Researchers outline farming strategies of future

To achieve success in agriculture in the late 20th century, farmers will have to develop new strategies, skills and priorities that weren’t required in past generations, Thomas Miller, Warren Trock and Danny Smith predict.

According to the three, successful farmers of the future will be both technically and economically efficient and will be better managers than today’s farmers.

Resource pack provides FCL training program

A compilation of training materials for use with the Family Community Leadership (FCL) program is now available.

The FCL Resource Pack consists of materials developed by the FCL regional office and the six FCL states (Alaska, Colorado, Hawaii, New Mexico, Oregon and Washington).

Jointly sponsored by Cooperative Extension Services and Extension Homemakers and funded in part by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, FCL is an educational program offering leadership training to prepare citizens for involvement in public policy decision-making.

The basic FCL resource pack training program includes 30 hours of instruction in six subject areas: leadership and communication, working groups, issue analysis and resolution, community affairs and public policy, volunteerism, and teaching methods.

For more information, contact Family Community Leadership Regional Office, Western Rural Development Center, Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR 97331, (503) 754-3621.

Miller, Trock and Smith described the successful farmer of the future in a recent report on the prospects for agriculture in the 1980s and 1990s.

Miller is an agricultural economist with the USDA Economic Research Service. Trock and Smith are professors at Colorado State University.

The three predict that greater productivity from improved inputs will be required in the future to assure the farmer an acceptable net farm income, and that farmers must become highly skilled technical and production managers.

Other predictions include the following:

- Financial business skills and business expertise in general will be necessary to operate in the high risk environment of agriculture in the next decades.

- Future business emphasis will be on controlling costs and maximizing net income from enterprise, rather than on maximizing volume and gross sales.

- Farmers will need to acquire their own reliable marketing information and forecasts. USDA and other public and private publications will not be sufficient sources of information due to the greater level of price uncertainty.

- Access to telecommunications and microcomputer systems information will become crucial to survival in the farm business. In the future, farmers must accumulate accurate, detailed information and form reliable expectations from this information.

- Partnerships and family-held corporations are, to some extent, replacing the sole proprietorships for commercial-size farms. Debt financing is being replaced by leasing and various methods of outside equity financing as a means to

(continued on page 5)
NCSC offers video on creating small-town jobs

A video on proven methods of creating jobs in small towns through local ingenuity is being developed by the National Center for Small Community Research and Training of the National Association of Towns and Townships (NATa).

The video, which is scheduled for release in mid-February, will show specific approaches for creating jobs in small towns and rural communities throughout the United States.

"Small towns and rural areas have experienced challenges in creating jobs, but we have found that by focusing on local ingenuity and resources, we can create sustainable solutions," said someone from NATa.

The video will be distributed to local governments and community organizations to help them understand and implement these methods.

Georgia counties plan to share jail facility

Four Georgia counties are exploring the possibility of sharing a single jail to save money.

Elbert, Hart, Franklin, and Madison counties have expressed interest in sharing a jail to address the challenges of operating separate facilities. The counties are currently experiencing inadequacies in their present facilities, but none is singly ready to build a new facility.

Since they are part of the same judicial circuit, they find the logic of building a joint-use jail quite appealing. Raising money for such a project is the first roadblock, however. They have asked the state Department of Community Affairs to help locate any available grants, but have yet to come across any. The Governor's Jail Improvement Program could put as much as $20,000 per county into construction if the applications are approved, but the four counties are not looking at a need for upwards of $5 million.

Hart County Chairman Ray Lewis has high hopes for the project, and he surprised state authorities when he reported that all the county commissioners and the four sheriffs were in complete agreement on preliminary plans.

Already under discussion is a proposal to locate the jail so that some proceedings can be conducted. The transportation of prisoners to their respective counties will be done by a system requiring a jury to be conducted at the appropriate courthouse.

Hart County Chairman Billy Ray Brown says the sheriff determined that the average population in all four jails is about 20 inmates at times. However, he would expect a new facility to accommodate more than the present occupancy. If new facilities were allowed, allow the federal courts and other counties to use their surplus space and pay for the price of the facility.

(Excerpts from the November 1986 issue of Georgia County Government.)

States develop crop diversification strategies

Agricultural crop diversification is one farm crisis survival strategy adopted by several state governments and troubled farmers.

Since 1982, 13 states have mandated special studies to develop new markets for farm products. These studies included examining the economic potential of specialty crops in Alabama and financial incentives to encourage the establishment of food processing industries in Oregon.

The agricultural diversification programs are designed to inform farmers about the full scope of what they can produce.

Many new crops are being promoted to fill the market demands for low-calorie, high-nutrition foods. For example, South Carolina is promoting various high-nutrient vegetables, fruits, and shrimp. In Mississippi, farmers are expanding their soybean acreage.

CAPSULES is published periodically by the Southern Rural Development Center at the University of Georgia, Tuscaloosa, Alabama. It is also available in a loose-leaf format for viewing by larger groups convened by state agencies, power distributors, local governments, organizations, cooperative extension offices, community colleges, and others.

The video, which will be loaned to interested parties for a nominal fee, will feature local leaders telling their real-life success stories to illustrate such homegrown techniques as identifying and training entrepreneurs, reducing retail leakage, reducing low-value agriculture products into high-value consumer goods, and financing new small business endeavors.

Along with the video, Stark said small groups will receive a user's guide and copies of NATa's best-selling Hawai'town Jobs guidebook, a small-town development tool.

The project is made possible through a grant from the Economic Development Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Tennessee county operates rural recycling center

A recycling center in Tennessee's Blount County (pop. 16,000) has been helping the county get rid of its solid waste since 1983.

The center buys aluminum, glass, paper and other materials from residents and resells them for reuse by industry.

Blount County's recycling center is relatively new because it is located in a rural area. Recycling is often thought to be impractical because of the large volume of recyclable materials generated in such areas and because of the distance to markets for recyclable materials, typically located in more urban areas.

To start the center, the county provided the building and the land at no cost. The manager's salary came from a state grant, and Tennessee Valley Authority provided $27,000 for the purchase of equipment.

The center does not yet pay its own way. However, not all benefits are of the kind that show up in an accountant's ledger. Benefits include reducing the volume of waste and thus the cost of waste disposal in a landfill, reducing roadside litter and improving the aesthetical appearance of the county, and providing a source of supplemental income (though quite small) for local residents.

Four percent of the total county population participated in the program during the first year. Average payment per participant was $30.

(Condensed from "Can Rural Recycling Centers Work in Tennessee," by Deborah Markley and William M. Stone, in the October 1986 issue of Rural Development Perspectives.)

For more information on crop diversification programs, contact Michael Greene, Center for Agriculture and Rural Development, School of Forest Resources and Geomatics, Lexington, KY. (606) 225-2291.

(Condensed from the November 1986 issue of Franklin News, a NASDA publication.)
Local initiative leads to medical aid for farmers

A privately funded program in Marshall-town, Iowa (pop. 27,000) provides free medical care for financially strapped small farm families.

Omar Voran, administrator of the Marshall-town Medical and Surgical Center, described the December workshop on health services in small cities. The workshop was held in conjunction with the National Council of Cities of Small Towns.

Voran said that the Farmers Medical Emergency Program has already helped about 100 farmers and residents of towns under 5,000 population in two central Iowa counties. The program is made possible through the local County Extension Service and Iowa State University. According to Voran, this program has enabled hundreds of rural families to avoid the stigma of welfare, which would have kept many rural families away.

The Voran stresses that the program is a local initiative, with local control and responsibility.

"It is an effort to solve local problems with local resources and caring," he said. The program was initiated by ministers working with the Community Resources Committee, a panel with broad community representation formed through the Iowa State University Cooperative Extension Service.

The ministers approached Voran about having his hospital treat financially troubled rural families at no cost. In addition, 80 dentists and doctors provide their services free and are reimbursed for 50 percent of their overhead.

The program is funded with 10,000 dollars, private donations and a 5,000 grant from Iowa's Extension Agency for Peace and Justice in Des Moines.

Screening of patients for eligibility is done by volunteers from the Community Resources Committee. The Mental Health Center of Tama County does the auditing and finance services at no charge.

So far, the program has paid out almost $75,000 for 250 cases of medical services, Voran said.

(Condensed from "How one town provides free medical care for those who can't pay," by Linda R. Woodhouse, in the Dec. 22, 1986, issue of Nation's Cities Weekly.)

It's an idea...

* Gearheart, Oregon (pop. 900), was watching its fire fighting equipment fade and rot away because it could not afford to keep it in good repair. When the fire station converted from fossil fuel to passive solar heat collector, the system worked so well, says Bruce Maltman, city administrator, that the station doesn't have to use its backup oil furnace. Other fire stations in the area are interested in the idea.
Number of black-operated farms declines sharply

Between 1920 and 1982, the number of farms operated by black farmers decreased 96 percent, according to a USDA demographer.

Increased poverty among black farming families, the promise of higher income jobs away from home, and the older age of today's black farmer have contributed to the decline of black-operated farms.

The majority of black farmers do not receive a farm income capable of supporting their families at an acceptable standard of living, according to Vera Banks of the USDA Economic Research Service (ERS).

Two reasons account for the failure of black farm families, according to ERS researchers. Black farmers tend to have less education and capital than other farmers. They are also concentrated in Southern rural counties that have not benefited from the nation's economic growth and development.

Children of black farmers have had strong economic incentives to leave home to find higher paying jobs in other areas.

The abandonment of agriculture as a profession by farmers' children has greatly affected the number and age of those who continue to farm. The average black farmer is 58 years old, while the average white farmer is 51, according to Banks.

The average age of black farmers has risen since before World War II because of the decline of young black entering agriculture. The high proportion of older black farmers indicates that the number of black farmers will continue to decrease unless young blacks decide to enter farming to replace older black farmers as they leave agriculture.

To encourage young blacks to remain in agriculture, Banks promotes the formation of programs that are specifically designed for low-income black farmers in poverty regions.

In economically depressed regions, like the slow-growing Mississippi Delta, poor black and white farmers may be forced to leave to find economic opportunities, projects economist Robert Hoppe.

Conference to focus on agriculture, rural crisis

A regional conference highlighting the agricultural and rural crisis in the South will be conducted May 18-20 at the Holiday Inn Downtown in Jackson, Miss.

The conference, entitled "The Rural South in Crisis: Challenges for the Future," offers a unique opportunity for interaction among a diverse set of people, including land-grant institution researchers and extension faculty; federal and state government agency personnel, state policy analysts, and representatives of private sector organizations.

