

The Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development

# Annual Report 2000

*NERCRD Publication #76*



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# Annual Report 2000

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## *Retrospective and Outlook*

A number of changes were implemented at the Northeast Center during the last year. Perhaps the most significant is the focus on a more narrow set of rural development issues, which was identified as a priority at the 1999 Strategic Planning Meeting. For this fiscal year, that focus will be on land use, which was listed by one-third of our stakeholders as the single most important issue facing the rural Northeast US. In response we limited the Center's RFP last year to the subject of land use.

This Report summarizes Northeast Center activities and accomplishments over the last year. It contains information on the implementation of the Strategic Plan as well as abstracts of the grants and mini-grants that were funded by the Center and completed during the last year.

A number of exciting initiatives are on the horizon for the Center this year. They include developing a multi-state, multi-disciplinary and multi-functional research proposal in the land use area; providing data and information about land use trends and their consequences in the Northeast US; co-sponsoring a national land use conference; and expanding our website as a portal to land use issues, knowledge and expertise in the region.

I am particularly excited about expanding our work into the e-commerce and e-community areas, which includes ensuring that rural communities have access to the most up to date information available on land use. I am also interested in exploring new ways of working with faculty—through virtual offices and teams—in the Northeast.

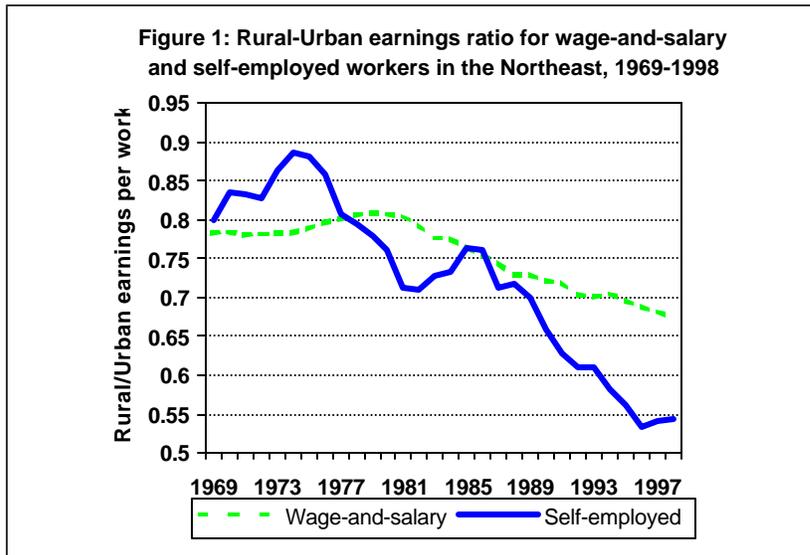
These are highlights of the major efforts we plan to engage in during 2001. As always, I thank you for your support, and cordially welcome your feedback and comments on all aspects of the programs and activities of The Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development.

Stephan J. Goetz, Director  
University Park, PA  
January 2001

# Activities and Accomplishments

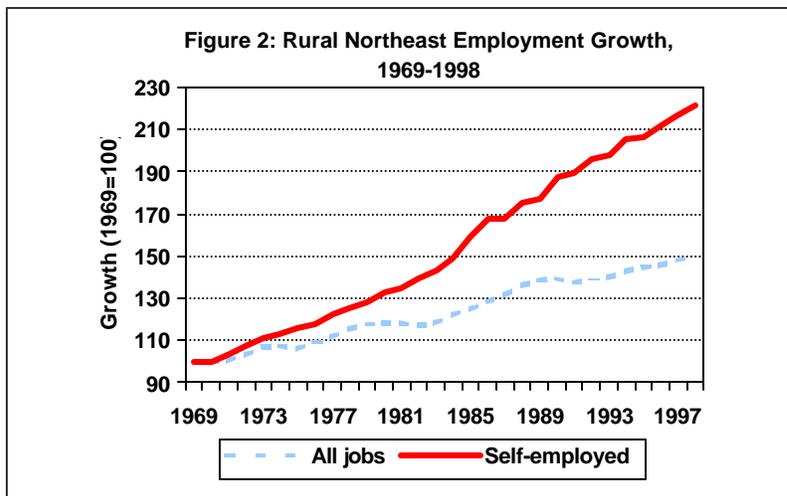
## 1. Major Trends Identified

The Northeast Center identified and reported on two major trends affecting rural counties in the Northeastern U.S. over the last three decades. These were reported in Newsletters and are reproduced here with updated statistics for 1998. The first trend is the persistent and growing gap in earnings of wage and salary workers in metro and non-metro counties (Figure 1 and *Network00*, Vol. 15, No. 1). Further analysis revealed that differences in educational attainment (the percent of residents who are college graduates) between metro and non-metro counties account for about three-quarters of this gap.



Therefore, the growing earnings gap evident in Figure 1 reflects the fact that relative returns to formal education are increasing in the “New Economy.” An even more pronounced gap appears for earnings of the self-employed, although data for 1997 and 1998 suggest a turnaround may be on the horizon.

