

## **Hispanic Growth and Dispersion in Rural America**

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Growing numbers of Hispanics are settling in rural America, especially in non-traditional areas. In this paper, we provide an overview of Hispanic population growth and regional settlement patterns and measure the effects of rapid growth in nonmetro areas on residential settlement patterns, 1980-2000. Outside the Southwest, one-third of nonmetro Hispanic growth occurred in just 149 high-growth counties, located mostly in the South and dominated by low-skill, low-wage industries. Residential segregation between nonmetro Hispanics and non-Hispanic Whites increased in these counties at both the municipal and neighborhood levels. If settlement patterns follow those of Blacks and Whites in many parts of the rural South, Hispanic communities may face similar outcomes: declining status as retail centers, growing dependence on government assistance, and inadequate schooling and transportation.

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