

RURAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT NEWSLETTER

HALE COUNTY

USDA Rural Development Seven Strategies for Economic Development

TEXAS A&M
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Building 21st Century rural communities requires adoption of strengths and opportunities, but to regions where one community can compliment and draw upon the resources of another.

Strategic Partners: The old adage that there is strength in numbers especially holds true when you build strong and strategic alliances.

Capital Markets: Stimulating local economies requires the infusion of new

investment opportunities.

Regional Food Systems:

Building markets for local and regionally grown agricultural products makes great economic sense.

Regional Collaboration:

Smaller, more remote rural communities do not have to be stand-alone economic engines in an oasis, each looking only from within for sustainability.

Community Building:

Creating great places to

live, raise families, provide recreational opportunities, and infrastructure for high paying jobs is very important.

Alternative Energy:

American development and use of alternative energies is good for our country and good for our environment.

Broadband and Continuous Business Creation:

Expanding access to high-speed broadband is one of our greatest challenges and our highest priority.

Hale County Extension is looking for partners on small business educational issues and opportunities.

Bountiful Baskets Food Co-op

Sally Stevens and Tanya Jolly started Bountiful Baskets Food Co-op in May of 2006. It was a winning combination from the beginning. Tanya and Sally both had experience running their own small food co-ops that were not web based. As their small co-ops grew it challenged them to think of a way to

keep up as more families were wanting to save money on healthy food. Adding a little bit of e-commerce technology to the mix was just the trick. Since May of 2006 BBFC has grown from 2 sites and an average of 120 families a cycle participating, to hundreds of sites in 16 states & countless participating families.

The Co-op offers a conventional produce basket every other week which is generally 1/2 fruit & 1/2 veggies. The monetary contribution is \$15 and is generally worth \$50 retail. Organic baskets require a contribution of \$25. To participate visit: <http://www.BountifulBaskets.org> and check the schedule to see when your state is

available to make your monetary contribution using a debit or credit card. Then pick up your basket on Saturday at the time and place you choose when you contributed.





Stronger Economics Together—SET

WHAT IS SET?

Stronger Economics Together (SET) enables communities and counties in rural America to work together in developing and implementing an economic development blueprint for their multi-county region that strategically builds on the current and emerging economic strengths of that region.

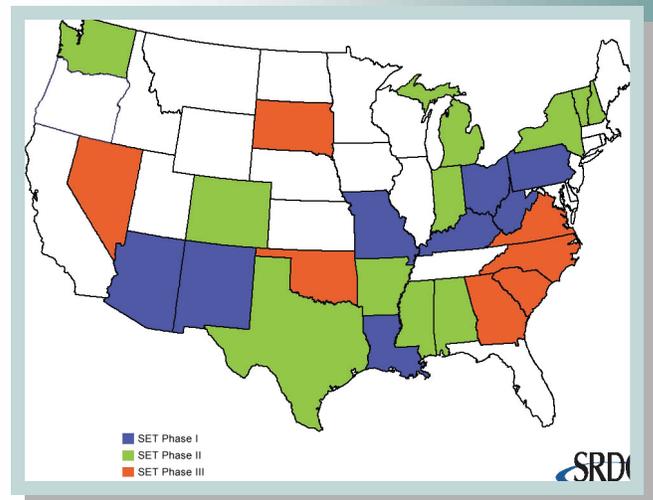


Creating, attracting and retaining jobs as a single rural county, in isolation from other nearby counties, is becoming increasingly ineffective. In today's global marketplace, economic development progress is more likely to be realized when rural and metro counties work together as a region to assess, design, and implement plans that build on their assets and comparative economic strengths.

Launched in 2010 by USDA Rural Development and the nation's four Regional Rural Development Centers and their land-grant university partners, the exciting initiative is now in place in nearly 40 regions in 19 states. Regional teams in seven additional states are joining Phase III in 2012.

SET BENEFITS

- More than 35 hours of valuable, step-by-step training to guide production of a practical and viable regional economic development plan.
- In-depth data tailored to the region, describing its current and emerging clusters, comparative economic advantages, and detailed demographic and socio-economic information.
- Tools to uncover local assets and resources that can advance the region's economic strategies • Up to 40 hours of technical assistance from Extension educators, USDA RD state staff and the Regional Rural Development Centers to guide the implementation of regional goals and strategies.
- Opportunity to apply for a special assistance grant to support more advanced regional data analyses or to connect with those with specialized expertise needed to reach your regional goals.
- Chance to share information and gather ideas from other SET regions nationwide.



Volunteers are needed for this program.

If you would like to submit an announcement for projects, programs or anything that promotes Hale County, please talk to Gary at 806.291.5267 or e-mail him at gary.cross@ag.tamu.edu

[Art Walk]

June 28th—Downtown Plainview

Art walk will be held every other month on the 4th Friday of the month except December which will be on the 13th.