"The program is designed to offer insight on the agriculture and rural community crisis impacting the region. It is clear that the crisis is not strictly an agricultural one. Rather, a host of rural people and rural communities across the Southern landscape are experiencing a crisis of their own," explained Dr. Jo Beaulieu, visiting professor at the Southern Rural Development Center and associate professor in the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.

Beaulieu is chairman of the planning committee for the conference.

Sponsors include the Southern Rural Development Center and the Farm Foundation in cooperation with the USDA Extension Service, Southern Legislative Conference, Council of State Governments, and USDA Economic Research Service.

According to Beaulieu, the conference will address three specific objectives during the three-day meeting:

On Monday, May 18, speakers will take up the first objective, that of articulating the dimensions of the agricultural/rural community crisis in the South.

For the morning of Tuesday, May 19, the objective will be to highlight current public and private sector initiatives developed in response to the crisis. Two concurrent sessions will be offered, one highlighting land-grant university research initiatives and activities of state government agencies, the other spotlighting programs of both cooperative extension services and non-profit voluntary organizations nationwide.

Beginning with the Tuesday afternoon session (continued on page 3)

Southern states cut higher education funds

Three of the five states cutting their higher education budgets over the past two years were located in the South.

According to a new report from the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC), Mississippi, Texas and Louisiana lowered their levels of tax support for higher education operating expenses nationwide, the average increase was 14 percent.

For example, Mississippi cut 5.5 percent from 1984-85 to 1986-87 in state tax appropriations for higher education while Texas cut 10 percent. In Texas, state appropriations dropped 9.5 percent.

Alaska and Montana also reported declines.

The report cited economic stress involving oil and energy, farming, and the wood and mineral industries as factors in the low educational appropriations in the states in the bottom quarter of the rankings. That group also included Oklahoma, New Mexico, Kansas, Nebrasaka, Wyoming, Iowa and Wisconsin.

Among other Southern states, Tennessee (continued on page 7)
Rural health care institutions face problems

A national survey shows that rural health care institutions face long-term financial and personnel management problems. The survey was administered by Price Waterhouse, a tax and management consulting firm, in cooperation with the National Rural Health Care Association (NRHCA). The survey, which included 336 members of the NRHCA, received responses from 65 institutions.

Survey results provide data on the factors that are important to rural hospitals and their long-term survival and financial success. Based on observations of hospitals in good condition, survey results show the aggressive hospital governance, top quality management, incorporating strategic planning, comprehensive marketing strategies, effective financial and operating performance, and close communications with the medical staff. This will have even greater impact on health care institutions in the future.

For a copy of the survey, "Strategic Positioning for Rural Hospitals," contact the NRHCA office, (816) 756-3140.

Florida farmers learn farm management skills

Farm management courses in 16 Florida counties are helping farmers gain management skills.

Aimed at economically distressed row crop farmers, the courses provide farmers and their spouses with farm management and recordkeeping skills to help them make decisions with less uncertainty about the future.

For these farmers don't stay in farming, the courses will make a difference because the information will help them get out earlier and close all their equity and assets," said Rick Goff, a county Extension agent who helped coordinate the eight-course course for about 47 farmers and their spouses.

The courses are one part of a larger state plan to help row crop farmers in North Florida and the Panhandle weather the current farm crisis. Other tactics for farm survival include integrating cattle and horses.

Study examines aid cuts to rural areas

A recent study examined federal aid to local governments in rural and low income areas to help understand how national development policies shifted toward reduced federal spending.

Results of the study show that rural counties showed gains in aid during the 1970s, but by 1982 aid was reduced to levels considerably less than the grants that were provided to small towns in urban areas.

The study, entitled, "Targeting of Federal Assistance to Local Governments in Rural and Low Income Areas, 1972-1983," was conducted by William Fox of the University of Tennessee and Norman Reid of the University of Missouri.

The study also indicates that the aid cuts of the early 1980s appear to overstate the rural loss since much of it was likewise taken in loans.

A modest amount of income targeting was evident in the early 1970s, but this appears to have deteriorated during the decade. By 1983, counties with higher incomes and more satisfactory levels of public services received higher per capita aid than places that were needier, the study reveals.

Results of the study will be published in a special issue of Publius.
Report reveals advantages of state bond banks

State bond banks offer great advantages for rural local governments who need to borrow money for roads, water systems and other infrastructure requirements.

According to a research report entitled State Bond Banks and Pre-'86 League Pools, state bond banks have saved local borrowers millions of dollars. The study was conducted by John Nuveen and Co., Inc.

Comparing bond banks operating in Mississippi, Vermont, Maine, Puerto Rico, Alaska, North Dakota, New Hampshire, Illinois and Michigan, the study suggests that small issuers in the 31 states with double-A or higher credit ratings generally benefit most from state bond banks. They would experience reduced issuance costs due to economies of scale.

USDA Extension to stage May audio conference

USDA Extension Service will host a national conference on economic development Thursday, May 21, 1987, from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m., Eastern time.
The primary goal of the conference is to enable one to site per state to engage in a question-and-answer discussion with economic development experts.
The audioconference is intended as a follow-up to a set of three videotapes, which will be available at USDA Extension Services at the end of March.
The tapes will document trends, issues and dynamics affecting the economies of rural America; present fundamental strategies, theories and approaches to economic development; and show four case studies illustrating Extension's role in facilitating the development process in a diverse set of communities nationwide.
The videotapes will be supplemented by facsimile copies of the participants' manuals, which will enable states to stage their own in-service workshops on economic development.

It's an idea...

*a North Carolina regional council has set up a water leak detection program for its member local governments to share. The equipment developed by the North Carolina Regional D Council of Governments several years ago for about $5,000. The council loans out the equipment for demonstrations and training assistance for member local governments. According to Dick Fender, executive director of the council, the equipment paid for itself the first time it was used. For more information, contact Fender at (704) 264-5588.

Southern states pursue farmland protection plans

Farmland protection activities continue in Southern state legislatures and agricultural departments.
The Farmland Project's annual survey of the past year of activities reveals the following progress in 1986 for Southern states.

*ALABAMA: Five more prime farmland maps were published, bringing the state total to 40. The maps are being encoded for a computer database that will serve as a strong planning tool in the state. The legislature passed the "Farm Crisis in transition" program which, when implemented in 1987, will make farms eligible for the sale of taxable bonds available to farmers for land purchases.

*ARKANSAS: Prime farmland maps have been completed for 23 of 75 counties. These maps will be integrated with county soils maps. The future development of the state's farmland plan is 80 percent complete and will be finished in June. Each of 67 county maps shows 20 land use classifications.

*KENTUCKY: The state Departments of Revenue and Conservation are developing a new agricultural property tax system in which which equalize agricultural property valuation across the state. The new system is based on soil productivity and comes in response to a court decision which struck down the old valuation. The number of agricultural districts in the state has climbed to 91 in 30 counties, involving 815 landowners. In 1986, 69 of 70 state funded projects affecting 12,000 farmland acres passed the impact review committee.

*LOUISIANA: A bill charging commercial property tax rates to corporations buying forested agricultural land did not pass in 1986.

*NORTH CAROLINA: The legislature passed the Farm and Rural Preservation Act in which grants counties the power to adopt agricultural districting programs. The local purchase of Rights of Entrance (ROE) programs got funding boosts: $350,000 was appropriated to the Roanoke River district, $111,000 to the Catawba River district, and $1.7 million farmland preservation bond referendum was passed by Mecklenburg County.

*OKLAHOMA: The legislature resolved to suspend Farmers Home Administration foreclosures on agricultural land for a period of one year. The court cases are in the process of enforcing more equitable property assessment statewide, including agricultural land.

*SOUTH CAROLINA: The state Task Force on Agricultural Land met in 1986 but will not continue due to the absence of state legislative leadership. A 1987 proposal to amend the current use value assessment law will triple the assessed value of land which will equalize agricultural property valuation across the state. The new system is based on soil productivity and comes in response to a court decision which struck down the old valuation. The number of agricultural districts in the state has climbed to 91 in 30 counties, involving 815 landowners. In 1986, 69 of 70 state funded projects affecting 12,000 farmland acres passed the impact review committee.

*TEXAS: A bill will be introduced to the 1987 legislative session to allow the Open Land Tax Act by stripping the tax relief/preferential assessment privileges from open lands owned by nonresidents.

*VIRGINIA: The state agricultural districting program has 144 districts enrolled in 22 counties protecting over 500,000 acres of farmland. Land Evaluation and Development Services; The Virginia Land Council of Governments several years ago for $5,000. The council loans out the equipment for demonstrations and training assistance for member local governments. According to Dick Fender, executive director of the council, the equipment paid for itself the first time it was used. For more information, contact Fender at (704) 264-5588.

(Extracted from the January 1987 issue of Farmland National Bulletin the USDA Research Foundation Farmland Project.)
Study explores rural infrastructure management

Rural America must upgrade its infrastructure to meet the economic growth necessary for its recovery, according to a new study by the Council of State Governments.

Their report, Managing Rural Infrastructure, explores the programs states are using to address infrastructure needs. It is the first of its kind.

The report, prepared by assistant professor Judith Hackett and Terri Busson, is a 29-minute videotape. According to Dr. James Carpenter, director of the Center for Policy Research, the video has been well-received by state decision makers.

The video provides a summary of 1986 Mies programs and activities. Although the initial state cost for all MIES programs is more than $350,000, it is expected that for a printed report, each recipient is given a videotape to return the videotape, or replace it if broken. The videotape is then used to recover most of the cost of using this technique.

Financial turmoil on the farm isn't a phenomenon confined to the 1980s. Rather, it's a problem faced by farmers in every state. According to Terri Townsend of the USDA Economic Research Service, agricultural policies have been widespread across different states since World War I.

A special edition of Alternative Agriculture News, monthly newsletter of the Institute for Agriculture Policy, is soon to be available for distribution to the nation's 5000 county Extension directors. The special edition will carry more policy-related material and other information. For more information, contact the Extension Service, 1003 18th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

To identify opportunities for vitalizing the rural South, a special session on rural development at the Southern Regional Council (SRC) conference, April 22-27, will be held. The conference is sponsored by the National Rural Health Association (NRHA) and will include over 50 sessions on topics such as management, clinical and research issues.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY 19TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE, July 28-31, West Virginia University, Morgantown, W.Va. Theme: "Community Development: Responses to Emerging Realities." For information, contact Delmar L. Yoder, 210 Agricultural Sciences Bldg., P.O. Box 6108, Morgantown, WV. 26506-6108, (304) 293-3408.

