



Rural Development News

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2000

From the Director

Market, State and Civil Society: Creating Advocacy Action Coalitions for Rural Development

by Cornelia Butler Flora

The changes in rural America can be best understood by examining the major institutional actors in market, state and civil society. These institutional spheres, which overlap in different ways at different times and places, are all critical for societies—rural and urban—to flourish.

Market

Markets are the many firms and institutions that exchange goods and services at a profit. When there is competition and free flow of information, they are incredibly efficient at distributing goods and services to those who can pay. They are not as efficient at distributing goods and ser-

vices to those who cannot pay or at protecting the environment.

The market is highly dynamic, with much competition and the constant entrance and exit of firms. Market institutions are present at the local, state, national and transnational levels. These institutions sometimes compete, sometimes collaborate, and are integrated forward and backward to differing degrees.

The purpose of market institutions is to make a profit for their owners. Sometimes the owners are individuals or families, and sometimes the owners are stockholders. Stockholders tend to evaluate firms on how much profit was generated in the last quarter and their market value. When either of these is viewed as unsatisfactory, owners seek to change the hired managers. Consolidation, competition and cooperation among market firms suggest a very dynamic sphere.

Farms, cooperatives and transnational firms are all part of the market sector.

State

The state includes local, state, national and international



Cornelia Flora

government institutions, including the three branches of government: the legislative (which makes the laws and allocates resources), the administrative (which implements the laws and distributes the resources) and the judicial (which sanctions those who do not follow the laws).

The state makes markets possible. Markets need fairly stable conditions in which to operate. Markets need contracts that are enforceable through an effective administrative and judiciary system. They need a reliable money supply. They need to know that rules will be put into place

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by the legislative system, and that those rules will be administered in a universalistic way—the same rules applying to everyone. The state is therefore critical to the market.

The state, like the market, is a highly contentious sphere. State governments disagree with the national government, the legislative branch contests the administrative branch, and even bureaucracies and agencies within the same institution seek to gain or maintain hegemony, influence and budget. Very often, local levels of government feel imposed upon by the state or federal governments, especially as they deal with unfunded mandates.

The state provides the rules under which the market operates in order that the common good is

served at the same time that firms are profitable. The state also provides a safety net for people and protects natural resources deemed to be in the common good. Elected officials are often judged by the degree to which they serve the common good. However, definition of the common good is almost always contested.

Civil Society

Civil society, which consists of formal and informal groups of citizens, determines the common good. These groups join together around shared interests or values and through organized activity impact the market and the state. The faith community, including churches, synagogues and mosques, the National Rifle Association, and anti-gun groups are all part of civil society. So is the Sierra Club, Ducks Forever, Parent-Teacher Organizations and Rotary Clubs.

Civil society influences the market through forming consumer groups that can engage in information campaigns and boycotts.

Civil society influences the state by forging laws (influencing the legislative branch of government), by urging that particular laws be enforced (influencing the administrative branch of government), and by bringing lawsuits (influencing the judicial branch of government).

Civil society generally exerts influence based on deeply held values or desired future conditions. Groups in civil society, both formal and informal, form around these shared future conditions and their mental/causal models of how the world works. Individuals relate to civil society when they become participants or members.

Groups in civil society are also in dispute. Since this is where the definition of the “collective conscious” is negotiated, groups struggle to gain participants and to co-opt other groups. The dynamism of this sector influences both the market and the state.

When One Sphere Dominates

As individuals, we have roles in each sphere (see figure 1). We are part of the market as individual producers and consumers. We are part of the state as individual citizens, which involves rights (such as voting and running for public office) and responsibilities (such as paying taxes and following laws). We are part of civil society as we become involved in interest or value groups; which many Americans are members of several such groups.

