



COMMUNITY
We Care



RELIABLE
We Deliver



**CUSTOMER
FOCUSED**
We Serve

PREMIER
Companies

COMMITTED. DEPENDABLE. HONEST



PROGRESSIVE
We Move Forward



INTEGRITY
We Do What Is Right

LEGACY

We Have Deep Roots



2024 ANNUAL REPORT

LETTER FROM THE CEO



Harold Cooper
CEO

STRONG GROWING YEAR, STRONG RESULTS

I have been a Hoosier for more than sixty years and this is the first time I can remember Indiana weather being the most predictable event influencing our lives compared to other things going on around us. From elections, mass immigration straining local communities, international conflicts in Eastern Europe and the Middle East to high inflation affecting buying power and personal budgets, it has been a highly unpredictable year.

For Premier in fiscal 2024, we are pleased to report a more normal year as it relates to bottom line earnings. Our year-end total was just over \$14 million dollars pretax.

FINANCIAL SUCCESS ALLOWS US TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING PRIORITIES:

1. Maintain a strong balance sheet.
2. Reinvest back into operations.
3. Invest in new technologies, markets, and innovations and
4. Return a portion of our success back to our member owners.

} Greater detail on overall financial results and member-owner distributions are found within this Annual Report.

REINVEST INTO OPERATIONS / NEW VENTURES

Workforce Development and Retention

The greatest investment we have been making back into operations has been with our workforce. We continue to monitor wages and strive to ensure we are competitive within our industries. Additionally, we have improved our health care offering for families and continue to offer very strong retirement benefits. Reinvesting back into operations is important to our company and Premier continues to upgrade facilities. In Indiana, we are nearing completion of our Campbellsburg crops site which will replace our Mitchell and Salem branches. This will complete our efforts to rebuild our capabilities across our trade area by enhancing storage, speed, and environmentally friendly facilities.

Energy

In energy, we are consolidating four different fuel businesses and their older bulk plants into one brand new, state-of-the-art facility in Shelbyville, Kentucky. Our fuel bulk plants in Indiana have already been rebuilt or modernized which will allow us to consolidate operations from older bulk plants located in Washington, Worthington, North Vernon, and Batavia, Ohio, in 2025.

Fleet

On rolling stock, even with higher costs, we continue to trade out our fleet in normal replacement cycles. We want to ensure we have safe, reliable vehicles to operate. Continued standardization of our fleet capability enables more sharing of workload.

Employee Needs

Employees are our most important asset and we strive to make Premier an employer of choice. When many in our nation continue to see annual health care increases of more than 10 percent, Premier has been able to lower employee out-of-pocket costs closer to 7 percent, all while improving benefits. We now offer specialized assistance and programs to employees facing diabetics, cancer, joint replacements, or depression as well as helping with prescription drugs. Premier offers up to an 11% contribution towards employees' retirement savings.

We are returning 100 percent of the earnings we generated on farmer-owner sales in 2024 back to our owners. I am pleased to report we will send over \$4 million dollars in cash through patronage and equity redemption.

In Summary

I hope you spend time reading this Annual Report and learning more about Premier's variety of products and services. On February 11, 2025, we will complete our 98th year. We thank those of you who trusted us with your buying decisions in 2024 and will continue to work to earn your trust in the future.

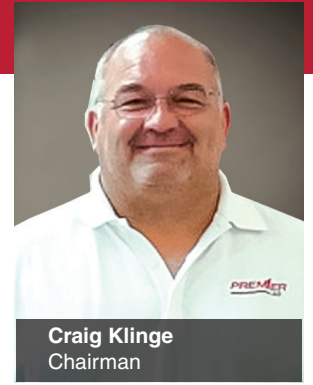
Harold Cooper, CEO

A LETTER FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD CHAIRMAN

Fellow owners,

Like all years, 2024 had its share of opportunities and challenges for our cooperative. While there are hills and valleys, what does not change is the dedication and devotion of our employees and our focus on the long view. Each month as your Board of Directors meets to review the financials and discuss the business, we get insight into how our employees are working in a manner that is committed, dependable and honest. As a board, we appreciate each and every employee and their efforts.



Investing Together

As a board of farmers, we share what we are hearing out in the countryside and enjoy the detailed updates that staff provide us on a regular basis. This exchange of information is helpful as the board makes decisions about capital and where to continue to invest. I assure you we take our responsibilities seriously on your behalf in building Premier Companies for the long term.

In thinking back, it is important to remember that our founders had to have great understanding that investing together as one would have a better outcome for them - and someday for us. Although for many of us it is hard to see, those investments made in other eras are paying dividends to owners today. While my definition of success might be different than yours or a neighbor's, any success we find these days would not be possible without those founders and all the other farmer owners who have contributed in building our cooperative as we know it to be today. We can all agree that Premier Companies is a significant asset to our communities and brings diverse services to help each of us do what we do better.

As Your Chairman

I am honored to serve as the Chairman of your cooperative and proud of all that Premier Companies has achieved this year as you will read about in this report. I thank every employee for their hard work and every customer for their continued support. We can each take pride in being part of an organization that is committed, dependable and honest.