A second significant region-wide trend, previously documented only in selected New England States (Watkins and Allen, 1993), is the steady increase in the number of self-employed workers in the rural Northeastern US (Figure 2 and *Network00*, vol. 15, No. 2). If past trends continue, one in every four rural workers will be self-employed by 2017, up from every one in five workers today.



The trend in self-employment has potentially important implications for land grant universities in the new Millennium. Recently, Mark Drabbenstott (Vice President of the Kansas City Federal Reserve Bank and Director of the Center for Rural America) proposed that the rural self-employed may be the *homesteaders* of the new

Century. See: [http://www.kc.frb.org/RuralCenter/speeches/M\\_FarmFound\\_900.pdf](http://www.kc.frb.org/RuralCenter/speeches/M_FarmFound_900.pdf)  
This could have profound implications for the content of research, teaching and extension programs of Universities and Colleges serving predominantly rural communities.

## References

Drabbenstott, Mark, *New Hurdles, New Horizons: The Rural Economy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, pres. at the Farm Foundation Annual Conference, Albany, NY, Sept. 2000.  
[http://www.kc.frb.org/RuralCenter/speeches/M\\_FarmFound\\_900.pdf](http://www.kc.frb.org/RuralCenter/speeches/M_FarmFound_900.pdf)

Watkins, Dennis A. and Thomas G. Allen, "Firm Formation, Firm Failure and Competitiveness: An Overview of Maine's Entrepreneurial Economy," Univ. of Maine, Dept. of Resource Economics, Orono, ME, Bulletin 840, September 1993, 34pp.

## 2. Implementation of the 1999 Strategic Plan

Under the 1999 Strategic Plan, the Director was to visit each of the land grant universities and other rural development partners in the Northeast, update the Regional Issues Analysis published in 1990, and prioritize Center activities over the next four to five years.

### 2.1. Site Visits

As part of the 1999 Strategic Plan implementation, the Center Director visited stakeholders in each of the Northeastern States. Input received during these visits was synthesized into a list of regional extension and research priorities in rural development, which will in turn be used to focus Center activities over the next four years.

Stakeholders were visited in **Connecticut** (CT AES, UConn; CT Rural Development Council); **Delaware** (University of DE, DE State University, DE-USDA Resource Conservation and Development, MD/DE-USDA Rural Development; Institute for Social and Economic Development); **Maine** (UMaine; ME Rural Development Council; Western Mountains Alliance; USDA Forest Service; USDA Rural Development; Growth Council of Oxford Hills; Coastal Enterprises, Inc.); **Maryland** (UMD Eastern Shore, CES, DE/MD USDA Rural Development; Small Farm Institute, FORVM—MD Rural Development Center); **Massachusetts** (UMass; New England Small Farm Institute; and NE Sustainable Agriculture Working Group; Legislative Assistants, US House of Representatives; MA Rural Development Council; Young Entrepreneurs Society; Millers River Community Development Corp.); **New Hampshire** (UNH; State Division of Economic Development; NH Rural Development Council; North Country Education Foundation); **New Jersey** (Rutgers, Cook College; Center for Environmental Communication); **New York** (Cornell University, CaRDI; NY-USDA Rural Development; NY Rural Development Council; Herkimer County Trust; Environmental Finance Center); **Pennsylvania** (PSU, PA Rural Development Council, Center for Rural PA, Hamer Center for Community Design Assistance; USDA Rural Development; Appalachian Capital Alliance; Potter County CE and Educational Council and County Commissioners); **Rhode Island** (URI, Depts. of Environmental and Resource Economics,

and Community Planning and Landscape Architecture); **Vermont** (UVM); **West Virginia** (WV State College; WV University; WV Clearinghouse for Workforce Education; Regional Research Institute).

At most Universities, and at selected Rural Development council meetings, the Center Director presented a seminar on “Identifying Critical Rural Development Issues in the Northeast: 2000-2005”, and visited with individual faculty and administrators to gain input through a formal stakeholder survey instrument about Center activities over the next 4 years.

**2.2. Update of the regional issues analysis**

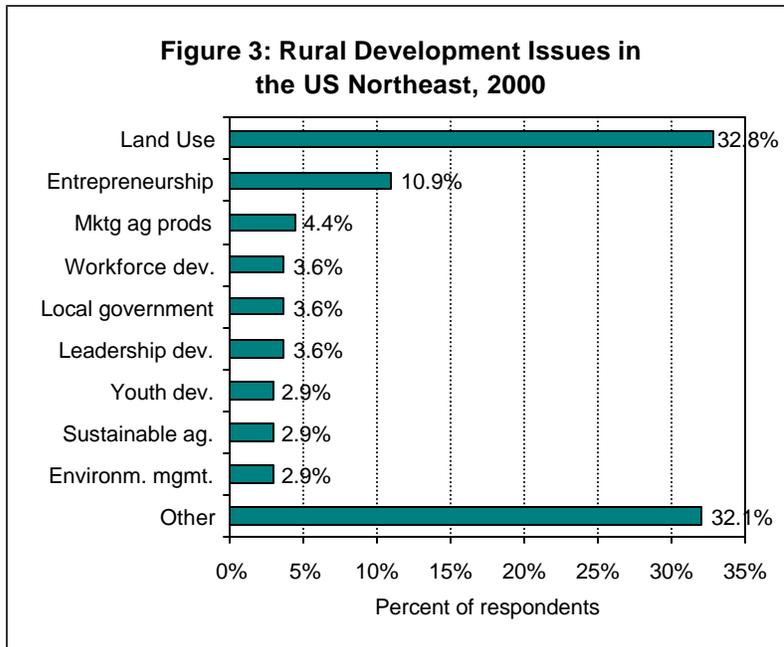
The regional issues analysis document was updated and is available on the Center’s web-site: <http://www.cas.nercrd.psu.edu/Publications/index.htm>.