These spheres are not one-dimensional, yet there are

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The North Central Regional Center for Rural Development is one of four regional centers coordinating rural development research and education throughout the United States. It is supported by the land-grant universities of the North Central region, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and grants and contracts from private foundations. The mission of the NCRCRD is to initiate and facilitate rural development research and education programs to improve the social and economic well-being of rural people in the region. The NCRCRD also provides leadership in rural development regionally and nationally by identifying, developing and supporting programs on the vanguard of emerging issues.

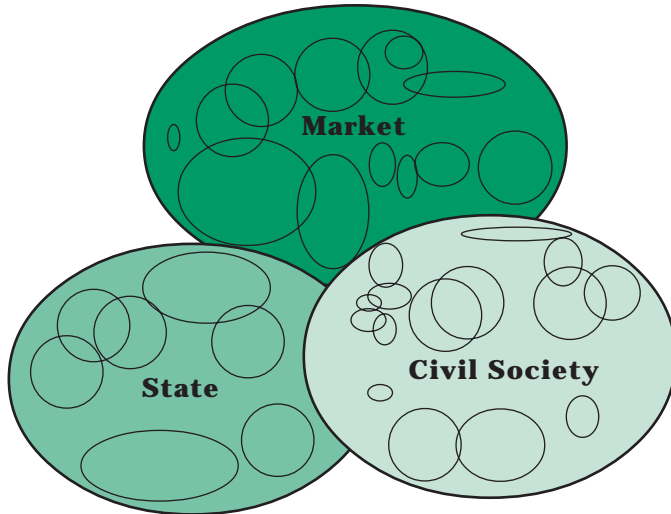
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Programs of the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development are available to all potential clientele without regard to race, color, sex or national origin.



Figure 1. Balanced and dynamic



tendencies for one sphere to dominate the others. In the former Soviet Union, the state dominated to the point that the market was small and did not work very well, and civil society was non-existent or convened only under government auspices (see figure 2). With the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Soviet Union, the belief was that free markets alone would transform the newly-reformed countries into nations similar to the capitalist democracies of Western Europe, North America and the Pacific, including Japan, Australia and New Zealand.

However, the state was very inefficient in distributing goods and services in the old centrally planned economies. The external advisors and the nationalist reformers forgot the need for a strong state to enforce contracts (not run the market), and for civil society to organize groups of citizens to be outraged by corruption and able to pressure the state to put more rules on the market.

As a result, we currently have what some refer to as “mafia”

capitalism in the former Soviet Union. Individuals are upset, but organized corrective action is still not in place. The lack of civil society and a strong state have resulted in a market dominated purely by power. In more stable parts of the world this power, which includes control of the means of violence, is reserved for and protected by the state.

An imbalance in favor of the market is also problematic (see figure 3). When things are judged as moral because they are profitable and the state therefore acts only to increase profitability, other important roles of the state—such as protecting those in society who

cannot protect themselves and protecting the environment—fall by the wayside. Thus, civil society through organized groups becomes important in order to help move toward desired future conditions.

Advocacy Action Coalitions

Advocacy action coalitions are formed within civil society with linkages to various state institutions and market firms to try to bring about change—or to keep the status quo in place. Often, advocacy action coalitions that do form around key societal issues such as welfare reform, health provision, economic development and urban sprawl, do so as if location and space do not matter. Rural disadvantages of dispersal and distance are generally more acute when policies of both the market and the state assume an urban model.

One of the challenges facing rural development is for our market, state and civil society institutions to articulate rural concerns and rural specificities that facilitate rural firms to make a profit, rural governments to be effective, and rural organizations to work together. It is particularly important that civil society in rural areas be strengthened for the balance among the institutional spheres to be maintained. □

