

Retaining Rural Business through Employee Ownership

Selling to the Workers

Minnesota and Wisconsin are working together to invite rural business owners to consider selling their business to their employees. A roadshow of no-cost workshops will be held March 2nd through 6th (see other side) to create awareness and knowledge about converting businesses to employee cooperatives.



Why is employee ownership a good option for retaining rural businesses?

- Retaining the businesses of retiring baby boomers is a key opportunity for rural communities, which often are aging faster than urban and suburban places. According to one source, the majority of small businesses in the USA are owned by people older than 50.
- For many rural places the ability to retain existing businesses is their best bet for economic development.
- Selling to employees means that an outside buyer does not need to be persuaded to invest in the community. An employee cooperative is much less likely to relocate or disinvest in the business.

The partners in this education and research project are the University of Minnesota Extension, University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives and Cooperative Development Services (St. Paul, MN). Grant funding is provided by the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development at Michigan State University.

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Roadshow Schedule*

Location	Date	Time of Day
Duluth, MN	3/2/2020	9 a.m.
Hayward, WI	3/2/2020	1 p.m.
Webster, WI	3/2/2020	4:30 p.m.
Mora, MN	3/3/2020	9 a.m.
Fridley, MN	3/3/2020	3 p.m.
Rushford, MN	3/4/2020	10 a.m.
Black River Falls, WI	3/5/2020	10 a.m.
Viroqua, WI	3/5/2020	3 p.m.
Oronoco, MN	3/6/2020	9:30 a.m.

*Registration is required. All workshops are subject to change or cancellation at any time. **Please see <https://z.umn.edu/SellingtoWorkers> for the latest information and to register for an event.**

These 90 minute workshops are no-cost and open to all. A special invitation is extended to economic and community development officials, business support professionals, business owners, business employees, and anyone else interested in employee cooperatives.

Workshop presenters:

Courtney Berner, University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives

Michael Darger, University of Minnesota Extension Center for Community Vitality

Kevin Edberg, Cooperative Development Services (St. Paul, MN)

Esther West, University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives

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