

# SOUTHERN REGION RURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP ROUNDTABLE SESSIONS

**MAYFIELD, KY**

**December 15, 2005**

**ATTENDEES: 12**

**SPONSOR:**

Southern Rural Development Center

**HOSTS:**

Kentucky State University  
University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service

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**Mayfield, KY Listening Session  
December 15, 2005**

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## **Southern Region Rural Entrepreneurship Roundtable Session**

### ***SUMMARY***

**Mayfield, Kentucky  
December 13, 2005**

**Host: Kentucky Cooperative Extension System  
(Kentucky State and University of Kentucky)**

**Contact: Gae Broadwater (gae.broadwater@kysu.edu)**

Twelve participants attended the Rural Entrepreneurship Listening Session in Mayfield. The participants represented a mix of individual entrepreneurs, educational institutions, and organizations with economic development missions. This allowed for 2 groups to discuss, share, and compare ideas.

#### **Round 1- What Works!**

Because of the region's dependence on agriculture, topics related to the transition from tobacco were discussed. Alternative enterprises, such as aquaculture, are being explored locally by many farmers. Additionally, the Mayfield/Graves County region has lost several significant manufacturing employers and local residents are seeking new opportunities to generate income. Each group reported that the question, "where do I begin?" is asked often.

The main themes emerging from budding entrepreneurs include:

- What do I do first to start my own business?
- How do I find financing?
- How can I take care of my family?
- What is the feasibility of my idea?

Resources that participants rely on for assistance include:

- Extension Service network—regional and national
- SCORE
- TVA
- SBDC at Murray State
- KY Economic Development Cabinet

#### **Round 2 – Wishes to Strengthen Entrepreneurship**

Awareness of information sources was the primary wish among this group. Many expressed concern that people are unaware of available resources.

- Sharing of information to eliminate duplication of effort and service
- Get word out about loan programs
- Support financial assistance, including insurance, for small businesses
- Make it acceptable to do the unconventional—what works for one may not work for another

The group felt that commitment from local and state officials as well as business owners was needed to accomplish this. Efforts are needed to make their community more business friendly.

### Round 3 – Entrepreneur Friendly Communities

Murray, KY  
Paducah, KY

Grand Rivers, KY  
New Harmony, IN

In order to accomplish the success they see in these communities, these suggestions were made to move forward:

- Increase downtown parking
- Find out what businesses are needed
- Identify successful models for others to see
- Sell the benefits of our community—low cost of living and doing business, positive attitude
- Build on local assets—e.g. indoor soccer arena and area’s sports events; private university

The group summarized the day by identifying the need to work together on the local level and to form a network to stay informed. Additionally, they wanted to see state policy initiatives that would provide incentives to facilitate local entrepreneurial development.

## **Southern Region Rural Entrepreneurship Roundtable Session**

**Mayfield, Kentucky**

**December 13, 2005**

### ***World Café – Round 1***

#### **Sharing What Works! Programs, Activities, and Resources that Make a Difference in Supporting Entrepreneurs**

- a. Reflect on the activities that you (or the organization that you might represent) are involved in (either directly or indirectly) that are designed to strengthen local entrepreneurship activities

