SRDC survey ranks rural development research priorities

Return migration to the rural areas has created headlines across the nation as an aftermath of the 1980 census. It has also created special problems for the rural development professional.

After years of struggling to curb a declining rural population, the rural development professional must now deal with the problems of growth and more specifically with the problems of an "urbanized" rural population that wants the benefits of both urban and rural living.

Such a change in emphasis simultaneously creates a need for updating rural development research priorities to make them relevant to the issues faced by community decision-makers.

To help determine these priorities, the Southern Rural Development Center initiated a regional rural development research needs study during the spring of 1981. The study was conducted in two stages in order to first determine the relevant areas and then to prioritize these high-priority research areas.

Dr. William W. Linder, director of the Southern Center, and Pamela H. Rodgers, research associate, conducted the research efforts as 320 respondents from 13 Southern states and Puerto Rico participated in the survey.

The results show that researchers and extension workers intend on helping solve the problems of the rural South will not have the luxury of responding to one or two key problem areas. The data reveal that a wide variety of research needs receive strong support in spite of the fact that the top five research concerns appear to be the following: (1) impact of growth and development on the demand for and costs of services, (2) water resources, (3) impact of energy shortages and inflation, (4) health care, and (5) preservation of farmland.

Rural development needs in the future will require expanded programs covering more areas but receiving less financial assistance. While the wide variety of needs revealed by the survey will provide the rural development professional with the luxury of working in almost any research area, such diversity may also mean that rural development efforts might become dangerously fragmented as a result of no central focus on specific areas of concern.

(see listing on page 7)

New FmHA pilot project encourages young farmers

North Carolina, Mississippi and Texas will be among 10 participating states in a new Farmers Home Administration program aimed at young farmers and ranchers.

The purpose of the pilot project is to develop a continuing and reliable supply of new commercial family farmers and ranchers who will replace the retiring generation and other agricultural producers who discontinue farming or ranching.

The new program will establish a USDA advisory committee in each FmHA county office. The committee will select program participants who are young and have a strong agricultural background.

Participants must be farmers and ranchers who have been unable to get credit commercially on reasonable terms and therefore need the assistance of FmHA. They will be required to "graduate" to other credit within five to 10 years.

Scheduled to begin October 1, the program will be expanded to all states in October 1982 if the pilot project shows favorable results.

RELATING RURAL DEVELOPMENT TO YOUR COMMUNITY
Visual simulation helps cities plan development efforts

A new computer program which presents a visual image of a town on a computer screen may be the answer for city planners and town councils forced to play the "What Happens If..." game.

Developed by Dennis Jones of the Mississippi State University School of Architecture's Center for Small Town Research and Design, the new approach is intended to help city planners see how their decisions will affect their town and to preserve the traditional downtown areas as the town focal points.

"Each small town has similar characteristics of development, growth and change of the central business district," Jones said. "When the downtown area saturates, property values increase and so does traffic. The downtown bypass is built to alleviate traffic."

Congressman to introduce rural enterprise zone bill

Congressman Wes Watkins (D-Okl.) will soon introduce a bill to create enterprise zones in rural areas around the nation, according to a recent National Association of Regional Councils report. The bill, which would be administered by the Farmers Home Administration, would authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to designate zones under the following conditions:

1. If local governments in the area approve;
2. If local government commits an approved enterprise zone plan; and
3. If the area meets certain poverty, per capita income and unemployment criteria or can demonstrate sudden and severe dislocation or prolonged economic deterioration resulting in net outmigration of population, industry, jobs.

Under the bill, grants would go to enterprise zones for public works and development facilities where assistance would result in attraction, expansion or retention of business. Direct loans and loan guarantees for small businesses in zones would also be made available.

Although this bill is one of several pending in Congress this year, it is the only one directed exclusively to rural areas. The legislation is expected to be referred to the Agriculture Ways and Means committee, according to the NARC report.

These and other variables such as transportation, zoning and employment affect the growth of a town. In a small town, the cause and effect relationships between those variables can be projected through a model such as the one designed by Jones, and the projections can be visually displayed through maps and overlays.

"The base map would show traffic volume, property evaluation and what each one of the buildings is," Jones said. A second map would show how the town is divided into a series of cells or neighborhoods. A zoning map would show the distribution of residential areas.

"Then you can play 'What Happens If...' taking away a factory and seeing what a big impact such a move would have on the town," Jones said. "You keep going through planning cycles on the screen until you achieve the right balance."

The first phase of the three-phase project has been in progress for a year in an effort to establish the concept of visual simulation of a town and to develop a model that demonstrates the feasibility of the program.

The second and third phase—fund-raising and practical use of the model—are still to come, but Jones predicts the system will be in total operation within three years.

Georgia's Sunbelt Expo largest in the South

Once upon a time there was a small South Georgia farm show that grew and grew until it became the largest agricultural exposition in the South.

Each year's success meant more people, more exhibitors and more hot dogs. This year will be no exception.

More than 200,000 persons are expected to visit the fourth annual Sunbelt Agricultural Exposition in Moultrie, Ga., Oct. 13-15. With 568 companies exhibiting at Sunbelt '81, the farm show will probably add millions—again—to the Southwest Georgia economy.

Sponsored primarily by the Rural Development Center of the University of Georgia Co-operative Extension Service and the UGA Coastal Plain Experiment Station, the Expo had humble beginnings in the early 70's with a series of small specialized agricultural shows conducted on the Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College campus and at the RDC facilities (both located in Tifton, Ga.).

Although the show has grown to be a complex undertaking, the objectives have remained simple: let the agribusiness public know and learn about the latest developments in scientific advancements and agricultural products and at the same time enrich the lives of Expo visitors.