FARMING SYSTEMS RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM, Oct. 18-23, 1986, University of Georgia, Athens. Theme: "How Systems Work." Sessions will be organized around five sub-themes: Information and Community Systems, Crop/Livestock Systems, and Crop Systems. For information, contact FSRE Symposium, P.O. Box 2100, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602.

Small talk on big issues

- Dull annual reports are things of the past at Mississippi Cooperative Extension Service (MCES), where the 1986 annual report was joined by a 29-minute videotape. According to Dr. James Carpenter, MCES director, the video has been well-received by Extension clientele.

- The video provides a summary of 1986 MCES programs and activities. Although the initial cost for all MCES programs is more than $350,000, it is expected that for a printed report, each recipient is given a videotape to return the videotape, or replace it if broken. The videotape is then used to recover most of the cost of using this technique.

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- The U.S. Senate has requested that the USDA Economic Research Service (ERS) prepare a rural development study, to be presented in February. The study is to present an analysis of the current rural economic situation in the 1980s, with particular attention to the performance of the farm sector and other key resource and service sectors. It will also identify alternative strategies for addressing rural economic adjustment issues, including both economically and sector-specific policies. The report will consist of the final report and a draft version of the final report, which will be available for public review.

Higher education...

(continued from page 1)

Higher education appropriations were reduced by 23 percent over two years. Alabama was up 11 percent, and Arkansas was up 10 percent. Florida (24.3 percent) and Georgia (24.8 percent) joined Tennessee in the top quarter of the rankings.
Since 1984, a rural economic development district in California has been helping small and medium-sized firms investigate foreign trade opportunities. The Sierra Economic Development District's Rural Export Development Program operates with Economic Development Administration (EDA) and local funding and is fashioned to meet the specific needs of individual firms in the area's four rural counties.

According to Barbara Hollatz, district executive director, the district is based on natural resources, with timber, agriculture and tourism providing the bulk of employment. In 1984, at the end of the recession, tapping foreign markets seemed a good way to spur local recovery.

"We identified a number of companies that had export potential but weren't doing anything about it," said Art O'Neill, the program's export trade specialist. "We designed a program for medium and small firms that wanted to get into the market but didn't have the resources." General employer awareness of the prospect of overseas trade has increased greatly; 45 firms have used the program, and 21 of those are still pursuing foreign markets.

The program uses individual counseling and offers a one-stop center where companies can get help identifying likely markets. Clients learn to meet different export requirements, market products abroad and get financing.

The resource center at the district's office provides export-related materials. It offers export seminars several times a year and participates in international trade shows. Last year, for example, it promoted the products of several local firms at a show in Taiwan.

To further increase outreach, Sierra staff also take services on the road. Many of the assisted firms have expanded their workforces, according to Hollatz, although there is no sure way to link the new jobs to the new foreign business.

"It's difficult to quantify, but I'm convinced jobs have been created because of the export business," O'Neill added. For more information, contact Hollatz, Executive Director, Sierra Economic Development District, 1230 High St., Suite 224, Auburn, CA 95603, (916) 823-4703.

(Reprinted from the Winter 1987 issue of Economic Development Briefs, a publication of the National Alliance of Business.)
OSU forms national rural studies committee

Oregon State University (OSU) has received $63,000 from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to study rural development. With the grant, OSU will establish a National Rural Studies Committee of nine scholars representing several disciplines from OSU and other cooperating universities.

"A great many people are aware of the issues, and some research is getting undertaken, but nothing on an academic scale," said Emery N. Castle, director of the new program. "There is no one group in universities that is concentrating on this. If such a group could be formed, it would draw more attention to the problems of rural people."

The committee will be jointly sponsored by the four regional rural development centers, the Western Rural Development Center (WRDC) at OSU, Southern Rural Development Center at Mississippi State University, Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development at Pennsylvania State University, and the Central Regional Center for Rural Development at Iowa State University. Another cooperating agency in the project is Resources for the Future.

Each year, two fellows will be selected as one of the four regional rural development centers to conduct research on a specific rural issue. They will share the results of their research by offering demonstrations to rural communities.

"We hope that the results of what we do, universitives from around the country will develop or use the programs on rural studies, outstanding scholars will be attracted to the field, and ultimately, the quality of life for rural residents will be improved," Castle said.

FmHA program aids in rural development

A new Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) program is designed to assist in rural development.

FmHA is implementing its Nonprofit National Corporation Loan and Grant Program which provides loan guarantees and technical assistance grants to nonprofit finance corporations--authorized to do business in at least three states.

The nonprofit corporations will in turn serve rural businesses by providing loans, guarantees, and technical assistance.

The projects must serve communities with at least 100 residents.

This fiscal year, $20 million is available for loan guarantees and $13.8 million for technical assistance grants.

FmHA has loan guarantee authority for up to 90 percent of the loan amount (not to exceed $500,000 per project) and 75 percent of the total cost of a project financed by a nonprofit finance corporation.

More information about the program can be found in Federal Register Vol. 51, No. 1, No. 193, 3/30/86, pages 34726-34734, or John Slotin, FmHA at (202) 475-4100.

(Extracted from the March 13, 1987, issue of NEWS & NOTES, a publication of the National Association of Regional Councils.)

County develops creative rural housing program

A program developed by a North Carolina county offers a precedent for creating rural housing programs.

In late 1984 and throughout 1985, the Anson County Housing Authority (ACHA) conducted a program to train unskilled workers in the rehabilitation of historic homes and rural housing.

The primary goal was to provide housing for the county's low-income residents. The unique thing about this program, however, provided the chance to meet two more goals: a decrease in the county's unemployment and the protection of the county's dwindling stock of inhabited rural historic buildings.

The project was surveyed after a survey conducted by the Anson County Historic Properties Commission identified about 1,500 structures of national significance. Of these sites, many of which were located in rural areas, about one third were in deteriorating condition.

In spring 1984, the director of the ACHA sought funding for a proposed program to include training of unskilled workers in rehabilitation techniques, rehabilitation of historic homes and rural housing, rehabilitation grants and loans to qualified home owners, and an emergency repair and maintenance program for elderly residents.

Funding was received from several sources. The National Trust for Historic Preservation provided a $476,500 matching grant from its Critical Issue Fund to pay the salary of the restoration specialist.

(Condensed from "Preserving Rural Housing through the Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings" by Susan Kidd and Marjorie Salas, published in January/February 1987 issue of Small Towns Institute.)

Researcher predicts varied growth for South

The Southern region is set to grow, but the pace will vary from states and sub-regions, according to Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta Research Officer Gene Sullivan.

While the Southern region had the second fastest average rate of growth in the 1970's, it will be the slowest growing in the 1980's, according to the Economic Review. Sullivan predicted that the Southeast's economy should exceed the rate of gain anticipated for the U.S.

Those Sullivan also suggested that the continuing influx of population will spur expansion in the Southeast's economy again in 1987 by providing impetus to employment and personal income.

The region's population has increased nearly 2 percent since 1980, a rate above the national average of slightly more than 1 percent.

Total employment, including self-employed as well as those on the payrolls of factories and other business establishments, also has grown faster in the Southeast than nationally.

Sullivan expects the Southeast to gain a new job in 1987, two-thirds of which will come in the private sector. government and finance industries should experience a rapidly expanding population.

Jobs in these will go to all industries alike, however. The outlook for agriculture and other producers is not as rosy, however, and construction and real estate developments are likely to continue their mixed performance patterns, both showing some pockets of strength and persistent problems.

Job growth and economic strength will (continued on page 6)
Industrial park would put farmers back to work

There's new hope for embattled North Florida farmers, who proposed industrial park that would help farmers in five counties branch into other, more promising areas. An improved crop rotation and use of these crops has severely reduced demand and left many farmers deeply in debt.

The Apalachicola River Basin Agricultural Park is aimed initially at making North Florida a center for two expanding segments of food production: poultry raising and catfish farming. The project plans to pay farmers $15 an acre for 120 acres near the Interstate 10 in Blountstown in Calhoun County. The University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS), the project's main organizer, says preliminary plans call for a 13,000-worker aquaculture operation and a chicken processing plant that employs 16 to 250.

Planners hope some or all of the park's funds will come from state and federal grants, though Logan Barbee, an IFAS extension agent, says private investors have expressed interest in the project. One potential investor has discussed buying the site from the county and constructing the park's buildings, Barbee says.

Larry McGlothlin, a junior planner for Pensacola's Baskerville-Dunagan Engineering, which was hired to help seek government grants, says the park offers farmers many advantages over striking out on their own. Its tenants can cut costs by sharing such necessities as freezer space. Another innovative way they can hold expenses down is to use the waste from poultry or catfish feed. McGlothlin says the poultry operation could process up to 40,000 pounds of chicken a day.

"We can put farmers back to work in something that gives them a reasonable return on investment," he says.

Bowers Sandusky, the head of NCNB National Bank's agri-business office in Blountstown, says his bank would happily lend money to qualified farmers wishing to set up operations in the park.

"We've been depressed ever since 'I've been here," says Sandusky. "The bank could get all the future started on an innovative new path."

For more information, contact Logan Barbee, 340 E. Central Ave., Blountstown, FL 32424, (904) 764-6323 or Dr. Wayne P. Smith, District Extension Director, 1002 McCoy Hall, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611, (904) 392-5230.

(Excerpted from the March 1987 issue of Florida Trend.)

Bailies to chair Southern Technology Council

Virginia Governor Gerald L. Baliles will serve as the first chairman of the Southern Technology Council. The council was established last year under the auspices of the Southern Growth Policies Board.

The Southern Technology Council is intended to support technology-based economic development in the South by fostering interstate cooperation toward that end.

Among the specific purposes of the council are to promote interest in the area's technology-based industries, government agencies and the public regarding the importance of innovation, and to promote the sharing of information and ideas. "None of us has the resources or expertise to take full advantage of the opportunities that science and technology offer," Baliles said. "Through cooperation and collaboration, however, each state can strengthen its efforts to research and develop and transfer new technologies faster than it could working alone."

STC members include Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia. (Accompanied by a letter from the March 1987 issue of the STC Regional Forum, the STC newsletter.)

Analysts dispel farm ownership myths

Government analysts who have studied the current exodus of farmers are trying to dispel myths about the future that will emerge from the agricultural crisis.