Sincerely,



Craig Klinge, Chairman

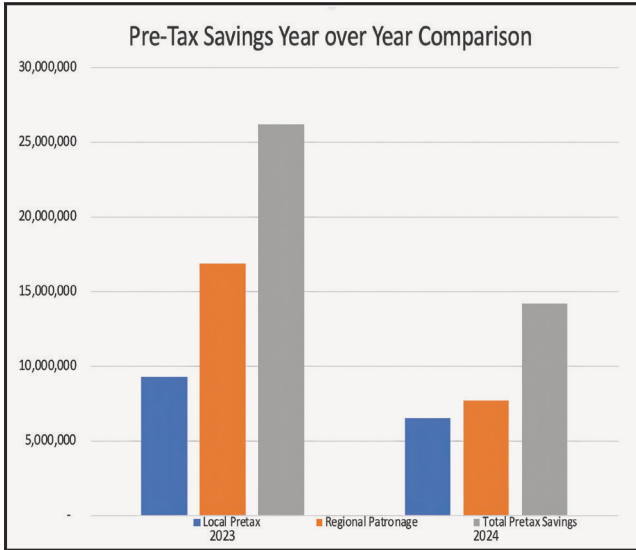


BOARD OF DIRECTORS

From left to right - Gary Scherschel, Lance Mathies, Brian Arnholt, Bill Metz, Scott Schepman, Gwen Newkirk, Craig Klinge, Fred Uhl, Tim York, Tom Nugent, Joe Bill Misiniec, Nathan Lykins

PATRONAGE & EQUITY DISTRIBUTIONS

SUCCESSFUL YEAR SHARED WITH MEMBERS-OWNERS



PRETAX SAVINGS

As the accompanying chart shows, Premier had pretax net savings in 2024 of \$14.22 million. Compared to the prior year, pretax savings declined by \$11.95 million. Regional patronage declined by \$9.2 million and totaled \$7.68 million. Local results were lower by \$2.75 million and totaled \$6.54 million.

Premier, at the direction of its board of directors, has four financial imperatives, including:

1. **Maintain a strong balance sheet.**
2. **Reinvest back into operations.**
3. **Invest in new markets and technologies.**
4. **Return success back to member-owners.**

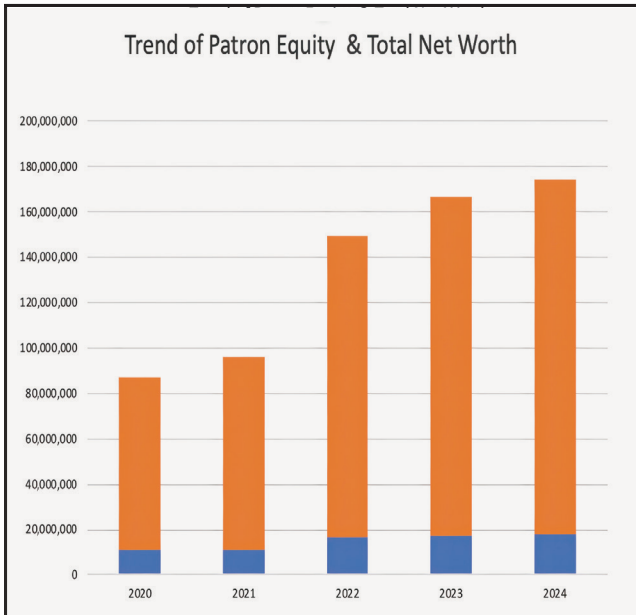
HERE'S HOW WE DID DURING 2024

1. MAINTAIN A STRONG BALANCE SHEET

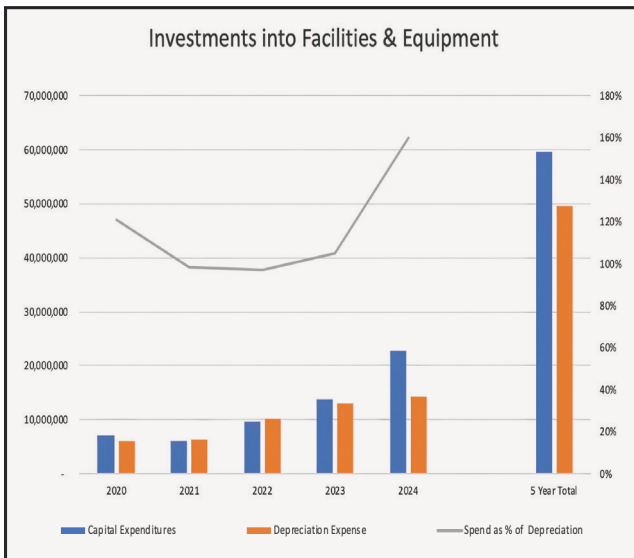
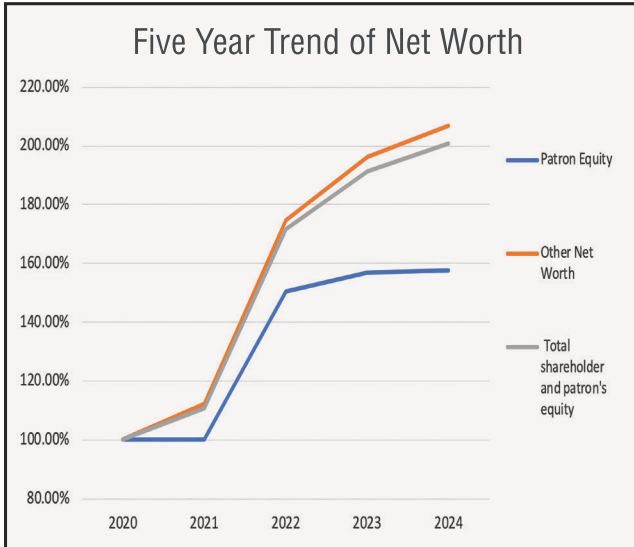
It has been a longstanding practice for Premier to maintain a strong balance sheet. This practice has enabled your cooperative to remain strong even through severe volatility and market fluctuations over the last 97 years. Estimates are that there are more than 10,000 agricultural cooperatives across the country. Premier continues to remain one of the strongest financially in the nation.

