



## ACTION STRATEGIES

The ingredients for addressing the tough challenges facing rural America include access to sound social sciences research, the application of such research in guiding local discussions and debates, and access to proactive leaders and citizens who are willing to implement bold strategies for placing rural places on the track to long-term economic, social and environmental sustainability. The RRDCs are doing their part to build strong communities in rural America by:

- Mobilizing multistate research teams to focus on critical regional and national rural development issues.
- Investing in promising social sciences research and outreach education programs.
- Organizing timely workshops and conferences on current and emerging rural development topics.
- Spearheading the development of needed educational curricula/resources.
- Expanding, through the delivery of in-depth training, the pool of land-grant and nonland-grant educators involved in rural development activities.
- Networking with public and private sector organizations that are committed to the well-being of rural Americans.
- Publishing newsletters, reports and policy briefs on important rural development topics.

### **NORTH CENTRAL REGIONAL CENTER FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

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### **WESTERN RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER**

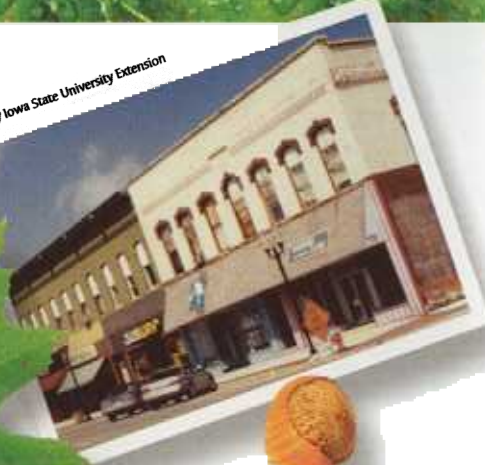
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The **REGIONAL RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTERS (RRDCs)** exist to strengthen the capacity of local citizens to be key players in guiding the future of their rural communities. Each Center links the research and extension capacity of land-grant universities in its region with local decision-makers to address a wide range of rural development issues, including...



Photo by Iowa State University Extension



## VIBRANT, SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Healthy communities have people and organizations that work together in pursuing equitable, inclusive community improvement strategies. The RRDCs help build strong, vibrant communities through the following activities:

- Community planning and action.
- Leadership development and expanded civic involvement.
- Building on local talents and resources.
- Partnership among farm and nonfarm sectors.
- Labor force enhancements and workforce development.
- Viable economic development strategies.
- Timely research on elements that promote strong communities.

Photo by Scott Bauer, ARS



## PROMISING DIGITAL FUTURES

Electronic technology and connectivity offer hope to rural areas that are left behind by the disadvantages of distance and population dispersion. The RRDCs are linked to the following efforts:

- A national eCommerce team that is galvanizing the current eCommerce efforts of state extension programs across the U.S.
- State of the art eBusiness curricula and training programs targeted to rural businesses, farmers, rural governments and small communities.
- Monitoring, through applied research, the current state of digital inclusion among rural people and communities across America.

Photo by USDA NRCS



- RRDC Partners**
- ✓ Land-grant university administrators and faculty.
  - ✓ Rural community colleges.
  - ✓ Federal and state agency representatives.
  - ✓ Local, state and national policy-makers.
  - ✓ Local citizens and community-based organizations.
  - ✓ Private firms interested in community betterment activities.
  - ✓ Foundations and non-government organizations committed to the well-being of rural people and places.

## BALANCED USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Rural America is endowed with rich natural resources, and promoting sound cultural, economic and ecological uses of these resources is of paramount importance. The RRDCs are engaged in a variety of strategies that enhance the environment, including:

- Sound growth and land-use planning.
- Public issues education and dialogue.
- Protection of community-based drinking water.
- Water resource management.
- Wildlife risk management.



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