One common myth is that investors, corporations and foreign money will move in and buy up farms lost by families forced off their land. "In fact, the evidence indicates that land ownership by non-farm investors, corporations and foreign owners is extremely low and declining," according to Agriculture Department economist David Harrington. Harrington and colleague Tom Carlin were assigned to review the technical status of the American family farm. Their conclusions were published recently as a report and in the Department's April issue of Farmline magazine.

About 75 percent of all land that changed ownership in 1985 was purchased by other farmers. The remainder was bought by retired farmers, non-farmers, or persons who usually kept land in production.

Existing large family farms got larger. "For the most part, the situation is little danger of the food supply being threatened by current changes in farm ownership," Harrington said. He said the 1986 tax law, which placed strict limits on tax shelters, eliminated many non-farmers who were attracted to farmland investment by expectations of capital gains.

Corporate ownership of farmland, excluding family-held farm corporations, remains relatively low as a result of the value of land and buildings in the overall agricultural sector. Foreign ownership is less than 1 percent.

Most of the non-farm investors continue to be retired farmers and heirs of farmers, and by the standards of the 1950s, 1960s, the number of people leaving farming is modest, Harrington said.

(An adapted story by UPI Farm Editor Sonja Hillgren.)

Tips help main streets compete with malls

What can small communities do to compete with regional malls?*

Brian Hartig, coordinator for Stanford University and Ralph Utermohlen of Kansas State University, offer the following suggestions:

1. Check out the competition. Make sure the town offers a browsing atmosphere that contributes to a total shopping experience.

2. Get the word out! Proactively cooperate on promotions, including coordinating special safe days and establishing some uniformity of retail signs.

3. Foster the appearance of merchant cohesiveness through logos and slogans. The town could erect light poles with signs and billboards, on street and store chairman of commerce letterheads and signs. If a store window, it should be a window. It should be a window instead of a window.

4. Market the area. Get more from the mill, the three years. The mill, the three years.

5. Organize the competition. Join the demand this year. Offer a loan demand this year. Join the demand this year. Offer a loan demand this year.

6. Get organized. Join the demand this year. Offer a loan demand this year. Join the demand this year. Offer a loan demand this year.

(Condensed from December 1988 issue of Rural Development News, a publication of the National Association of Development Organizations.)

Data reveal farmland price drop to continue

Data on the amount of farmland held by farmers indicate that the price of farm acreage may continue to decline in many rural areas.

The Wall Street Journal recently reported that the impact of Farmland Administration and other land is selling for $3 billion in farmland on the books due to foreclosures and the like. That translates into more than five million acres. Compounding the problem is the fact that some lenders are adding farmland to their inventories faster than they can sell it without further reducing market values.

(Condensed from December 1988 issue of Rural Development News, a publication of the National Association of Development Organizations.)

* Two Wisconsin counties are embarking on a program of sharing personnel management services. The counties, led by the Monroe County Executive's sharing the program (NCPC), plan to hire a full-time personnel coordinator who will spend half-time in each county. The coordinator will be assigned as a personnel functions including recruitment, training, equipping, making and classification, records, personnel administration, and labor relations. For more information, contact the NCPC at (715) 635-2197.
Rural governments increase per capita spending

Nonmetro local governments increased their real per capita spending by 4 percent from 1977 to 1982, despite reduced federal and state aid. However, financing that growth in spending required increased local property taxes or raising local revenues. Anomalies in the data may provide clues to rising local property taxes or raising local revenues.

These developments have contributed to rising property tax rates in many nonmetro areas. Nonmetro government debt also increased, adding to the fiscal pressure.

Nonmetro spending grew mostly for utilities and other local government expenditures, such as health, hospitals, sewage, sanitation, interest payments, and jails. Only education, among the remaining groups, showed a decline in real per capita spending, reversing previous trends. Reducing real spending helped avoid rising local property taxes.

Nonmetro local government debt burdens (real debt outstanding, per capita) rose by 10 percent from 1977 through 1982. Rising debt burdens were fueled by rapid growth in long-term, generally nonguaranteed debt, which includes most debt issued for private purposes, such as industrial revenue bonds and mortgage revenue bonds. (Condensed from "Nonmetro Governments: Becoming More Self-Reliant," by Richard J. Reeder, in the February 1987 issue of "Rural Development Perspectives").

Growth... (continued from page 3)

also be unevenly distributed among states in the region. Nonstate or state is likely to produce a spectacular performance. However, Louisiana's economy should likely bottom out after a long and severe decline in the 1980s. The state's economy seemed likely to recover after a strong economic recovery.

The main focus of the analysis is on the performance of local governments in the 1980s. The analysis is based on a sample of 131 local governments, representing about 70 percent of the total population of these local governments.

The analysis is conducted at the city level, using data from the U.S. Census Bureau and other sources.

In the 1980s, the overall economic performance of local governments in the 131 cities showed improvement in most areas. The main sources of improvement were a decrease in unemployment rates, an increase in the number of jobs, and an increase in the number of businesses.

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On Schedule

SYMPOSIUM FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SURVEY RESEARCH, June 16-17, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX. For information, contact Dr. Peter R. Nong at (205) 772-8809.

Satisfied Forest Landowner CONGRESS AND CONFERENCE, July 21-24, Tuskegee, AL. For information, contact Dr. Peter R. Nong at (205) 772-8809.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY 19TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE, July 30-31, Virginia University, Morgantown, WV. Theme: "Community Development: Responses to Emerging Realities." For information, contact Delmar R. Yoder, 2012 Agricultural Small talk on big issues...

Farm families facing divorce and suicides will get a national commission to help them deal with stress. Susie Elson, president of the National Farm Family Association, says financing for a national commission on agricultural stress has been completed, and commission members will be appointed soon.

Of the farmers who quit farming, 61 percent found a new job in less than three months, according to a study conducted by North Dakota State University.

A new electronic bulletin board on economic development is available via DIALCOM from the Economic Service. The bulletin board will enable cooperative extension service staffs to share with other states and the federal government programs, resources, and materials. Information on audiovisual materials, publications, fast-breaking news and success stories in economic development is included. The bulletin board is also available to users who ask questions of other users. For more information, contact Beth Walter of Extension Service at (204) 447-7185.

On Film

Serving Our Nation's Communities is a 12-minute video that looks at the roots of community economic development in the 1960s and shows the current growth and maturity of community development organizations (CDCs). Four case studies are highlighted to illustrate the successes of CDCs and their contributions to the communities they serve. The video also outlines the recent reauthorization of federal support for community economic development and describes the need for an increase in funding. The video is available for $40 (including postage) for members of the National Congress for Community Economic Development (NCED) and $45 for nonmembers. The video is not available for rent.

Copies may be ordered from: WV Center, 1765, Beta or 3/4" format. For more information, contact NCED, 1612 K St., N.W., Suite 510, Washington, DC 20006, (202) 659-4111.
Community Economic Development Strategies, by Glen Pulver, focuses on specific community economic development strategies for local community action to increase employment and income. Copies are available for $1.25 each from Agricultural Bulletin, Room 243, 30 N. Murray St., Madison, WI 53715.

Groundwater: New Perspectives, New Initiatives is a non-technical, full-color overview of groundwater. Groundwater is defined, issues and concerns are explored, and initiating steps are undertaken to protect groundwater are highlighted. Available for $11.95 from Freshwater Foundation, 2500 Shadywood Dr., Box 90, Navarre, MN 55392, (612) 471-5407.

Large-Scale Farms in Perspective, by Donald A. Neufeldt, Thomas A. Beuker and Nora L. Brooks of the USDA Economic Research Service, uses unpublished 1982 census data to report on large-scale farms. The report examines recent trends in the number of large-scale farms, the proportion of total farmland under their control, and their contribution to total output. Also discussed are the origins of large-scale farms and their future role in U.S. agriculture. Available as Agriculture Information Bulletin No. 505 from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402.

Maintaining the Spirit of Place: A Process for the Preservation of Town Character, by Harry L. Garnham, serves as a guidebook for local communities interested in their community history and quality of life, and features some important ideas useful for planners. Available for $15.95 from PIA Publishers Corp., 1725 E. Fountain, Mesa, AZ 85203.

Preservation of Prime Farmland and Planned Rural Development: A Literature Review, by Donald A. Cunningham and S. R. McManus, provides synopses of articles from periodicals, research reports, books and specialized journals, grouped under subject headings. Available free from Mr. Al Henderson, TVA Agricultural Institute, Muscle Shoals, AL 35660.

SRDC supports extension, experiment stations

The Center also issues requests for proposals in order to provide seed funding for the development of programming ideas with widespread regional application. Currently, the SRDC is providing funding for 11 additional projects, including land-grant institutions throughout the South. In the two years Brodnax has been director, the SRDC has been involved in projects addressing many issues in rural development, including conferences on alternative farming opportunities, the rural South in crisis, rural entrepreneurship, the competitive position of Southern agriculture in a world economy, triennial Southern community resource development (CDR) training, agriculture and community development interface, and other projects.

Parcels are transferred

Only 3.3 percent of all U.S. rural land changed hands between July 1985 and June 1986. Normally 2 to 5 percent of rural land is transferred in a year, according to Alex Majchrowicz in Transfer Rates of U.S. Land.

Rural land accounted for only 5 percent of the parcels (taxable tracts) that changed hands in 1966-1986. Rural land, as defined by this study, includes farms, ranches and associated land, forest land, idle land, and wasteland. This study indicates that most parcels of land, instead of complete farms are being transferred. It also indicates that farms are now expanding by acquisition of adjacent parcels.

In 1985-1986 the rate of land transfer was highest in the Delta States at 4.9 percent and lowest in the Pacific States at 1.8 percent.
In Print

Barry Ryan, examines the changes in capital requirements needed to bring rural wastewater treatment systems into compliance with Clean Water Act standards. Available from National Technical Information Services, 5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, VA 22161. Ask for staff report no. AEC8501218.

State data centers offer useful rural information

Anyone in need of rural information who doesn't know where to start looking might try the state data center first. The State Data Center Program operates in all 50 states. As of July 1987, the center has locations in Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

The centers compile data on many topics using sources such as the censuses of population, housing, agriculture, business and manufacturers, and other federal and state sources.

The program provides vital planning and research information—much of it free for the asking—to small town mayors, state and local agencies, businesses, and individuals.

For example, the information can help farm cooperatives and small businesses decide on the location of stores and the kinds of food, seeds, pesticides and other merchandise to stock. It can also help machinery manufacturers and dealers determine what to stock and promote in an area. It can be especially useful to local communities because many federal and state agencies use the data to determine a community's eligibility for a variety of programs.