NET WORTH TOTALS

- \$174.5 million as of 08/31/2024. This is a \$8.9 million increase from last year.
- Patron equity credits as a percentage of total net worth is 10.1%. Patron equity credits are assigned through the patronage distribution process and reduced through equity distribution payments. Member investment has remained fairly consistent over the years, which simply means that redemption of prior equity credits is keeping pace with new equity assigned through the patronage refund process.
- Current ratio of 1.64 and a debt to equity ratio of 0.55



ANNUAL REPORT OVERVIEW



“...Investments into new technologies like TRAX, Truterra, drones, and robotics help us meet the ever-changing needs of our farmer-owners.”

2. REINVEST BACK INTO OPERATIONS

Premier continues to maintain an orderly replacement schedule for its rolling stock and upkeep of facilities. We also continue to invest in additional storage to position product closer to need and remain reliable despite supply channel uncertainties (logistics and manufacturing).

The board has authorized a spend totaling nearly \$60 million dollars over the past five years on fixed assets. This demonstrates an aggressive approach of keeping our facilities and equipment in excellent condition. This spend on fixed assets and acquisitions totals 120% of depreciation over the past five years.

3. INVEST IN NEW MARKETS AND TECHNOLOGIES

Our venture into Kentucky/Tennessee over the last three years in liquid fuel is an example of this imperative. This expansion helps meet local demand in those areas with a dependable supplier, lowers our overall operating costs, and helps us negotiate favorable terms on all our gallons.

Additionally, investments into new technologies like TRAX, Truterra, drones, and robotics help us meet the ever-changing needs of our farmer-owners.

4. RETURN SUCCESS BACK TO MEMBER OWNERS

This year we are issuing patronage at the rate of 2.01% on farm purchases made during fiscal year 2024. We are returning nearly \$3.25 million dollars of the net income we derived from sales to our member-owners in patronage refunds with 70% of the patronage being paid in cash.

Additionally, we are redeeming approximately \$1.7 million dollars of oldest member equity (2015 and prior). We anticipate that all equity assigned prior to 2015 will be fully redeemed by 2027. Our current equity redemption plan projects that this year's equity portion of patronage may potentially be redeemed in 2035. This falls in line with our target of a 10-12 year redemption plan.

Through cash patronage and equity distributions, Premier will be returning approximately \$4 million dollars in cash to our members and equity holders. Patronage checks will be mailed by the end of January 2025 with equity distribution payments to follow in February 2025.

BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS

CURRENT ASSETS	2024	2023
Cash	\$ 2,304,792	\$ 5,643,588
Trade & notes receivable	\$ 43,992,622	\$ 48,900,668
Inventories	\$ 46,589,077	\$ 43,597,181
Prepaid inventories	\$ 722,963	\$ 4,246,299
Income taxes receivable	\$ —	\$ —
Other current assets	\$ 2,171,895	\$ 1,247,468
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	\$ 95,781,349	\$ 103,635,204
PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT, NET	\$ 106,442,489	\$ 86,342,088
RIGHT-OF-USE-ASSETS		
Right-of-use assets under finance leases	\$ 775,531	\$ 825,297
Right-of-use assets under operating leases	\$ 13,451,240	\$ 17,516,866
RIGHT-OF-USE ASSETS, NET	\$ 14,226,771	\$ 18,342,163
OTHER ASSETS		
Investments	\$ 23,969,771	\$ 23,144,647
Investments at equity	\$ 12,693,874	\$ 11,752,702
Note receivable, net of current portion	\$ 303,833	\$ 413,207
Intangibles, net	\$ 16,009,393	\$ 16,230,825
Other	\$ 545,718	\$ 293,251
	\$ 53,522,589	\$ 51,834,632
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 269,973,198	\$ 260,154,087

BALANCE SHEET

LIABILITIES

CURRENT LIABILITIES	2024	2023 (As Restated)
Long-term debt	\$ 2,600,004	\$ 2,600,004
Lease liabilities	\$ 3,788,447	\$ 3,830,426
Demand note payable	\$ 185,000	\$ 202,000
Note payable to bank	\$ 11,230,258	\$ —
Accounts payable	\$ 16,788,238	\$ 17,315,093
Customer deposits	\$ 9,330,834	\$ 8,597,656
Patronage payable	\$ 2,300,000	\$ 4,425,000
Accrued employee cost	\$ 5,650,585	\$ 5,616,135
Income taxes payable	\$ —	\$ 809,117
Other current liabilities	\$ 6,652,180	\$ 5,737,198
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$ 58,525,546	\$ 49,132,629
LONG-TERM DEBT	\$ 18,199,988	\$ 20,799,992
LEASE LIABILITIES	\$ 10,307,844	\$ 14,408,507
LONG-TERM PENSION & DEFERRED COMPENSATION	\$ 4,572,355	\$ 6,206,360
DEFERRED INCOME TAXES	\$ 3,854,726	\$ 3,187,851
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$ 95,460,459	\$ 93,735,339
SHAREHOLDERS' AND PATRONS' EQUITY		
Common stock	\$ 19,800	\$ 19,885
Patron equity credits	\$ 17,619,046	\$ 17,504,700
General reserve	\$ 147,965,114	\$ 131,883,745
Undistributed savings	\$ 9,340,278	\$ 17,901,985
Accumulated other comprehensive loss, net	\$ (431,499)	\$ (891,567)
TOTAL SHAREHOLDERS' AND PATRONS' EQUITY	\$ 174,512,739	\$ 166,418,748
TOTAL LIABILITES AND EQUITY	\$ 269,973,198	\$ 260,154,087