Dr. Joseph E. Burnside, coordinator of agricultural and forestry production at the RDC, has spearheaded the growth of the Expo as more than 515,000 farmers, agribusinessmen and consumers visited the show during its first three years.

An economic impact study of the 1978 Exposition estimated that in that year alone $2 million was contributed directly to the Southwest Georgia economy and the total economic impact of the Expo was $6 million. That was the first Expo and the smallest.

Since then the show has become regional and even national in scope as visitors and exhibitors have literally flown in from throughout the country. Located at the 1,680-acre Spence Field, a former air base three miles southeast of Moultrie, Ga., the Sunbelt Expo has a 9,000-foot hard surface FAA controlled runway that can land anything up to a 747. In the three years of the Expo, 3,415 aircraft have landed during the show dates.

Three hundred campers are within walking distance of the exposition area, and the show boasts an 80-acre static exhibit area and 600 acres of aerial displays and for harvesting and tillage demonstrations. The cropland is planted in corn, cotton, peanuts, soybeans and cane bermuda.

One third of each crop is harvested during each of the three days of the Sunbelt and the land is prepared for next year's crop. Fifteen acres of plot demonstrations are grown to demonstrate the effects of chemicals, performance of seed varieties and effectiveness of cultivation methods.

The cropland also features a home-style vegetable garden using drip trickle irrigation with fruit and nut trees, grapes and vegetables.

A consumer family living show spotlights energy and money saving ideas and includes modular homes and log cabins built on site. Other items of consumer interest include wood-burning stoves, solar collectors and travel information.

By taking new farm products and ideas out of the showroom and into the hands and head of the farming community, the Sunbelt Expo has made a valuable contribution to the local economy and to agriculture in the Southeastern United States.

THE REAL ISSUE...

At a time of diminishing resources, the issue is whether new growth and development should be contained so as to foster the conservation and use of old facilities that can be restored or whether the process of letting the population scatter while abandoning or destroying the old and building anew should continue unabated as it has since World War II.

--Copied from NEW ENGLAND GOVERNMENT INFORMATION EXCHANGE
Names in the News...

- Agricultural economists at three Southern land-grant universities were honored recently during the national meeting of the American Agricultural Economics Association at Clemson University.

- DR. LUTHER G. TWEETEN, Regents Professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics at Oklahoma State University, presided at the annual meeting as AAEA president.

- Two other Oklahoma State agricultural economist received recognition during the awards banquet: DR. GERALD DOEKEN and DR. JAMES R. NELSON were presented a group award for development of distinguished extension programs.

- SALEH HALWAN HUMAIDAN of Oklahoma State received an honorable mention award in the Outstanding Ph.D. Thesis category for his work entitled “Policies and Management Guidelines for Optimum Resource Utilization at Al-Hasa Irrigation and Drainage Project, Saudi Arabia.” DR. DEAN F. SCHREINER served as Humaidan’s faculty advisor.

- DR. JOHN R. STOLL, formerly of the University of Kentucky and now with the Texas A&M University Department of Agricultural Economics, was one of the three winners in the Outstanding Ph.D. Thesis category. Stoll’s Ph.D. thesis was entitled “The Valuation of Hunting and Related Amenities: A Conceptual and Empirical Approach.” DR. ALAN R. STOLL is Stoll’s advisor.

- STOLL and RANDALL teamed up to win an honorable mention award in the Quality of Research Development Category: their University of Kentucky research report entitled “Economic Surplus and Benefit-Cost Analysis.”

- DR. JOHN C. REDMAN, another member of the University of Kentucky agricultural economics department, received a special award from the national association in appreciation for his outstanding contributions to AAEA during the 11 years he served as secretary-treasurer.

- RALPH SEMPREVIO of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University was one of three winners in the Outstanding Master’s Thesis category for his thesis titled “Evaluation of Economic Structural Parameters and Multipliers Under Conditions of Multicolinearity in Simultaneous Systems.” DR. ORAL CAPPS JR. served as his advisor.

- DR. RONALD R. JOHNSON is the new associate director of the Oklahoma Agricultural Experiment Station and the department of animal science by the retirement of Dr. JAMES WHITLEY last spring. Johnson has his B.S. and M.S. from South Dakota State University and his Ph.D. in animal science from Ohio State University. He worked as a researcher at Ohio State before joining the Oklahoma State University faculty from 1969 until 1974. Johnson was head of the University of Tennessee Animal Science Department before assuming his experimental station position at Oklahoma State.

More medical specialists choosing rural practice

- More physicians are choosing smaller communities, according to a recent demographic characterization study of United States medical specialists.

- The research study reveals that big cities still hold a significant per capita advantage in specialists, but the percentage of increase in specialists locating in smaller communities has “significantly exceeded” metropolitan areas.

- Sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the National Institute of Health and the Rand Corporation, the study charts the distribution of certified practitioners in eight specialties currently practiced in 2,085 counties. The specialties include the five specialties with the largest membership—internal medicine, surgery, pediatrics, obstetrics/gynecology and radiology—plus three smaller specialties: urology, neurosurgery and dermatology.

- The study also indicates nonmetropolitan gains in family practice physicians but pinpoints movement of the five largest specialties to outlying communities as a “particularly striking phenomenon.”

- The authors of the study, headed by Dr. William B. Schwartz, professor of medicine at Tufts University, found that a full complement of the five specialties were located in 51 percent of communities of 20,000 to 30,000 inhabitants by 1977. In 1960 less than one-third of these communities had all five.