Figure 2. State dominated

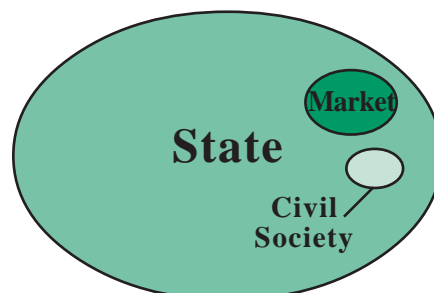
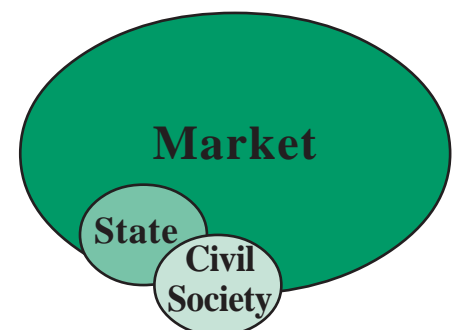


Figure 3. Market dominated





Is eCommerce Right for the Independent Retailer?

“**T**here may not be a retailer in North America that has not given some thought to what impact the Internet is going to have on their business,” states Jim Dion in an article titled *To Net?* The frightening part of the Internet, however, is not that it is here, but that it appears to be happening so fast. According to Dion, “Most of the changes that we have faced in the past in retail have taken place over 10 to 15 years and gave many retailers time to prepare.”

In the article *To Net?* Dion advises retailers to get on the Internet, but to start with product information and never begin selling until you can assure your customer that you can deliver the same level of service on your Internet site that you can also give them in your store.

Jim Dion, founder and president of Dionco Inc., Chicago, a North American consulting and training firm specializing in retail, marketing, technology and leadership, emphasized this in a presentation to participants of the National Small Stores Institute. Independent retailing was the topic of this three-day seminar held in Nashville, Tennessee on October 29 to November 1, 2000. The intent of the National Small Stores Institute is to strengthen the knowledge, perspective and skills of field professionals who provide assistance to those who own and operate small retail businesses across the United States.

Dion opened the National Small Stores Institute with an overview of the retailing industry, and emphasized that the world is

changing. Customers are better educated, have many choices available to them, and do not trust prices. In addition, more customers do not enjoy shopping and spend less time doing so. Technology is also dramatically changing the landscape of the retail industry, and independent retailers need an increasing number of skill sets to make it work.

Bill Bomash and Toni Smith with the University of Minnesota Extension Service presented Access Minnesota Main Street to NSSI participants as one program to help increase a skill set with independent retailers. Access Minnesota Main Street is electronic commerce education for owners of small businesses.

Participants learn to use the Internet as a business research tool to find new markets or suppliers or to check out the competition; to decide if a Web presence is right for their busi-

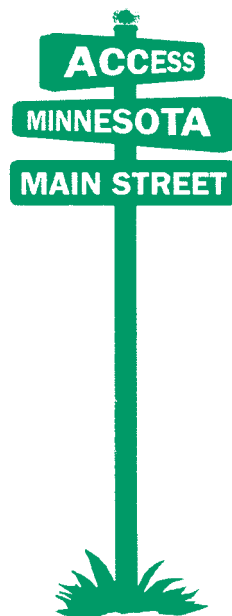
ness; to learn steps in planning their website; to learn techniques to effectively promote their website; and to learn how to incorporate the Internet into their business plan. Access Minnesota Main Street training is hands-on with comprehensive online curriculum designed especially for the program (<http://www.extension.umn.edu/mainstreet/>). Participants prepare themselves and their business to compete in the worldwide electronic marketplace.

Additional topics addressed at this year's National Small Stores Institute included:

- Recruiting, training and retaining a productive workforce.
- Merchandise management techniques for a stronger bottom line.
- Small business survival in a land of giants.
- Marketing strategies designed for independents.
- Improving your balance sheet with proven financial results.
- What's ahead for the economy and small retail businesses.

A national team of educators from land-grant universities, the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, and the private sector work together on NSSI to help retailers become more competitive. This year we were pleased to welcome to our partnership the National Retail Federation Foundation.