**2.3. Prioritization of issues for the FY 2001 RFP Process**

Two primary issues areas emerged from the stakeholder input received during the site visits.

*i. Land Use*

The subject of land use – including urban sprawl, farming on the rural-urban fringe, farmland preservation, distributional issues and “big box” retailing – was cited more frequently than any other topic by Center stakeholders in the Northeast who were interviewed or responded to our survey during the first half of 2000. This is an area in which the Center can integrate, network and leverage research and extension resources within the land-grant system, and play the following key roles identified in the Strategic Plan: 1. build awareness of the issue; 2. serve as a regional information source; 3. organize & support a research agenda;



4. convene & engage regional players to take action; 5. organize funding; 6. be a voice of the Northeast Region. A strong potential exists for strengthening the collaboration between research & extension faculty in this area.

The bar chart (Figure 3) shows that nearly one in three respondents listed land use as the priority rural development issue on which The Northeast Center should focus its

resources; no other single issue even came close. In response, the 2001-2002 Request for research and extension Pre-proposals was limited to the subject of land use. We also plan to organize a land use “summit” later next year, and are exploring avenues for coordinating multi-state research and extension faculty and interest groups in the Northeast. We have added a “briefing room” on land use to our web site, and plan to compile and maintain extensive links to land use resources through this site.

The second-most important rural development issue identified by respondents in the Northeast is that of entrepreneurship—both at the level of communities and of individuals. One in every ten respondents indicated that this was an important priority, and we intend to focus on this topic in the 2002-3 funding cycle. No other single issue received more than five percent of the “votes” by Center stakeholders.

The last category in the bar chart (“Other”) includes topics ranging from food security issues to health care, information technology, welfare reform, aging of the population, public participation in community development to decision support for conflict resolution, among others. While all of these topics are without question important and require urgent attention, our funding reality is such that we must limit the Center’s agenda in a given year, if the Center is to have an impact.

## *2.2. Information Technologies (merging of computers and communications)*

A critically important issue in the rural Northeast is the emergence and adoption (or lack thereof) of information technology (IT), including the use of IT as an instrument of economic development for rural communities. Specific topics include e-commerce and e-communities or community information networks (CINs). In this rapidly changing area, the research effort within the land grant system tends to lag behind extension activities, and opportunities exist to better integrate research and extension activities.

The Northeast Center engaged in a number of efforts in the IT area, including:

- Co-sponsoring, with the three other regional rural development centers, a national workshop on e-commerce on July 18-19, 2000 in Memphis, TN (with representatives from MA, DE, PA and VT). The purpose was to review and evaluate existing extension and other curricula in e-commerce. A follow-up meeting is planned for January 2001. The Farm Foundation has tentatively agreed to help support this meeting.
- The Director presented *A Brief Review of the Literature on E-Commerce Research* at the Memphis Conference.  
Available at: <http://ext.msstate.edu/srdc/E-Team/activities/activities.htm>
- The Director coordinated the taskforce created to compile research papers on e-commerce.  
Available at: <http://ext.msstate.edu/srdc/E-Team/activities/activities.htm>
- The NE Center’s links to rural development organizations in the NE states have been expanded significantly < <http://www.cas.nercrd.psu.edu/Links/links.htm> >

- An e-commerce list serve for the region has been set up. [ecommerce@lists.cas.psu.edu](mailto:ecommerce@lists.cas.psu.edu)
- The Center hosted an intern during the summer who worked on a paper, "Adoption of E-Commerce by New England Maple Sugar Producers." The intern was supported by the CIC-Summer Research Opportunities Program, which has won the 2000 US Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring.
- To expand the Center's networking capabilities, we are setting up NE-specific briefing rooms on our web-site, which will eventually cover topics such as land use/sprawl; community-supported agriculture (niche marketing); community design/visitation programs; business retention and expansion; workforce preparation; youth development; local government issues; entrepreneurship/self-employment (small businesses); leadership, visioning, and consensus-building. < <http://www.cas.nercrd.psu.edu/> >
- We distributed a copy of the guide, *Getting On-Line: A Guide to the Internet for Small Town Leaders*, published in 1999 by the National Center for Small Communities, to all county Extension offices in the Northeast.
- We co-sponsored a national e-commerce conference for small businesses in Washington, DC (with SBA and USDA); two other conferences will be held subsequently at other sites < <http://www.ecommerce.gov/summit> >.