- Most towns of less than 20,000 in 1960 had continued on page 5

It’s an idea...It’s an idea...

- A MINI COMPUTER SYSTEM became an advisor to the city council in Traverse City, Mich., after facing the need to seek out city residents on several controversial subjects.

- The system, named “Tellus,” was set up in a high traffic area of city hall and citizens were asked by city personnel (e.g., an elderly chaperone service which allows youth to assist elderly persons with household jobs). For information contact the Human Services Administration, 599 Thompson Ave., East Haven, Conn.

- ...continued from page 4

- even one internist, pediatrician or obstetrician/gynecologist. By 1977, however, most towns of less than 10,000 had acquired these specialists—and nearly two-fifths of the towns between 5,000 and 10,000 had at least a surgeon.

- What accounts for the spread of physicians to smaller communities? The authors contend that as the ranks of physicians swell, simple supply and demand forces take over.

- The total physician-specialist population has tripled since 1960, putting pressure on physician earning power in the larger cities. The report says that an disproportionate fraction of the U.S. physician population still prefers to live in large cities and therefore earns less money in real terms, on an average, than their counterparts in outlying communities.

- Another explanation for the growth is that hospital facilities are now ample with 80 percent of the communities in the 5,000 to 10,000 population range and 60 percent in the 2,500 to 5,000 range having hospitals in 1970.

- The report discusses other factors which point to a continuing flow of professionals to smaller communities. Some of these factors include the possibility of altered admission policies in medical schools to provide for more family physicians; the actual preference of growing numbers of medical students for general practice and small-town living; and finally the potential impact of a national health insurance program which may further increase doctor demand in nonmetropolitan areas.

- A copy of this study is available for $3 by requesting publication R-2673-HHS/RC from the Publications Department, The Rand Corporation, 1700 Main St., Santa Monica, Calif. 90406.

KEEPING YOUTH ACTIVE and interested is a problem for many small communities with limited resources to offer youth in their job opportunities. Towns seeking ideas in this area might write to East Haven, Conn., where the Local Coordinating Committee for Youth has developed brochures describing their activities (e.g., an elderly chaperone service which allows youth to assist elderly persons with household jobs). For information contact the Human Services Administration, 599 Thompson Ave., East Haven, Conn.
'Black gold' fever strikes three Deep South states

With millions of acres under lease for oil exploration, three Deep South states are getting "black gold fever" and a surprising new source of revenue for county governments.

According to an article in the June issue of Georgia County Government magazine, at least five major oil companies are buying oil leases in Northwest Georgia and buying leases on county roads rights-of-way.

Areas in Georgia, Tennessee and Alabama—all within the range of the Appalachian Mountains—are part of what the oil industry considers the Eastern overthrust belt. The oil companies are interested in the area because of recent discoveries of fuel, after considerable drilling, in the Western overthrust belt in the Rocky Mountain region.

A July 8 story by the Associated Press estimated that at least five and a half million acres are under lease for exploration in Tennessee alone. Such firms as Amoco, Atlantic Richfield Co., Chevron, Shell and Gulf have leased oil exploration rights in eastern Tennessee.

The AP story reported that SONATA Exploration Co. of Houston has leased for 10 years the oil and gas exploration rights for 175,000 acres of land owned by Bowater North America Corp. Most of the Bowater land is located in eastern Tennessee between Chattanooga and Knoxville with some of it in northern Georgia and Alabama.

Freepool, Arco, Mobil and Amoco were some of the companies mentioned in the Georgia County Government magazine as oil prospectors in the Cumberland Fault region of Georgia. The fault is a geologic trough reaching from the Cumberland Mountains of Kentucky into Georgia.

Polk County, Georgia, was the first county in the state to lease public lands to the oil prospecting companies and has since been followed by other counties.

Oil leases are regulated and prospecting done by square-mile sections of 640 acres each, according to Polk County Attorney Wayne Gammon. A strike anywhere in the designated square mile allows all landholders in that section to share in royalties from the producing well. They receive a portion of the royalties based on their proportionate share of owned acreage.

Gammon said bids for the oil leases started at $3 per acre and then went as high as $30 per acre by late spring.

Polk County wrote the leases in such a way that no drilling could take place on road rights-of-way, no barricades associated with drilling could be erected and no testing could disturb the ground. Nevertheless, if a well comes in within the square mile section through which the road runs, the county will share in royalties proportionate to its acreage.

While no known well drilling has been undertaken in the northwest Georgia counties, one county official speculated that "this will be the greatest tax relief ever if they bring one in."

Tourism means jobs in Sunbelt states

In 11 Southern states, the travel and tourism industry is either the first or second major employer, according to recently released employment information.

Statistics generated by the Labor Department and analyzed by the U.S. Travel Data Center indicate that in four Southern states—Arkansas, Florida, Louisiana and Oklahoma—the travel and tourism industry is the largest employer when compared with other industries within the states.

Considered from a national perspective, the travel and tourism industry is the largest employer in 18 states, the second largest in 13 states and third largest in 6 states. The newly released labor department figures show more than 6.2 million jobs were generated in 1978 by the travel and tourism industry.

SOUTHDB TRAVEL AND TOURISM EMPLOYMENT RANKINGS AS COMPARED WITH OTHER STATE INDUSTRIES

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<thead>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi</td>
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RURAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH PRIORITY AREAS FOR THE 80'S RANKED ACCORDING TO IMPORTANCE BY 320 RESPONDENTS FROM LAND-GRA OUTED INSTITUTIONS IN THE SOUTH

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<thead>
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Small Talk on Big Issues...