For more information on the National Small Stores Institute contact Norma Turok at the University of Illinois Cooperative Extension Service, (618) 453-5563, turokn@mail.aces.uiuc.edu. □





Forest*A*Syst Helps Forest Landowners Protect Water Quality

State forestry agencies now have a new tool to involve private landowners in the fight to protect water quality and forest health. Forest*A*Syst, a new national forestry guidance document for states to shape and mold for their specific land management needs, was released by North Carolina State University's Department of Forestry.

Forest*A*Syst is based on the widely popular Farm*A*Syst and Home*A*Syst programs, which focus on water pollution prevention from farms and ranches, and household activities, respectively. All three programs are voluntary partnerships between state government agencies and private landowners that enable individuals to take an active role in preventing pollution in and on their own farms, ranches, homes and forests using confidential environmental assessments.

Farm*A*Syst began in 1989 as a voluntary state program designed to educate farmers on how their activities, storage structures and well design may affect the quality of their drinking water. Seed money was provided by the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development. As it gained more recognition, Farm*A*Syst evolved into a nationwide program that has been expanded to assess pollution risks for all farm and ranch activities, for non-farm homes (Home*A*Syst), and now for private forest landowners (Forest*A*Syst).

The Forest*A*Syst guidance, developed by Rick Hamilton, an Extension forest specialist with

the department of forestry at NCSU, is designed to be tailored for each state's specific management activities or techniques.

For example, where a Forest*A*Syst program created for a Midwestern state might call for prescribed or controlled burning to reduce invasive plant species, a Forest*A*Syst program for New York would not include burning because of air quality issues. To further customize a Forest*A*Syst program, each state can add tables, figures, and pictures of local tree and wildlife species, as well as best management practices used to meet state forest management guidelines.

Forest*A*Syst is targeted primarily for private forest landowners who manage their property for timber, wildlife, recreation, aesthetics, or water quality. The program encourages landowners to consult privately, without the threat of regulation or fines, with a natural resource professional that can help them enhance the forest's potential productivity, beauty, variety and environmental quality.

Consultation with a natural resource professional can take place through USDA's Cooperative Extension Service, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, a state forester, or the American Tree Farm System, an organization that has 8,000 volunteer foresters who donate their time to assist private landowners in developing forest management plans based on strict water quality standards and guidelines.

Forest*A*Syst

Since the publication of Forest*A*Syst, several states have begun the process of customizing the program to fit their needs, including Hawaii, Georgia, Kentucky and Alabama.

Through years of experience, state forestry agencies have learned that sound forestry practices are critical in the fight to protect water quality. Now, the new Forest*A*Syst template will help state foresters transfer this important knowledge more easily to the private landowner on a voluntary basis.

For more information contact Rick Hamilton, Extension forestry specialist, Department of Forestry, North Carolina State University, Campus Box 8003, Room 3028D, Biltmore Hall, Raleigh, NC 27695-8003; (919) 515-5574, rick_hamilton@ncsu.edu.

This article reprinted from the July 2000 issue of *Nonpoint Source News-Notes*, published by the Terrene Institute under an EPA Cooperative Agreement. □



Tourism: A Key to Retail Development in Small Communities

Throughout Wisconsin many smaller communities trying to maintain a healthy retail economy are turning their sights to tourism.

“Major changes have occurred in recent years in how and where local residents shop,” said Bill Ryan, Cooperative Extension business development specialist. “One strategy that’s helped some retailers is targeting tourist dollars, as shopping and tourism often go hand in hand.”

Half of Wisconsin’s estimated \$7.7 billion traveler expenditures are retail- or food-service-related. Successful retailing in many small and rural communities is often rooted in the growth of innovative businesses that serve both local residents and visitors.

To help Wisconsin and other Midwestern small and rural communities attract tourists to local businesses, Ryan worked

with a team of UW-Extension Community, Natural Resources and Economic Development agents interviewing people in 10 communities and 100 businesses.