*It is worth stressing that the topics of land use and information technology are related. In particular, our objective in working on these topics will be to identify and implement mechanisms through which communities have access to the most appropriate and up-to-date tools for dealing with their particular land use issue(s). This will be accomplished through the use of information technologies in general and the world-wide web in particular.*

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### 3. FY 2000 Funded Contracts: Final Reports

**Ilveto, Tom and Scott Loveridge**, "Factors Influencing Participation in BR&E Programs: A Study of Local Coordinators in Six States," Dept. of Food and Resource Economics Research Report, Univ. of Delaware, FREC RR00-03, May 2000, 17pp + App. (\$22,500, DE and WV)

This study used a telephone survey of coordinators of local Business Retention and Expansion Programs (BR&E) to better understand the factors that lead the community and the coordinator to undertake a BR&E program. A total of 94 Coordinators were identified and 80 responded to the survey during the summer and fall of 1998 (85% response rate). Initial

contact was made by phone to explain the project and to schedule a phone interview. Following the initial phone contact a copy of the survey and an explanation of the project was mailed to the respondent. Most of the interviews were conducted over the phone, but in some cases coordinators sent the surveys in the mail. For the most part coordinators reported few concerns or conflicts prior to beginning a BR&E program. However, local coordinators reported that many businesses were not aware of programs available to them and that this was a motivating force in initiating the program, nor were citizens aware about economic development and the problems local businesses faced. In general the coordinators recognized and supported many of the benefits that we generally use to promote BR&E programs. When asked what attracted them to a BR&E program they answered (in order of importance) -- the program emphasized a response to local business needs; it focused on existing local businesses; it allowed for local decision-making; and there was a written report and written priority projects. Coordinators were also asked to rate factors about the program that influenced their personal participation. Their answers reflected a mix of community and personal interests. The factors with the highest rankings were: it would help firms remain and grow; it would help them develop better contacts with businesses; it would help them learn about businesses; it would help their organization; and the program was needed in the community.

**Booth, Nan, Arthena Sewell Roper, Amy Schnappinger, Sherman Thomasino, and Mary Ellen Waltemire and Kendra Wells, *Building Teens for Better Communities*, Final Report, October 18, 2000, (\$19,964, MD, NY and WV)**

Building Teens for Better Communities (BTBC) began as a tri-state pilot effort in Maryland, New Jersey, and West Virginia to test the Youth As Partners approach with the implementation of a small-scale community development project. Four teams of 26 youth and eight adults had the opportunity to learn and practice leadership skills, develop new perspectives on community, and complete a small-scale community development project. The teams came from diverse backgrounds including a rural church group, a suburban 4-H teen council, a newly formed teen association in an urban working class community, and a teen group in an urban public housing project. Three of the four pilot teams successfully completed their projects. Assessments done at the beginning of the project and at the end indicate the teens changed positively in terms of their perceptions of self-empowerment, ability to talk to outside groups, and planning skills.

In addition to the activities of the local teams, the 18-month project included focus groups, two regional conferences, and the publishing of a handbook. Two new teams from Maryland and Delaware were introduced to BTBC at the second conference. The handbook builds on lessons learned in the project and gives new teams the understanding and tools needed to experience personal and group growth while successfully implementing a small scale community development project. The handbook, which is available through the Maryland 4-H Youth Development program, was distributed to 4-H contacts in each state.

**Collaborating partners:** Maryland Cooperative Extension, Maryland 4-H Tech Corps, Maryland Safe and Sound Project, University of Maryland Institute for Governmental Service, Rutgers Cooperative Extension, West Virginia Extension Service, Center for Innova-

tion for Community and Youth Development at the National 4-H Center, Hagerstown Boys and Girls Club, Hagerstown Housing Authority, Baltimore County Recreation and Parks, Maryland Save Our Streams, New Jersey Kids Educational Enrichment Programs (KEEP).

**Support leverage:** Two Maryland Cooperative Extension program development grants.

**Hanham, Alison Chrisholm and Anita Mayer, *First Impressions Program Evaluation*, Final Report, July 20, 2000. (\$1,000, WV)**

*First Impressions* is a community improvement program administered by the West Virginia University Extension Service, Center for Community, Economic, and Workforce Development. The program is designed to help communities raise local awareness of community strengths and weaknesses as seen through the eyes of a first-time visitor.

The Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development mini-grant was used to develop and implement an evaluation tool for the *First Impressions* program. As components of a comprehensive program evaluation, two separate surveys were designed to gather information regarding the process and impact of the program.

