

*Manager highlights facility improvements at annual meeting*

**By Russ Pankonin**

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Frenchman Valley Coop distributed \$1.915 million in cash patronage dividends to its members for the fiscal year ending Jan 31, 2011.

FVC General Manager Jim Chism made the announcement during the coop's annual meeting in Imperial Aug. 27.

This represents the second highest cash payout to members in the last five years.

Chism said \$1.502 million was paid as "qualified" cash patronage to members, \$91,292 in cash to retire estate equities and another \$321,582 to retired members to redeem their equity.

Another \$1.502 million was allocated to members as "non-qualified" patronage.

By using qualified and non-qualified dividends, patrons owe taxes on the qualified portion only. The tax on the non-qualified dividend was paid by the coop.

This results in putting more money in the patron's pocket, Chism said.

Over the last five years, the coop has put more than \$8.7 million back into the pockets of its members.

**Net Savings Up**

Total net savings generated for its members last fiscal year amounted to \$8.178 million. This compares to 2010 when by the coop generated net savings of \$7.288 million.

Total sales for the fiscal year were \$414.8 million, which is an increase of slightly more than \$15 million over fiscal year 2010.

Grain sales still account for the bulk of the sales, totalling 65 percent of all sales.

Chism said the impact of this summer's hail storms, which will likely result in lower grain sales, will show up on the 2011 fiscal year report.

During the past fiscal year, Chism said the coop made a number of improvements across its locations.

A new agronomy plant was completed in Chappell, 600,000-bushel bins were built in both Wauneta and Palisade and a one million bushel flat storage unit was completed, as well.

In board elections, all three incumbents ran unopposed. They included Larry Flohr of Chappell, Max Kaiser of Imperial and Duane Grosbach of Enders.

The board is comprised of three panhandle seats and eight southwest seats.