The team compiled 10 case studies as prime examples of how to capitalize on tourism niches (see sidebar for one example). The intent was to come up with practical tips on retailing and tourism that could be used by entrepreneurs and local tourism and economic development leaders, Ryan said.

“We learned that selling to tourists is not simply offering them knick knacks and T-shirts,” he said. “Successful retailers are offering a wide variety of products useful to both visitors and residents.

“We also learned that not just specialty retail shops benefit from tourism dollars. A smaller community that can’t support a



Bill Ryan

hardware store, for example, might have a hardware store because tourists help boost sales.”

Information gathered in the interviews was used to create the publication *Tourism and Retail Development: Attracting Tourists to Local Businesses*. By using the publication, current and prospective small-community retailers can learn how tourism is tied to retailing, how to analyze the market, and how to build on successful strategies used by others. View the guidebook on the UW-Extension’s Publishing website, <http://cf.uwex.edu/ces/pubs/pdf/G3713.PDF>.

Ryan said that the project results offer opportunities for UWEX faculty and staff to better serve the educational needs of communities and their businesses, and to work more closely with UWEX partners at the Wisconsin Departments of Tourism and Commerce. The results are also being shared statewide by the Department of Tourism and UW-Extension Community, Natural Resources and Economic Development faculty.



Retailers that benefit from tourism have opportunities to sell both convenience and speciality items to travelers, including agricultural products and gifts. Photo by Rick Ritter.



Working with Ryan on the project as the lead field researcher was Jim Bloms, now the Burnett County community resource development agent. Gerry Braatz, Calumet County community resource development agent, helped develop presentation materials and other UW-Extension Community, Natural Resources and Economic Development staff provided additional assistance.

Co-authors of the publication included Jim Hovland, Fond du

Lac County community resource development agent, and David Scheler of the Tourism Department.

A Microsoft PowerPoint presentation is available to educators for delivering local and customized workshops on the topic of tourism and retail development. Project materials are also being used this fall by three Small Business Development Centers throughout Wisconsin.

*Tourism and Retail Development:
Attracting Tourists to Local*

Businesses is available for \$15. To order a copy contact Cooperative Extension Publications at the University of Wisconsin-Extension at 1-877-947-7827 or <http://www1.uwex.edu/ces/pubs/order.cfm> and specify G3713.

This article, written by Pamela Seelman, was excerpted from the August 2000 issue of *Extension News & Ideas*, a publication of the University of Wisconsin-Extension. □

Germantown: Celebrating German Heritage with Visitors

The Tourism and Retail Development project highlights 10 communities in Wisconsin and the Midwest showcasing ways they increased retail activity by targeting the visitor market.

“In each case, community leaders and business operators identified attractions that draw visitors to their community,” said Bill Ryan, Cooperative Extension business development specialist. “They also studied their visitors to assess purchasing preferences and potential. Each case study provides information and ideas that may be transferable to other communities.”

The village of Germantown, for example, offers German heritage, history and culture in a friendly and charming community just outside of Milwaukee. Visitors include bus tours and day-trippers drawn by the community’s reputation and events that celebrate its ethnic heritage. Retailers serve the market by making shopping a cultural experience, with authentic products in buildings reminiscent of those in Germany.

Ethnic businesses include Jerry’s Old Town Inn and the Von Rothenburg Bier Stube and Bier Garden; the Sinter Klausen Christmas Market; the AppleWorks/Germantown Orchards; and the German Glass and Gifts and Christmas Chalet.

“Germantown’s pride in its heritage is evident in its authenticity and sincere hospitality,” Ryan said. “Grocery stores still maintain bilingual signs, and the shopkeepers’ last names readily reveal their roots.”

The residents and village government have embraced the ethnic and cultural theme of the private property owners. For example, the new village hall is a beautiful facility patterned after traditional German buildings. As renovation continues, new lampposts and cobblestone streets are scheduled to be installed.

