Capsules
Southern Rural Development Center

Volume 17 Number 1

January 1997

New trade leaflets product of Extension committees

The third in a series of trade leaflets entitled Southern Agriculture in a World Economy was released by three Southern Extension committees: Public Affairs, Marketing and Farm Management. The leaflets are a product of the Southern Extension International Trade Task Force. Geoffrey A. Benson, North Carolina State University, and Harold M. Harris, Jr., Clemson University served as Task Force co-chairs. Benson and C. Parr Rosson, III, Texas A&M University, served as co-editors for the series, and Judy Johnson, NC State University, prepared the manuscripts.

Camera-ready copies of the ten leaflets were distributed through the agricultural economics departments in each state. The Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC) also has camera-ready copies available (SRDC #188). Versions of the leaflets are available on the World Wide Web at North Carolina State University, the SRDC and Texas A&M University.

The NCSU url is http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/agecon/trade/
SRDC url is: http://www.ces.msstate.edu/~srdc

Support for the development of these leaflets was provided by the Farm Foundation, the SRDC and participating universities.

The leaflet titles and authors are as follows:

- Agriculture in a World Economy, Harold M. Harris, Jr. and Geoffrey A. Benson
- Economic Impacts of Trade: Perceptions and Perspectives; Timothy G. Taylor, Gary F. Fairchild and Harold M. Harris, Jr.
- Trade and the Environment; Gary F. Fairchild, Geoffrey A. Benson, James L. Seale, Jr. and Kirby S. Moulton
- Agricultural Trade and the Consumer; Kirby S. Moulton and Geoffrey A. Benson
- Macroeconomic Policies and U.S. Agriculture: Kathryn Niles and David Orden
- Government Intervention Affecting Agricultural Trade; Gary F. Fairchild, Geoffrey A. Benson, Larry D. Sanders and James L. Seale, Jr.
- The GATT Uruguay Round and the World Trade Organization: Opportunities and Impacts for U.S. Agriculture; Larry D. Sanders, Kirby S. Moulton, Michel Paggi and Barry Goodwin
- Preferential Trading Arrangements: Gainers and Losers from Regional Trading Blocs; C. Parr Rosson, III, C. Ford Runge and Kirby S. Moulton
- U.S. Agricultural Export Markets; Geoffrey A. Benson and Mary Marchant

SARE seeks proposals

The Southern Region SARE Professional Development program has released its 1997 Request for Proposals. A minimum of $350,000 is available in 1997 for projects to train extension personnel, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) workers and others who provide sustainable ag information to farmers. Typical funding levels range up to about $80,000 per project.

Two types of projects are eligible for funding. "Training Projects" provide training directly to professionals involved in education and the transfer of information about sustainable agriculture. "State Training Enhancement Projects" seek to identify obstacles to the state strategic plan for sustainable agriculture training and then develop strategies for overcoming them.

A project must have as its central purpose providing training of extension workers, NRCS personnel, consultants and others, including farmers who will be functioning in training and educational roles. For specific details on submitting a proposal contact Southern Region SARE, 1109 Experiment Station, Stuckey Building, Georgia Station, Griffin, GA 30223-1797. Source: Common Ground, Vol. 4 No. 1, Southern Region SARE, Winter 1998/97.
Video describes sustainable ag contribution

There are many ways to manage change in agriculture, including alternatives to the "bigger is always better" approach. A video produced by Iowa State University Extension in cooperation with the Western SARE/ESP program and the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, explains how social capital and community are critical for managing change in agriculture, as well as how sustainable agriculture contributes to vital rural communities.

The video, Social Capital and Sustainability: the Community and Managing Change in Agriculture, describes the mutual dependency between rural communities and the surrounding landscape. It explains how changes in the use of resources, such as reduced federal programs, increased globalization of markets, advanced information systems and increased concern for the environment, alters the landscape and requires changes in human, financial and social resources within the community. 

What Works! Water and Environmental Programming, April 5-9, 2016, Oklahoma Program and registration information is available from: http://www.okfarm.com. Mississippi State, MS 38792, 601-325-3207 or e-mail sandyp@mces.msstate.edu.

Southern Regional Science Association with Anne Metten, April 17-19, Memphis Tennessee. For information contact David Barkley, Faculty of Economic Development, Clemson, University, SC 29634-0555, 864-656-5797, e-mail DBRKL@Clemson.EDU.

From Research to Practice, April 25-27, University of Mississippi, Oxford, Mississippi. For additional information about this rural mental health research conference, contact Scotty Hargrove, Department of Psychology, University of Mississippi, MS 38677, 662-915-7883, e-mail psydh@olemiss.edu.

On Schedule

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South's business climate rated high

An economic development marketing firm and three national magazines reported the South’s business climate ranked in the top 10 in recent studies by their organizations. Florida’s World’s findings were from its first study and rating of states in terms of their appeal to businesses seeking a home. The magazine looked at such key data as each state’s cost of doing business, its recent economic history, its economic prospects and its supply of an educated workforce. The report predicts that “outgoings costs” will force businesses to continue abandoning some regions for the Southeast and Southwest.

Plants Sites & Parks asked its readers to reveal what states and regions they are considering as potential sites for new office and industrial facilities. Those hot spots, the magazine asserts, comprise a simple forecast of where businesses might be headed in the next year or so.

Site Selection’s rankings were based on several factors: a survey of top corporate real estate executives and also a proprietary in-depth analysis of new and expanded manufacturing and supportive facilities announced across the nation in 1998, plus those announced in 1997.

Another study, conducted by Development Counsellors International (DCI), surveyed 173 senior executives at large companies across the U.S., and found several southern states ranked among the top 10 business climates nationally. The South was named the most business-friendly region with 73% of respondents giving the area a favorable ranking. The Midwest came in second with 49%. The box below shows the top ten states as ranked by the four surveys.