Community Survey respondents were asked to identify changes and developments in their community that were either a direct or indirect result of the *First Impressions* program. The answers were quite positive and reflective of the original purpose of the program. In some cases, very tangible results have occurred and in others “*people are talking more about community development*” and “*a greater enthusiasm of several community members is noticeable subsequent to issuing the final report.*” Although some communities indicated they are still formulating their plans, significant future impacts are anticipated. For instance, one respondent reported “*bringing in partners to assist in further planning*” and another reported using the findings of *First Impressions* “*to leverage grant funds to complete tasks.*”

**Aileen Fortune, Deb Burwell, and Louise Franck Cyr, *Strengthening Voice: Speaking up for Gender Equity*, Final Report, August 18, 2000. (\$1000, ME)**

**Leverage:** \$1234.00 from the 4-H Pine Tree State Foundation in Maine.

The University of Maine Cooperative Extension York County Gender Project implemented the 'Strengthening Voice: Speaking Up for Gender Equity' retreat and work sessions. A two-day experiential, highly participatory retreat used role-playing, movement, writing, storytelling and small group work to explore the gender territory. During the three work sessions, women brought case studies from their personal and professional work. The group used these case studies to practice their skills in speaking up for gender equity. The sessions also focused on giving supportive feedback about what actions would support the group's advocacy roles. By attending the series, 11 women:

- ❖ Became aware of their own gender socialization and the ways in which this informed their multiple roles;

- ❖ Understood the potency of their own voice and the effect they have on interacting with young girls and boys;
- ❖ Are stronger advocates for the development of "whole" boys and girls; and
- ❖ Are part of an ongoing support network for community gender equity work.

**Michael Dougherty, *Local Government Issues Assessment (West Virginia)*, Final Report, August 28, 2000 (\$1,000, WV)**

Funding from the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development was used to support a survey of local government officials in West Virginia. The funds also are being used to support the development of a workbook and related materials that will be used to disseminate these results. Additional analysis of survey results from both the West Virginia questionnaires and from those from the nearby states also involved in this project (Pennsylvania and New York) continues to ensure the findings are complete and up-to-date. Initial findings include that most local governments in West Virginia have access to computers and the Internet. Also, while economic development matters continue to be dominant in localities across the state, a regional analysis shows that some of the other important issues in various parts of the state have changed since the initial survey in 1996.

This project provides meaningful information on the issues facing local government officials in West Virginia, as well as their use of computer technology and views on training. In the coming months, the preliminary findings will be confirmed (or revised) and interstate regional comparisons will be made. This information will be packaged into a workbook for local leaders and state officials. It already has become a starting point for the initiation of discussions on policy matters and resource allocation. And its impact will only increase in the coming months as the results are disseminated more widely and to more residents and public officials.

Matt Urban noted that almost all local governments in the state used computers (including more than three-quarters using the Internet). With respect to training, more than three-fifths of the responding officials had attended state (or national) association meetings in the last year and they were quite interested in trying computer CD-ROM-based training. Jennifer Teagarden found that economic development matters continued to top the list of concerns of local government leaders statewide, just as it had in 1996. However, the infrastructure and governance issues important to local leaders have changed over the last four years, as have the top issues in several regions throughout the state. The papers are available at: <http://www.rri.wvu.edu/reupapers.htm>. Matt Urban wrote "Training Needs and Computing Uses of Local Officials in West Virginia." Jennifer Teagarden authored, "A Comparison of Local Concerns in West Virginia Communities: 1996 and 2000."

**Michael Hattery, *Local Government Issues Assessment (New York)* Final Report, August 31, 2000 (\$1,000, NY)**

With the strong response rate, the survey results will provide an excellent base for understanding the training needs of local officials and their preferences for training venues, times

and formats. The survey will also provide an important understanding of the key issues of concern to local officials and a representative cross-section of information technology uses and needs. This information will be helpful to local extension educators and to other education and technical assistance providers in the state. Within the college, the survey results will be useful in identifying priorities for applied local government research and for extension outreach programming to the local government audience.

As indicated in the project proposal, we also believe that, with solid local responses in each the three cooperating state, this project will provide an excellent tool for use by other states in the Northeast and one of several project initiatives that could help provide a base for broader cooperation, communication and activity by local government researchers and educators in the Northeast. The cooperators in this proposal would like to work with the center to put together a conference on rural government research and extension in the Northeast in 2001.

We will give several examples here. Officials indicated one of their strongest support for the need for training in planning for capital improvements, creating a long term vision for the community and help in making the vision happen. Also almost 70% of respondents indicated the need for a multi-event training program that would cover key topics needed to serve effectively as a governing board member (with appropriate cost, location and timing).

**Susan Matson, Little Ones' Library: An Early Childhood Community Library Final Report August 29, 2000 (\$1,000, NY)**

The Little Ones' Library: An Early Childhood Community Library, is under development in the rural Accord/Kerhonkson area of Ulster County, New York, an area in which there is no public library. Many children in this area have their first significant experience with songs, rhymes and stories after they enter school, which, based on recent brain research is much too late. The library also provides an opportunity for residents to strengthen their community by together building a much-needed resource.

As a new program, library progress is measured against start-up goals. By the end of June 62 individual children had been served, some of them having returned multiple times. This exceeds the library goal for the entire year 2000 by five children. Likewise the goal of a 200-book collection by the end of the year 2000 was greatly surpassed when the collection exceeded 450 books by the end of June. In processing the books for lending it became obvious that most donated used books were not high quality children's literature, many were based on the popular culture. There also had been no donations of parent education/child development materials. The NERCRD mini-grant enabled the purchase of high quality books and extender materials to help build a balanced, quality collection and program while honoring the community donations of books and materials.

