
CNRED COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

September 2008

Wisconsin Agricultural Education and Workforce Development Council

Gary Green and David Trechter are working with the recently formed Wisconsin Agricultural Education and Workforce Development Council to examine the supply of and demand for workers in four key agricultural related industries: dairy product manufacturing, animal slaughtering and processing, farm supplies wholesalers, and bio-energy firms. They are conducting a mail survey of employers to assess the demand for skills in the workforce and will use data from technical colleges and universities to examine the supply of skilled workers in these industries. Data collection should be completed in September.

Crawford County

Laura Brown and Gary Green recently completed a set of surveys in Crawford County on local food and tourism. The report on the demand for local foods can be found at:

<http://www.drs.wisc.edu/green/documents/community/Crawford%20Retail.pdf>

The results of the survey of farmers can be viewed at:

<http://www.drs.wisc.edu/green/documents/community/Crawford%20Producers.pdf>

Governor's Workforce Development Conference

The Governor's Workforce Development Conference (GWDC) will be held October 27-29 at the Chula Vista Resort in Wisconsin Dells. The conference is a joint effort between the GWDC and the Wisconsin Economic Development Association (WEDA).

Information on the conference can be found at:

<http://www.weda.org/calendar/conferences/2008-fall/index.html>

Council of Rural Initiatives

As a result of the Future of Farming and Rural Life project of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences Arts and Letters, the Council of Rural Initiatives (CRI) has been organized to implement some of the projects proposals. The CRI has identified working lands, rural labor and health care as their immediate priorities. More information on the CRI can be found at:

http://www.wisconsinacademy.org/idea/index.php?category_id=3933

2008-09 Building Communities Series Announced

The 2008-09 Building Communities Series of webinars will focus on Sustainability. This year's program begins on Tuesday, October 21, 2008 and continues each third Tuesday of the month for a total of nine sessions, concluding on Tuesday, June 16, 2009. Each program will run 60 minutes from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Central Time. This series is well suited for community leaders—elected and appointed officials, business leaders, and community development professionals, along with Extension educators and others interested in learning more about how to reduce the impact of our activities on the environment and seek more sustainable approaches to meeting the needs of our communities.

The program line-up includes the following:

- Community Sustainability—Setting the Stage; Tuesday, October 21, 2008; 10-11 a.m. CT
- Energy Efficiency; Tuesday, November 18, 2008; 10-11 a.m. CT
- Renewable Energy; Tuesday, December 16, 2008; 10-11 a.m. CT
- Comprehensive Community Planning and Sustainability; Tuesday, January 20, 2009; 10-11 a.m. CT
- Sustainable Business Practices; Tuesday, February 17, 2009; 10-11 a.m. CT
- Green Collar Jobs; Tuesday, March 17, 2009; 10-11 a.m. CT
- Local Food Networks; Tuesday, April 12, 2009; 10-11 a.m. CT
- Sustainability Indicators and Measures, Tuesday, May 19, 2009; 10-11 a.m. CT
- Community Organizing for Sustainability; Tuesday, June 16, 2009; 10-11 a.m. CT

Details on each program, including presenters, will be forthcoming. The program will cost \$40 per site per program, or \$275 per site for the entire series. Registration information will be posted on the web at: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cced> shortly. This webinar uses WisLine Web Conference technology (an audio-visual delivery mode utilizing a web browser and telephone line powered by Microsoft Office® Live Meeting). For more information, contact Andrea Rush or Greg Wise in the Center for Community and Economic Development at 608-265-8136. The 2008-09 Series is being co-sponsored by the UW-Extension Sustainability and Energy Teams along with the Center for Community and Economic Development.

The TechShop Madison

The TechShop Madison project has moved from its research and planning phase to implementation this fall. The project is designed to enhance the information technology capacity of small to medium nonprofit organizations by providing trained students who can help organizations develop databases, websites, and other information technology issues.

Find out more at <http://comm-org.wisc.edu/techshop>.