Mark your calendars

Mark your calendars for the Southern Region Water Quality Workshop scheduled for April 5-8 in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. "What Works! Water quality" programming is an opportunity for professional development and networking for Extension agents, specialists and other agency professionals. Sessions and short courses will follow the workshops.

For more information contact: CIRBUESIDA, Farm Foundation and the Southern Rural Development Center.

2016 Events:

- 2016 Farm Foundation Workshop on Farm Profitability, April 1-3, 2016, The University of Georgia, Athens
- 2016 Farm Foundation Workshop on Farm Policy, April 10-12, 2016, The University of Illinois, Urbana
- 2016 Farm Foundation Workshop on Farm Management, April 17-20, 2016, The University of Maryland, College Park
- 2016 Farm Foundation Workshop on Farm Marketing, April 24-27, 2016, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville
- 2016 Farm Foundation Workshop on Farm Risk Management, April 30-May 2, 2016, The University of Wisconsin, Madison

Visit www.farmfoundation.org for more information on these events and others that are being held across the country.
SRDC project measured importance of health sector

Health care issues are being addressed at all government levels. National leaders are discussing Medicare and Medicaid issues. State leaders are addressing Medicaid issues. Community leaders are striving to maintain and/or improve health services.

Because of the intense interest by local decision makers to maintain a viable health sector, the Southern Rural Development Center funded a study to illustrate the importance of the health sector to the economy of a rural community and to present a simple procedure to measure the impact of the health sector on the local economy.

Gerald A. Doeksen, Tom Johnson and Chuck Willoughby recently completed the study and a final report was published by SRDC. At Oklahoma State University, Doeksen is regents professor and extension economist and Willoughby is extension assistant. At the time of the study Johnson was professor and extension economist at Virginia Tech; he is presently at the University of Missouri, Columbia. The study reviews the literature of studies that measure the economic importance of the health sector and also develops procedures to measure the impact. The literature review resulted in the conclusion that the direct and secondary impacts on community employment and income often account for 15 to 20 percent of the total community’s employment and income. In addition, the literature strongly supports the conclusion that a viable health sector is not only important for jobs, but also important if a community wants to attract industry, business or retirees.

Three procedures were developed that can be used to measure the economic impact of the health sector on a local economy. An aggregate approach measures employment and income impacts for the health sector. A disaggregate approach utilizes a spreadsheet and measures the economic impact of five health sectors. These include hospitals, doctors and dentists; nursing home and residential facilities; other medical and health services; and pharmacies. A dynamic approach was also developed via a spreadsheet to measure disaggregate health sector impacts for the next five years. All three approaches can easily be completed with the spreadsheet and SRDC publication # 202. Five copies of the report ($4) or disk ($11), contact the Southern Rural Development Center, Box 9856, Mississippi State, MS 37962, phone (601) 325-3207 or E-mail sandpy@micre.msstate.edu. Mailing costs are extra.

Grantwriter’s top 10 list why grant proposals are funded

Grantwriter Mike Ward of Greenville, Mississippi, begins his grantwriting workshops with a cardinal rule. aptly called, “Ward’s Law for Successful Grant Proposals to Foundations and Corporations.” His law is “If the cover letter of your grant proposal does not begin with, ‘Based on our recent conversation…’ or its equivalent, then your proposal is junk mail. The law rates the top spot in Ward’s Top 10 Reasons Why Grant Proposals to Foundations and Corporations Are Funded.” Ward, who has averaged a 92% success rate during his 20-year career as a grantwriter, spoke to the Arkansas Champion Communities Resource Conference November 21-22, 1996, at Little Rock, Arkansas. He outlined the top ten reasons for success with proposals as follows:

1. The proposal includes all supporting documentation which is requested by the funding source.
2. Original signatures are included on the cover letter and any required forms.
3. The proposal is organized in a format consistent with the guidelines published by the funding source.
4. Objectives are measurable and flow logically from the goals as stated in the proposal.
5. The plan of work is well-organized and contains a logical progression of methods by which goals and objectives will clearly be met.
6. The budget is reasonable, with a concise budget narrative which completely explains all projections.
7. The proposal is well-written in terms of grammar, spelling and punctuation, and tells a story in a readable manner.
8. The program is well-conceived.
9. The program is well-written.
10. The cover letter is well-written and includes the name and address of the organization and the contact person.

Continued on page 3
"What's rural?" discussion continued

Much has been written recently about what "rural" means. In the Winter 1987 issue of Small and Part Time Farms newsletter, Ronald C. Wimerbery discusses the issue from the perspective of a social scientist. Wimerbery is William Neal Reynolds professor of sociology at North Carolina State University. His comments follow.

We can often tell a place is rural when we see it. Social scientists who study rurality use several perspectives. These include space, population, social interaction, culture, occupations and quality of life.

Space. Rural places are typically remote from urban and suburban places. There is distance to, from and within rural areas. Those who live in a rural environment have to live with the realities of rural space. While new technologies make it possible to close communication distances, goods and many services still must be physically transported across rural space.

Population. Rural areas are sparsely populated, and rural communities are small in comparison to urban places. With few people, small places and large spaces, rural population densities are lower. The U.S. Census officially defines urban places as incorporated with 2,500 or more people. Rural is everywhere else. Metropolitan and nonmetropolitan counties also indicate rurality. Metro areas have central cities of 50,000 or more people plus adjacent counties with a major city. Nonmetro counties do not have large central cities but still have strong social ties to a metro county.

Social Interaction. Because of the distances, rural people may experience different social interaction patterns from those living in urban areas. Many rural social contacts take place among people having long-term acquaintances and friendships. Therefore, rural people are more likely to interact with each other in whole-person relationships rather than merely through the specialized roles used in many urban contacts.

Culture. Rural culture refers to the styles of life along with attitudes, beliefs, values and ways of thinking found in rural areas. Rural culture is seen through ways of speaking, traditions, family or community customs and tastes for things ranging from food to music, recreation and goods and services.