**World Café -- Round 1**  
**Individual Responses**

| Three Key Topics You Address in Your Work  | Major Audiences You Target in Your Work  | Three Products You Use to Support Your Work   | Best Resource You Want People to Know About   |
|--|--|---|---|
| <p><b>Aquaculture producers</b><br/> <b>Small business start up\</b><br/> <b>Visit new and existing businesses and listen to their needs</b><br/> <b>What to do with an idea</b><br/> <b>As a business owner I am asked many, many times per week how I did it and my way of being unconventional</b><br/> <b>Business plan</b><br/> <b>Importance of family to the future of our community</b><br/> <b>Small business development</b><br/> <b>Eligibility</b></p> | <p><b>Land Owners-resource enhancement</b><br/> <b>Small business retention</b><br/> <b>Networking opportunities for business</b><br/> <b>Reps to share ideas and meet community leaders</b><br/> <b>How to get funding</b><br/> <b>Financial projections</b><br/> <b>Financial fitness</b><br/> <b>Municipalities and special districts</b><br/> <b>Non-profit entities</b><br/> <b>Public Agencies</b></p> | <p><b>Educational Material/Literature</b><br/> <b>In house consultants</b><br/> <b>Faculty/staff</b><br/> <b>Expertise from MSU</b><br/> <b>Start up workshop</b><br/> <b>“Proventures”</b><br/> <b>SBD</b><br/> <b>DCI programs</b><br/> <b>I am happy to provide those that ask me with information I obtained from Loretta’s office</b><br/> <b>Evaluation packet</b><br/> <b>SCORE 641</b><br/> <b>Brochure regulations</b></p> | <p><b>National network of specialists linked electronically</b><br/> <b>24 year track record</b><br/> <b>DCI resources through KSTC</b><br/> <b>I have not been able to use any convention resources</b><br/> <b>I guess you could say I am the person everyone in the business of felling you how to start a business-would advise not to try...but I had nothing to lose.</b><br/> <b>Weekly workshops</b><br/> <b>Small business loans</b><br/> <b>SCORE counselors</b><br/> <b>Extension homemakers volunteering at schools</b><br/> <b>Resources for homemakers and their families through lessons</b><br/> <b>Cooperative Extension</b><br/> <b>Website and program</b><br/> <b>Availability of information</b></p> |
| <p><b>Fee fishing-agritourism</b><br/> <b>Small business expansion/troubleshooting</b><br/> <b>Business development/seminars/ Referrals</b><br/> <b>How to start in business</b><br/> <b>“smart” financing</b><br/> <b>Health and fitness</b></p>  |  | <p><b>Personal consultation</b><br/> <b>Advanced small business workshops</b><br/> <b>Think KY EDC website</b><br/> <b>PADD</b><br/> <b>Think Kentucky</b><br/> <b>Success Stories</b></p>  |   |
| <p><b>Land Owners-resource enhancement</b><br/> <b>Small business retention</b><br/> <b>Networking opportunities for business</b><br/> <b>Reps to share ideas and meet community leaders</b><br/> <b>How to get funding</b><br/> <b>Financial projections</b><br/> <b>Financial fitness</b><br/> <b>Project design/scope</b></p>   |  | <p><b>Programs/seminars</b><br/> <b>TVA</b><br/> <b>SBDC resources</b><br/> <b>Contacts with other related agencies</b></p>   |   |

*World Café – Round 1*

**Summary of your Team Discussion**

| Three Most Common Themes/Topics  | Most Innovative/Unique Topics | The three “Cream of the Crop” Resources or Products  |
|--|-------------------------------|--|
| <p><b>1. Family/future</b><br/> <b>SB Startups</b><br/> <b>What to do with an idea</b><br/> <b>Start up Aquaculture Enterprise</b><br/> <b>Writing a business plan</b><br/> <b>Smart financing</b><br/> <b>Information and referral</b></p>  | <p><b>1. Eligibility</b></p>  | <p><b>1. Extension and latino network</b><br/> <b>Consultants/MSU faculty</b><br/> <b>Innovation network/grants/investors/process</b><br/> <b>Startup Kentucky.com</b><br/> <b>Economic Development Cabinet website</b><br/> <b>Evaluation package</b><br/> <b>Score program-demographics</b><br/> <b>USDA website</b></p> |
| <p><b>2. Health and fitness</b><br/> <b>Expansion/troubleshoot and funding resources</b><br/> <b>How to start a business</b><br/> <b>Fee fishing-agri tourism</b><br/> <b>Eligibility/feasibility/project design</b></p>   |                               | <p><b>2. Reference guides, websites</b><br/> <b>Incubator curriculum, SBA resource guide</b><br/> <b>Innovative banking</b><br/> <b>0% interest technical fund</b><br/> <b>Venture Capital Clubs</b><br/> <b>Technical Loan fund</b><br/> <b>Brochures</b><br/> <b>TVA/SBA</b><br/> <b>Rural Electric</b></p>              |
| <p><b>3. Financial fitness</b><br/> <b>SB retention</b><br/> <b>How to get funding</b><br/> <b>Land owners enhance pond and lakes</b><br/> <b>Visit new businesses and listen to needs</b><br/> <b>Host business workshops/referrals</b><br/> <b>Networking opportunities/generate ideas</b></p> | <p><b>2. Feasibility</b></p>  | <p><b>3Kentucky entrepreneurial coaches institute</b><br/> <b>Score.org/grant info/secretary of state office</b><br/> <b>CEFD.org. super coaching</b><br/> <b>Score</b><br/> <b>Small business Guides</b></p>  |