Geographic Disparities in Access to Service Learning

Research studying the geographic distribution of higher education service-learning across the state of Wisconsin has found that urban nonprofit organizations are at least six times more likely to host service-learners than rural organizations. This dramatic inequity is likely due to students being less likely to travel far from campus, institutions not making extra effort to build connections with rural organizations, and rural organizations lacking the networks that would better link them with college and university resources. See the report at <http://comm-org.wisc.edu/drafts/wisl.htm>.

For Community's Sake: Maximizing the Community Impact of Service Learning

A group of 40 people representing higher education institutions and community organizations around the State of Wisconsin gathered in Baraboo this past June to develop recommendations for maximizing the community impact of service-learning. The recommendations are far-ranging have important implications for the state's higher education institutions. Read the recommendations at <http://comm-org.wisc.edu/sl/page.php?13>.

Economic Snapshot.

In 2008, we celebrate the publishing of the 200th *Economic Snapshot*. A partnership between University of Wisconsin Extension and the Wisconsin State Journal, *Economic Snapshots* are published every Sunday on the front page of the business section of the Wisconsin State Journal. Each *Snapshot* provides the Journal's 350,000 readers with concise, timely, and thought-provoking information about the local economy. Recently, foreclosures, and the impact of rising energy prices have been featured. Most of the 200 Snapshots are available on our website at:

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cced/economies/economicssnapshot/index.cfm>

We strive to present the data in a format that is interesting, accessible and causes people to question their established opinions and perceptions about their community and local economy. To us, success means that the information serves as a catalyst to stimulate thoughtful discussion about the local economy.

Many of you, and others, have expressed interest in generating similar information for your communities and counties. Cara Carper used the *Economic Snapshots* to develop Community Snapshots for Lafayette County. An online "Cookbook" is being developed to provide "recipes" to help easily localize each article. Sample recipes are available at:

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cced/economies/economicssnapshot/recipes.cfm>

Downtown Economics e-newsletter

Three recent issues of Downtown Economics (previously Let's Talk Business) focus on tourism and provide ideas for increasing downtown economic activity:

- Key Businesses in Vibrant Tourism Towns, No. 145, September 2008
- Revisiting the General Store Concept, No. 144, August 2008
- Downtowns in Small Communities that Celebrate Ethnic Heritage, No. 143, July 2008

Downtown Economics is available on-line at:

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cced/publicat/letstalk.html>

Please forward link to downtown and business district revitalization and planning professionals in your county. If your communities have information needs related to a downtown economic development topic, contact Bill Ryan at CCED.

Downtown Market Analysis Updates

CCED has been working with county faculty throughout the state in completing downtown market studies. Current projects include:

- Superior BID study with assistance from Fariba Pendleton
- Juneau County study with assistance from Jim Goldsmith
- Rhinelander Main Street study with assistance from Dan Kuzlik
- Prairie du Chien Main Street study with assistance from Laura Brown
- Monroe Main Street study with assistance from Cara Carper

If your community is interested in conducting a downtown/business district market analysis, contact Bill Ryan.

Wisconsin Downtown Action Council – Superior Visit (WDAC)

WDAC, in partnership with Superior Business Improvement District, invites you to join community leaders and statewide experts to tour and examine revitalization efforts in Superior. This event provides an opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with other downtown professionals. Time: 9:30am-2:00pm. Date: 10/03/2008. The Old Post Office, 1401 Tower Avenue, Superior. RSVP requested: rochonj@superiorbid.com

Downtown Vitality and Community Placemaking Team Meeting

The next team meeting is scheduled for 8:30AM on 10/03/2008, just prior to the Wisconsin Downtown Action Council community visit in Superior. A Wisline hookup will be available. Contact Bill Ryan, Chuck Law or Steve Grabow for more information.

Updating the Downtown Market Analysis Toolbox

Since its launch in 2002, the Center for Community and Economic Development's Downtown and Business District Market Analysis Toolbox has been used by over 2,000 communities nationwide. Widespread use of the Toolbox has resulted in many suggestions for additional content and ideas to improve the market analysis process. To reflect this feedback and incorporate other current downtown trends, CCED specialists Bill Ryan and Matt Kures are partnering with Todd Barman of the National Main Street Center to update the Toolbox. However, we would like your ideas as well. If you have any suggestions for how to improve Toolbox, please send your comments to Bill Ryan (bill.ryan@uwex.edu) or Matt Kures (matthew.kures@uwex.edu).