Occupations. Rural areas contain our natural and environmental resources. Consequently, many rural occupations are extractive jobs in agriculture, forestry, mining or fisheries. To the extent that food, fiber, lumber, minerals or other items can be processed in rural areas before being shipped out, benefits to local rural economies are generally greater. Rural occupations also include many recreational and retirement services.

Quality of life. Rural quality of life involves personal satisfaction as well as desirable social, cultural and physical conditions. Most research on rural quality of life deals with socio-economic, physical and health conditions. Many people are happy to live in rural areas.

Does Rural Matter? An objective of rural social science is to improve rural quality of life by providing what can be learned through the above concepts. Since the needs of rural people are met through social interactions in rural space, demography, culture and extractive occupational systems, there can be important differences in how policies, programs and services affect the quality of life of rural people and places.

In Print

Joint Southern Region Program Committee Meeting Proceedings is the report of the annual meeting of state leaders of the seven extension program committees: agriculture and natural resources, communications, community development, 4-H youth development, home economics, middle management and program and staff development. The 1996 meeting theme was "Tailing Responsibility." Order #201 for $4 from SRDC, Box 9656, Mississipi State, MS 39762, (601) 325-3207 or E-mail sandyp@mces.msstate.edu.

Measuring the Economic Importance of the Health Sector on a Local Economy: A Brief Literature Review and Procedures To Measure Local Impacts is the final report of a study funded by the Southern Rural Development Center. Principal investigators were Ida-Dawn Dowesken, Tom Johnson and Chuck Wilhoyth. The report is available for $4 from SRDC, Box 9656, Mississippi State, MS 39762, (601) 325-3207 or E-mail sandyp@mces.msstate.edu. An Excel spread-sheet is also available on disk for $1. Shipping costs are extra.

Selected Research and Extension Projects of the Four Regional Rural Development Centers is the 1996

combined report of the centers. The 55-page publication highlights the projects and accomplishments in fiscal year 96. The variety of projects and diversity of people and organizations involved in the work of the Centers attest to the impact of their work and reveal how this work touches rural people and communities. A limited number of copies are available from each of the four rural centers. Order from SRDC, Box 9656, Mississippi State, MS 39762, (601) 326-3207 or E-mail sandyp@mces.msstate.edu.

Transforming Your Community: Empowering for Change by Allen B. Mock and Pussy Brooks gives personal examples of real people who moved from taking talk to acting and developed their communities while maintaining what they valued most. The authors, with 25 years experience in community development, share a "framework for transformation," covering tourism, recreation, government regulation, funding, networking, education and follow-up using a bottom-up approach. $26.50 Order from Kriege Publishing Company, P.O. Box 9842, Melbourne, FL 32902-9842, (407) 924-9542 or FAX (407) 951-3071.

Where has all the money gone?


A. Where Government Funds Come From

B. Where Government Funds are Spent From

C. Balance Between Mandatory and Discretionary Spending in FY 98 Budget

Despite changes in the welfare system and the passage of the farm bill which was designed to significantly reduce the cost of farm subsidies—mandatory spending, the amounts that congress must appropriate annually because it has no discretion over them without amending current law—continues to dominate more than two thirds of the budget.

On Schedule

What Works! Water and Environmental Programming, April 8-9, Tulsa, Oklahoma. Program and registration information is available from SRDC, Box 9656, Mississippi State, MS 39762, (601) 325-3207, E-mail sandyp@mces.msstate.edu.

Southern Regional Science Association 36th Annual Meeting, April 17-19, Memphis, Tennessee. For information contact David Barkley, Faculty of Economic Development, Clemson University, Clemson, SC 29634-0355; 864-656-5797, E-mail DBRILY@CLEMSON.EDU.

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Top 10 continued from page 1

3. Goals are reasonable and flow logically from the mission of your organization.

The proposed work, taken as a whole, is compatible with and compliments both the mission of your organization and the stated guidelines and interests of the funding source.

1. The cover letter begins with "Based on our recent conversation..." or its equivalent.

Sources: Champion Communities News, monthly newsletter of the Champion Communities Project, December 1996, Volume 2, Number 3.
Search completed, Beaulieu named SRDC director

The Southern Rural Development Center board of directors has pleased to announce that Dr. Lionel J. "Bo" Beaulieu has accepted the position of Director effective August 1, 1997.

Dr. Beaulieu is currently with the University of Florida where he is Professor, Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences and Director, Florida Inter-University Center for Child, Family and Community Studies.

Dr. Beaulieu's professional activities include working with issues such as human and social capital resources in the rural U.S. and South, educational and career aspirations of youth; school-to-work transitions; rural revitalization; community leadership development and public policy education.

Dr. Beaulieu received a bachelor's degree from St. Anselm's College; the M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from Purdue University in the Department of Sociology. He spent one year on sabbatical leave in the mid-80's at the Southern Rural Development Center researching the nature and extent of the rural crisis in the South. He holds membership in many professional and honorary societies. He also has served on numerous national and regional committees and held many leadership roles including president of the Southern Rural Sociological Association. Dr. Beaulieu has written numerous publications, edited rural development books, and contributed to many journals and books.

The conference will offer sessions featuring new technologies, Internet issues and strategies, new marketing techniques, and also offering a chance to meet with some of the leading experts in the field. The conference will also feature a variety of workshops and hands-on sessions.

Registration is $175. For complete information, contact: Fourth Annual National Home-Based Business Conference c/o Conference Associates, 1776 Lincoln Street #1308, Denver, CO 80203 FAX (303) 863-9507.

Conference sponsors include Cooperative Extension Service, Communities in Economic Transition National Initiative, Home-Based and Micro Business Design Team, Rocky Mountain Home-Based Business Association; Colorado State University College of Extension; Center for the New West; Colorado Small Business Development Center; Community College of Aurora; and Colorado Community College Occupational and Technical Education Systems. Corporate sponsors are Microsoft, Public Service Company and US WEST Communications.
Conference explores forces shaping the South

Interested individuals are invited to join the South’s most influential leaders, including current and former governors, legislators, educators and business executives, in ongoing discussions about the region’s future. The conference will explore the forces that shape the Southern economy.