SALES & REVENUE

	2024	2023
SALES	\$ 552,282,232	\$ 655,130,282
COST OF SALES	\$ 472,312,428	\$ 570,848,884
GROSS MARGIN ON SALES	\$ 79,969,804	\$ 84,281,398
SERVICE REVENUE	\$ 13,981,795	\$ 13,561,635
SAVINGS BEFORE OPERATING EXPENSES	\$ 93,951,599	\$ 97,843,033
OPERATING EXPENSES		
Fixed Facility	\$ 16,628,369	\$ 15,621,795
Employee Cost	\$ 40,399,600	\$ 38,819,584
Other	\$ 29,307,443	\$ 30,305,727
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$ 86,335,412	\$ 84,746,727
SAVINGS BEFORE OTHER REVENUES	\$ 7,616,187	\$ 13,096,306
OTHER REVENUES (EXPENSES)		
Gain on sale of assets	\$ 1,285,397	\$ 547,934
Interest earned	\$ 1,177,038	\$ 1,261,015
Patronage refunds received	\$ 7,676,119	\$ 16,884,218
Equity in losses of investees	\$ (595,868)	\$ (2,230,536)
Other revenue	\$ 116,133	\$ 197,781
Non-operating pension revenue (expense)	\$ (161,442)	\$ (297,011)
Interest expense	\$ (2,898,339)	\$ (3,287,058)
TOTAL OTHER REVENUES (EXPENSES)	\$ 6,599,038	\$ 13,076,343
SAVINGS BEFORE INCOME TAXES	\$ 14,215,225	\$ 26,172,649
PROVISION FOR INCOME TAXES	\$ 2,574,947	\$ 3,845,664
NET SAVINGS	\$ 11,640,278	\$ 22,326,985

Securing Credit & Maximizing Programs Can Be Incredibly Complicated

CHANGING MANUFACTURER PROGRAMS. EQUIPMENT OFFERS. DISCOUNTS. SECURING CREDIT AND MAXIMIZING PROGRAMS CAN BE INCREDIBLY COMPLICATED FOR FARMERS. That's why Premier has a credit team ready to be a one stop shop for farmers to help take the hassle out of the process. With 2024 being a year with low commodity prices, this service has been especially important.

"There are major programs out there, like through Rabo and John Deere, so we work with our account managers to find ways to utilize these offers and help farmers lessen their overall cost," says Nate Yagle, Premier Vice President of Credit. "We help identify what actions need to be taken to qualify for the various programs. A farmer may have six or eight choices as everyone has a program, so we consolidate all that in a one stop shop to help farmers secure what they need."

Cross-company collaboration between the credit team and agronomy teams means that farmers can get their plans in place for their fields knowing what products they will need, then work through pre-payment details and have financing flow smoothly all year. Grant VonDielingen, Premier Director of Credit for Agronomy, says that often the teams make joint calls with customers to work through all the details for the best outcome.

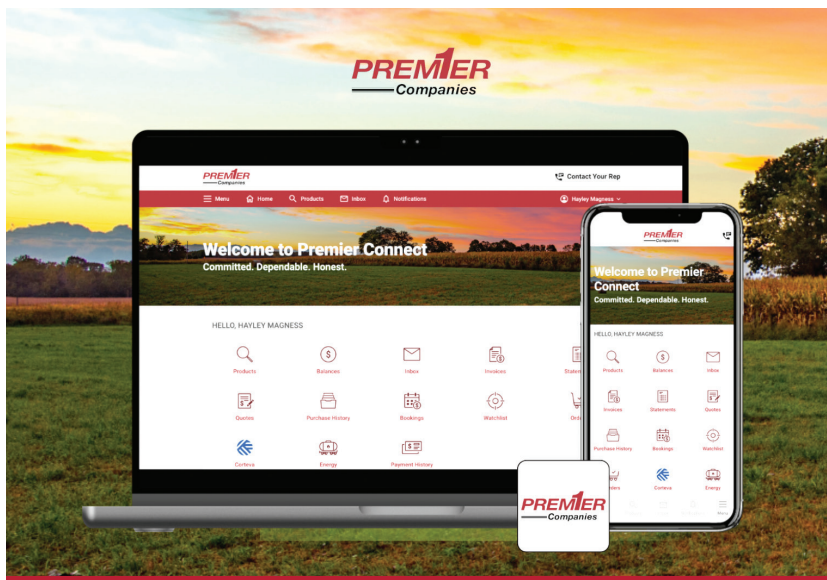
Manufacturer programs fluctuate, so the Premier team helps stay abreast of these changes. Yagle points out, "For example, we stay on top if a minimum product requirement has changed which opens up more opportunity for those who may not have qualified before." VonDielingen adds, "We help fill out the paperwork to make the process as easy as possible."

Premier customers can count on the credit team to help them find the right finance solution as the Premier mindset makes a difference. "Some companies see finance as a profit center and our approach is different," says Yagle. "We offer credit services because we believe it is the right thing to do for our member owners. We are trying to give everyone a fair shake and cover costs."

“Some companies see finance as a profit center and our approach is different. We offer credit services because we believe it is the right thing to do.”

THE PREMIER CONNECT PORTAL

An Extension of our Team in the Palm of your Hand



EASY MANAGEMENT

Quickly access your account information, purchase history, & more.



