



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DEVELOPMENT

November 11-12, 2026

*Reno Co. Chamber of Commerce
Hutchinson, KS*

Discussion topics will focus on leadership in the boardroom; building cooperative resiliency; understanding the legal foundations of a director; how to talk to elected officials; and a fireside chat featuring cooperative industry experts. This program will also include a group dinner for networking and opportunity to discuss topics with your fellow board chairs.

*Attendees must hold an executive leadership position on their respective cooperative board.
Registration is limited to the first 30 attendees.*

REGISTRATION INFO:

Registration fee is \$200 per person and includes conference materials, breaks, lunch, social hour and dinner. **Deadline to register is October 28, 2026.** Register [here](#). Please note, no refunds will be issued for cancellations after October 28th, including no-shows.

HOTEL INFO:

A block of rooms has been reserved for the night of Wednesday, November 11th at Hilton Garden Inn, located at 1715 N. Waldron St., Hutchinson. Hotel reservations may be made using [THIS LINK](#). Rooms must be reserved by October 22nd to receive discounted rates.

[Register Here](#)

[Hotel Reservations](#)



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Wednesday, November 11th

- 12:30 pm **Registration Opens**
- 1:00 pm **Welcome/Group Activity/KCC Updates**
Russell Plaschka, President/CEO Kansas Cooperative Council
- 1:45 pm **Where Are We Heading?**
Polly Ruland; Polly Ruland Advisory
- 2:30 pm **Digital Threats, Real Harvests: Cybersecurity for Ag Co-ops**
Richard Broz, Pride Ag Resources
- 3:30 pm **The AI Disruption: Separating Fact From Fiction**
Dr. Pascal Hitzler, Professor at Kansas State University
- 4:30 pm **Q&A with Mr. Broz and Dr. Hitzler**
Polly Ruhland, Moderator
- 5:00 pm **Wrap Up**
- 6:00 pm **Dinner at location TBD**



Thursday, November 12th

- 8:00 am **Cooperative Capital**
Dr. Brian Briggeman, Professor and Director of the Arthur Capper Cooperative Center
- 9:00 am **USDA Rural Development Opportunities for Cooperatives & their Communities**
Dan Fischer, Deputy Director for Kansas USDA Rural Development
- 10:00 am **Break**
- 10:15 am **Legal Nuggets**
Eric Steinle, Martindell Swearer Shaffer Ridenou LLP
- 11:30 am **Wrap Up Q&A**
- 12:00 pm **Lunch**
- 1:00 pm **Optional Tour of Hutchinson Career and Technical Academy**