- the changing face of the South;
- how the South is shaping American values, politics and culture;
- the role of technology in the 21st century;
- the South in a global economy;

Nonmetro retail trade marketplace changing

Retail trade is the second-largest source of nonmetro employment, accounting for nearly 5 million jobs and nearly 17 percent of nonmetro employment in 1993, second only to the service industry’s 21.6 percent share. Many nonmetro retailers have benefited from consumers’ increased demand for convenience, ease-of-access, and price competitiveness from retailers, which led to a shift of retail trade away from central city business districts and toward regional malls and other large scale retail centers.

Contemporary considerations have been generated by Wal-Mart, the first big chain to cultivate the rural retail market. Other chains have followed Wal-Mart into the long-ignored rural market leading to concentration of retail trade in larger, centrally located towns. Smaller, less accessible communities are generally not attractive locations for chain stores. These communities are often served by small, independent retail establishments, but this category of retail stores is shrinking. Single-unit retailers, including the "mom-and-pop" stores so long a part of the rural landscape, made up over 50 percent of retail establishments in 1985, but accounted for only 40 percent of retail sales in 1992, down from 43.8 percent in 1987.

The concentration of retail trade in large, centralized towns and cities makes it a challenge for many small communities and rural counties to maintain a viable retail sector. Analysis of data for all U.S. counties in 1987 and 1992 indicates that, on average, residents of nonmetro counties without a major "trade center" town make about 25 percent less than retail purchases outside their county of residence. The rate of leakage varies considerably, however. About 18 percent of counties without a trade center town lost more than half of their sales to retail sales on other counties, while another 20 percent of non-trade center counties had no sales leakage.

Retailing may be in for big changes in coming years, as improved telecommunications change the way we shop. Amazon.com, for example, is increasingly shopping at home using a telephone or computer, retailers will begin to serve national, rather than local, markets. An early indicator of this trend is the rapid growth in mail order retailing. Between 1987 and 1992, catalog mail houses were the fastest growing single retail industry, adding 550 establishments and 27,000 employees, and posting real sales growth of 46 percent.

In Print

A New Look at Poverty in America is a publication of the Population Reference Bureau, Inc. Of the 45 million people in poverty, 14.5 percent of the U.S. residents were characterized as poor, but the national average masks enormous variations by income groups and geographic areas. In 1990, poverty rates were 17.1 percent for a person 65 or older living alone, to 15.8 percent for a single parent with one child, to 15.0 percent for a family of four.

Among states, average poverty rates for the 1992 to 1994 period ranged from 8.8% in Delaware and New Hampshire to 25.5% in Louisiana. In four states and Washington, D.C., the average poverty rates are expected to exceed 20% for the three years.

In general, rates in the South and Southwest have the highest poverty rates. State poverty rates are affected by state policies and the regional economy, but they also reflect the demographic makeup of the population. States with a large share of people at high risk of being poor, such as minorities and immigrants, tend to have higher rates. Under the federal legal aid programs through block grants to the states, all states will have a greater role in managing antipoverty programs.

Who are the poor of America?

Nearly 40 million Americans live in poverty in 1994—more than anyone since the early 1960’s. In 1994, 14.5 percent of the U.S. residents were classified as poor, but the national average masks enormous variations by income groups and geographic areas. In 1994, poverty rates were 17.1 percent for a person 65 or older living alone, to 15.8 percent for a single parent with one child, to 15.0 percent for a family of four.

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However, contrary to common images of the poverty population, many poor people are not working and wages are a major source of income to poor families. Nearly five million adults ages 22 to 64 worked at least half of 1994, but earned so little that they and their families were classified as poor. Another three million adults ages 22 to 64 worked for 26 or fewer weeks in 1994. These low-income earners are the working poor, and account for nearly one-half of the poor adults of working age.

In a country with the world’s largest economy and relatively low employment rates, the working poor remain a residual group. They are often overlooked in discussions of poverty and welfare. Even the existence of the working poor belies two common beliefs: that people are poor because they do not, or will not, work and that people who work will not be poor. The increase in the number of poverty-prone workers has been linked to changes in our economic structure that have reduced the availability of well-paying blue-collar manufacturing jobs. Industries have eliminated many lower-skilled jobs through automation or by sending work to countries where labor costs are lower.

Source: This article and “Common Myths...” were taken from Economic Development Digest, Volume 6, Number 2, February 1997, published by the National Association of Development Organizations Research Foundation. The articles are excerpted from A New Look at Poverty in America by William P. O’Hare. See To Print on page 2 for ordering information.

Common Myths About the Poor

Perceptions about the poor, welfare programs and welfare recipients are shaped often more by myth, anecdote and misinformation than research. Five common misperceptions include the following:

- Most of the poor are black or Hispanic. Poverty rates are higher among Hispanics and African Americans than in the general population. In 1994, the majority of the poor were white. Whites are the largest racial group in poverty, more than 48% of the poor, while blacks are 27% and Hispanics 22%.
- People are poor because they do not want to work. Half the poor are not working in the working ages: about 40% are under age 18, another 10% are over age 65. Many poor people work, but their wages are below-poverty wages.
- The poor are in a cycle of poverty that few escape. The poverty population is dynamic and people move in and out of it. Only 12% of the poor are in poverty for five or more years.
- Most poor live in inner-city neighborhoods. Poor people live in areas that are no more than one quarter live in high poverty inner-city neighborhoods, but only 36% of the poor live in the suburbs and more than 20% live outside metropolitan areas.
- The poor live off government welfare. Welfare accounts for only one-fourth of the income of poor adults. Social Security, which is not based on need, contributes about 22% of the income of the poor. Half the income received by poor adults comes from wages or other employment activity. Only 40% of the poor receive cash welfare payments.
Public access to more than 500 indicators of state policies and family well-being became available recently when the Urban Institute’s state-by-state database came online on the Internet.

