

A close-up photograph of the stars on the American flag, showing the texture of the fabric and the arrangement of the stars. The stars are white and set against a dark blue background. The flag is draped, creating soft folds and shadows.

Regional Rural Development Centers

Regional Focus
NATIONAL IMPACT



Regional Rural Development Centers **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Building New Economic Opportunities

Increasing economic development success is more likely to be realized when rural counties work in partnership to assess, chart, and implement an action plan that **builds on their regional comparative economic strengths and advantages.**

The RRDC's **Stronger Economies Together (SET) Initiative** does this by delivering 30-plus hours of face-to-face training, and statistical data and technical assistance in partnership with USDA Rural Development and Cooperative Extension. Currently underway in 22 multi-county rural regions located in eight states. **SET is expanding to 42 more regions and 20-plus states over the next two years (2011 and 2012).**

Providing Entrepreneurs with On-Demand Information and Education

About one in five persons in today's rural labor force is self-employed and the numbers are continuing to increase. Thanks to the efforts of the Regional Rural Development Centers and a team of Extension specialists from around the country, entrepreneurs and local leaders have entrepreneurship-related information available 24/7 at: extension.org/entrepreneurship.

RRDC.INFO

Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Job Creation through Regional Food Systems Development

The opportunities to better link local farmers and consumers in urban areas can produce a win-win situation, but the logistical challenges are staggering. The Center's "Enhancing Food Security in the Northeast" project seeks to improve inner-city diets and expand employment opportunities by more closely linking regional food production, distribution and consumption.

Focusing Local Development Efforts on High Impact Sectors

The Center's *Targeting Regional Economic Development* book offers a science-based and data-driven national educational program that helps communities and regions identify specific industries and economic opportunities of especially high local potential. The techniques have been used in states across the nation to enhance local economic development and job creation activities, and complement the Center's longstanding support of business retention and expansion.

Community Benefits of Entrepreneurship

Communities and regions must increasingly look to local entrepreneurs and the self-employed as engines of economic growth. Our research shows community leaders and small business development agency personnel the broad economic impact and growing importance of local businesses and entrepreneurs.

Creating Your Own Job

Increasing self-employment across the nation is a potentially vital strategy for combating persistent high jobless rates, and science-based information is needed to identify the most effective policy levers for accomplishing this goal. Our on-going research and outreach are critical in identifying these levers and in educating local and regional community leaders about their relative effectiveness.

STEPHAN GOETZ
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