



# The Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development Summer 2001 Report to the Northeast Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Directors

NERA/NEED Joint Meeting, State College, PA, June 24-27, 2001

Covering the period January – June 2001

## Grant Seeking Activity

The Northeast Center was the lead entity on one Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems (IFAFS) and two Fund for Rural America (FRA) grant applications:

IFAFS Grant: "Raising Benefits and Reducing Fragmentation: Options for NE Forest Owners," \$3.9 million over four years, in the area of Alternative Natural Resource Management Practices for Private Lands. An open invitation to participate was extended to all States in the region. Faculty and specialists from DE, MD, MA, NJ, NY, VT and PA are co-Investigators on this project. Submitted 4/20/01.

If funded, this multi-state, -disciplinary and -functional project will (1) provide information to forestland owners and communities for evaluating alternative management and marketing strategies and (2) provide information to policymakers for implementing policies that are better targeted at forest landowners. The central concern is raising private and public benefits derived from private forestlands without compromising ecosystem integrity.

FRA Grant (1): "A Web-Based Model for Adding Value to Land Use Information for Practitioners," \$600,000 over four years. Submitted 06/19/2001 (Rural Community Innovation).

We will apply information- and computer-based tools to address information needs of land use planners and local officials, to improve community planning, development and decision making processes. The Web is used to generate, evaluate, organize and disseminate information on land use, with community practitioners as end users. If funded, this project will draw on research faculty, extension collaborators and practitioners from each NE state.

FRA Grant (2): "Using Community Information Networks to Increase IT Capacity and Use in Rural Areas," \$600,000 over four years. Submitted 06/19/2001 (Rural Comm. Innovation).

If funded, the project will support an IT planning process in four communities, develop appropriate IT and application-based training curricula, a community information network, and the establishment of community technology centers. Collaborating communities are located in NH, NY, WV and PA.

The Center Director received a \$40,000 competitive research grant from the *Joint Center for Poverty Research* at Northwestern University/University of Chicago. The objective of the grant is to identify determinants of variation in Food Stamp Program participation across counties over time, and in the process to raise awareness of research and extension needs in the area of Welfare Reform and Food Assistance Programs in the rural Northeast.

## Other Efforts in the Strategic Focus Area of *Land Use*

We are about to release our significantly expanded Land Use Website, which includes extensive links to other web resources as well as land use documents prepared by land grant faculty and personnel in the Northeast. Results of an informal e-mail survey of 22 land use experts conducted in February to identify key research and outreach issues were summarized in Goetz 2001 (see below). In collaboration with Dr. D. MacKenzie of NERA, we are conducting a search of the land use literature to determine the state of the art in this field and to identify research gaps. We plan to invite land use experts from around the nation and Europe to a workshop early next year to move ahead with this initiative. Finally, the NE Center is the lead sponsor of a national land use conference to be held September 5-7, 2001 in Baltimore, MD on "Protecting Farmland at the Fringe: Do Regulations Work? Strengthening the Research Agenda." For details, please see: <http://aede.osu.edu/programs/Swank>

### *Land Use Efforts – cont.*

As reported earlier, the Center will fund two proposals on land use this year: *The Nexus of Agricultural Land Use Policy and Rural Employment Generation in the Northeast* (NJ/CT cooperating; 60%R, 40%E; \$24,712 plus \$27,867 in leveraged funds) and *GIS Analysis of Land Use on the Rural-Urban Fringe* (MD/PA coop.; 75%R, 25%E; \$19,504 plus \$33,151 in leveraged funds).

### **Selected Meetings Attended and Presentations Made (January-June 2001)**

Growing New Farmers Conference, Albany, NY, welcoming remarks  
Appalachian Studies Association Conference, Snowshoe WV, presented a paper on Self-Employment Growth and sponsored a workshop on Community Information Networks  
Rural Education and Community Trust/CSREES meeting, Kansas City, MO  
Rural Policy for Our Nation: Charting a New Course for a Community-Based Approach, workshop and dialogue sponsored by RUPRI and NCRCD, Airlie, VA  
USDA/ERS Experts Panel, presentation on "Industrial Structure and Rural Economic Growth: Suggestions for Needed Research," Washington, DC  
NASULGC/TIC Conference, Munich, Germany, presented a paper (see below)  
ESCAP Social Sciences sub-committee meeting, Washington, DC  
E-Business for Small Business Conference, Las Vegas, NV and e-Commerce team meeting  
Center for Rural Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, PA; two Board meetings  
IFAFS Workshop, sponsored by UMD/NERA, College Park, MD  
ECOP, CRED-BPT February 2002 conference planning committee meeting, Memphis, TN  
NY Legislative Commission on Rural Resources (Sen. P. McGee and Rep. J. Gunther)

### **Publications**

In progress: Goetz, S.J. and B. DeYoung, Editors, *Information Technology and Extension Programming: A Web Book*; with a national team of authors from the Extension system. The purpose of this book is to showcase how IT is being used in existing Extension programs and how new Extension programs have developed using IT, and to examine the implications of the digital divide for Cooperative Extension. Publication expected in Fall 2001.

We published the Center's Annual Report 2000, two Newsletters (one in progress), and launched a new publication series, *Rural County Business Reports*, designed to provide business and economic information about rural counties in the Northeast US. Report No. 1 is entitled "High-Technology Industry Growth in the Northeast U.S." Future reports will examine impacts of NAFTA on rural Northeast workers and the importance of self-employment income.

Goetz, Stephan J. 2001. "Land Use Issues and Research Opportunities in the US." Presented at the second annual conference on European and U.S. Partnerships in Food and Agriculture Education and Research, Freising-Weihenstephan, Technical University of Munich, Germany, April 4 and 5. <http://www.cas.psu.edu/docs/casconf/nercrd/Publications/index.htm>

Goetz, Stephan J. and David Freshwater, 2001. "State-Level Measures of Entrepreneurship and a Preliminary Measure of Entrepreneurial Climate," *Economic Development Quarterly: The Journal of American Economic Revitalization*, vol. 15, no. 1, February, pp. 58-70.

### **Staff Update**

We are pleased to announce that Ms. Pam K. Hileman has joined the Center as a staff assistant.