The collected data from each state includes information in the areas:
- income security
- health
- child and youth well-being
- fiscal and social services policies, and
- economic and demographic conditions.

This is the first time such data are available through a single, non-governmental source and at no cost to the user. The data include aggregate measures of budget growth or decline, tradeoffs among major spending categories, discretionary tax increases and decreases and certain indicators of how programs are changing, changing benefit levels, eligibility rules, time limits, and behavioral incentives. Various demographic, economic and social indicators are included.

The State Database is a major component of a 6-year Urban Institute project, Assessing the New Federalism, a study monitoring the decentralization of social programs and policies from the federal government to the states.

Statistics in the database are compiled from federal government agencies and other sources, such as the National Association of State Budget Officers and the National Conference of State Legislatures. Additionally, the database includes findings from surveys conducted by the Urban Institute and its contributing organizations. Although measures from 1993 to the present are emphasized, the database includes some historical data from the late '80s and early '90s.

The database is searchable and will be updated quarterly. Users can browse through the variable descriptions while on-line, searching by subject or by ad hoc "keywords." It is accessible through the Urban Institute’s home page at http://www.urban.org. Or go directly to the database at http://newfederalism.urban.org.

Poor children still face tough odds

The 7.1 million children growing up in poor communities today face tough odds. Research predicts that they are at greater risk of being sick and having inadequate health care; of being parents before they complete school; of being users of easily available drugs; of being exposed to violence; and of being incarcerated before they are able to vote. Although poor neighborhoods include individuals and families with extraordinary resilience and strength, too many kids growing up in such environments will reach adulthood unprepared to parent, to work and to contribute to society.

These comments are in the overview to KIDS COUNT Data Book recently released by KIDS COUNT, a network of child advocacy organizations sponsored by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. That foundation is a private charitable organization dedicated to helping build better futures for disadvantaged children in the U.S. Its primary mission is to foster public policies, human-service reforms and community supports that more effectively meet the needs of today’s vulnerable children and families.

Each year the KIDS COUNT publishes its data book to illuminate the conditions facing America’s children and to assess trends in their well-being. By updating the assessment every year, benchmarks are provided with which to evaluate ongoing efforts. Researchers and policy makers can see how each state has advanced or regressed since 1989 and can compare the status of their children to those in other states and regions across several dimensions of well-being.

Some statistics reported about the Southern region are grim. Southern children are more likely to be poor and to die young than those in other parts of the country; black children in the South are three times more likely to be poor than white children. These grim statistics indicate there’s much work yet to be done to raise the basic living, health and educational standards for the citizens in our region. When compared...
One of the most prominent transformations in US agricultural history has been the farm-to-city migration pattern. This movement has been predicated on the improved social opportunities available to people in urban areas. The strategies, programs, and initiatives have been designed to "develop" rural areas, but to mitigate the deficits that would accrue to rural residents. The question of whether or not any observable social contrast between rural and non-rural places implies a significant difference in the life chances of individuals residing there, however, has not received the empirical attention that it deserves, especially in light of the immense amount of public policy attention that rural development has received since the turn of this century.

The report of The Social Cost of Growing-Up in Rural America: Rural Development and Social Change during the Twentieth Century reviews the research on rural differentiation and the history of major federal rural development policy initiatives to compensate for such a decline experienced by rural residents. The authors, Frank Hower, Yue-Ying Tseng and Cynthia Wade-Harder, empirically examine the extent to which a situation exists by which rural origins may affect socioeconomic attainment in adulthood and how these costs may have changed during this century in the US. They then show how historical rural origins may affect socioeconomic achievements later in adulthood using database information to estimate a social psychological model of status attainment. Moreover, they test whether rural-origin youth can "mitigate away" the social costs associated with their rural origins by re-estimating status attainment models with the addition of variables measuring rural-to-urban and urban-to-rural migration from age 16 to adulthood. The results of this study, completed at the Mississippi State University Research and Extension Center at Mississippi State University, indicate that the social costs associated with rural origins in completed education by major period of rural development and the Social Science Research Center at the University of Mississippi, publish Social Research Report Series 1994-5. The cost estimates are based on a comprehensive database of all US Census data and other sources of information. The report concludes that rural origins continue to have a significant impact on adult attainment.

Video, study guide available to help natural resource-dependent communities

Oregon State University has produced a set of materials to help natural resource-dependent communities across the US cope more successfully. Often when a community faces drastic change, its residents fear the community will "blow away." In fact, most communities come through change alive and prosperous. The key to success is to strengthen citizens and communities as change continues. Natural resource-dependent communities have a lot in common when dealing with change. This educational package includes a video which shows how three of these communities are managing change and a companion study guide that offers practical information to help individual communities deal with change. Towns in Transition is a 30-minute video about Managing Change in Natural Resource-Dependent Communities in the 40-page study guide. The messages delivered in the video by the residents and communities highlighted apply to towns anywhere in the country. The study guide, which can be ordered from the work of sociologist William Bridges, applies a model for managing change to the communities featured in the video. Discusses how informal and formal leaders can help and hinder the process that can be useful. The video and guide are available for $30 for 30 copies.

On Schedule

29th Annual Community Development Conference and Expo, held in Atlanta, Georgia. The theme for this year's conference is "Reflections and Visions on the Next 25 Years." Attendees will have the opportunity to participate in workshops, presentations, community-based problem solving, roundtable breakfast discussions, session meetings, a swap market and lobby sessions. Registration materials are available from Rusty Brooks, phone (706) 542-3350, fax (706) 542-6183 or E-mail rbrooks@kcatga.edu.