## *World Café – Round 2- Table Summaries*

### **If I Had Three Wishes!! What I Would Love to See Happen to Strengthen Entrepreneurship in My Community, State, or Region**

1. You have been granted the special powers to “make things happen”!! What THREE wishes would you personally grant that would have a positive impact on entrepreneurship in your community, state, or Southern region? Share your ideas with the group at your World Café table.
2. As a group, select the THREE most important wishes that you want the whole group attending this meeting to hear about.

#### **Group 1**

Better understanding between business owners and community leaders-better camaraderie between them.  
Financial assistance-insurance assistance for employees of small businesses  
Parking assistance

#### **Group 2**

Sharing of information to eliminate duplications  
Spread word about loan programs available  
Educate public on resources

3. For the “top three wishes,” identify what it will take to make these wishes a reality in your community, state, and/or Southern region.

#### **Group 1**

Commitment by local, state officials, and business owners to work together to get task done.

#### **Group 2**

Realize importance of SBA entrepreneurship  
Make Mayfield more business friendly

## *World Café – Round 2- Individual Responses*

### **If I Had Three Wishes!! What I Would Love to See Happen to Strengthen Entrepreneurship in My Community, State, or Region**

4. You have been granted the special powers to “make things happen”!! What THREE wishes would you personally grant that would have a positive impact on entrepreneurship in your community, state, or Southern region? Share your ideas with the group at your World Café table.
  - Jobs for our young people
  - A favorable climate to encourage new businesses
  - Sharing of information to different agencies

- Sharing information between agencies-remove duplication of efforts
- “Spread the word” regarding our loan programs
- Education at all levels to prevent “grant scams”
- People who have the impact on economic development would understand the importance of entrepreneurship so they would make decisions to better support entrepreneurs
- Education shift to entrepreneurship resources available-get the word out
- Education in school systems
- County and city forums
- Grants/loans(free government money)
- I wish there were more innovative funding opportunities for those of us who just do not qualify for funding
- A drive by the state to encourage more people to try to bring their dreams to life
- Banking for people that need loans-not those that don’t
- Entrepreneurs doing a better job on their homework
- Better contact with those that want information
- Better training and educational opportunities
- Financial assistance to feasible projects
- A better understanding between community leaders and small business owners as to needs
- A sense of camaraderie between business owners
- Funding resources/insurance needs met
- More funds for new business development
- More funds for business expansion
- More funds for education of new and existing business to start or improve

5. As a group, select the THREE most important wishes that you want the whole group attending this meeting to hear about.

Education

6. For the “top three wishes,” identify what it will take to make these wishes a reality in your community, state, and/or Southern region.

- The bottom line is to try some unconventional ways to build business in our community. I can see my community dying and it’s a death that will be mourned by many if we do not try to reutilize and rejuvenate our downtown area
- Better access to funding-commitment to funding projects
- Loan program
- Doable interest rate
- State incentives/building renovations

**World Café – Round 3- Table Summaries**  
**(NO TABLE SUMMARIES FOR THIS SECTION)**

**Creating Entrepreneur-Friendly Communities --**

**Places That Are Doing It Right! New Ideas for Building Entrepreneur Friendly-Communities!**

1. Think of a community that you would identify as “entrepreneur friendly.” What is this community doing specifically that makes it a great place for entrepreneurs? Try to think of at least 2-3 examples of “entrepreneur friendly” activities this community is undertaking.
2. As a team, select FOUR key activities a community should undertake if it wants to become recognized as an “entrepreneur friendly” locality.
3. What 3-4 activities can we -- the people and organizations attending this roundtable session – do to help communities become “entrepreneur friendly”?

