

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

**Chet Esther**

64 years old  
Frederick, Ill.  
(217) 248-0864  
Kyab@casscom.com  
Farm Credit Member since: 1988

**Family:** Wife Lori, sons Ryan and Chad who, after college and other jobs, have both returned to our farm full time. We

have five granddaughters, one grandson and three “bonus” granddaughters so far!

**Brief description of agricultural operation and employment/business experience for the past five years:** Our operation includes 5,600 acres split between corn and soybeans along with over 500 acres of woods and water that we lease for deer, duck, goose and turkey hunting. We also have a construction company that does dirt work for ourselves as well as area farmers.

I have invested a good portion of my adult life to improving area cooperatives, starting with Schuyler-Brown FS in 1988, then Two Rivers FS after a merger, and retired from the board of Prairieland FS last fall after serving as president of each for several years. At the same time I was first elected to the GROWMARK Board of Directors in 1994 and over the years served on the executive committee as an officer from 2005 until my retirement in 2022 as first vice chair. Over the last 34 years, either for or because of the FS system, I have had the good fortune to visit farms and businesses on five continents as well as speak on behalf of U.S. agriculture at meetings in Asia and Europe.

**Boards or Committees in the past five years (and principal business):** Along with my cooperative service, Coal Creek Drainage and Levee District Commissioner, Schuyler County Board member, currently serving as Chairman, as well as a member of Compeer’s Client Advisory Council.

**Community Involvement/Government Service:** As a County Board member I work with our committees - Ambulance, Road and Bridge, Sheriff, Building and Insurance, along with the Health Department to keep our county growing and recently helped pass a 1% “safety tax” for the benefit of our police and ambulance service. I also am a past board member of the Rushville Little League.

**Education:** Graduate of Rushville High School 1976; Spoon River college 1977 - Alumni Achievement Award 2016; Graduate of Illinois Ag Leadership program 2006-2008; GROWMARK Master Director 2020.

**What is your vision for the future of agriculture?** I believe agriculture and Compeer have a very bright future, the use of technology and AI will continue to make both more efficient and effective. With that being said there will also be many challenges that will take some creative thought and solutions to keep us relevant in an ever changing world.

**What do you believe are the primary issues facing agriculture and Compeer Financial?** More and stricter government regulations would top my list as we seem to continually have more “hoops” to jump through. Also, the need for farmers to self-advocate or “tell our story” before someone else tells it for us, along with trained labor shortages and the volatility of both inputs and commodities.

**Why I want to serve on the Board of Directors of Compeer Financial?** I believe I can make a difference and help move Compeer forward for current and future clients. I have many years of experience in board rooms, working with a variety of stakeholders and stockholders, and the time to commit as my sons have the management responsibility and do most of the “heavy lifting” on our farm now. I look forward to both the challenges and opportunities that serving on the Compeer Board might bring.