ONE-STOP-SHOP

Simply pay invoices, view products, view price lists, and more.



24/7 COMMUNICATION

Streamline connecting with our team for updates & important details.



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Premier Fuel Providing Quality Fuel, Quality Service

WHETHER IT BE A FARMER IN THE FIELD OR A LARGE CONCRETE CUTTING COMPANY WORKING ON THE INTERSTATE, HAVING QUALITY FUEL DELIVERED ON TIME IS ESSENTIAL. That's why Premier's Energy Division is focused on being a reliable supplier with best-in-class service.



"We are fortunate that we have our own refinery in CountryMark, and they have always been in the front of quality fuel. They do a good job of testing and I tell folks that we have the best winter operability fuel on the market," says CD Kinney, Operations Manager. "You can go to bed at night and know fuel is not going to freeze."

Kinney and the operations team work closely with dispatchers and drivers to ensure each gallon gets where it needs to go. "It takes a whole team to make it happen, getting fuel from the refinery through the system to the farm or wherever that customer is using fuel,"

Kinney says. "We have a team that works together very well, both behind the scenes and out in the field with customers to deliver that gallon of fuel."

Johnny Tedder is one of those people out on the front line as a driver. Tedder has been with Premier for 40 years, 20 of those in the energy division, and is someone customers can count on. "My accounts depend on me to keep them going, seeing some of them two or three times a week," Tedder says. "You figure out your customers as time goes on and know their busy times of year."

Tedder will be retiring in early 2025 and shares a story that illustrates the dedication Premier employees have to their customers. He recalls it was very early in the morning on Christmas many years ago. "It was around 4:00 a.m. and I got woken up by a call from an elderly lady who said she was out of fuel. I tried to assure that she still had half a tank but she was in tears and afraid of being cold so I got up and went out to her home. She lived alone and when I got there I saw her line was frozen. We found a heat lamp and got it thawed out for her over the course of an hour and half. She was so happy and gave me a hug and a kiss, I know she was happier to see me than Santa," Tedder recalls. Going the extra mile is what Premier employees do.

Along with extraordinary days like those, Premier focuses every day on continuing to invest in facilities to remain efficient and effective. "We are committed to making sure our investments today positively impact our current customers and prepare a path for future generations," says Ben Hoene, Senior Vice President of Energy. Actions like centralizing facilities and upscaling the size of trucks are examples of progress made over the years.

By being a member owned cooperative, Premier is unique in its approach to energy. "We look at things from the eyes of patrons and what makes best sense for them, thinking about what they need. Looking through their eyes drives our day to day work," says Kinney.

“Going the EXTRA MILE is what Premier employees do.”

JOHNNY TEDDER
Premier Retiree – 40 years

Propane Division Focused on Efficiency, Service and Family

WHO WANTS TO RUN OUT OF PROPANE IN THEIR TANK? NOBODY. That's why the Premier Propane team works hard every day to ensure customers' tanks stay full. "We work to ensure you never run out and never have to worry about it," says Ben Hoene, Premier Senior Vice President of Energy.

Being a reliable supplier is the goal, and the Energy Division continues to look for ways to improve efficiency. CJ Brown, Service Manager, points out that the autofill option is an efficiency tool customers can use so they don't need to call for a delivery. "This is a free service and we keep customers' tanks full based on historical use levels so they never have to think about it."



Several success stories of the year illustrate Premier's commitment to their propane customers. For one, the company built a state-of-the-art propane tank refurbishing center in Washington, Indiana. This investment means Premier can control being sure tanks are at their best. "Now we can take old tanks and make them brand new, including sandblasting, adding new valves and paint so they are in good condition for another decade," Brown says.

Another investment this year comes in the form of the company's first tandem axle bobtail delivery truck. This is the largest delivery tank the company has ever had, enabling more deliveries before having to come back to reload. "Our driver, Josh Roach, really enjoys driving this truck and in fact when it came online this summer he broke his own personal record of gallons hauled in a day. It's exciting to see how this truck will help us over the busy winter months," Brown says. "This type of vehicle might represent the future."

In addition, the company has added more storage which benefits supply and volume efficiency. There is also the fact that propane company acquisitions made in recent years help expand the customer base and maintain the locally owned option for propane customers.

Safe, efficient deliveries is the goal as the Premier team knows families are counting on them. The team also counts on each other, which is an important part of the Premier work environment. "What I like best about working here is that this company cares about family," Brown says. "If something comes up for a co-worker, we all pull together to get customer needs fulfilled while the employee is where they need to be with their family."



Premier Retail Sets the Bar High, Supports Community

CLEAN. BRIGHT. NICE. Every time a customer pumps gas or walks into a Premier retail location, they know what to expect. Friendly employees will greet them, and likely know their name. “It is the little things that separate us from the big retailers, along with having outstanding people who take great pride in their stores,” says Bob Cherepski, Premier Retail Operations Manager.

The positive experience begins the minute a person pulls up to the fuel pump. The area is stocked so you can clean your windshield and a pump is ready to go. “People should not overlook the importance of quality fuel,” Cherepski points out. “CountryMark fuel is the best fuel around and we’re proud to offer it to our customers.”



Once inside the store, the products are fresh and Premier locations are known for excellent fountain drinks. In fact, the health department has mentioned to our managers that our fountains, as well as our restrooms, are the cleanest around. While tough economic conditions mean customers might cut back on the “extras” when shopping in the store, they can count on finding what they need to keep their day going.