The program has been beneficial to the East Central Mississippi Planning and Development District, which both disseminates and uses information obtained through the program.

"We have had ready access to a variety of information about our area, without having to go through the expense and effort of conducting our own surveys," said Jennifer Buford, a planner with the District. Most recently, she used census data to demonstrate that several rural areas qualified for lower fire insurance ratings.

Albrecht, a rural sociologist with Texas A&M University, obtains census information from the state data center to study trends in farm size, part-time farming and rural population characteristics. He cited the convenience of having a wide variety of data from different sources available in a single location as a major advantage of the program.

The program works this way: Each state's governor designates a state agency or university group to work with the Census Bureau. The designated (continued on page 4)
American Farmland Trust studies small farms

A new study by a conservation group, the American Farmland Trust (AFT), may add momentum to a developing national interest in small farms and their role in 1980s agriculture.

According to the private, non-profit group, 72 percent of the nation's 2.3 million farms were in the 1982 census of agriculture had marketings of less than $40,000 a year.

"Yet, because these small farms account for only 11 percent of the total value of annual U.S. food production, their special needs have been neglected by agricultural policymakers," the AFT said.

The study, financed by the Ford Foundation with the key to understanding the role of small family farms Ties in not how much they produce, but in what they must hold land.

For example, in 1982, small farmers owned over half the nation's tractors. The value of all their farm equipment was four times as great, per dollar of agricultural sales, as that of larger producers. Thus, small farms appear to be able to enable equipment manufacturers to lower prices for all farmers.

"The message is similar to what you see in the auto industry," said AFT study director Edward Thompson. "If GM or Ford only make a few big cars, they'd be very expensive.

Land ownership is another area in which the importance of small farms stands out, according to the report. Nationally, small farms hold roughly a third of the farmland, about of their share of actual food production. "This has tremendous implications, not only for food but also for all rural development, agricultural resources and open space, but also for the property tax system," Thompson pointed out. "If small farms owned up or developed, I think we'd see more of the local tax burden shifting toward homeowners, because of a reduced base due to fewer farmsteads and greater public service costs." (Condensed from "Role of Family Farms Studied" in the February 1987 issues of Community Development Communications, a publication of Delta Cooperative Extension.)

CAPSULES is published periodically by the Southern Rural Development Center as an information service to educators, researchers, local officials and private citizens interested in improving the quality of life in the small communities and rural areas of the South.

The Southern Rural Development Center is one of four regional rural development centers in the nation and focuses specifically on rural problems of the Southern region. The Center is located at the University of Georgia and serves the nine Southern states of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee.

H. Ross Blandon ... Director
Jane Rendleson ... Editor of Newsletter, Sandy Markley ... Editorial Assistant

Lyng appoints national rural advisory council

Secretary of Agriculture Richard Lyng has named the members of the National Advisory Council on Rural Development. The council will advise the secretary on rural development activities and policies.

"It will also serve as a forum for state and local rural development groups to discuss important issues affecting the lives of rural Americans," said Lyng.

Hal Manders of Iowa and Kathleen Lawrence, USDA's acting under secretary for rural development, are co-chairmen of the council.

Appointed for two-year terms, council members representing Southern states include: Alabama, Benjamin Payton, president of Tuskegee Institute; Arkansas, Ernest True of Stuttgart, an agricultural consultant and former Farmers Home Administration supervisor; Georgia, David Baxter of Macon, an attorney and former farmer; Kentucky, Amber Henton, mayor of Livonia; and wildlife expert, Louisiana, Buford Smith of Effie, a rural businessman and former member of the Louisiana state legislature; Mississippi, Bobby Hartin of Ripley, president of the Peoples Bank, North Carolina, Gary Whitener of Hickory; Pennsylvania, rural electrification expert; Oklahoma, William Rodgers of Blackwell; and South Carolina, rural banker; South Carolina, Coy Johnston of Summerville; Leslie, rural development director of Ducks Unlimited and wildlife expert; Tennessee, John Hutton of Greenback, a farmer and member of the board of directors of the Tennessee Counties Farm Aid Association; and Virginia, Carmen Evans of Forest, a cattle rancher. (Condensed from the April 30, 1987 issue of Extension Service Update, a publication of the USDA.)

Foreigners own 12.4 million farmland acres

Despite the increased amount of farm land that has been offered for sale in recent months and concern about foreign ownership of U.S. farmland, foreign investors hold only about 12.4 million acres, or slightly less than 1 percent of privately-owned agricultural land.

And since some land is only partially held by foreign investors, foreign holdings amount to an 11.6 million acres. According to the recent USDA report, foreign holdings increased by only 369,000 acres in the first nine months of 1986.

Forest land accounts for 52 percent of all foreign-owned acreage, with most of the holding being by American companies. Forest land holdings account for about 10 percent of Maine's privately-owned agricultural land, with three timber companies owning 91 percent of the forested acres. Two of those companies own 99 percent and the third is a U.S. company that is partially foreign-owned.

Data centers... (continued from page 1)

organization recruits other state and local organizations to participate in disseminating information. In North Dakota, for example, the principal organization is the Agricultural Experiment Station. In Louisiana, Texas and other states, a university department of rural sociology or agriculture participates in the program.

The Census Bureau provides these organizations with all census information for their state, including computer tapes, maps, microfiche, reports and reference materials.

About 1,100 organizations across the country are affiliated with the program at the local level, providing convenient access to a variety of information. These organizations include local public libraries, councils of governments, and planning and development agencies. In some states, chambers of commerce, health systems agencies and the Cooperative Extension Services participate in the local distribution of information.

Services provided include informational assistance, computer tapes and printouts, maps, and information on new products. For information about which organizations near you are depositaries of census information, contact any of the state data center lead agencies listed below.

(Copyrighted by "Data Centers Have Information About Rural Areas in Your State" by John C. Kavallinas, in the June 1987 issue of Rural Development Perspectives, a publication of the USDA Economic Research Service.)

SOUTH CAROLINA
Division of Research and Statistical Services
South Carolina Budget and Control Board
Rembert Dennis Bldg., Room 337
Columbia, SC 29201
(803) 734-3762

KENYUCKY
Urban Studies Center
College of Urban and Public Affairs
University of Louisville
Louisville, KY 40292
(502) 588-6626

LOUISIANA
Louisiana State Planning Office
Department of Administration
P.O. Box 94095
Baton Rouge, LA 70804
(504) 342-7410

MISSISSIPPI
Center for Population Studies
The University of Mississippi
Bondautil Bulldg., Room 3W
University, MS 38677
(601) 322-7280

NORTH CAROLINA
North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management
116 West Jones Street
Raleigh, NC 27611
(919) 733-7061

OKLAHOMA
Oklahoma State Data Center
Oklahoma Department of Commerce
5 Broadway Executive Park
6601 Broadway Extension
Oklahoma City, OK 73116-8214
(405) 943-7270

PUERTO RICO
Puerto Rico Planning Board
Minillas Government Center
North Building, Avenida De Diego
P.O. Box 41119
San Juan, PR 00940
(809) 728-4430

Table 1 presents the rankings of the Southern States in each of the four categories. For more information, contact Bob Friedman, Corporation for Enterprise Development, 1725 K St., NW, Suite 1601, Washington, DC 20006, (202) 293-7963. (Condensed from the May 8, 1987, issue of NADD News, a publication of the National Association of Development Organizations.)

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TABLE 1: RANKINGS OF SOUTHERN STATES IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
In Print

Alternative Farming Opportunities for the Southwest is the title of a conference of the same name sponsored by the Southern Rural Development Center, Farm Foundation, TVA Valley Authority and Southern Legislative Conference Jan. 26-28 at Mississippi State University. Available for $5.00 for postage and handling from the SRDC, Box 5446, Mississippi State, MS 39762, (601) 325-3207. A tabloid proceedings of the conference is also available.

Cooperative Extension-Agricultural Profitability and Competitiveness

In this issue, the District Manager for the Mississippi Districts Farm Families and Communities is a report based on a survey of Extension Service detailing assistance provided to farm families and rural non-farm residents by Extension personnel for the three-year period prior to August 1986. A limited number of copies of the report is available from the Extension Publication Office at (202) 447-4111 or from Boel Launher at (202) 447-4165.

On Film

Economic Development for Rural Revitalization is a multimedia media resource pack to be used by Extension staff. The package contains a handbook, three videotapes and a conference facilitator's manual. Included in the handbook are case studies illustrating approaches to economic development. A loan copy of this package is available from the SRDC. Box 5446, Mississippi State, MS 39762, (601) 325-3207. The package may be purchased from the Media Resources Center of Iowa State University for $75.00.

The U.S. Farm Sector: How Is It Weathering the 1980's is David Harrington and Thomas A. Carlin, gives information on the production and sales of farm stress by commercial farm (gross annual sales of $50,000 or more) and non-commercial farm. It also discusses issues facing the farm sector. Information on how to obtain this report is available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. Also available on microfiche for $6.50 from the order desk, National Technical Information Service, 5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, VA 22161. Refer to AIB-506.


On Schedule

RURAL SOCIOLOGICAL SOCIETY 50TH ANNIVERSARY MEETING, Aug. 11-15, Madison, WI. This national meeting for sociology faculty, graduate students and others interested in rural societies will feature plenary sessions, workshops and sessions. For information contact Gene Summers, Dept. of Rural Sociology, 350 Agriculture Hall, 1450 Linden Drive, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI 53706.

JOBS, EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY: THE STATES' AGENDA FOR RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE, Oct. 12-13, Frankfort, KY. How new concepts of diversified economic development based on education and technology can be applied in rural America, beyond the suburbs, is the subject of this conference. For information contact Judith C. Hackett, CARD, CSD, Iron Works Pike, Box 11910, Lexington, KY 40578, (606) 252-2291.

CONFERENCE ON THE LAND GRANT UNIVERSITY AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT: EXAMINING A GROWING ROLE, Oct. 9-10, Chicago. The purpose is to explore the difficulties, challenges and rewards of good working relationships among local governments, colleges and universities. For more information, contact Sue Overmyer at (217) 333-2861.

FARMING SYSTEMS RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM 1987, Oct. 18-21, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. Theme: "Farm Systems Work." Sessions will be organized around five sub-themes: information and community systems, macro systems, agro-ecosystems, crops/livestock systems, and crop systems. For information, contact FSR/ES Symposium Committee, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR 72702.