Community leaders continue to show interest, some providing personal as well as official support. They have suggested replication in other areas. Parents and childcare providers have expressed gratitude for library accessibility. Adults are learning about emergent literacy and

are encouraging more community attention to early childhood. Supporters are contributing regularly to the library, as each is able.

**Rick LeVitre and Mike Dolce, Development of a Farm Labor Service Cooperative, Final Report, 8/31/2000, (\$1,000, VT)**

A dozen Vermont dairy farmers, working with UVM Extension and USDA Rural Development, have launched the Vermont Farm Labor Service (FLS)- a cooperative that will recruit, train and match workers with farmers needing temporary help. A pilot program/feasibility study is developing a data base of workers, skills and availability. Farmers needing help will be able to call in their requests for workers with particular skills and the time(s) needed and the pilot service will furnish a list of people available.

The Center funded project made possible the design and construction of a professional exhibit outlining the goals and accomplishments to date of the FLS. The exhibit was set up at the annual Vermont Farm Show and was viewed by 100's of attendees. FLS Steering committee members were on hand to answer questions and asked farmers stopping at the exhibit to fill out a questionnaire concerning the availability of labor for their operation and qualifications they as employers needed from employees.

By visiting with steering committee members farmers better understood the concept of the FLS and gained insight into the developmental process of the cooperative. Potential participants were afforded a chance to ask questions pertaining to employment and to sign up to be included in a data base of future employees. By having an active presence at the annual farming event in the state both farmers and non-farmers have contacted the steering committee and project leaders to offer support for the project. Results of the questionnaire have aided the steering committee in further developing the pilot program.

Starting a FLS in Vermont becomes a win-win proposition. The farmer will gain a reliable, trained and insured work force. The state continues to have a farm base beneficial to its economy. The community maintains its farms and the infrastructure that surrounds them. The service opens opportunities for young people to enter farming. Part-time employment and flexible scheduling for retired farmers, single parents and others is created. All this aids in the enhancement of a sustainable rural community.

**Steve VanderMark and Frank Flavin, *New York Urban Forest Demonstration Arboretum Project*, Steve VanderMark and Frank Flavin, Final Report, August 31, 2000. (\$1,000, NY)**

Based on community needs to replant and re-grow trees lost to decline and weather events such as the January 1998 Ice Storm, this demonstration arboretum is to be a centralized model for training proper ways to:

- Plan better replacement tree siting
- Plant, mulch, sometimes stake new trees
- Care for and establish new trees

- Train young trees by pruning for better future strength, safety in our communities' forests

As communities, large and small in the region, look to tree planting, such as encouraged and supported by storm damage grant programs, the need is clear to train local officials, tree managers or community groups and workers in the steps outlined above. Poor past examples abound in the region from the past, leaving trees that are bad choices, prematurely declining, or likely hazardous future liabilities. This demonstration arboretum will help teach methods of improving community forests' future quality and safety by starting with proper procedures early on in any replanting project. Expandable and considered long-term, the arboretum will generate transportable teaching materials as well as being a living reference resource.

**J. W. Comerford, Mary Shick, Christian Vinten-Johansen, Sandra Gunsallus, *Expansion of the Pennsylvania Feeder Calf Roundup Beef Cattle Marketing Program*, Final Report, August 2000 (\$1,000, PA).**

The Pennsylvania Feeder Calf Roundup is an ongoing effort of beef cattle extension in the Department of Dairy and Animal Science and Penn State Cooperative Extension. Objectives are to improve the quality and value of feeder cattle produced in Pennsylvania; and to allow Pennsylvania feeder calf producers to participate in marketing programs that are more competitive and recognize the added value of their cattle.

Pennsylvania Roundup calves have developed an outstanding reputation for health and feedlot performance. Morbidity after the sale has averaged less than 1%, and only one calf has been lost from traceable records. Calves have sold at the top price or near the top of all 1200 cattle sold on the sale annually. Repeat buyers occur regularly. A survey among producers indicates they feel the additional price they receive for the cattle is the most important feature of the program, which often averages \$20/cwt above local markets. Costs for the program have varied from \$35.00 to \$47.00 per calf, and usually requires a premium price of \$4.00/cwt. Producers also indicate the program has helped them make production and breeding decisions that have improved the value and pride they have in their cattle. Future improvements include the purchase of half-sib sires among consigning herds to increase the genetic consistency, source verification validation, and enterprise financial analysis.

The objective of the current project is to expand the awareness of the program among extension educators, veterinarians, and beef industry support personnel. A CD-ROM was developed to explain the program in an easily transportable form. Some formatting delays prevented extensive distribution, but an evaluation of the product was conducted among 20 county extension agents. The professionals participating in the evaluation process indicated this form of educational delivery will be useful for extension educators and for beef producers. Further, there was significant agreement that the use of informational CD's will improve the impact of extension educational programs in beef production. The major disadvantages were the ability to use the CD in a remote location and translation problems from one computer platform to another. There is significant evidence providing information about the Pennsylvania Feeder Calf Roundup to educators, producers, and industry support

personnel in a CD-ROM format will allow more beef producers to take advantage of the increased economic value of cattle produced and sold in this program.