- Black population growth in the United States rose by 17 percent during the 1970's while the overall population increase grew by only 11 percent. The total U.S. population increased from 203.2 million in 1970 to about 226.5 million in 1980. The number of blacks expanded from 22.6 million to 26.5 million, an increase from 11.1 percent to 11.7 percent of the total population.

- The House Select Committee on Aging in a report entitled "Retirement, the Broken Promise" found that 15.1 percent of Americans 65 and older were living below the poverty line — $5,700 for a two-person household.

- For the first time since 1971, the annual increase in average farmland value has failed to keep pace with inflation, resulting in a decline in the real value of farmland. Farmland values rose 9.3 percent during a 12-month period ending Feb. 1, 1981, and during the same period inflation rose 11 percent.
History proves some things don't change with time

Sometimes it takes a while to get things done. In his last State of the Union message for Congress, George Washington asked for creation of a Board of Agriculture. He wanted the board charged with collecting and diffusing information to encourage and assist a spirit of discovery and improvement.

His proposal was enacted in 1862—the era of Abraham Lincoln—when Congress set up the United States Department of Agriculture.

When asked by a friend in England what American farms would produce, Washington didn’t know. He sent out a mail survey to find out. The survey covered only land in what would be four states along the East Coast.

At that time wheat in Virginia was going 30 bushels to the acre, corn on bottom land went 20 to 40 bushels. Land was $16.50 an acre and wheat sold for 80 cents a bushel. Pork cost 4 cents a pound, beef 3½ cents and butter 9 cents.

Washington wrote that he never had a high opinion of the American system of farming because farms were too large, slavery was inefficient and tobacco was exhausting the land. Farmers were getting 6 bushels of tobacco per acre on poor land and 20 to 30 on well manured land.

Congress had just voted to move the capital from Philadelphia to the District, 300 miles by ship from the Atlantic. Members said it was too far west and resented being sent to legislate in a wilderness.

Washington loved the new capitol, however, and envisioned a nation of farmers who would move west to new lands via the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers.

Americans did move west as Washington envisioned and today U.S. farms literally grow food for the world. While the nation’s capital is no longer a wilderness, one thing hasn’t changed—it still takes time to get things done.

Southern Rural Development Center
P. O. Box 5406
Mississippi State, MS 39762
Young farmers multiply while overall ranks decline

New figures from the Economic Research Service dispel the widely held belief that farmers are aging rapidly and that younger people have not been able to make significant inroads into agriculture.

The Associated Press recently reported new population studies revealing 401,000 farmers under the age of 35 in 1980 compared with 265,000 a decade earlier.

The research figures, according to the AP news story, related only to people who are self-employed in farming and who make most of their living from it. The statistics are based on monthly Bureau of Labor Statistics reports on employment and earnings, including agriculture.

Calvin L. Beale, head of population studies in the USDA's Economic Research Service, expressed surprise at the findings in light of the economic difficulties. "A lot of these guys have a lot of debt and unless you've got the father or father-in-law to facilitate it, it's pretty tough," he said.

Beale said his studies show that the median age of farmers has declined from a peak of 53.1 years in 1970 to 48.6 years in 1980. The median age means half are younger, half older.

Beale explained that a decade or so ago "there was a large potential supply of young farmers" and that it was "a propitious time for this to happen."

"You had large numbers of farm youth who had been born after World War II, in the 1950s, just as you had in the cities. And in the early '70s there was an improvement in the income position on farms, particularly in the boom years of '72-'73."

Beale said he had conducted many interviews, mainly in the Midwest, to determine some of the reasons young people stayed or returned to the farm.

"There were a number of them who had non-economic considerations, I think, in their decisions," he said. "They had seen the city and it wasn't at all that great any more."

Beale found that in 1980 the total number of farmers had dropped to 1,628,000 people, which included 401,000 under the age of 35 years (nearly 25 percent of the total).

As the percentage of younger farmers increased "we had a number of older farmers pull out," Beale said. In 1970 there were 601,000 farmers who were 60 or older and only 415,000 by 1980.

In virtually every farming area, however, the number of youth reaching age 20 "will decline now for the next 15 years," Beale said. And that will mean a lower potential supply of young farm people.

Stockman threatens cuts in small cities block grants

A new blitz of spending cuts again threatens to perform radical surgery on the nation's system for distributing Federal funds to local governments.

In an effort to cut the Department of Housing and Urban Development's fiscal 1983 budget by billions of dollars, Budget Director David Stockman reportedly wants to eliminate all new spending after 1983 for Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and Urban Development Action Grants (UDAG).

The two programs, which this year aided about 2,850 communities in every part of the country, started out with a $4.2 billion budget for 1982 and may find even that budget jeopardized by a new round of cuts.

The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981 combined the UDAG program with CDBG (Continued on page 2)
Cuts in aid to small cities

...Continued from page 1

after the administration proposed "block grants" to replace many Federal assistance programs. A total of $4.2 billion per year for the two programs was authorized for FY 1982 and FY 1983. Appropriations for the program have not yet passed Congress and could be less than the authorized figure. Congress stipulated that a large portion of the CDBG money (nearly $1 billion) be set aside for small cities block grants to states. Under the small cities block grants, each state will be offered the option of assuming control of community development aid for small communities in that state. If the state chooses to accept this program responsibility, then it will be free to design a program that gives local government grants for any one of a large number of local needs, including water and sewer systems, street paving and funding for vital public services. If a state chooses not to administer the small cities program or does not meet the eligibility requirements, then use of the money within the state will be determined by HUD.