Bioenergy Mapping

Statewide and national maps related to bioenergy production are now available from the CCED for use in energy, economic development and comprehensive planning efforts. Maps depicting a variety of agricultural/forestry feedstocks and energy-related infrastructure will be available for download in late September, but can currently be requested by contacting Matt Kures at (608) 265-8258 or matthew.kures@uwex.edu.

Sustainability Team

The Sustainability Team had a productive face-to-face meeting in June at Stevens Point that was attended by 18 team members. Three priority projects and associated work groups – built on individual “commitments” – were established.

1. Sustainability In-Service. The team has received funding from the CNRED Program Area and the Dean's Office for sustainability in-service scheduled for January 28-29 in Madison. A recent Zoomerang Survey was used to help guide the agenda development process. This survey was also used to identify the key topics of interest for this year's Building Community Webinar Series with its complementary theme of Sustainability. (See a separate item with the dates and topics for this series.)
2. Sustainable Community Development Capacity Center. A web site/clearinghouse or capacity center is under development and slated for launch in the very near future. The initial focus is on an “Eco-municipality Capacity Center” section to provide resources for the growing number of local governments either adopting or interested in eco-municipality resolutions and use of The Natural Step Framework.
3. Curriculum/Fact Sheets/Resources. A group of team members, both internal and external to UWEX, are focusing on the development of educational products and materials to support sustainability education. These materials will complement and become part of the capacity center effort.

Sustainability Roundtables

The Sustainability Roundtables proposal was awarded a Program Innovation Fund grant for 2008-09. The primary goal of this effort is to conduct roundtable discussions in spring 2009 that will help develop successful working relationships between diverse groups around issues of sustainability. The intent is to bring labor to the table in order to promote greater collaboration to advance green economic and workforce development within Wisconsin communities. The four tentative locations for the Roundtables are the Greater Milwaukee area, the Green Bay/Fox Valley area, the Chippewa Valley area, and the Duluth-Superior/Northwest Wisconsin area. Corliss Olson, with the School for Workers at UW-Madison, is the project leader, with support from Jay Moynihan and Jerry Hembd, Sustainability Team co-leaders.

Early Adopter Project Launched

Fifteen organizations representing the Duluth-Superior community have been selected to receive comprehensive training and professional coaching in sustainability over the next year. The “Early Adopter Project,” led by the regional grassroots group Sustainable Twin Ports, will use a science- and systems-based sustainability action planning framework known as The Natural Step. The formal training and consulting services will be provided by The Natural Step Canada. Jerry Hembd is a member of the project’s steering committee and his Northern Center for Community and Economic Development, on behalf of the University of Wisconsin-Superior, is the project’s fiscal sponsor. Tracy Meisterheim has been hired as Project Coordinator for the eighteen-month duration of the project. See www.sustainabletwinports.org for additional information.

Sustainable Management Degree

UW Extension and five UW campuses—Eau Claire, Parkside, River Falls, Stout, and Superior—are in the process of developing a *sustainable management degree*. The degree will focus on developing the competencies required to enable graduates to help businesses meet triple bottom line requirements: strong profitability, vital communities, and healthy environment. This program will be offered in an online format and focus primarily, but not exclusively, on adult and nontraditional students, helping to ensure that they are well versed in business and science. Particular attention will be paid to teaching students about *systems* and how various systems interact so that students gain a comprehensive understanding of the ways in which natural processes, business structures, and social needs intersect. The degree is tentatively set to be launched in fall 2009. Jerry Hembd is the faculty lead from UW-Superior on this collaborative project and set to teach a course entitled “International Development and Sustainability.”

SHARE YOUR WORK!

Please share with us your community and economic development work that would benefit other Extension educators elsewhere in the state. Email your contributions to the CNRED Community & Economic Development Update to Gary Green (gpgreen@wisc.edu).

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