Henkenius started as a yard specialist, hauling feed, fertilizer and lumber. “Back then, FAC didn’t have a forklift and barely had a skid loader,” he said. “The experience I gained was good, because it helped me learn how the co-op works from the ground up.”

Henkenius joined FAC full-time after graduating from Kuemper High School in Carroll in 1979. By 1999, he became the grain division manager. He was promoted to operations manager in 2009. During his career, he has helped oversee a number of major changes at FAC, from addition of the Westside and Schleswig locations to the construction of a \$14.4 million feed mill in Arcadia in 2016.

“When Dave Leiting asked me to become the operations manager, one of my goals was to create a more cohesive FAC culture,” Henkenius said. “Everyone pitches in where they’re needed, because we’re a family.”

This teamwork contributes to FAC’s financial strength, which benefits farmers and local communities. “With many families, I’ve worked with the grandfather, the son and now the grandson or granddaughter,” said Henkenius, a husband, father and grandfather who values family. “I’d like to thank FAC’s members, patrons, management, board members and employees, past and present, who are dedicated to keeping local farms and communities strong for generations. We’re proud to maintain this tradition as we look to the future.”

*FAC became a farmer-owned cooperative in 1937. FAC, which operates locations in Arcadia, Westside and Schleswig, specializes in grain, agronomy, feed, lumber, and petroleum. Learn more at [www.faccooperative.com](http://www.faccooperative.com).*