Stockman's proposed reductions in funding for the CDBG program are part of a package of deep spending cuts in non-defense programs that the Office of Management and Budget is preparing for Reagan, who must submit it to Congress in late January. HUD Secretary Samuel Pierce Jr. has strongly opposed cuts in the CDBG program as well as proposed cuts in Federal subsidies for low-income housing construction. The housing cuts would come amid the worst homeless building slump since World War II and would mean that starting later in the current fiscal year, no new money would be available to help finance construction or rehabilitation of housing for low-income families.

HUD has calculated approximate grant amounts under the small cities block grant program. The allotments are estimated levels per state and assume that Congress will appropriate the full amount authorized for CDBG in fiscal 1982.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<td>Virginia</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

State requirements: small cities block grants

If a state chooses to administer the small cities block grant program, the state must meet a number of requirements established by the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act:

1. The state must prepare statements of community development objectives and proposed use of funds, including a description of how the state will distribute funds to local governments, provide information on the amount of money available and activities which may be undertaken, and hold at least one public hearing to receive comments from local officials and others concerning the statement.
2. The final plan must be made available to the public and submitted to HUD with the following certifications: (1) the state must certify that it has compiled with the public hearing requirements; (2) the state must administer the program in compliance with the civil rights laws; (3) the state's statement on the projected use of funds must be "developed so as to give maximum feasible priority to activities which will benefit low and moderate income families or aid in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight;" and (4) the state must comply with any other applicable provisions of Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act.

Unemployment survey lures industry to small community

An unemployment survey just may be the drawing card that community leaders need to convince small labor intensive labor industries that a ready labor force is available and waiting in some areas of the rural South.

When tobacco farming died in Gadsden County, Fla., in 1977, it was an economic disaster for a county that had depended on the tobacco industry for nearly 200 years.

Official unemployment figures were too low to get federal funds to help rebuild the economy, but a new unemployment survey prepared by extension specialists at the Center for Community and Rural Development, University of Florida, showed an unemployment rate of about 20 percent as opposed to the 9.9 percent official statistic. Although attempts to change the official figures were unsuccessful, the new survey became a successful tool in convincing labor-intensive small industries that the county had a ready labor force as well as available fields and warehouses.

One of the first new industries attracted to the area was a 10-acre nursery. Today there are 2,000 jobs in more than 30 new industries after the unemployment survey laid the groundwork for rebuilding the county's economic base.
SMALL TOWN INGENUITY has saved money for Leesburg, Va., (7,000 pop.) taxpayers while simultaneously improving city employee benefits. Since every cent of raises would cost Leesburg another 20 percent in taxes, retirement contributions and insurance, the town council established an "optional benefits program." This program gave each employee $500 in added fringe benefits rather than adding 8 to 10 percent of living adjustments (COLA) plus in-grade services raises to the employees' pay. The amount is earned in monthly increments of $41.67 and is used to help improve their health, athletic condition and physical fitness in the manner the employees desire. This benefit was in addition to a 4 percent COLA and the 5 percent service raise received by most employees. Employees can use this money for additional term life insurance or to pay premiums for hospitalization/major medical insurance for spouses or dependents. Employees also may select town payment of membership fees in athletic or swim clubs. The third option is a $500 self-insurance fund for uninsured dental, medical or optical medical bills. This permits employees to collect reimbursements from the town of up to $250 every six months. An independent legal opinion has been obtained which indicates the receipt of such benefits is exempt from federal income taxes. However, an IRS ruling is not available to date. Further information can be obtained from Town Manager John Niccolis, who developed the program. Contact Niccolis at 15 West Market Street, Leesburg, Va., 22075, 703-777-2420.

A CASH-AWARD SUGGESTION encouraging cost-saving ideas for the 1982 city budget produced an estimated savings of $62,775 for the city of Westminster, Colo. All city employees except department heads and personnel in the city manager's office were eligible to participate. The person with the best suggestion was awarded $100 (from city funds), the second place winner, $75; third place, $50; and fourth place, $25. For further information contact City Manager William Christopher, 3031 West 76th Ave., Westminster, Colo., 80030-423-1546.

REWARDING CITY EMPLOYEES for helpful suggestions has proven financially beneficial for both the city and the worker in St. Louis, Mo. Mayor James Conway reports that the city has instituted a program to reward city employees for suggestions that financially benefit the city, with the employee receiving an amount equal to 10 percent (up to a maximum of $2,000) of the financial benefit realized.

SMALL TOWN in South Australia cut its employee absenteeism in half when they began paying staff for sick leave not taken. Absenteeism had been growing alarmingly in Hindmarsh, South Australia, (4,500 pop.). In analyzing what this was costing, the town started to factor in lost productivity costs and the hidden costs of reorganizing work programs to accommodate the absence of employees. The town council reasoned that it was possible to pay staff for sick leave not taken and still gain in productivity and lower administrative costs. An employee who had taken no sick leave received 10 days' pay (since that was the number of authorized sick days per year), an employee taking one sick day received 90 percent of 9 days' pay, and so on down the line an employee using all ten days of leave received no bonus at all. After the first year of instituting the new policy, the total man-hours lost dropped from 1,600 to 870, and the average time lost per employee dropped from 8.3 days to 4.53 days. For more information contact Town Clerk J.R. Langman, P.O. Box 22, Hindmarsh 5007, South Australia.

CANA$02.000 house still be built? The city of Cotati, Calif., (3,000 pop.) is sponsoring a housing design contest to encourage affordable housing for its citizens with low fixed incomes. Five winners will be selected during the competition, and they will have the opportunity to build their models on lots provided by the city. The land to build the models will be purchased with a $48,000 loan obtained from the Department of Housing and Community Development's Rural Land Purchase Fund. The city has arranged for a savings and loan company to provide five $30,000 loans at below market interest rates so that low income persons can purchase the model homes (after a one-year display period has elapsed). For further information contact City Manager Rory Robinson, P.O. Box 428, Cotati, CA 94928, 707-795-5478.