Customers can also count on Premier caring for its community. The 2024 “Fueling Freedom” event done in conjunction with CountryMark marked its 16th anniversary. On the designated day for five hours, 50 cents from every gallon of gasoline and diesel fuel sold is donated to over 12 local organizations dedicated to supporting military families. Among the beneficiaries are the National Guard Family Readiness groups and the USO, organizations that play vital roles in the lives

of service members and their loved ones. “This is an important way to honor and give back to our service members and their families,” Cherepski says. “Our Brownstown location had the highest number of gallons sold this year, and all our employees take pride in supporting our troops.”

Providing a positive experience every time makes stopping by a Premier Retail store a habit for many customers. “They can count on our stores to be clean, bright and nice – it makes a difference,” Cherepski concludes.

“ This is an important way to honor and give back to our service members and their families. Our Brownstown location had the highest number of gallons sold this year, and all our employees take pride in supporting our troops. ”

BOB CHEREPSKI, Premier Retail Operations Manager



Herd Health, Sound Program Earns Respect for SwineLink

HEALTHY PIGS PERFORM BETTER. While that may be a simple statement, making it a reality takes a great deal of work, planning and best in class animal husbandry. The SwineLink Division is now led by Dan Vague, Premier Vice President of Swine Production, who has been part of the SwineLink team for more than 15 years. He succeeded Gary Callaway who retired last year.



Vague has worked in a variety of roles both with the pigs and the contract growers, giving him unique perspective on leading the division. "It might surprise people to know that inside the barn is the "clean zone" thanks to all of our biosecurity protocols. The outside world is what we consider dirty and our growers work to keep disease out."

There are automated systems in each barn to control the climate to keep temperatures at a constant temperature so there are not big swings up or down. Biosecurity practices like anyone entering the barn needing to "shower in and shower out" help keep disease at bay. SwineLink growers practice an "all in-all out" process to move pigs, and barns are thoroughly disinfected between groups of pigs moving in or out. The Premier program includes working with a nutritionist to ensure the pigs have the right ration balanced for their needs.



Premier's swine team visit the growers' barns weekly to provide another set of eyes and be sure all is going well. "We have good growers who take excellent care of the pigs and our team is there to support them and share information," Vague says.

As the new leader for the Division, Vague is building on the strong foundation and focused on growing responsibly. "We are very proud of the respect that Premier has in the industry for how we do things," Vague says. "We do the right things all the time and never let that slide while we keep moving forward."

of the respect that Premier has in the industry for how we do things," Vague says. "We do the right things all the time and never let that slide while we keep moving forward."

SWINELINK BY THE NUMBERS

- Commercial sow farms produce approximately 600,000 pigs per year
- 23 barns wean to finish produce 200,000 pigs per year
- We sell our finish pigs directly to JBS, USA
- Over 1,750,000 bushels of Premier Member-sourced corn are fed to our hogs annually



GRAIN DIVISION

Grain Division Helps Bushels Go to Market Close to Home

PREMIER'S GRAIN DIVISION HAS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY WHEN IT COMES TO HELPING FARMERS MARKET THEIR GRAIN.

By collaborating with Premier's Agronomy Division as well as utilizing technology and facility advancements, the Premier team keeps the bushels flowing.

What can a farmer do in 10 minutes? If they are selling their grain to Premier, they can unload their semi of grain and be on their way. Premier's Grain Division expanded storage capacity at both Columbus and Loogootee in 2024, continuing to give local farmers a choice to sell their grain close to home.



"On average, farmers spend under 10 minutes dumping grain at our elevators. As their yields increase it is even more important to get them in and out efficiently," says Aaron Bledsoe, Premier Grain Merchandiser. In fact, over 5 million bushels of corn and 1.5 million bushels of beans flowed through Premier facilities over the course of the year.

While Premier can't alleviate the worries around what commodity prices will be, there is an answer for the question of "do you still have room for my grain?" Bledsoe says, "We are making investments in trucks and storage to be there for farmers who need an avenue to keep their grain flowing out of the field and on to the market."

Lance Mathies, a farmer from Loogootee, appreciates the convenience and positive experience of selling his grain to Premier. "Premier is close to our farm, and especially in the fall, time really matters," Mathies says. "A lot of terminals have an hour wait and with Premier I can dump and go thanks to their upgrades and service, plus they have extended fall hours." He adds, "They are competitive pricewise when you factor in transportation, and it is great to work with Aaron who checks in with us and is proactive."

The Premier team works year round to help farmers achieve the best price possible for their grain. Offering average pricing contracts in the spring for fall delivery gives farmers an option with the Premier team doing the legwork on the back side. "We know farmers don't want to put all their apples in one basket, so we can help them spread that risk," Bledsoe says.

Of course, speed and service are also appreciated when it comes to payment. Especially with 2024 market conditions, keeping dollars following along with grain was essential. Farmers selling their grain to Premier can be paid by direct deposit via ACH transaction, meaning they can typically be paid in 24 hours.

"Our team is staying focused on what farmers need and continuing to look at how we can expand while other elevators are going the other direction," Bledsoe says. "We are continuing to invest and working hard to be a local farmer-owned option for grain."

**SIGN UP FOR
DIRECT DEPOSIT
ACH GRAIN
PAYMENTS!**

Visit www.premierag.com/forms



Agronomy Division Focused on “Keeping the Main Thing the Main Thing” in 2024

ECONOMIC HEADWINDS MADE 2024 A

TOUGH YEAR FOR AGRICULTURE. When belts must tighten, the Premier Agronomy team walks alongside farmers in their decision making. “In 2024, it was essential we kept the main thing the main thing – economic yield,” says Sal Sama, Premier Ag Vice President, Agronomy Sales & Marketing. Helping farmers with plans that make the most of their ground and their resources is essential, especially when disease pressures pop up or weather is less than ideal.