ALTERNATIVE USES OF HIGHLY ERODIBLE AGRICULTURAL LAND CONFERENCE, Nov. 15-17, Agricenter International, Memphis, TN. The purpose is to explore the nature and extent of the problem of excessive erosion in the Tennessee Valley region and its adverse effects on water quality, and to propose practical ways to use highly erodible lands for maximum returns. For more information contact the Southern Rural Development Center, P.O. Box 3446, Mississippi State, MS 39762, (601) 325-3207.

It's an idea

* A sanitarian in the Duplin County, NC, health department has developed a computer trivia game which has spurred local interest in the county's rich history. With the assistance of his father-in-law, who programmed the game, Leon Sikes has put the game on floppy disks which sell for about $26.50 each. The county's schools have bought copies of the program. The game contains 240 questions divided into categories such as people, places, events and general information. For more information, contact Leon Sikes at (919) 296-1015.

On Film

Economic Development for Rural Revitalization is a multimedia media resource pack to be used by Extension staff. The package contains a handbook, three videotapes and a conference facilitator's manual. Included in the handbook are case studies illustrating approaches to economic development. A loan copy of this package is available from the SRDC. Box 5446, Mississippi State, MS 39762, (601) 325-3207. The package may be purchased from the Media Resources Center of Iowa State University for $75.00. The three videotapes and handbook cost $35 in 1/2" VHS and $75 in U-matic. The conference fee costs $1. Family Community Leadership Discussion Workshop is a 23-minute videotape covering the Denver National Discussion Workshop held in September 1986. The workshop brought together representatives of the six existing Family Community Leadership projects (FCls) to share their experiences with people from 42 other states and Guam. FCls help women and other family members develop leadership skills for taking active roles in public policy formulation and community. The Cooperative Extension Services of the grant colleges and universities in cooperation Councils take the lead in developing and carrying out activities in these projects, assisted by funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. A loan copy is available from the SRDC. Box 5446, Mississippi State, MS 39762, (601) 325-3207. Copies may be purchased from National Technical Information Service, 3311 120th Ave., NE, Bellevue, WA 98004. Price is $15.95 per copy, which includes tape, storage box, shipping and handling.

You Can Make a Difference, a slide set and accompanying audio commentary, tells about the work of Family Community Leadership projects (FCls). A loan copy is available from the SRDC. Box 5446, Mississippi State, MS 39762, (601) 325-3207.
Checklist provides local government cutback ideas

When forced to implement cutbacks in hard times, what methods do local governments employ?

George Goldman of the University of California at Berkeley Cooperative Extension Service and Anthony Nakazawa of the University of Alaska Cooperative Extension Service, present a checklist of some reduction and efficiency-building ideas for local governments in "Local Government Cutbacks in Hard Times," a publication of the Western Rural Development Center.

Goldman and Nakazawa provide the following checklist:

- Improve and increase use of computer technology, i.e., train staff to use word processing, spreadsheets and data bases.
- Centralize purchasing functions, order in bulk and avoid emergency purchases.
- Establish blanket purchase orders or credit situations with vendors to economize paper handling.
- Review investment and insurance policies.
- Review employee benefit packages.
- Examine the possibility of contracting some services, such as janitorial/maintenance functions, through private agencies rather than by hiring permanent employees.
- Consider employee programs such as job sharing, part-timing, benefits cost-containment, renegotiating labor agreements and volunteer services.

Goldman and Nakazawa stress that cutbacks should be made with a clear understanding of future local impacts that may result from the new environment. In other words, cost reductions must be made for the environment that "will be" rather than the environment that "was."

Conference to explore highly erodible land

A regional conference entitled, "Alternative Uses of Highly Erodible Agricultural Land," is scheduled for Memphis, November 30-December 2, to the Agricenter International.

"Studies show that a relatively small acreage of land in the Tennessee Valley is producing a majority of the excessive erosion. A significant portion of the resulting sediment reaches streams and lakes in the Tennessee Valley, causing an adverse effect on water quality," explained Dr. Al Henderson of Tennessee Valley Authority.

Dr. Henderson is chairman of the program planning committee and is on staff of the Agricultural Institute, TVA, in Muscle Shackle, Alabama.

The conference will explore the nature and extent of high erosion rates and identify practical ways to use highly erodible agricultural lands for maximum returns. Speakers will include national authorities on soil and water conservation issues as well as agricultural specialists and agribusiness leaders who will discuss potential crop production on highly erodible land.

The conference is designed especially for professional agricultural leaders from land-grant universities; staff of Federal, State and local agencies; and representatives of private industry and agribusiness organizations.

Many regional and national organizations are co-sponsoring the conference including TVA, Soil Conservation Service, Agricenter International and the SROC.

Registration for the three-day conference is $50 if postmarked before November 3; $60 if postmarked after November 3. The fee includes two planned luncheons, coffee breaks, conference materials, and printed proceedings. Persons interested in the conference may contact the Southern Rural Development Center, Box 5446, Mississippi State, MS 37962, (601) 325-3207, to receive a registration brochure which includes a listing of hotels and complete agenda.

Extension winter school dates announced

The 1988 Cooperative Extension Winter School will be offered January 25-February 12 in Tucson.


Registration fee for the three-week school is $300.

The Southern Rural Development Center is providing three scholarships of $200 for the course on "Local Government and Extension: A Working Partnership."

The Farm Foundation is offering scholarships for the "Public Policy Issues" course and the "Administration, Management and Supervision of Cooperative Extension" course.

To apply for a scholarship, contact Dr. Jim P. M. Chamie, Extension Winter School Director, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721, (602) 621-7205. Applications for the scholarships must be received by December 4.
Worksite literacy programs successful

In order to combat widespread adult functional illiteracy, which limits productivity and increases costs, an increasing number of Southern employers are providing adult basic education classes on site, according to a study recently released by the Southern Growth Policies Board (SGPB).

Such programs are particularly important in the rural South, where the rates of adult functional illiteracy are much higher than in the region's cities. The study entitled "Lifelong Learning: Worksite Literacy Programs," offers profiles of programs at four Southern workplaces.

The study discovered that an increasing number of employers are recognizing the potential benefits of providing on-site literacy programs for their employees. These programs not only help employees improve their literacy skills but also contribute to a more educated and productive workforce. The study highlights the importance of such programs in addressing the challenges faced by workers in rural and urban areas alike.

Study compares rural, urban spending habits

Rural residents spend more than urban residents in most categories of spending, according to a recent study by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Transportation expenses take 22.4 percent of the rural consumer's pre-tax income while urban dwellers spend 20.1 percent. Principal differences are in greater amounts spent for gasoline and motor oil.

Rural consumers spend 8.9 percent of the income on utilities, fuel and public services related to housing while urban consumers spend 7.7 percent for the same purposes.

42 percent of rural residents are without a mortgage, compared with 21 percent of urban consumers.

On Film

Defending Family Farms is a video that looks at the origins and effects of the farm crisis and outlines what some church groups can do to help family farmers survive. It concludes by summarizing the actions of the Rural Crisis Issues Team of the National Council of Churches and the Office of Technology Assessment (U.S. Congress) propose for families who want to continue to live and farm their land. The 21-minute videotape costs $25 and is available for interpretation. General Assembly Mission Board, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), 341 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE, Atlanta, GA 30305.

Southeast second in farm profits

The Southeast ranks as one of the most productive and competitive areas of the nation for farming, according to ERS. Despite a steady decline in the number of Southern farms and a series of natural disasters, the Southeast trails only the Pacific Coast in agricultural profits.
Farmland being sold to family farmers

An annual survey by the Agriculture Department shows that most farmland put up for sale in the hands of family farmers.

"Many farmers and residents and farm organizations have expressed concerns that investors in the farmland market, including foreign investors, buyers, posed a threat to family farms," the department's Economic Research Service said in its report.

"However, it appears from the survey results and other studies that non-farmers are less well off as acquiring it, and that much of the land is being sold to family farmers wishing to expand or own it," the report said.

The survey also indicated that nearly five-fourths of the land transferred from one owner to another was expected to remain in agricultural use for at least three of the next five years.

Overall, the survey showed the number of reported farmland sales in the year that ended on February 1, 1987, increased about five percent from the previous year, which was "consistent with comments by some respondents that activity was picking up toward the end of 1986 and early in 1987." The survey indicated that the high proportion of transfers involving foreclosures is indicative of the continuing financial stress for some farmers, even while average farm income is increasing and farm debt is declining.

Condensed from "Family Farming Continues" in July 1987 issue of Community Development Communications, a publication of Delaware Cooperative Extension.

Names in the news

* DR. D. H. GOSSETT has been named University of Tennessee Vice President for Agricultural and Commercial Affairs and served as Dean of the Tennessee Agricultural Experiment Station since 1976.

* DR. JAMES FISCHER has been named Dean of Agricultural Research and Director of the South Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station at Clemson University. Dr. Fischer has been Associate Director of the Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station since 1985.

* DR. CHARLES B. KNAPP has been named the new President of the University of Georgia. He was formerly Executive Vice President of Tulane University.

* DR. ALDEN REINE has been appointed Research Director at Pratek and A. M. University of Utah. Prior to this assignment, he served as research chemist, USDA, ARS, Southern Regional Research Center.

