

MEET YOUR BOARD

MEET CARMEN SCHLICKBERND, CVA BOARD MEMBER FROM WEST POINT, NEBRASKA. **CARMEN REPRESENTS REGION 4.**



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The Central Valley Ag Board of Directors is made up of local, agricultural leaders, who are recognized for their industry expertise, as well as economic and community development skills. The board currently has 21 directors and two associate directors. These individuals are located in your communities throughout the CVA territory.

Carmen Schlickbernd is a CVA Director for Region 4; her farm is located near West Point, Nebraska, just a few miles Southeast of town. Carmen works alongside her father and brother-in-law as livestock producers, operating a feedlot and raising a cow-calf herd. They also grow corn, soybeans, and hay. Carmen's grandpa initially settled the farm place and began the tradition of raising cattle for the family.

"I love doing it. It's a good way of life, and you have to focus on spending every day with the livestock," she said. "It's just what you do – kind of like a family that's loved sports. It's what they do. Well, we just grew up raising cattle."

Carmen wasn't always on the farm. After high school, she left the area for a while and spent time in the Army Reserves, and attended Southeast Community College. During those nine years in the Army Reserves, she was on and off the farm.

"The biggest thing that made me want to come back is the peaceful way of life," said Schlickbernd. "And you're doing something different every day. Calving, planting, harvest, weaning, marketing; it's such a diversified career."

She enjoys the job's challenges and takes the nutrition of her cattle seriously. "We work with a nutritionist

to come up with rations. We want to ensure that their rate of gain is good, watch the costs and make a profit while providing the best for our animals." To provide for their animals, Carmen works with the local Central Valley Ag. In the agronomy sector, they can get the products they need for raising the crops that will eventually feed their cattle. In addition, the Feed Specialist is able to provide options for any feed they don't grow on their own, such as protein supplements and minerals. They work together to find what products and diet will work best for whatever stage of life the livestock are in.

Carmen understands the importance of serving her community, and when asked a few years ago to interview for the associate program at Central Valley Ag, she went for it. After spending two years learning as an associate, she ran for the board in November of 2020. Carmen believes that cooperatives are fundamental to local communities. "The customer is the owner of the cooperative. So that's huge. You have a say in how the cooperative runs, and you get to help

choose who represents you on the board. Because of that, the board is always focused on making decisions that will benefit the producer."

Another reason Carmen enjoys serving on the board of directors is contributing to the community. "It's always important to put your time out there to serve others and make your community better. The community is made up of those around you, and if it's filled with people that are willing to donate their time and talents, you're going to have a great community."

Carmen's passion for her animals, community, and the rural way of life is evident. "When people throughout the agriculture sector work together as a group to better ourselves, we're going to succeed." • • •

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