**Conklin, Jean**, *Preserving Rural Character through Agriculture*, Final Report, June 1, 2000 (\$1,000, NH). WEB INFO: <http://ceinfo.unh.edu/Agriculture/Documents/PRCTA.htm>

*Preserving Rural Character through Agriculture* is an initiative designed to educate planner, citizens and decision makers about the role of agriculture in shaping the visual, economic and interpersonal landscapes referred to as rural character. The centerpiece of the initiative is a resource kit for town planners. The resource kit describes agriculture's role in the community and receptive ways to present this to the public. It offers insights, tools and resources to prevent unintended negative consequences of land use regulations and decisions on agriculture, along with specific suggestions for enhancing and supporting agriculture in New Hampshire.

### **Preserving Rural Character Through Agriculture**

The New Hampshire Coalition for Sustaining Agriculture has been promoting the resource kit and the concept of preserving rural character through agriculture for the past year. On December 3, 1999, the University of New Hampshire held a three-hour in-service session to train extension educators and other agency personnel in the use of the kit; 30 attended. More than 1000 individual citizens have been introduced to the resource kit in New Hampshire. Audiences have included citizen planners, resource professionals working with towns, farmers and legislators. Kits have been distributed to over 100 towns.

Collaborating Partners: New Hampshire Coalition for Sustaining Agriculture, UNH Cooperative Extension, New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food, New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, New Hampshire Office of State Planning, Rockingham Regional Planning Commission.

Support Leveraged: Coalition members developed sections of the kit and have introduced it at events around the state, the NH Office of State Planning printed the Technical Bulletin, and UNH Cooperative Extension supplied facts sheets for the notebook.

**Abel, Jennifer, Joan S. Thomson, and Audrey Maretzki**, *Food matters: evaluating the participation of county, city and town planners in community food systems*, Final Report, Nov. 15, 2000, (\$1,000 PA)

A total of 33 county and municipal planners from 18 counties in Southeast and Southwest Pennsylvania were interviewed to study their involvement in food system issues, to find out what factors would influence them to become more involved, and to explore how groups like extension educators and community organizations can work with planners on food system issues. Food system issues include farmland preservation, mapping food sector activities, and siting supermarkets in underserved areas. Only 12% of the planners reported significant involvement, 18% moderate, and 70% reported minimal involvement in food system activities. In terms of factors that would influence them to become more involved, those factors

that would have the most significant influence were government mandates, citizen pressure, and funding. The factors having the least influence were working with nonprofit organizations, working with community development corporations, and educational programs from groups like cooperative extension.

The results of the study were reported in a master's thesis and in three publications, each of which was directed toward a different audience: extension educators, community organizations, and planners. The publications were sent to a total of 150 representatives of these audiences, who were asked whether or not they would use the information in the publications and for suggestions on improving them. Among the 26 people who provided feedback, only three said they would not use the information. The suggestions offered for how to improve the publications are being incorporated into their revisions. The revised publications will be produced as Penn State Cooperative Extension publications and available for distribution to organizations and individuals across the country interested in strengthening their local food systems.

**Ingerson-Mahar, Joseph, Kristian Holmstrom, Sarah Walker, Peter Nitzsche and Michelle Infante-Casella, *Development of an Educational IPM Poster for Farm Vegetable Markets* (\$1,000 NJ)**

**WHAT IS IPM?**

Farmers use **Integrated Pest Management (IPM)** strategies to prevent crop damage from insect, weed, and disease pests.

**IPM PRACTICES INCLUDE:**

- Susceptible vs. Resistant (Pest Resistant Varieties)
- Cultivation
- Natural Control
- Pest Monitoring
- Responsible Chemical Use

**WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?**

Because IPM practices help farmers:

- conserve our environment
- produce quality crops
- maintain farm profitability

**RUTGERS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION**  
NORTH EAST CENTER FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Development of an educational IPM (integrated pest management) poster for farm vegetable markets evolved from a farmer request for a poster to help identify him as an IPM practitioner and to educate his customers about IPM. Our group developed a 2 by 3 foot laminated poster to be used in ten farm markets in New Jersey as a preliminary step in educating farm market customers about IPM. Six hundred self-addressed, stamped postcards with five survey questions designed to measure the impact of the poster were placed with the posters, along with a Rutgers Cooperative Extension fact sheet on IPM.

Twenty-four percent of the respondents were aware of IPM prior to seeing the poster, however, the poster helped 94 % of the respondents to better understand what IPM was and 79 % said that they would be interested in learning more



about IPM. Ninety-four percent of the respondents did not know that the farms at which they purchased their produce practiced IPM. Ninety-seven percent of the respondents felt that IPM was a positive farm practice. In additional comments, 47% of respondents indicated that they are more inclined to purchase IPM produce.

**Barbara O’Neill, Patricia Brennan, Gerri Walsh, Jane Schuchardt, Linda Fox, Joan Witter, Joyce Christenbury, Nancy Porter, Connie Kratzer and Irene Leech:** *Investing for your Future* Final Report, Sept. 20, 2000, (\$1,000, NJ, cooperating with CSREES-USDA and the Securities Exchange Commission)

The project team developed 250 annotated PowerPoint slides for a six-week class series called *Investing For Your Future*. The class was developed to teach the same content as the existing print and online home study courses, which were funded with a previous grant. Both the home study course and the class series are targeted at beginning investors with small dollar amounts to invest.