60th Annual Rural Sociological Society Meeting, August 13-17, Toronto, Canada. The theme of the 1997 meeting is "Globalization and Community." It will focus on the themes of community and sense of place, the impact of new technologies, the potential mobility of economic, social and demographic activity. Registration information is available from the agricultural committee of the International Sociological Association which will meet with RSS on the 16th and 17th. Early bird registration is $135 until July 12. For further information, registration, contact Rural Sociological Society, Rabbi B. Judge, Treasurer, c/o Department of Sociology, 510 Amstel Hall, Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA 98225-9081, phone (360) 650-7571, fax (360) 650-7295, or E-mail ruralsoc@cc.wwu.edu.

Lone eagles desirable neighbors

Lone eagles, according to the Center for the North West, are professionals who use modern technology to be able to work just about anywhere they want. Lone eagles are a potential source of economic development for rural communities and would likely benefit a lot of small businesses. They are good catches for any community they move into. They don't destroy the infrastructure and usually are highly educated people who bring good earnings and new dollars into the community. The Center asks lone eagles to seek a community that:

- Is business friendly with financial institutions that are responsive to their needs and small business.
- Provides opportunities for the repair and maintenance people to fix computers, fax machines, copiers and other technologies.
- Minimizes tax and regulatory burdens.

Lone eagles also need services that allow them to remain connected to colleagues, information and markets in the outside world, so they seek a community with:

- Advanced telecommunications including one-party, voice grade, touch tone telephones with enhanced services such as voice messaging, call waiting and call forwarding.
- Cellular/mobile phone services.
- Access to cable television news and information channels such as CNN, C-Span, CNBC, financial networks, ESPN and others.
- Regular overnight express mail service.
- Access to a commercial airport with scheduled airline service.
- Same day delivery to one or two major national or regional newspapers.

In Print

Commodities by Choice: An Introduction to Sustainable Community Development is a nontechnical booklet that introduces the concepts of sustainability framed in the empowering language of creating a community future. It includes: Contact Mountain Association for Community Economic Development (MACED), 433 Chestnut Street, Berea, KY 40403.

Food Processing Industry - Resource Directory identifies extension and research expertise, the facilities and equipment available, and other resources that are in place to support the food processing industry in the Southern region. See a related article on page 1. It is available for $10 (including postage) from SRDC, Box 9656, Mississippi State, MS 39762, phone 601-325-3207 or E-mail sandyp@mcx.msstate.edu. Order SRDC #209.

Healthy, Wealthy & Wise: Improving Rural Health Care & Rural Economics is a videotape that introduces community leaders, consumers and providers to the service significance and economic development potential of health care systems in rural communities. It focuses on communities in rural Oklahoma and Appalachian Kentucky where residents are engaged in strategic planning processes to build health care systems to meet residents' needs. Order from Appalshop Film & Video, 306 Madison Street, Whitesburg, KY 41858, phone 606-645-7487 or E-mail appalshop@aol.com.

Home-Based & Micro Businesses Resource Directory will help professionals who work with entrepreneurs. Developed by the Home-Based & Micro Businesses Design Team of the CSREES/USDA Communities in Economic Transition Initiative. The 1997 edition is $12.50 plus shipping. Order #204 from SRDC, Box 9656, Mississippi State, MS 39762, phone 601-325-3207 or E-mail sandyp@mcx.msstate.edu.

Capsules is a forum for sharing; please send news articles and information about forthcoming events to the editor. Jacqueline Tisdale Writer/Editor Sandy Payne Editorial Asst.

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Food processing consortium produces resource directory

Considerable discussion among food technologists over the past several years has related to industrial Extension Service activities supporting the development of small to medium-sized manufacturing/processing industries throughout the U.S. Some supporters felt a critical mass of food processing expertise and resources existed within the land-grant system at Extension Services and Experiment Stations in the Southern Region to form the basis for regional collaboration and a consortium to address food processing industry development and competitiveness issues.

The Southern Rural Development Center recently funded a task force to link the land-grant system of the 13 states in the Southern region into an alliance to address food processing technology issues, technical assistance resources and collaborative opportunities. The effort, "Southern Region Consortium To Address Food Processing Industry Development Needs," was spearheaded by a regional design team with extension and research representatives from the land-grant system across the South.

The first step was to produce a directory of resources. Design team members collected and provided state information on faculty expertise, support of small to medium-sized manufacturing/processing industries through the processing industry. They compiled the information into a directory that provides a concise listing of this expertise and resource base to support the commercial food processing industry. Food Processing Industry - Resource Directory is divided by state into three sections. The Faculty Expertise section gives pertinent information such as expertise, current projects and ways to contact each person. The Support Facilities section lists the facilities, location, focus areas, capabilities and a contact person for each site. The Other Resources section is primarily a listing of educational materials.

This publication should enhance collaboration between state land-grant institutions and can be used by guide for the identification of resources available and accessible to the food processing industry. Design team members include the following:

- E.B. Baker, Louisiana
- Philip Crandall, Arkansas
- Virgil Culver, Mississippi
- Cameron Hackney, Virginia
- Michael Hedges, Arkansas
- Clare Hicks, Kentucky
- Alfred Wagner, Texas
- Norman Marriott, Virginia
- Richard Maurer, Kentucky
- Warren McCord, Alabama
- William Mosby, Tennessee
- Estes Reynolds, Georgia
- Arthur Taylor, Florida
- Daniel Tillery, Oklahoma
- Terry Titus, South Carolina
- Donn Ward, North Carolina

"Boomer" retirees sought-after commodity

As the 1990s progress, more rural communities need to consider how they will be affected by the incoming surge of baby boom baby boomers. During the 1980s when most of America’s rural areas were struggling economically, those that successfully attracted retirees enjoyed substantial growth in population, employment and income. Some states and localities are trying to promote their prime rural retiree destinations to take advantage of this development.

