

Kalispell, Missoula ag co-ops consolidate

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CHS Mountain West Co-op and CHS Kalispell will consolidate their operations into one business unit, effective Sept. 1.

The producer boards of the two agriculture product retailers announced the decision this week, saying the consolidation is in the best long-term interest of patrons and their communities.

CHS Mountain West is based in Missoula and serves an area that includes not only the Missoula area but also the Drummond, Stevensville, Helmville and Ronan areas.

CHS Kalispell covers the Flathead Valley, the Eureka area to the north and as far as Ronan to the south. The Kalispell operation includes the Country Store at 150 First Ave. WN, the Feed Center at 505 W. Center St., a gas and fuel and supply store on Fourth Avenue East North, grain elevator, fertilizer plant and propane delivery operation.

“Both of our businesses are financially strong and coming together will allow us to put the appropriate level of resources into programs and services that help our customers grow their operations,” Douglas W. Manning, board chairman of CHS Kalispell, said in a prepared statement.

The combined size and scope will enhance the cooperatives’ leverage with chemical manufacturers and strengthen their market positions, among other advantages,” CHS Mountain West board chairman Brien Weber said. “Together, we’ll be able to reach efficiencies for you that we could not achieve individually.”

CHS Kalispell General Manager Mark Lalum, who will become the assistant general manager of the consolidated business, said customers won’t notice anything different in the day-to-day operations of the business.

“For the producers of our valley, it will be a good deal,” Lalum said. “It will keep us relevant in the market. It’s all about what’s best for producers.”

Chuck Thompson, general manager of CHS Mountain West Co-op, will become the general manager of the consolidated business.

Lalum said he expects his role with the company will be very similar to what he does now.

“I probably will do a lot of what I’m already doing,” he said.

The cooperatives collectively serve farmers, ranchers and other customers in 10 counties across Montana, from the Canadian border to Idaho. They are part of CHS Inc., a leading global agribusiness owned by



CHS consolidation

Will Price stacks grass lawn seed at the CHS in Kalispell on Friday. (Aaric Bryan/Daily Inter Lake)

farmers, ranchers and cooperatives across the United States. A Fortune 100 company, CHS supplies energy, crop nutrients, grain marketing services, animal feed, food and food ingredients, along with business solutions including insurance, financial and risk management services.

The company also operates petroleum refineries/pipelines and manufactures, markets and distributes Cenex brand refined fuels, lubricants, propane and renewable energy products.