Publications

Videotape Highlights Successful Practices of Mentor Farmers

Access to reliable information, advice and support can mean the difference between success and failure for farmers interested in trying organic production. According to a new documentary video, the Iowa Organic Farming Mentor Program provides that access. The program links experienced organic farmers with beginning organic farmers through field days, conferences, telephone calls and face-to-face meetings.

The half-hour video outlines the structure of the program and highlights some of the successful practices of the mentor farmers, focusing on practices used in row crops, dairy farming, commercial vegetable production, and CSA—community supported agriculture.

The mentor program and video have been funded by grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Environmen-

tal Education Program; and Iowa State University Vision 2020 (a W.K. Kellogg project).

Copies of the 28-minute video are available for \$19.95, including shipping. To order, send a check to Iowa Organic Farming Mentor Program, 610 South 4th St., Fairfield, IA 52556; (641) 472-1587, abright@kdsi.net.



Videos Explore Hmong Culture

Northeast Wisconsin In-School Telecommunications (NEWIST) has produced several videos exploring the cultures of Southeast Asian refugees and immigrants. Highlighted below are two videos focusing on the Hmong, a people who migrated hundreds of years ago from China to the mountainous regions of Laos, Thailand and Vietnam.

New Faces on Main Street, an hour-long investigative docu-

mentary video, provides a contemporary perspective of the situation of Hmong and Latino refugees and immigrants, why they originally came to the United States, and how they are surviving in middle size and smaller communities in the Midwest. It hopes to dispel some commonly held beliefs and stereotypes about the Hmong and Latino cultures.

Being Hmong Means Being Free provides an in-depth look at the culture, ritual and ceremonies at the heart of the Hmong people. It takes you into the lives of the Hmong in America, explains why they are in the United States, the problems they are facing here, how they are overcoming these difficulties, and how their culture is adapting to their new home. A comprehensive teacher's guide is included with this 60-minute documentary video.

These videos are available to purchase for \$195, or to rent for \$50. To order these videos or to

obtain more information about other videos available from NEWIST, contact Northeast Wisconsin In-School Telecommunications, Rm. IS 1040, University of Wisconsin, Green Bay, WI 54311; (920) 465-2599 (800) 633-7445, (920) 465-2576 fax, newist@uwgb.edu, <http://www.uwgb.edu/newist/>.



The Internet: A Guide for Small Town Leaders

It's hard to believe that just five years ago the Internet was a fringe tool employed by few and ignored or overlooked by many. Today, this technology has captured the attention of just about everyone.

A new guidebook for local government officials and community leaders explains the power, organization and tools of the Internet. *Getting Online: a guide to the Internet for small town leaders* demonstrates how local government's use of the Internet can make a major contribution to public information and customer service.

Chapter titles include:

- Getting on the Internet
- Exploring the Web
- Putting Local Government Online
- Encouraging Public Access and Use

World Wide Web

Rural and Agricultural Transportation: Data and Information Resources

<http://www.bts.gov/ntl/ruraltransport/>

This website supports the collaborative efforts of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Transportation to:

- Address rural and agricultural transportation issues that support and enhance rural economic development, rural life and mobility.
- Ensure the efficient movement of agricultural products on the nation's highways, rail systems, waterways and air in national and global trade.
- Maintain the global competitiveness of American agriculture.

More than 700 links are provided to information and data produced by USDA and DOT units as well as other Federal and State agencies and academic institutions. Included are websites, reports (or abstracts), statistical reports and data resources, bibliographic databases and directories.

- Attracting High-Speed Telecommunications Services
- Websites of Interest

For more information about *Getting Online*, contact the National Center for Small Communities, 444 N. Capitol St., Suite 208, Washington, D.C. 20001; (202) 624-3550, (202) 624-3554 fax, natat@sso.org, <http://natat.org/ncsc>.