There are both advantages and disadvantages to attracting retirees to rural areas. The advantages are:

- retirees help stabilize areas with declining populations;
- retirees have relatively high income and spend much of their money locally;
- retirees add to the local tax base;
- retirees create high-paying jobs, such as in the health-care industry, that help retain or attract higher-educated workers;
- retirees bring considerable skills and experiences to the community, often in the social services;
- however, attracting retirees to rural areas can also have disadvantages. For example, retirees might drive up the cost of local housing, decreasing the supply of affordable housing;
- retirees might conflict with other residents over public policy, such as taxes and school spending;

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Oklahoma • Puerto Rico • South Carolina • Tennessee • Texas • Virgin Islands • Virginia
“Boomer” retirees continued from page 1

 uncontrollable retiree attraction can strain the environment and affect local services, and the rural character of the community.

Local and regional job-seekers often migrate to the area, adding to the costs of public services; and retirees may pose a strain on local health care systems as they grow older.

Retiree attraction is especially beneficial for places experiencing economic decline and loss of population and retail sales base. For example, rural communities with declining traditional rural industries or whose main street businesses are threatened by competition from regional and national businesses may have much to gain from retiree attraction.

Several regions have already benefited from retiree attraction. Besides the traditional areas of Florida, California and Arizona, remote areas in the Pacific Northwest, the Texas Hill Country, the Rockies, the Ozarks and coastal areas in the East and the Gulf of Mexico.

The census figures estimate that by 2005, the 50-59 pre-retirement age group will reach 35 million. The next ten years, the first wave of baby boomers will begin seriously to consider retirement, and they will retire when they are likely to migrate from big cities to small cities or rural areas. For places seeking to create jobs and stimulate local businesses, attracting and retaining those retirees may become a priority. States and communities that act soon may have the best chance to achieve their goals.


Galaxy Summit’s Mission Improbable becomes a reality

The Galaxy Summit Conference is becoming a reality. The Summit is the first national conference of extension professional associations planning by and for extension professionals. In the planning, this conference took place earlier this year with 200 seminars, a wide variety of exhibitors and 300 sessions. The regional rural development centers are developing two of the sessions. Presenters range from colleagues and corporate leaders to exhibitors and profession-1

Galaxy Summit Mission Improbable becomes a reality

Gore announces $39 million in aid for EZ/ECs

While on touring the Rio Grande Empowerment Zone in south Texas, Governor Blaine Luetkemeyer announced the present administration will invest an additional $39 million in EZ projects to improve the living conditions and create jobs in some of the nation’s Neediest rural areas. The funds will be directed to rural Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities (EZs/ECs), designated for special assistance under a presidential policy directive to revitalize economically depressed areas and communities.

Travelling with the Vice President, Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said, “USDA is committed to making the EZ effort work. We will change from the ground up. EEs and EZs will bring together local residents and non-profit organizations with federal agencies to change laws and to make government work in the lives of the community.”

Projects in the South include the following:

Alabama - 8,400,000 to create a revolving loan fund to start or expand small and emerging businesses in the Grenae & Sunyer Counties;

Arkansas - 4,685,000 to expand a printing and desktop publishing business, creating 23 new jobs in the El Dorado area;

Georga - 2,745,000 to build a public water system in the Central Savannah River Area East;

Kentucky - 6,117,000 to create revolving loan fund to support new businesses and community development projects with a potential of creating 25 new jobs and to improve waste water systems; to remove health and safety hazards from homes in the Williamsburg County & Lake City;

Louisiana - 3,393,000 to revitalize downtown areas in the Macon Ridge EC;

Mississippi - 3,365,000 to construct a new waste water treatment facility in the Delta EC and Mid Delta EZ;

North Carolina - $1,400,000 to rehabilitate standard housing in the Halifax, Edgecombe & Wilson ECs;

North Dakota - 5,371,000 to provide funding for the McClure County Hospital; for an excursion train business that will promote tourism-related activity; to construct a building to attract new small industries in the Southeast Ohio EC;

South Carolina - $4,407,000 to create a revolving loan fund to support new businesses and community development projects with a potential of creating 25 new jobs and to improve waste water systems; to remove health and safety hazards from homes in the Williamson County & Lake City;

Ohio - 3,050,000 for a waste water treatment facility in the Rio Grande Valley E

National Epsilon Sigma Phi will have a scholarship auction with proceeds going to the numerous scholarships offered by ESP.

The early bird registration date is July 15. The housing deadline is September 10. If you have not received a registration packet, call Richard Freeman at 910-697-9386 or E-mail javalaneta@ecu.edu The Galaxy Summit website address is http://www.agr.umd.edu/useres/galax/galax.htm

School should not be a preparation for life; school should be life. Elbert Hubbard
Volume 17 Number 5

August 1997

Study examines rural preparedness for managed care

Rural community-based health practices will need assistance from resource development agencies as they make the transition to managed care. That is one conclusion of a study conducted in North Carolina by the North Carolina Rural Health Research and Policy Analysis Center. The study was headed by Julie Alexander and Thomas Ricketts and focused on the extent to which rural community-based practices were ready to participate in managed care.

Discussing the reason for the study and its conclusions, Alexander said that urban areas become more saturated with managed care plans, the pressure for managed care adoption will move to more rural areas. "While adoption of managed care will depend in part on local industry as a driving force for the change, all rural areas are likely to be affected to some extent and those practices not prepared will be at a disadvantage," said Alexander.

She said rural health centers and community health centers have a mission to serve people who live in medically-underserved areas, many of whom are uninsured. Practices serving uninsured people are absorbing some of their health care expenses and therefore are unable to be as competitive as practices who do not serve the uninsured. Often the community-based practice is the only health care provider in the area. The need is to ensure that rural practices do not have their infrastructure threatened to the point where they cannot provide care at all. Some practices will be put in that position unless they can prepare to participate in managed care effectively, and for that they may need help.

The project began in 1995 with preparation of the survey instrument. The primary Care Association and the Office of Rural Health, with input from several health care researchers and the managed care consultants. After pilot testing and revision, data were collected from 35 North Carolina centers in rural areas, both rural health centers and community health centers.