“Our people make the difference for Premier,” says Scott Sharp, Senior Vice President of Agronomy. “We have our sales force focused on the farm so they can be out there and engaged with customers. Our people can keep an eye on what is going on with field conditions to share knowledge and react quickly.” For example, field scouting was essential to having the right application made at the right time.



Speed is essential and Premier continues to invest in facilities that enhance customer service. By consolidating older plants and creating hub facilities, the company achieves efficiency for both the farmer and employees. Concentrating resources in best-in-class facilities enables product storage and distribution to go smoothly. “This structure is setting us up for long term success,” Sharp says. He points out that farmers can pick up products to do their own spraying or look to the Premier team to handle applications, it is all about how the farmer wants to operate. The company replaces 10 to 15 percent of its equipment annually to always be at the ready.

Along with investing in physical resources, putting dollars into human capital is top of mind. “We are fortunate to have one of the industry’s best agronomists on our team. Glenn Longabaugh is one of the smartest people I know and has been a huge asset to our team. He’s been in the industry almost 40 years and has seen it all. He can be on the farm quicky with our customers to share that knowledge,” Sama says.



Premier also invests in employees who are in the early stages of their career. The intern program provides opportunities for college students to gain experience and be ready to step into roles with the company and hit the ground running.

Conducting test plots and working closely with the TRAX/Truterra division of the company enables solutions to come from a team perspective. “Each Account Manager can access reports that help tell the whole story,” Sharp says.

In a year when every decision matters, mindset matters. “We have a personal mindset, growers who do business with us will have advantage over those who don’t because we are an extension of their farm as we’ve earned their trust and confidence,” Sharp says. “In years like this, there is the temptation is to cut back, but you must have all the yield you can economically achieve. Every farmer plans to win and we help them stick to the ROI playbook.”

Premier's TRAX Department Works to Unlock Land Potential



DRIVING ACROSS SOUTHERN INDIANA, THE UNTRAINED EYE MIGHT NOT APPRECIATE THE FARMLAND ON EITHER SIDE OF THE ROAD. That's the job of Premier's TRAX Department -- who work closely with farmers to unlock the potential of their land in an environmentally sustainable and profitable manner. Economic and environmental forces give farmers a lot to think about and the TRAX team brings expertise to assist.

"We start from the perspective of maximizing ROI on a farm, which is essential when commodity prices are not ideal," says Joe Zimmerman, TRAX Agronomy Lead. "While a first instinct might be to make operational cuts, we can come in and do a deep dive to be sure a farmer is not leaving money on the table by ensuring we are getting the most out of every acre."

This in-depth analysis can include a variety of services such as nutrient analysis, yield mapping, and satellite imagery. Data drives the recommendations being made. "We are sharing the science; we provide farmers the facts that best work on their farm as they make tough decisions," says Zimmerman. These facts can come from many services the team provides, such as automated robotic soil sampling.

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- JOE ZIMMERMAN, TRAX Agronomy Lead



Solinftec Solix Ag Robotics – First autonomous robot for large scale food production

Soil Sampling Enhances Speed, Efficiency

SOIL SAMPLING IS IMPORTANT TO BUILD THE RIGHT PRESCRIPTION FOR EVERY ACRE. While the company has an excellent team, there are only so many hours in a day that a human can pull samples. “Robotic sampling has been around for several years and we continue using robots more with great success,” says Evan Eggersman, Ag Technology and Sustainability Lead in the TRAX Division. He points out that robots can provide additional peace of mind due to their reliability. “A robot doesn’t get fatigued, and when soil test results are driving thousands of dollars of input decisions, it gives us extra confidence in the recommendation.”

Robots are also able to cover a lot more ground than their human counterparts, which helps speed up the process. “We are not sacrificing quality for quantity, and using the robots is a huge help to our operations team as we can get results more quickly and move faster to make recommendations,” Eggersman says.



Sustainability Efforts Improve Soil Health and Financial Flexibility

GRANTS AND OTHER FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEFINED SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES ARE PLENTIFUL RIGHT NOW IN THE AG MARKETPLACE. Yet, it can be tricky for a farmer to know how to access these dollars. This is where the new Conservation Specialist, Sydney Calhoun, can help. Her role in the TRAX department is to educate growers on local grants, private funding opportunities, and government programs.

“Many of our customers have already been employing conservation efforts on their land for years. We recognize that by matching them with the right programs, they will be rewarded for their existing practices and that extra money can then be re-invested in their fields,” Calhoun says.

In her first year with the company, she shares that farmers are excited to attend educational events, such as cover crop field days. “These events can be a great opportunity to learn about better land management practices and the programs available to implement these practices,” Calhoun says.

Linking The Food Chain

HELPING BOTH FARMERS AND INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS EMBRACE CONSERVATION EFFORTS IS GOOD FOR THE ENTIRE FOOD CHAIN. “Without the farm, nothing is possible; growers are trusting us to help them work through all the data demanded by the food chain,” says Eggersman. The company helps farmers enroll in the Land O’Lakes Truterra program and serves as a trusted advisor throughout the season.

Whether it is helping identify low producing ground to pull back on or pinpointing fungicide application to get more bushels, the Premier team is there to help. “We’ve had farmers pleasantly surprised by the success of pushing up a seed population on their best acres, it really is about using the data to reach the full potential,” Zimmerman says. “Every operation is different in how they achieve success.”