A FREE DESIGN SERVICE for private property owners who want to upgrade their buildings has proved to be a successful part of an ambitious public improvement program for Martinez, Calif., (18,804 pop.). At no charge to business owners, the city offers an architectural rendering service which supplies improvement ideas for beleaguered buildings. In addition, the city has the opportunity to enforce design modification to ensure consistency with a historic theme and ensure that neighboring buildings complement each other. Costs for the program have been kept to a minimum by the use of a graphic artist hired on a part-time basis. To learn more about this downtown revitalization service, contact City Manager Paul Brotzman, 525 Henrietta St., Martinez, Calif. 94553, 415-372-4905.

SHARING FRESH AIR is a new form of giving for small town families who literally open their homes and hearts to urban young people. In 320 cooperating towns from Maine to Virginia, host families annually welcome into their homes more than 11,000 disadvantaged New York City youngsters seeking relief from hot urban tenements. Conducted under the auspices of The Fresh Air Fund, the program considers small towns as ideal host communities. To inquire about the program or about becoming a host family, contact The Fresh Air Fund, 70 West 40th Street, New York, NY 10018.

(Editor's Note: The following comments by choreographer Eliot Feld are offered as a humorous aside to a more serious problem.)

I was reading that proposed new 300-foot nuclear submarines would cost $1 million a foot. I have three ways that you could restore the $5 million reduction in (National Endowment of the Arts) dance programs. One: If one of these submarines was only 295 feet long, support for dance could remain at the current level of funding. Feld's other solutions: Cut five submarines by one foot each, or 37 submarines by an inch and a half. Having slightly shorter fleet of submarines, he said, "would make little difference. It's my observation that things appear longer submerged under water."
Executive order to protect ag lands draws criticism

By SUE H. JONES
Editor

An executive order aimed at protecting the nation's farmland officially "under review," but it might be better described as "under siege."

The proposed order has been under review by an inter-agency Cabinet council since a dispute erupted between the USDA and the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The conflict between the two cabinet-level departments supposedly had led the USDA to propose the executive order directing all Federal agencies that finance or assist in construction and improvement projects "to take steps to assure that the actions of the Federal government do not cause U.S. agricultural land to be irreversibly converted to non-agricultural uses."

HUD officials, on the other hand, view the executive order as a restraint on the free market. They argue that the marketplace ought to determine the use of land.

The executive order had its origins in findings of the recent National Agricultural Lands Study which identified 90 Federal programs that reduce the availability of land for agricultural production. Singling out HUD, the report said the agency's programs had contributed in one instance to the conversion of 29,000 acres of prime agricultural land from 1978 to 1980 in just one Texas county.

In a written response to one senator's distress over HUD's opposition to the study, HUD Secretary Samuel R. Pierce maintained that "there are some circumstances in which the need for housing is a compelling priority, even if it results in the conversion of agricultural land."

The Cabinet-level dispute reflects an even broader, deep-rooted conflict between urban and rural interests — between growers and builders. At the heart of the dispute is the nagging fear that someday there won't be enough farmland.

Most people concerned with future land availability usually mean cropland. In spite of urban development, the total acreage classified as cropland has not changed much for several decades. The actual acreage, however, has varied greatly.

The past few years, crops — particularly soybeans in the South — have been more profitable than cattle. As a result, a significant amount of pasture has been converted to cropland. Such conversion has helped keep the total cropland figure unchanged for decades, but it also has placed new land — often marginal land — into production.

Soil conservationists argue that new land brought into crop production will naturally be more erosive than current crop acres. Erosion, in fact, is frequently cited as a major potential cause of reduced productivity, possibly leading to a reduction in usable crop acres.

In spite of this problem, the odds are that continued conversion to crop uses will allow sufficient cropland to be available to meet future needs, especially domestic needs, for the rest of this century.

The problem is that "the rest of this century" is less than 20 years away. What HUD calls "doomsday scenarios" of land availability are made even more dreary by the potential use of cropland for energy production. This includes land used for strip mining coal as well as for producing alcohol for crops.

The Energy Security Act of 1980 calls for 10 percent of annual U.S. gasoline consumption by 1990 to come from alcohol — 11 billion gallons, assuming a total U.S. consumption of 110 billion. If half of this alcohol were to come from corn, 12 to 20 billion acres of cropland would be needed in the range depending on how much feed-by-products from alcohol production are utilized.

If corn were the sole source of this alcohol, the additional acreage required could run as high as 39 million acres.

The Corn Belt and the Delta, two of the nation's most productive regions, have almost 25 million acres of potential cropland for expansion of crops like corn and soybeans. While the Corn Belt could easily convert its pasture land to crop use, farmers in which careful use might move American agriculture safely into the next century.

If the current dispute between HUD and the USDA is a reflection of a deeper conflict between urban and rural interests, then the decision of the inter-agency Cabinet council might also be considered as a reflection of whose priorities will prevail. Other
27 National Defense
25 Transportation
25 Recreational and wildlife
59 Cropland
472 Grassland pasture and range
587 Forest
Total acreage — 2,264 mil.

Bil. acres
2.5
2.0
1.5
1.0
0.5
0.0
Names in the news

- DR. E. BROADUS BROWN has been named director of the Georgia Agricultural Experiment Station. Dr. Brown was formerly associate director of the experiment station and director of the Coastal Plain Experiment Station in Tifton, Ga. He succeeds DR. WILLIAM P. FLATT who was named dean of the University of Georgia College of Agriculture.