For the analysis, questions were grouped into key areas and weighted according to how critical they were. The result was a global picture of ten different areas of managed care preparedness, showing how practices were progressing and highlighting areas needing attention as managed care becomes more universal.

In responding to the need for change, Alexander recommends that practices use a phased approach. At the base are domains that she suggests should be developed first, such as patient satisfaction, adequacy of medical records and risk management. The researchers felt those areas should be handled in a practice regardless of the payment mechanism and regardless of adopting managed care because they make good sense from a clinical and business standpoint. Further up the pyramid are domains that become important as involvement with managed care and awareness of managed care increases. It must be recognized that practices need to adopt systems to help them manage utilization and quality and to help them understand the scope or comprehensiveness of their services. At the top of the pyramid are areas relating to sophistication of a health care organization-to what degree it was able to track data and report it within the organization and respond quickly, how efficiently the organization's computer system could handle the data requirements of managed care and to what extent the practice is already involved with managed care.

This study showed that some practices are already considering managed care and preparing for it, while others are not. According to Alexander, preparation should be ongoing. However, preparation often is determined or motivated by whether or not a practice already has had exposure to managed care. "Rural practices will need to network more with other providers and with people and organizations within their community to ensure that they are offering appropriate services and handling the health care needs of the community," said Alexander.

The researcher encourages practices to prioritize their development strategy carefully. She says the important first move is to make sure that the practice has a loyal patient base and is managing the risks. Her main concern is that managed care does nothing to take care of people without health insurance. Handling that issue will become more pertinent as managed care becomes more prevalent. Alexander explained that managed care makes health care more efficient and economical, leaving fewer funds to cover the costs of care of the uninsured. She said, "Since many rural areas are underserved to start with, and with managed care practices have limited personnel and financial resources, they're going to be disadvantaged under managed care. The nation cannot afford for people not to have health care systems available to them, therefore society as a whole must keep rural practices viable."

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Adult education promotes success while working

Some occupations require continuing education of varying intensities and intervals, so overall adult education provides an important opportunity for the adults already employed to make rapid changes in the workplace. Participation rates are an important measure of the importance of lifelong learning as a condition of employment in the future labor force. Full-21 percent of all adults participated in adult education for work-related purposes.

Among those who worked in work-related courses, 35 percent took courses provided by businesses and industry, which was higher than the national average of 31 percent. The most common topics were industry and production; professional; business administration, law, and public administration; health professions; and education. The most popular courses were computer training, business management, technical skills, and health and safety training.

On Schedule

56th Annual Rural Sociological Society Meeting, August 13-17, Toronto, Canada. The theme is "Global Competition and Community. It will focus on the themes of community and sense of place juxtaposed against the spatial mobility of economic, social, and demographic activity. For details contact Rural Sociological Society, Ralb J. Budge, Treasurer, phone 360-650-7531, fax 360-650-7235, e-mail ruralsoc@cc.wwu.edu.

Sustaining Our Environment and Our Communities: Working Together, the Sky's the Limit, August 19-22, Kalsipell, Montana. This conference is sponsored by the U.S. Forest Service and local Councils on Rural Community Assistance. Sessions will discuss compromise and negotiation between local communities and the Forest Service, forest management, and natural resource agencies and resource managers can take to enhance the natural ecosystems and communities. Registration information is available from the Bi-State Forest Resource, 1709 North First, Hamilton, MT 59840, phone 406-363-5450.

Southern Region Program Leadership Conference, August 24-27, Tallahassee, Florida. This year's annual regional extension meeting is "Building Collaborative Partnerships." Registration information is available from the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Program Development, 200 Monroe St., Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001, phone 850-488-3127, fax 850-488-3295, e-mail bonniet@florida.state.edu.

Building Rural Health Partnerships in the South, November 12-14, Biloxi, Mississippi. National leaders will present health needs and collaborative efforts and multi agency teams will present successful experiences. States will have opportunities to build collaborative teams. Share-session will explore examples of materials, successful programs and planning tools. Registration brochure will be mailed in September. For additional information or if you want to share a planning tool or materials that have been successful contact SRDC, Box 8066, Mississippi State, MS 38892, phone 601-325-3207, fax 601-325-8915, e-mail bonniet@mcs.msstate.edu.

Study continued from page 1

Alexander believes this study confirms the important role that resource development agencies in supporting community providers. As practices are increasingly targeted to more with fewer resources, they will need assistance in making the transition to these successfully.


Galaxy Summit: October 12-16, Columbus, Ohio. The theme is "Mission Impossible: Uniqueness with Unity." It is the first of its kind and will bring together all the disciplines of the Extension Service for a joint meeting. Seminars, exhibits, and tours offer a variety of educational experiences for all extension educators. The housing deadline is September 10. If you have not registered, send a registration packet, calling Richard Freeman at 810-697-9358 or E-mail javalanta@aol.com. The Galaxy Summit website address is http://www.agr.msu.edu/galaxy/galaxy.htm.

The 1997 Forest-Based Economic Development Academy, October 21-23, Birmingham Alabama. This training is a product of the Southern Forestry initiative formed to assist communities in creating more viable economic futures through natural resource solutions. The initiative centers around providing regional support in technology transfer and information sharing and provides a focal point for related activities. The academy will bring together experts and key players in forestry, woody products, rural development, and forest-based recreation and tourism to collaborate in the creation of state forest-based economic development plans. Contact Bill Hubbard, Southern Regional Extension Forester at 706-542-7183 for registration information. The housing deadline is September 20. See related article on page 2.

National Community Land Trust Conference, October 23-26, Durham, North Carolina. The theme is "We're All in This Together." It is sponsored by the National Institute for Community Land Trusts, 3013 16th St. NW, Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20009, phone 202-347-0069, fax 202-347-1705, e-mail bonniet@mcs.msstate.edu.