Blake Albrecht, TRAX Support Specialist, joined the company in 2024 and works on the west side of the Premier market to help farmers use their data to make informed decisions. Having grown up in the area, Albrecht’s relationships help him understand what farmers are going through. “I sell what I genuinely believe will help that customer have a more profitable future,” he says. “With commodity prices being down, it is important to not just have data, but to use it to drive economic decisions for our growers in a direction that maximizes their ROI.” Albrecht stresses that no matter what the farm’s size, the Premier team stays focused on providing the service the farmers’ needs.

Ultimately, helping farmers develop a plan and stay on course is important to make the most of every acre. “Our team is here to help each customer unlock their land’s potential and get a return on the investment, there is no looking back,” Zimmerman says.



THE HIGH GROUND

The High Ground Podcast Blends Information and Entertainment



WITH MORE THAN 150 EPISODES ON THE AIRWAVES, PREMIER'S THE HIGH GROUND PODCAST IS GOING STRONG. Available on both YouTube and streaming services, the podcast brings a variety of guests into the studio to talk about various aspects of agriculture while having some fun along the way.

"Our podcast features regular guests such as agronomists and employees from our various divisions as well as industry experts," podcast co-host Sal Sama, Premier Ag Vice President, Agronomy Sales & Marketing, points out.

Sama is joined by Jeff Jarrett, Vice President, Crop Nutrients & New Ventures, as they

provide an entertaining blend of industry, company and countryside information. "It is always a highlight to talk with a grower as nobody tells a story better than a farmer," Sama says.

While it is clear the co-hosts are having a good time, the podcast serves as a valuable source of information for potential employees. Sama points out the podcast is often mentioned when Premier staff are talking with prospective employees and at job fairs.

People who are not directly involved with the agriculture industry also enjoy the podcast as it gives them a window into the rural community and a better understanding of their neighbors. The Premier Companies website has a recap of each podcast so you can see at a glance the many topics that have been covered.



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Premier Building Leaders and Community Through Donations

WHEN IT COMES TO CHARITABLE DONATIONS, PREMIER FOCUSES ON BUILDING: BUILDING LEADERS, BUILDING THRIVING COMMUNITIES AND BUILDING A WORKFORCE. In 2024, Premier has given back to a variety of organizations making a difference in our local area.

Youth development and leadership is a major area of focus. “Premier recognizes the value of 4-H as it prepares young people to be leaders in our community and around the world through hands-on experiences alongside their peers and caring adults,” says Katie Hillian, Premier Marketing Director. Premier donated \$100,000 to benefit 4-H programs in its trade area through a grant program with the Indiana 4-H Foundation. “The grants funded a wide variety of programs and efforts that directly impact the youth in our trade area,” Hillian says.



The Indiana FFA program also benefited from Premier donations via a grant program. Chapter advisors shared program needs ranging from helping youth get to conventions to purchasing drones and equipment for hands on learning in class.

Helping families is another way charitable dollars build community. Many people in Indiana are food insecure, and Premier leveraged matching dollars from Land O'Lakes Foundation to help local food banks put meals on the table. “By working together as cooperatives, we are helping food banks purchase the items they are short on which directly helps local families,” Hillian says.

Working together is also a theme when it comes to training and education. Premier donations help bring together first responders and emergency personnel for training and securing new equipment. Hillian points out that educating people who may be involved in a grain bin rescue from firefighters to farmers to FFA youth is important to responding in these life or death situations.

Building a workforce for the future comes through partnership with educational organizations like Ivy Tech. Having people with specific expertise is essential to agriculture and the sprayer apprenticeship program is one way to help young adults secure those skills.

While many donations were made over the course of 2024, a final one to highlight hits home for any family who has had someone experience cancer. Premier’s “Fueling the Cure” program donates \$1.00 for each of its propane deliveries to cancer research conducted at The Ohio State University. This program, which has been in place since 2011, has provided over \$360,000 to research work.

“We feel strongly about giving back to the communities where our employees and customers live and work, we are making a difference in tangible ways,” Hillian concludes.

“ Premier recognizes the value of 4-H as it prepares young people to be leaders in our community and around the world through hands-on experiences alongside their peers and caring adults. ”

KATIE HILLIAN, Premier Marketing Director



The logo for Premier Companies features the word "PREMIER" in a bold, red, sans-serif font with a white outline. The number "1" is integrated into the letter "I". Below "PREMIER" are three horizontal lines, followed by the word "Companies" in a black, serif font.

PREMIER Companies

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PATRONAGE & MEMBER EQUITY CHECKS WILL BE MAILED

PATRONAGE & MEMBER EQUITY

are fundamental benefits of cooperative ownership.

VALUE OF A COOPERATIVE It is important that there is a farmer- owned choice in the marketplace, allowing those making purchases to own part of the company they are patronizing, and receiving patronage and equity credits on those purchases.

The success of your cooperative is shared via cash patronage (current year dividends shared with the member-owner for business completed in the prior fiscal year) and Equity (member equity retained in the organization that is a valuable source of capital for cooperative maintenance and growth).

Patronage checks will be mailed to members that had qualifying business during FY2023. Approximately 2,500 member owners will receive just over \$2.3 million dollars. Patronage checks will arrive in mailboxes mid-late January.

This years **Equity Redemption** is for equity credits assigned in 2016 and prior. Over 3,000 unique owner members are receiving their portion of \$1.7 million dollars. Equity checks will arrive in mailboxes late January – early February.