**World Café – Round 3- Individual Responses**

**Creating Entrepreneur-Friendly Communities --**

**Places That Are Doing It Right! New Ideas for Building Entrepreneur Friendly-Communities!**

4. Think of a community that you would identify as “entrepreneur friendly.” What is this community doing specifically that makes it a great place for entrepreneurs? Try to think of at least 2-3 examples of “entrepreneur friendly” activities this community is undertaking.
  - Murray- active enthusiasm in revitalizing our downtown area
    - Very active “hands-on” Chamber of Commerce
    - Interaction between the community and Murray State
    - Incubator programs with MSU, SBDC, ICC
    - Annual SB trade show
  - Cadiz-downtown area has been renovated to be a favorable location for small shops particularly antiques shops. Brick walkways, access streets
  - Paducah-Commerce Center
    - Alpha project
    - In order for me to consider a place entrepreneur friendly, I would first have to be aware of entrepreneurs doing business in a given city and successful businesses in that city, and to date I am not aware of any. I am not a shopper and have not been down to any other cities or business districts in several years.
    - Downtown revitalization, artist relocation program, Lower Town
    - Performing art center/theaters
    - Open Friday night
  - Grand Rivers
    - Patti’s
    - Theater
  - New Harmony Indiana
    - Antique shops
    - Red Geranium Inn
5. As a team, select FOUR key activities a community should undertake if it wants to become recognized as an “entrepreneur friendly” locality.
  - Donate community centers for activities that draw a large crowd

- Annual trade show
  - Parking availability-tax incentives
  - Public restrooms/information centers
  - I think it would be in the best interest of any community that wants to draw new businesses of the entrepreneur sort to have a successful models in place for any one who wants to start one to see.
  - Find out what your communities needs are
  - Find out what interest people in your community have
  - Investigate to start a new business
  - Offer incentives
  - Indoor soccer
  - Low cost of living/selling point/positive attitude
6. What 3-4 activities can we -- the people and organizations attending this roundtable session – do to help communities become “entrepreneur friendly”?
- Be aware of resources available and understand their function.
  - Know the resources and share them to community leaders
  - Entrepreneurship important
  - Rural/urban
  - Find needs of community
  - Mass transit information center
  - Encourage leadership to enact changes in order to make the community someplace others may want to live
  - Positive atmosphere
  - Niche
  - Hispanic community outreach
  - Bilingual and/or Spanish speaking individuals
  - Shop at local store
  - Schools/churches-have bilingual persons to help Hispanic community with translation and to teach the children. The children in turn help their parents with language

**Topic 1**  
**Building Networks and Alliances**  
 (# dots receive in ( ) ‘s )

- Network of entrepreneurs locally (4)
- Mentoring, discussing, building up of an supporting each other and new entrepreneurs (4)
- Local, state and federal agencies **working together** to provide assistance to the small business community (2)
- Locals working together to make community more attractive to entrepreneurs along with business and community leaders (2)
- A local, forward thinking government/leadership that value education and progressive community development over local politics. Make the community attractive to outside/inside business investment. Group should consist of business leaders, officials, educators, citizens, agency personnel (2)
- Most valuable network to me would be with agencies or other entities that serve similar customers but at different levels. For example, if an entity provides counseling but not

financial assistance to businesses they would be a good partner for us. Network level is not important. (2)

- A group of people, all with the same goal...to help to make what the entrepreneur dream is come true from conception, to accrue working business, to have someone who understands where I am in my dreams...be it coming up with a concept or, deciding what the end will be, someone to work with me through all the stages to the grand opening (2)
- A network consisting of community leaders and members, that would meet to agree upon and establish goals aimed at making the community more entrepreneur friendly; the network would have a local, regional, and statewide component to incorporate both and also to maintain openness to outside objective feed back (2)
- Local government, business, schools, private sector-all people from every segment of population (1)
- A network of business, government and education, it should start locally with these three groups and expand to state, southern region, etc as specific needs and topics are developed.
- Statewide network; develop SBA 504 program, banks, county and city government agencies
- Local lever, workshops, forums for the public educating them on how to become a successful business owner