- JAMES A. CHRISTENSEN, professor of sociology and director of the Survey Research Center at the University of Kentucky, was selected as editor of Rural Sociology, 1982-1984. He recently co-edited a state-of-the-art book, Community Development in America, which is now in its second printing with the Iowa State University Press.

- DR. STEWART H. FOWLER, former resident director of research at the Texas A&M University Agricultural Research Center at Uvalde, was recently inducted into the American Cattle Breeder’s Hall of Fame in recognition of his work with the Texas Longhorn. Dr. Fowler has helped bring new popularity to a hardy cattle breed that by the 1960s had almost disappeared. The Hall of Fame includes such notables as the late John Wayne, who was part owner of a Texas ranch, and former Texas Governor Dolph Briscoe. Dr. Fowler is presently professor and head of the Department of Agriculture at the University of Rome, Ga. Before going to Texas A&M University in 1972, he served for three years as professor and head of the Department of Animal Science at Mississippi State University and for 11 years as professor of animal science at Louisiana State University.

- DR. EDWARD B. FORT has been named the new chancellor of North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro. Dr. Fort was formerly chancellor of 14-two-year colleges in Wisconsin and succeeds LEO C. DOWDY, who retired last year. Dr. Fort has his BA and MA from Wayne State University and a doctorate in educational administration from the University of California at Berkeley.

- EARL WILSON, Extension agent for Baxter County, Arkansas, was recently presented the Rural Advocate of the Year Award by Gov. Frank White in a ceremony at the state capital. The award was made in conjunction with the Governor’s proclamation of Small Business Week, and Wilson was cited for his efforts in helping small businesses in Baxter County.

Southern states lead nation in 1980 reported crimes

Southern states had the highest percentage of reported crime in 1980, according to final figures compiled by the FBI. With 31.3 percent of the reported crimes in the United States, the South led other regions of the nation by a substantial margin. The Western states claimed only 23.9 percent; North Central states, 23.5 percent; and Northeastern states, 21.3 percent.

The FBI also reported that violent crime has jumped 60 percent since 1971 and property crime has increased by 54 percent. When compared with 1979, however, the total crimes reported increased only 9 percent.

The National Rural Crime Prevention Center at Ohio State University has developed a series of leaflets designed to help rural people make decisions which will reduce their chances of becoming crime victims. The brief leaflets are intended as a means of helping people develop prevention strategies. Camera-ready copies of each of the following leaflets are available to state Cooperative Extension Services on a request basis:

- Home and Farm Security: Machinery and Equipment — NRNPC 21
- Livestock — NRNPC 22
- Timbrel — NRNPC 23
- Being a Good Witness — NRNPC 24
- Fuel Tank Security — NRNPC 25
- Basic Door and Lock Security — NRNPC 26
- Securing Your Windows — NRPC 27

Requests should be directed to G. Howard Phillips, Director, National Rural Crime Prevention Center, Ohio State University, 2120 Fyfe Road, Columbus, Ohio 43210.

Small Talk on Big Issues

- Michigan State University received a $10 million grant from the Kellogg Foundation to launch a major new teaching and public demonstration project. "The project is designed to assist in introducing AGRICOLA online to agriculturalists and advanced students at their institutions. AGRICOLA is one of the computer data bases operated at NAL. Of the seventeen 1980 land grant libraries included Tuskegee Institute, nine now have online bibliographic services.

- About half of all families below the poverty level in 1980 were maintained by women with no husband present. In addition, single-parent families increased from 1 of every 9 families with children under 18 in 1970 to 1 of every 5 in 1975.

- The median age in the United States has increased from 28 in 1970 to 30.1 in 1980, according to the U. S. Census Bureau. Florida’s median age in 1980 was 34.7, making it the state with the oldest population. Utah, with a median age of 24, is the home of more young people.

Predicted trends for 80s may influence programming

Anyone involved in designing and developing programs for that unknown quantity called "the public" is interested in trends revealed recently in the Journal of Extension.

In an article entitled "Thinking Globally, Acting Locally," author WOOD and Jenkins outlined some predicted trends extension workers should keep in mind for future programming:

- The 80’s are bringing a sharp return to conservatism. People are electing to step down from a high socio-economic status to a lower status.
- Only 9% of the working force, 20 million people, in the U.S. today are in manufacturing. The remaining 65 million workers provide services or manipulate data.
- More and more people will be over 65, and the ratio of children to adults will probably go down.
- In medicine, a "holistic health" movement has been building on the notion that the well being of the individual depends on integrating the physical, spiritual and mental aspects.
- Future growth and development depends on how well people cooperate at the grassroots level. We must work with people, not at them, to help them initiate and achieve changes in attitude and action.
- Stressors of the 80’s are necessary for growth we must be a partner. People are changing and will not accept programs as "is," we must be oriented toward a "conserver" society—one that minimizes waste, supports an ecological balance and prolongs the life of our natural resources.
- The home is again becoming the pivot for the "new civilization." As the electronic cottage, it will house the information, economic, medical and social units. The rise of the prosumer (one who consumes what he produces) will be evident as we begin to make more of what we consume. We’re already caring for family members at home instead of in institutions.
- Youth of tomorrow will grow up sooner, show responsibility earlier and adapt more readily to change. They’ll likely question authority. They’ll be willing to work but will resist working for money alone.
GUIDE TO WASTEWATER FACILITIES PLANNING IN SMALL AND RURAL AREAS is a handbook that provides information on water and sewage systems for rural residents and planners with a simple guide to what sewage system would be best for their community. Prepared for the Small and Rural Development Management Project at the University of Wisconsin, the handbook is addressed to two basic groups: residents and planners and another for engineers. Preparation of the manual was funded by the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development at Iowa State University. The handbook attempts to guide rural residents through various systems alternatives, the myriad of federal and state regulations, and the environmental impacts. Copies of the manual (FOR ORDER) may be obtained for $3.75 (engineer's guide) from Rita Daley, Small Scale Watershed Management Project, 1450 Linden Drive, Madison, WI 53706. Make checks payable to the University of Wisconsin.