Illinois Libraries Provide Valuable Services

Public libraries are an important asset in virtually any size community, but especially in small towns where many social institutions are in decline or have left. Libraries increase the quality of life, can help attract new residents, and can support the quality of life that is essential to attracting businesses

The results of a joint study by the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs and the Alliance Library System confirm the fact that public library services are held in high esteem by users and rural residents alike. *Managing Illinois Libraries: Providing Services Customers Value* reports that the growth in Internet use, computer training and similar services are well received by residents.

The complete report is available in PDF format at http://www.IIRA.org/pubs/pdf/ALS_good_complete.pdf. For more information, contact Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, Western Illinois University, 518 Stipes Hall, 1 University Circle, Macomb, IL 61455-1390; (800) 526-9943, <http://www.IIRA.org>.



And the Loser Is....

Who loses? What happens when a community loses its health care infrastructure? is the eighth report in the Millennium Series, published by the Southern Rural Development Center. According to the report, if a community loses its hospital infrastructure, local residents are the big losers as access to primary health care declines, and jobs and wages are lost. And the losses mount over time.

Who loses? examines the link between health care services and rural development—a link often overlooked as financial stress increases and community and hospital leaders contemplate the future of their health care infrastructure. At least three primary areas of commonality exist, according to Gerald Doeksen, Regents professor and Extension economist at Oklahoma State University and author of the report. A strong health care system can attract and maintain business and industry growth, attract and retain retirees, and create jobs in the local area.

“If the health sector increases or decreases in size, the medical health of the county, as well as its economic health, will greatly be affected,” Doeksen said.

The report is available in PDF format on the SRDC website at <http://ext.msstate.edu/srdc/publications/doeksen.pdf>.

For more information about the topic, contact Gerald Doeksen, Department of Agricultural Economics, Oklahoma State University, 508 Ag Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078-0488; (405) 744-6081, (405) 744-8210 fax, gad@okstate.edu.



Conferences



Extreme Demands... Extraordinary Products

The Agricultural Forum 2001, a broad-based debate of national policies that have an impact on the profitability of the U.S. food and agricultural industry, will be held March 2, 2001 at the Scheman Building, Iowa State University, in Ames, Iowa.

This years' forum, “Extreme Demands—Extraordinary Products: A New Agriculture for a New Marketplace?” will explore:

- Catalysts of changing consumer preferences in the marketplace.
- The role of eCommerce and information technology in meeting emerging customer demands.
- Predictions for growth or decline in current food categories and a definition of the latest identified trend—“extreme eating.”
- Potential premium pricing opportunities for fulfilling “extreme” demands of consumers—the risks and rewards for retailers, processors and producers.
- Effects of new demands and new products on relationships and structures in agriculture.

Information about Forum 2001 as it becomes available can be found at <http://www.agforum.org>. For program information, con-



tact the Center for Agricultural and Rural Development, Iowa State University, 578 Heady Hall, Ames, IA 50011-1070; (515) 294-6257.



**Rural Voices:
Sharing Our Stories**

The 2001 National Rural Development Conference will be held March 12-14, 2001 at the Town & Country Resort and Conference Center in San Diego, California. The conference theme, *Rural Voices: Sharing Our Stories*, represents the power of rural network.

This rural development conference focuses on three major goals:

- To create a forum that blends the best of research, practice and policy to promote healthy development of the local and national rural network and to examine the research, trends, opportunities and risks that are defining new directions for all nonprofit agencies.
- To explore what can be learned from the past. To use storytellers to help “share our stories,” in order to integrate knowledge and experience, share information and gain a vision for the future.

- To provide consistent, quality training using well-known leaders and rural practitioners to represent the broad spectrum of rural America. Their presentations will provide practical details on new ideas and proven programs.

Throughout the conference, professional storytellers and successful community leaders will “share their stories,” while participants will learn how to best share their own stories and how these stories can help provide creative solutions for rural communities.

Several partner agencies are conducting their national and regional conferences in conjunction with the 2001 National Rural Development Conference.