## **Topic 2**

### **Policy Efforts**

(# dots receive in ( ) 's )

- There is a lack of policy areas that pertain specifically to entrepreneurship, funding incentives at the state and federal level, health insurance at the state level (6)
- Education should be structured to include business/entrepreneurial education and be enacted at all levels to all interested parties (3)
- Policy areas of interest would be zoning, taxation, utility availabilities; policies should be implemented that would not present cost or regulatory barriers to small businesses. Local policy making bodies would be best; government and business reps should jointly make policies (3)
- Tax incentives to prospective businesses, efficient and quick application process for business license, policies should be implemented on local and state basis for those present (2)
- There does not seem to be any policies that effect entrepreneurs either pro or con, but the lack of interest in keeping small businesses open and doing business in my community however Mayfield city officials should see the economic hardship that are upon our community and try to fill the gap's to make entrepreneurism possible (2)
- Local and state policies needed; incentives geared toward helping small businesses not only large manufacturers; health insurance-state level (1)
- Loans for asset purchase; need loans for working capital (1)
- Don't know any locally; policies-local would be best-but take help anyway or from anywhere you could get it; business leaders, citizens, educators, elected officials, agency personnel
- Should be implemented on the local level; not aware of what policies that need changes
- Small business administrative offices and PADD are probably the 2 most successful and helpful; people working on policies need to have an understanding of rules and regulations and become involved in local efforts to make necessary changes
- Helpful to make employee parking in an area off the court square; education of sources available

## Individual Responses

1. Add individuals to my e-mail list, send my info to individuals I met, include more educational seminars in my annual program of work-to help business, don't assume that everyone knows of available resources, more meetings-I learned today
2. Attend Chamber sponsored grand openings, work on establishing entrepreneur seminar to be held at PADD, work on establishing "follow-up" seminar for new and existing businesses, work closely with PADD staff to develop programs
3. Have more of an "open door" policy to business owners, improve marketing techniques to business owners, partner with other agencies in an effort to expand education, work closely with local community leaders to provide funding, work with various agencies that I have not teamed with in the past
4. Provide more workshops on business start-ups, fund more workshops, and continue to dialogue with like minded people
5. Extension-create awareness of entrepreneurship assistance, work with other assist-agencies to provide programs
6. SRDC-work with leaders on regional level to increase awareness of importance, help raise awareness of importance and assistance programs to the public, funding to assistance programs and entrepreneurs
7. Me- consider how to better co-ordinate with other agencies and consider how to increase awareness of assistance and importance
8. Encouragement is always something we don't have enough of, foster and encourage the entrepreneur spirit!!!
9. OPEN- my mind and store to help train some of the light house clients on retail business
10. KY Coop Extension Services should continue to provide educational assistance to small business owners and farmers, conduct outreach activities to let the public know about their services
11. Am not sufficiently familiar with the SRDC to comment on things they should be doing
12. I was able to identify two potential applicants for USDA programs today, and will work with them in developing applications if desired
13. KY Coop Extension Service should continue to provide educational assistance to small business owners and farmers, conduct outreach activities to let the public know about their services.
14. Am not sufficiently familiar with the SRDC to comment on things they should be doing.
15. I was able to identify two potential applicants for USDA programs today, and will work with them in developing applications if desired and will continue to attend similar events as available.
16. Summarize meeting and present to Extension Homemakers Council meeting in January
17. Talk to Jana Adams, Mayfield Main Street Director about things that would project a positive image of our community and be an entrepreneur friendly community.
18. Three things- KY Coop Ext. host workshops, educate community, and promote entrepreneurship
19. Three things-SRD fund local efforts, continue to host meetings like this one, and help improve opportunities.
20. Three things I would do-educate myself on resources, share info learned, explore options
21. Start by making my business known to others
22. Educate myself on policies of entrepreneurship and try to apply new idea's to help our community
23. Work with any local group.
24. KY. Coop. Ext.-assist in creating public awareness of new businesses, maintain resources on entrepreneurships, and maintain info on funding opportunities for prospective entrepreneurs.
25. Things I will do-share info with individuals who serve on committees with myself, research pros/cons of starting my own business.

