



The GROWMARK System Summit will be August 4-5, at the Bloomington-Normal Marriott Hotel & Conference Center.

The GROWMARK System Summit

A Reimagined Agribusiness Symposium Brings System Leaders Together Again Under a New Name

Amy Bradford, GROWMARK Corporate Communications Manager abradford@growmark.com

In-person events are occurring across the country and this summer, the GROWMARK System will have an opportunity to convene together at The GROWMARK System Summit, August 4-5, at the Bloomington-Normal Marriott Hotel & Conference Center.

The Summit is the Agribusiness Symposium reimagined into a one-day conference targeted to FS and Grain member cooperative leadership. “There hasn’t been an Annual Meeting & Agribusiness Symposium since 2019, due to COVID restrictions,” according to Ann Kafer, GROWMARK Executive Vice President, HR & Corporate Services. “The pandemic caused us to look at how we deliver relevant and applicable educational content to directors and management personnel, and the GROWMARK System Summit is one result,” she said.

The Annual Meeting, in which shareholders and others learn the fiscal year operational results, has been held virtually in late November. “The benefit of holding the business meeting in late November is we can present audited results, which are more meaningful to our shareholders,” Brad Drake, GROWMARK Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer noted. “Pre-pandemic we were issuing estimated results and the last few days or weeks of the fiscal year could produce different results. With this timeframe, we have the audit complete and can report it.”

The GROWMARK Annual Meeting is the System’s biggest public relations event of the year, and for more than 40 years, the conference was held at the Chicago Hilton. This year, the GROWMARK Summit will be held downstate at the Bloomington-Normal Marriott Hotel & Convention Center.

“In addition to looking at how we deliver our operational results, the pandemic also provided an opportunity to scout various locations outside of Chicago for the event,” Kafer said. “We wanted to try Bloomington-Normal, as a central location for much of the System, to give attendees more

focused time on professional development and less time traveling and being away from the business.” The 2022 GROWMARK System Summit features System supply chain and legislative updates, as well as sessions on myFS, sustainability, and innovation. Speakers to these topics will be a combination of GROWMARK Vice Presidents and representatives of partner organizations. Keynote speakers include Joe Theismann and Gen. (Ret.) Stanley McChrystal.

Shareholders will receive an update from Chairman of the Board and President John Reifsteck, CEO Mark Orr, Drake, and Executive Vice Presidents covering Retail Supplies, Member Resources, and Enterprise Marketing. There will be plenty of time for Q & A.

Shareholders will attend Zone Caucuses and nominate individuals to serve as GROWMARK directors; voting will take place via mail following the August caucuses, with directors elected announced at the November 29 GROWMARK Annual Meeting.

While the location and schedule are different than in past years, there will be some familiarity when attendees walk into the Ballrooms. Work is progressing on the final stage setting, graphics, theme videos and transitions, and branding throughout the hotel, all supporting the Summit theme: CONNECT EMPOWER GROW.

“We know we cannot reproduce the pageantry we had at the Hilton; however, there will be top-notch production with a more connected environment for networking.” Kafer said. “Attendees can expect to feel very much a part of The GROWMARK System Summit and have a sense of pride being part of the System.”