In addition, a National Environmental Training Center for Small Communities preconference training, workshops and round table discussions specifically addressing Native American issues, and the 2001 Multifamily/Single Family Housing Plans Contest will be a part of this conference.

Conference registration fees are \$199 before January 12, 2001; after January 12 the registration fee is \$249 for nonprofit agencies and \$299 for for-profit agencies. The registration fee for the NETCSC pre-conference workshop is \$110.

For additional information please contact Rural Community Assistance Corporation, 3120 Freeboard Dr., Suite 201, W. Sacramento, CA 95691; (916) 447-2854, (916) 447-2878 fax, <http://www.rcac.org>.



Digest

Study Focuses on Gender and Employment Among Migrant Farmworkers in Michigan

Most migrant farmworkers change employers and move from farm to farm in an annual cycle to follow the availability of farm work requiring hand labor in the fields. This annual shift from job to job is termed an occupational cycle. A recent study investigated Latino farmworkers in Michigan in regard to these occupational cycles focusing largely on the shift to nonagricultural types of employment and its variation by gender.

The study found that as many as 42 percent of women and 34 percent of men had nonagricultural jobs during the past year. Though the types of jobs outside agriculture were all low in status on the scale, the analysis revealed a higher proportion of women in jobs with higher status.

The study also indicates that extended families and families with children provide a supportive base for migrant farmworkers. Policymakers need to recognize the large percentage of family-based households in the migrant stream and should consider ways to support family units economically and socially and to prevent educational deficits among migrant children as a result of moving to new schools twice yearly.

The full report, including tables, will be available in the near future as a working paper of the Julian Samora Research Institute, <http://www.jsri.msu.edu/RandS/>.



Excerpted from "Gender and Employment Among Migrant Farmworkers in Michigan Studied," by Vivian D. Roeder and Dr. Ann V. Millard, *NEXO*, Vol. VIII No. 2, Summer 2000, published by the Julian Samora Research Institute.



Promotion Ideas

The West Michigan Tourist Association is promoting a common product in a new way. A recent press release proclaims:

"YOU"LL SCREAM FOR WEST MICHIGAN ICE CREAM"

The press release informs the public of ways and places to satisfy cravings for ice cream. It lists a number of locations, their specialties, facts about the business and phone numbers.

The article ends with ice cream facts:

- Michigan is #1 in ice cream production.
- The U.S. is #1 in the world in ice cream consumption.
- Ice cream is an \$11 billion retail industry.
- Chocolate syrup is still the favorite topping.
- More ice cream is sold on Sunday than any other day of the week.

Are you ready to promote ice cream yet? Are there things in your community you could apply this concept to? Sporting goods stores, great hot dogs, antique shops?

Excerpted from "Promotion Ideas," *Tourism Matters*, Vol. 4 Issue 2, Summer 2000, published by Michigan State University Extension.



ISU to Offer Innovative Graduate Program in Sustainable Agriculture

Iowa State University is gearing up to offer a new master's and Ph.D. program in sustainable agriculture, slated to begin in the fall of 2001. The comprehensive, interdisciplinary program is believed to be the first of its kind in the country. Departments involved in delivering the program will be agricultural and biosystems engineering, agronomy, animal science, anthropology, entomology, horticulture, plant pathology and sociology. A program brochure and website are planned.

For more information about the program, contact Matt Liebman, associate professor, Department of Agronomy, Iowa State University, 3218 Agronomy Building, Ames, IA 50011-1010; (515) 294-7486, (515) 294-3163 fax, mliebman@iastate.edu.



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Rural Development News



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Rural Development Directory

The NCRCRD works with an extension liaison in each of the 12 states in our region. The liaisons, listed below, can be contacted for information concerning rural development programs in their respective states. Complete contact information can be found on our World Wide Web homepage at <http://www.ncrcrd.iastate.edu>.

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For information about 4-H youth development programming in the North Central region, contact:

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