# Investing For Your Future

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF N.J. | COOK COLLEGE & THE NEW JERSEY AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION

The major impact to date is that *Investing For Your Future* was the first financial management course to be developed by a team from within the Cooperative Extension System for national distribution. States do not need to “reinvent the wheel” (as they did with MONEY 2000™) because they have all of the class files on a CD-ROM. Another major impact is a continued close working relationship between Cooperative Extension and the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission). For further details, see [www.investing.rutgers.edu](http://www.investing.rutgers.edu)

#### 4. Other Center Activities

- Center staff worked with WVU faculty to start designing a Small Retail Business Evaluation program, Winter 2000.
- Attended the PASA (Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture) annual meeting, State College, PA, February 4, 2000; this meeting draws participants from around the nation. <http://pasafarming.org/>
- Attended Center for Rural Pennsylvania quarterly Board meetings, January 7, May 15 and November 13, 2000, Harrisburg, PA. [www.ruralpa.org](http://www.ruralpa.org)
- Attended the National Rural Development Partnership meeting, Washington DC, March 5-8, 2000. <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/nrdp/conf/March2000.html>
- Attended the national conference on “Rural Policy: Issues, Data Needs, and Data Access,” co-sponsored by the American Agric. Economics Association, US Department of Agriculture, Statistics Canada and Farm Foundation, in Chevy Chase, MD, March 27, 2000. <http://www.ext.nodak.edu/homepages/aedep/ruralconf/index.htm>
- Attended the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City/Center for Rural America national conference, “Beyond Agriculture: New Policies for Rural America”, Kansas City, MO, April 27-28, 2000. <http://www.kc.frb.org/RuralCenter/conference/ruralconfmain.htm>
- Attended the RULE Leadership conference, Harrisburg, PA, April 30-May 2, 2000.
- Served as a Discussant at the “Rural Dimensions of Welfare Reform” national conference, Washington, DC, May 4-8, 2000. <http://www.jcpr.org/conferences/oldconferences/rural.html>
- Represented the Regional Rural Development Centers at the American Enterprise Opportunities annual conference, May 10-13, 2000, Lowell, MA. <http://www.microenterpriseworks.org/conferences/highlightcover.htm>
- Represented the USDA and rural areas at the National Steering Committee Meeting on Regional Resource Centers (for using Information Technology in rural communities), Denver, CO, May 24-25, 2000 [travel supported by USDA/CSREES/ECS].
- Presented a selected paper at the *Northeastern Agricultural and Resource Economics Association* annual meeting, June 11-13, 2000. “Why Farmers Quit: A County-Level Analysis” *Abstract*. We identify factors associated with changes in the number of farm proprietorships at the U.S. county-level between 1987 and 1997. Particular emphasis is placed on the role of off-farm employment in stabilizing farm numbers over time. <http://bluehen.ags.udel.edu/narea/index.html>

- Attended the Northeast Agricultural Experiment Station and Extension Directors Summer 2000 joint meeting in Vergennes, VT, June 25-28, 2000 and presented an update on Center Activities to NERA, NEED and the AH/CARET groups.  
<http://www.agnr.umd.edu/users/NERA/meetings.html>
- Presented a symposium paper at the *American Agricultural Economics Association* annual meeting on "Rural Economic Adjustments to Changes in Agriculture" and a poster entitled "Technology Gains and Farmer Well-Being: Some Evidence from the Data" (with David Debertin), Tampa, FL, July 30-August 2, 2000.  
<http://www.aaea.org/meetings/m2000/overview.html>
- Participated in a panel presentation at the 2000 Rural Sociological Society annual meeting, in Washington, DC, August 13-17. <http://www.ruralsociology.org/> The following is from CSREES UPDATE (the electronic newsletter), September 22, 2000:

REGIONAL RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTERS FEATURED IN PANEL

The four Regional Rural Development Centers (RRDC's) were featured at the annual meeting of the Rural Sociological Society, August 13-17, in Washington, DC. In a panel on "Rural Development Issues in America," the directors of the Centers discussed key issues emerging in each region, methods to involve land-grant faculty in innovative rural development activities, ways to influence rural development extension and research and policy, and the importance of the centers for the land-grant system.

- Provided travel support for the Executive Director of the New England Forestry Foundation (Groton, MA; <http://www.neforestry.org/>) to attend the 8<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Society and Resource Management in Bellingham, WA conference.
- Represented the RRDCs at the 2000 Farm Foundation/ National Public Policy Education Committee "50th National Public Policy Education Conference," in Albany, NY, September, 17-20, 2000. <http://www.farmfoundation.org/2000NPPEC/00nppec.htm>
- Developed and submitted an NRI Conference Grant application, "Community Design Team Approaches to Community Development: Commonalities and Impacts," with and on behalf of the four regional Center Directors. Faculty from WV and PA are on the organizing committee.

## • Regional Rural Development Centers



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