* Dr. DAVID P. ROSELL has been named President of the University of Kentucky. Dr. Roselle has served as provost at Virginia Tech since 1983.
Timber bridges option for improved transportation

Bridges serving America's rural areas are in bad shape and need costly repairs. However, USDA is identifying solutions to this crisis—and one major solution relies on the timber bridge as an option for improving transportation. "Bridges in townships and counties may need complete renovation or replacement," according to Transportation administrator Martin Fitzpatrick. The Office of Transportation recently conducted a survey to determine the condition and cost of improving rural bridges and roads. "Because of the serious nature of the bridge problem and the cost of making improvements, OT is focusing on the economical replacement and rehabilitation of rural bridges," said Fitzpatrick. Over 470,000 bridges are currently in use in the U.S., and that figure represents more than 80 percent of the state’s bridges. Fitzpatrick pointed out that nearly one-half are deficient for structural or functional reasons. Some of the principal reasons for bridge deficiencies include lack of proper maintenance—due in part to insufficient funds; secondarily, structural weakness due to weather, inadequate initial design or construction, and age of the bridge. Solutions to the bridge problem will vary by state and locality. "However, one possibility is the use of a temporary solution, such as the contemporary timber bridge," said OT economist Ruth McWilliams. She noted that timber bridges are numerous and inexpensive, as reported in the National Bridge Inventory, which is maintained by the U.S. Federal Highway Administration. More than 65,000 timber bridges are currently in use in the country. Over 5,000 of these bridges are located in each of the three Southern states of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas, while more than 4,000 are found in both Iowa and Arkansas. According to Bruce A. Parson, Assistant Director of Cooperative Forestry for the Forest Service, modern advances—such as the use of pressure-treated and glue-laminated timber—have made the contemporary timber bridge an increasingly attractive option to small, local rural areas. Another advantage of timber bridges is that they offer better resistance to de-icing salts than do either steel or concrete bridges. Third, the lighter weight of timber bridges enables construction in remote area, coupled with simpler installation requirements resulting from use of prefabricated design and construction, makes it possible to use local, semi-skilled workers for bridge installation and maintenance. Fourth, the aesthetics of using wood in a bridge makes a timber bridge a more attractive option in many settings. Fifth, timber bridges last a long time. "We found that the expected life of timber bridge sections is about 40 years," McWilliams said. "This exceeds the life of the typical steel or concrete bridge by as much as 20 years," she added. She also noted that some timber bridges are already more than 100 years old. Finally, like concrete and steel, the costs of building timber bridges vary widely and depend heavily on distances from suppliers. However, because of the longevity of the product, initial costs can be reduced. Savings can be realized over the life of the bridge." Parson added that the Forest Service is developing a timber bridge design and construction manual for use by bridge officials. It is also installing demonstration timber bridges at sites within the U.S. National Forests. "The Department’s involvement in these efforts should increase the use of a natural rural resource in the improving the nation’s rural bridges," Fitzpatrick said.

Small talk on big issues...

- The ratio of rural nonfarm to rural population is now 10 to 1. It was one man to two women in 1900. In 1870, 61 million or the same population as the eight largest U.S. cities.

In Print

Computer Selection & Use in Local Government: Staff Briefing, January 25, 1985, by Jesse Whelan, Executive Director. The brief provided a useful overview of local government computer use and the problems associated with it. An important part of the brief was the discussion of some of the specific issues facing local government managers, including staff training and the selection of computer systems.

Designing a Citizen Involvement Program: A Guide to Implementing Program, by Nancy A. Hixon and Judith Sommer, from The National Rural Involvement Project. The guidebook provides a practical and easy-to-follow guide for developing a citizen involvement program. It is divided into sections on program planning, needs assessment, and evaluation.

Distribution of Employment Growth in 10 Ozark Counties: A Case Study by Victor J. Oliveira and John A. Kuehn, from The Western Rural Development Center, Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR 97331. The study examines the distribution of employment growth in 10 Ozark counties and provides insights into the role of local economic development efforts.


How is Farm Financial Stress Affecting Rural America? by Mindy Petrullis, Beryl Groff, and John Hsu. This report provides a comprehensive analysis of the impact of farm financial stress on rural America. The report includes data on farm bankruptcy, farm insurance, and farm income.

National Rural Entrepreneurship Symposium. The symposium was held in Washington, D.C., and included discussions on the role of entrepreneurship in rural development.

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On Schedule

JOBS, EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY: THE STATES' RESPONSE TO THE DEVELOPERS CONFERENCE, Oct. 5-7, Lexington, KY. The conference will focus on new concepts of diversified economic development, including microtechnology and information systems.

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CONFERENCE ON THE LAND GRANT UNIVERSITY AND LOCAL COMMUNITY: EXAMINING A GROWING ROLE, October 9-10, Colorado. The conference is to explore the difficulties, challenges and rewards of good working relationships among local governments, colleges and universities. For more information, contact Sue Overmyer at (217) 333-2881.


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Statewide rural incubator network established

The Alabama Cooperative Extension Service (ACES) has established a statewide rural incubator network. Federal and state economic development agencies have been brought together to fund the program—U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development funding the central Small Business Incubator Program (SBIP) operation at ACEs, and the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) funding $1 million for facility acquisition and/or renovation. The Director of the Alabama Office of the U.S. Small Business Administration has pledged the manpower resources of the statewide 13-member Small Business Development Consortium. In addition, formal linkages among the state's public universities for coordination of the program needs are being established. ACEs is the only service which has taken the responsibility to coordinate a statewide effort in the thrust of an incubator as an economic revitalization tool. The purpose is to optimize the traditional advantages of incubators and prevent incubator saturation.

Incubator sponsor and tenant (entrepreneur) management and business technical assistance requests will be coordinated through the central SBIP. No fee, on-site assistance will then come from a number of sources—the SBIP, Small Business Development Centers, local talent and statewide public university professionals. The long run goal is to establish a true network—from communications to produce transfers.

For more information, contact David Arnold, Financial Specialist, ACEs, 106 Duncan Hall, Auburn University, AL 36849, (205) 826-5328.

USDA study reports 1980s trends, issues

While growth and economic vitality were the dominant rural themes in the 1970s, structural change and economic dislocation have become overriding rural issues in the 1980s. In recent decades, the rural economy has shifted from heavy dependence on natural resource-based industries to more reliance on manufacturing and service industries. This industrial restructuring has left rural areas open to rapid shifts in production technologies which appear to have reduced their competitive position in the national and international economy.

In the 1980s downturns in several industries important to rural areas (agriculture, mining and energy, and manufacturing) coincided, turning what would normally be local or regional problems into a widespread rural decline of national proportions. A study done by the USDA Economic Research Service, entitled Rural Economic Development in the 1980s: Preparing for the Future, reports: Population: Rural population trends during the 1980s have returned to the generalized declines of the 1950s and 1960s. Almost half of all non-metro counties lost population during 1983-1985. During 1985-1986 rural areas experienced a net outmigration of 632,000 people.

Job Growth: Since 1979 the number of urban jobs increased by 13 percent while the growth in rural jobs was only 4 percent. Employment declined by 9.5 percent in counties dependent on mining and energy extraction. Virtually no growth occurred in agricultural counties; manufacturing counties had only 2.7 percent growth.

Unemployment: Since 1980 rural areas had a higher unemployment rate than urban areas. This was a major reversal of the historical pattern of lower rural employment. High rural unemployment is concentrated in the manufacturing counties of the South and East and the mining and energy counties of Appalachia, the Gulf Coast and scattered areas of the Northwest.

Rural Poverty: Throughout the century, a disproportionate share of the nation's poor have resided in rural areas. In 1985 the rural poverty rate was 18.3 percent versus 12.7 percent for metro areas. The metro poverty rate has been falling since the last recession, but the non-metro rate has not.

Education: Rural persons continue to lag behind urban persons in years of formal education. High school dropout rates are higher in rural areas. A heavy loss of people with four or more years of college has occurred in many non-metro areas, in addition to net loss of high school graduates.

(Extracted from the October 23, 1987, issue of NADD News, a publication of the National Association of Development Organizations.)

Electronic bulletin board available to CES

The Cooperative Extension System has a new "Electronic Bulletin Board on Economic Development" accessible through DIALCOM. The electronic bulletin board enables users to read and post their own messages regarding such things as new publications, upcoming conferences and meetings, success stories and audiovisual materials. The system is now in use by Extension professionals in a number of states.

For additional information, contact Beth Walker Honadle, National Program Leader for Economic Development, (202) 447-7108.

(Extracted from Computer Topics, No. 9, 1987, a publication of the Georgia CES.)

RELATING RURAL DEVELOPMENT TO YOUR COMMUNITY
Loan losses affect farmers, lenders

The farm sector's financial difficulties in the 1980's have caused many farmers to fail and have threatened the survival of many financial institutions that lend to farmers. Agricultural lenders could potentially lose $6-$8 billion on farm operator loans in 1987-88. By 1989, $20 billion, or 10 percent of all farm loans outstanding in the early 1980's, will likely have been written off by lenders. By the end of 1987, 70-90 percent of all lender loan losses will probably have been taken. This means 75 percent of the farm debt crisis will have been worked through by the end of 1987.

The Southern Plains, Delta, and Southeast are the only regions where the problem of potential loan defaults is getting worse. Louisiana land prices fell 27 percent in 1986, and major agricultural states surrounding Louisiana have suffered.

**Survey indicates economic climate**

A survey of economic climates reported in the October issue of INC magazine, reveals that states along the country's coasts are among the most prosperous. The top twenty ranked states are in the Southern region. Georgia ranks highest at fourth, up from fifth last year. Following closely is Virginia fifth, up from tenth; Florida, sixth, up from seventh; and Texas, seventh, up from tenth; North Carolina, eighth, up from eleventh; and South Carolina remained the same at 14th. Other Southern states as ranked in the survey are:

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<th>State</th>
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<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
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<td>Oklahoma</td>
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The rankings were determined by considering the number of job created in February 1985 to February 1987, the number of new companies formed in 1985 or later and the number of fast-growth companies in each state.

CAPSULES is published periodically by the Southern Rural Development Center as an information service for educators, researchers, government officials and private citizens interested in improving the quality of life in the small communities and rural areas of the South. The Southern Rural Development Center is one of four regional development centers in the nation and focuses specifically on rural problems of the Southern region. The Center is located at Mississippi State University and provides support services to the Extension Services and Experiment Stations of 29 land-grant universities in 13 Southern states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

H. Doug Bradshaw, Director, Jacob Tiddle, Editor, Sandy Markley, Editorial Assistant

**Insight into value of regional centers' explained**

In the May 1987 issue of SOUTHLANDS, a commentary on the priorities for rural education offers "Insight into the value of the regional rural development centers."

Deryl K. Hesley and Ellin M. Natten co-author an article, entitled "The Regional Rural Development Centers: An Overview," in the why, how and what of rural development centers is explored. The regional rural development centers are an important part of the institutional support for rural development research and extension through the land-grant university system. The rationale for a regional approach to rural development has its bases in a recognition that:

- Major changes are occurring in the social, economic, governmental and demographic structure of rural areas.
- Rural problems are not respect critical lines and are generally multi-state in nature.
- All states cannot individually justify a full complement of research and extension faculty necessary to address the broad array of rural development problems.
- Rural development research and extension efforts can be effectively integrated within an institutional entity.

The general purpose of the regional rural development centers is to encourage and conduct programs to improve the social and economic well-being of nonmetropolitan communities in the various regions. An integrated program of research and extension is conducted by each center.