THE FARM AND RURAL ENERGY PLANNING MANUAL was published by the Institute of Rural and Agricultural Systems at its widely used COUNTY ENERGY PLANNING GUIDEBOOK. The manual, written by Dave Weaver, Louisa Grendell and Dennis Greggs, is organized into sections dealing with (1) the analysis of present agricultural energy consumption, (2) the projection of future energy consumption for agriculture, (3) the determination of energy conservation potential, and (4) the estimation of renewable energy potential. The authors suggest alternative practices which can be readily implemented to conserve energy in agricultural operations. They also give the ranges of potential energy savings for farm buildings, farm machinery, solar devices, irrigation, crop drying and greenhouses. In exploring the renewable energy potential of the agricultural sector, the authors examine the materials, methods and equipment that can be used for solar energy heating and for generation of electricity, wind-generated energy, energy storage, and biomass for generating electricity for calculating the production potential in each of these categories. The manual is available for $6.00 and $6.16 to the Institute for Ecological Policies, 9208 Christopher St., Fairfax, VA 22031, 701-691-1271.

RURAL AND SMALL TOWN PLANNING by Judith B. Gartel and Charles Thomas is a practical guide for the planner and offers advice from successful, seasoned planners working in rural areas. The 323-page paperback shows planners how they can shape the future physical growth of communities without endangering those qualities that rural residents most value. The book emphasizes planning in rural places that result from energy development, new agricultural practices and recreational and second-home development. Available for $12.95.

SMALL COMMUNITIES AND RURAL AREAS provides descriptions and illustrations of numerous small wastewater systems and how they may be used to fulfill community needs. Available free from National Association of Towns & Townships, 1521 16th St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20036.

On Film

THE MILLION DOLLAR PUNK is the story of a young photographer's volunteer work in a drug rehabilitation program in Rome, Italy, and how the citizens dealt with it. The first step used by the community to combat the increasing problem was to gather more accurate data on Rome's vandalism. Then a public awareness program was created to acquaint the community with vandalism. Local program officials encouraged parents and teachers to teach their children about vandalism, and local meetings were held to discuss the need for vandalism prevention programs. In the community's Center for Protection, Terrell Hall, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602.

FARM SECURITY, a slide-tape presentation prepared by the Michigan State Police, features techniques of crime prevention for farm operators. The slide-tape presentation point out the serious cost of crime to farm operators and discusses different ways of reducing crime opportunities such as marking machinery and cattle. "Farm Security" is available for $2.00 from the Michigan State Police, Community Service Section, 715 South Harrison Road, East Lansing, MI 48823.

On Schedule

EXTENSION NATIONAL CONFERENCE, Jan. 11-14, Holiday Inn Airport North, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Contact: Ted McCord, CRD State CRD Leader, Alabama Cooperative Estension Service, Auburn University, AL 36849, 205-826-5323.

SIXTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON ENERGY FROM BIOMASS AND WASTES, Jan. 25-29, Hotel Royal Plaza, Lake Buena Vista, Fla. A comprehensive technical program on research and commercial projects for the production of energy and synthetic fuels. Contact Sunny Fierce, 3127 42nd Street South, St. Petersburg, FL 33704, 813-889-1323.


Public Relations Department.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS, FIFTH NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RURAL PRIMARY CARE, April 4-6, Jackson, Miss. Contact Carrie Samuel, Conference Coordinator, National Rural Primary Care Association, Box 1211, Waveland, MS 39580, 601-285-1127.
Federal land ownership creates problems for states

A recent tally of land in Federal ownership indicates why states and localities look fondly at payments in lieu of taxation.

According to a survey by the National Association of Counties, five states have given up more than half their territory to Federal ownership, and 15 states have 10 percent or more of their land owned by Uncle Sam.

Since Federal ownership precludes development and removes land from the tax digests of states and localities, it is a burden not often offset by Federal contributions to the local economy. Many are questioning the need for so much real estate tied up in Federal reserves.

States where land resources are depleted most by Federal ownerships also have the least voters and therefore little political clout to effect change. Payments in lieu of taxes on these lands -- only 75 cents per acre -- have been a salve to moderate the negative effect of Federal land ownership, but now it appears that even payments-in-lieu might fall victim to budget cuts. The PILT program is one Congress can cut without offending a large segment of the public.

Alaska leads the nation with 95 percent of its land owned by the Federal government. Nevada is second with 87 percent while other states with large percentages include Arizona, 45; California, 44; Colorado, 36; Idaho, 64; Montana, 30; New Mexico, 34; Oregon, 52; Utah, 66; Washington, 29; and Wyoming, 48.

Southern states have comparatively low percentages. Florida leads the region with 10 percent of its land under Federal ownership. Other Southern states include Alabama, 3; Arkansas, 9; Georgia, 6; Kentucky, 5; Louisiana, 4; Mississippi, 5; North Carolina, 6; Oklahoma, 3; South Carolina, 6; Tennessee, 6; Texas, 2; and Virginia, 9.

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