The centers provide technical, educational, and personnel development for and between researchers and Extension staffs in their respective regions. They strengthen and support in-house individual state efforts by developing multi-state networks of scientists and Extension workers with varying disciplinary backgrounds who identify and integrate educational and research efforts and develop strategies for implementation and diffusion.

This catalytic action often results in efforts that could not be performed economically or effectively in a single state because of limited resources. The centers also act as supplemental sources of research funding by providing "seed money."

The regional rural development centers are viable and reliable resources for intrac- and cross-regional rural development efforts. They are especially salient in helping supplement individual state efforts in this time of "downsizing" by being the only unit specifically authorized to encourage and support multi-state efforts in rural development.

Under increasingly competitive situations and with limited formula funding, the pooling of research and extension facilities across state lines may prove the only way to return program continuity or to adequately address critical public issues.

The regional rural development centers (in conjunction with their hosts land-grant institutions) continue to initiate, plan, coordinate, facilitate, and disseminate multi-state and multi-national efforts in research and extension.

(Source: SOUTHLANDS, Vol. 7, No. 3, May 1987.)

**Hot line opened for technology transfer**

Information hotlines for the Appropriate Technology Transfer (ATTAP) program opened on July 1 in Memphis, Tennessee. The toll-free line is available for farmers, Extension agents and rural community personnel. It connects callers with information specialists on low-cost farming technologies, crop and market diversification, and community resource management techniques.

Startup funding for the ATTAP program was provided by a $500,000 congressional appropriation in 1987. The program is a cooperative public/private sector effort, administered by the USDA Extension Service and managed by the National Center for Appropriate Technology.

For information, contact ATTAP, P.O. Box 151, Agricultural Information Network, 7777 Walnut Grove Rd., Memphis, TN 38119, (901) 366-9740.

(Source: American Journal of Alternative Agriculture, Vol. 11, No. 1.)
Unemployment remains problem for small towns

Unemployment is the biggest problem facing small towns and rural areas today, according to local elected officials who responded to a straw poll conducted by the National Association of Towns and Townships (NATAT). The dreary unemployment nationwide apparently is not reflected in everyday life in Small Town, America. Twenty percent of local officials who were delegates to NATAT's annual educational conference listed lack of jobs and unemployment in response to an open-ended question: 'What is the biggest problem facing your community?'

According to Jeffrey Schiff, NATAT's executive director, small town residents are not as critical of the current job situation and increased employment that we're hearing about in the metropolitan areas of the East and West. Small town problems are still as rough as they were at the height of the farm crisis. Only now it is a small town crisis that is receiving little or no attention.

The second biggest problem, faced by 16 percent of township leaders and small city managers, is the drop in unemployment protection—groundwater pollution, wastewater treatment, and waste disposal. All are confronted with federal mandates requiring clean water and improved wastewater and waste disposal systems. These three requirements alone mean millions and millions of dollars in expenditures. Small communities don't have the local financial resources to pay for new construction or comply with all the regulations.

Other major problems were development and growth, particularly for townships in suburban areas, listed by 15 percent of the respondents; no money or lack of funds listed by 12 percent; and the need for better roads, also listed by 12 percent.

Leadership development programs in the rural South can provide the leaders who will mean the difference between economic decline and economic recovery and growth, according to a new study by the Southern Growth Policies Board (SGPB).

The study indicates that developing Pragmatic Leaders with a Global Vision in the Rural and Small-Town South is needed. It describes leaders who are providing training, encouragement to groups of new, and existing leaders in rural areas of the South. Successful leaders will be those who understand the new international economy in which their communities must operate, and who are willing to involve all sectors of their community in economic, educational, and defense spending and aid to Nicaragua.

PASTURE software helps small farmers

Computers are not for big operators alone. A new program, developed by the Agriculture Research Service and the University of Kentucky, helps small farmers to make the most of their grazing acreage.

PASTURE lets farmers ask 'what if' questions. Co-author Michael A. Brown, at ARS' South Central Family Farm Research Center in Booneville, Arkansas, has described many management scenarios and seen what happens to costs and returns, Brown says. To operate the model, farmer describes the type of forage and how it's managed. Then the program projects forage and animal production for cooperative extension services; identifies agencies to cooperate in these research programs; identifies the needs for funds and staff; and provides implementation plan and funding strategies to generate new funds.

To assist the task force, comments and suggestions on all topics covered in the above objectives are invited. Please write to: James Zulches, Chairperson, Agriculture and Community Viability Task Force, College of Agriculture and Home Economics, Washington State U., Pullman, WA 99164.

Net farm income remains strong

Record direct government payments and falling production costs have combined to boost net farm income to an estimated $57 billion this year. That's $5 billion above the record level reached last year. Next year, lower government payments will drop net income by $3.5 billion, according to the projected 1988 net farm income remains quite favorable.

Leadership development benefits rural South

South, a panel of 20 distinguished Southerners who spent a year studying economic development in the South, identified the development of leaders as one of the 10 regional objectives in their report, 'Halfway Home and a Long Way to Go.' The study, 'Developing Pragmatic Leaders with a Global Vision in the Rural and Small-Town South,' is available for $2.00 each from the Southern Growth Policies Board, P.O. Box 12293, Research Triangle Park, NC, 27709.
Number U.S. farms decline, South loses most

The number of farms in the United States dropped by 38,510 during the last year, according to preliminary 1987 estimates by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service.

The decline reduced the farm count to 2,17 million units, down from 2,21 million last year and 2,43 million in 1980. Although the farm financial crisis may have contributed to declines, most analysts see a continued slump in farm numbers well into the foreseeable future. The trend, they contend, is more a factor of the long-term structural changes in agriculture than any ups and downs in the farm economy.

Within the farm count, the percentage of small farms (those with annual sales of less than $10,000) increased from 52 to 53 percent of the total. The proportion of farms with sales of $10,000-$39,000 decreased in 1987, while farms with sales of $40,000-$99,000 remained stable. Those with $100,000 and over in sales declined slightly.

A quick review of the statistics revealed that five of the Southern region states-Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina-experienced a combined 20-percent drop in farm numbers between 1980 and 1987, about double the national rate of decline over the same period of time.

Texas, the state with the largest number of farms, experienced the largest numerical decline since 1980 with a loss of 29,000 farms. North Carolina also lost a particularly large number of farms, 21,000, in the past seven years.

The latest numbers also included information on U.S. farm size. The average American farm now covers 461 acres, up from 456 acres last year and 427 in 1980.

(Extracted from the October 1987 issue of FARMLINE, a publication of USDA, ERS.)

In Print

Protecting Texas Groundwater: Opportunities for State and Local Action, by the Texas Rural Water Quality Network Project, Texas Department of Agriculture. The final report of an 18 month task force study of problems associated with the future of Texas's groundwater resources. This document will be useful to decision makers from other states who need guidance in forming a broad based constituency and in writing water quality laws. Copies are free from Texas Dept. of Agriculture, Box 12947, Austin, TX 78711.

Forest Management and Use of Marginal Agricultural Land in the Southern Region contains nine papers presented at a workshop sponsored by the Southern Extension Public Affairs Committee in cooperation with the Tennessee Valley Authority, Southern Forestry Economics Workers, Farm Foundation and Southern Rural Development Center. It is available from SRDC, Box 5446, Mississippi State, MS 33976.

Rural Transportation Interest Sharing Network: A Directory of Assistance is a listing of names, addresses and expertise of persons willing to network with other professionals in the field of transportation. It is available from the Southern Rural Development Center, Box 5446, Mississippi State, MS 33976.

Economic Analysis of Alternative Trash Collection Systems in Mississippi and Alabama has recently been compiled by Steve Murray, Albert Myles and Lynn Reinschmidt. The publication identifies existing methods used to collect trash, estimates the cost of alternative methods, and identifies the most economical methods under varied condition. It is available from the Southern Rural Development Center, P.O. Box 5446, Mississippi State, MS 33976.

The Fiscal Year 1989 Priorities for Research, Extension and Higher Education has been distributed by the Joint Council on Food and Agricultural Sciences. The report discusses the national priorities for food and agricultural sciences relative to research, extension and higher education programs. Eight ranked priorities are discussed. Copies are available from Dr. Mark R. Bailey, Leader, Joint Council Reports Staff, Room 452-A, Administration Building, USDA, Washington D.C. 20250.

1987 Annual Progress Report of the Southern Rural Development Center is an end of the year summary of its activities. In addition a brief background of the Center is given as well as a list of the board of directors and staff. It is available free from SRDC, P.O. Box 5446, Mississippi State, MS 33976. (601) 325-3207.

Names in the news

DR. MILTON SHUFFETT has been named associate dean for research and associate director of the Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Kentucky. He replaces DR. GLENN B. COLLINS, who has returned to teaching and research in the Department of Agronomy.

DR. N. DWIGHT MERCER is the new Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine at Missis- sippi State University. Prior to coming to Mississippi State in 1977, Mercer worked for the Food and Drug Administration as Deputy Director of the Division of Veterinary Medical Research.

DR. JAMES E. RAKOCY has been appointed assistant director of the University of the Virgin Islands' Agricultural Experiment Station. He has been acting since last January. Dr. Rakocy has been associated with UVI/AED since 1980.

DR. TROY WAKEFIELD, JR. has been appointed Research Director of the Evans-Allen research program at State University. His BS and MS degrees are from Tennessee State University, and Ph.D degree from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

FARMLINE/October 1987
Small talk on big issues...

- It took 601 man-hours of labor in 1800 to produce a bale of cotton compared with 5 man-hours in the current decade. Cotton yields per acre increased from 154 to 630 pounds during the same period.

- Since 1981 about 15 million parasitic wasps have been released in 25 states as part of a biological pest control program sponsored by the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. Some states report that wasps provided virtually 100 percent protection from alfalfa weevils. At the same time, farmers saved $8 million per year in pesticide application costs, while the program itself cost USDA only $1 million. For information, contact Max Heppner, USDA APHIS, LPAS, 700 Federal Building, Hyattsville, MD 20782.

- Americans continue to pay as much for processing the food bought at the checkout counter as they pay for producing the crop and livestock on the farm. About 30 cents of every dollar spent in foodstores last year went to cover the farm value, while 31 cents paid for the processing after foods left the farm. Another 10 cents was spent for wholesaling and 6 cents for transportation between the processor and retailer. Retailing charges added the remaining 23 cents.

The total marketing bill, then, covering the four main functions of the food industry - processing, wholesaling, transporting, and retailing - came to 70 cents of each dollar spent in foodstores. (Source: FARMLINE, Vol. VIII, No. 10, October 1987.)