Training Program Outline

The SET Initiative:

An Introduction *(Time: 1 hour)*

- What is SET?
- What it offers to a regional team
- Who's who? State partners and trainers
- Preview of the training program

Profiling Your Region *(Time: 3 hours)*

- Reviewing key elements of SET
- Defining and examining economic development activities
- Examining approaches to defining a region
- Exploring regional demographic features

Building a Strong Regional Team *(Time: 4 hours)*

- Determining elements of a sound team
- Developing a call to action
- Inviting broad participation
- Creating a succession plan
- Exploring habits of highly effective regional teams

Developing Your Vision and Goals *(Time: 4 hours)*

- Defining your vision
- Determining the features of a vision statement
- Developing a vision statement
- Determining the elements of a good regional goals

Focusing on Regional Competitive Advantage

(Time: 6 hours)

- Investigating elements that contribute to regional economic advantage
- Exploring data that may help identify regional clusters
- Selecting clusters for further exploration

Exploring Strategies for Enhancing the Regional Economy *(Time: 4 hours)*

- Identifying economic leaks in the region
- Exploring basic avenues for strengthening clusters
- Providing specific strategies within each avenue
- Selecting potential directions for the region to explore

Discovering Regional Assets & Barriers *(Time: 5 hours)*

- Examining asset-based regional development
- Discovering assets that exist locally
- Pinpointing potential barriers

Planning for Success *(Time: 4 hours)*

- Defining the regional goals
- Identifying the ABCs of success
- Selecting strategies
- Planning for action

Measuring for Success *(Time: 4 hours)*

- Exploring the value of measuring
- Deciding what to measure
- Using measures to promote success
- Tracking appropriate measures
- Creating a regional plan for measuring success

Supplementary Modules

- Community Business Matching Model
- Entrepreneurship
- Financial Capital
- Networking
- Sustainable Communities

SCORE

SCORE is a nonprofit association dedicated to helping small businesses get off the ground, grow and achieve their goals through education and mentorship. We have been doing this for nearly fifty years.

Because our work is supported by the U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA), and thanks to our network of 12,000 plus volunteers, we are able to deliver our services at no charge or at very low cost.

We can provide: Volunteer mentors who share their expertise across 62 industries.

Free business tools, templates and tips online.

Free, confidential business counseling in person or via email.

Inexpensive or free business workshops (locally) and webinars (online 24/7)

Our 340 plus chapters hold events and workshops locally across the U. S. and its territories, and match up entrepreneurs with local, volunteer mentors.

SCORE is headquartered in Herndon, VA.

<http://Score.org>

Counselors to America's small business.



Drought Disaster Assistance

Small, nonfarm businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small businesses engaged in aquaculture and most private nonprofit organizations of any size affected by drought (in a federally declared drought area), may qualify for Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDLs) of up to \$2 million to help meet financial obligations and operating expenses which could have been met had the disaster not occurred.

By law, SBA makes EIDLs available when the U. S. Secretary of Agriculture designates an agricultural disaster.

Businesses primarily engaged in farming or ranching are not eligible for SBA disaster assistance. Agricultural enterprises should contact the Farm Service Agency (FSA) about the U.D. Department of Agriculture (USDA) assistance made available by the Secretary's declaration. However, in drought disasters nurseries are eligible for SBA disaster assistance.

You can apply online for an SBA disaster assistance loan.

Disaster loan information and application forms are also available from SBA's Customer Service Center by calling SBA toll-free at 800.659.2955, e-mailing disastercustomer-service@sba.gov or visiting www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance. Individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing may call 800.877.8339.



Disaster Loan Assistance Available from SBA for Drought impact:

Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDLs) – Working capital loans to help small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small businesses engaged in aquaculture, and most private, non-profit organizations of all sizes meet their ordinary and necessary financial obligations that cannot be met as a direct result of the disaster. These loans are intended to assist through the disaster recovery period.

EIDL assistance is available only to entities and their owners who cannot provide for their own recovery from non-government sources, as determined by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

Credit Requirements:

- Credit History – Applicants must have a credit history acceptable to SBA.
- Repayment – SBA economic injury assistance is in the form of loans. Applicants must show the ability to repay the loan.
- Collateral – Collateral is required for all EIDLs over \$5,000. SBA takes real estate as collateral when it is available. SBA will not decline a loan for lack of collateral, but SBA will require the borrower to pledge collateral that is available.

Interest Rates:

The interest rate is determined by formulas set by law and is fixed for the life of the loan. The maximum interest rate for this program is 4 percent.

Loan Terms:

The law authorizes loan terms up to a maximum of 30 years. SBA will determine an appropriate installment payment based on the financial condition of each borrower, which in turn will determine the loan term.

Loan Eligibility Restrictions:

- The applicant business must be located in the declared disaster area.
- Nurseries are only eligible for economic injury caused by declared drought disasters.
- Applicants who have not complied with the terms of previous SBA loans are not eligible. This includes borrowers who did not maintain flood and/or hazard insurance on previous SBA or Federally insured loans.

Loan assistance is available only to the extent the business and its owners cannot meet necessary financial obligations due to the disaster. This determination is made by SBA.

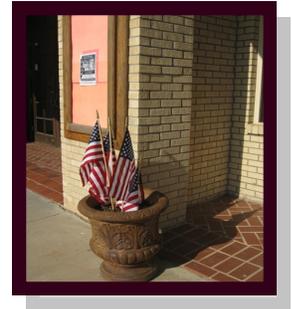


MAIN STREET

The Plainview Main Street Committee has begun adding colorful banners to beautify downtown.

Master Gardeners to Assist in Main Street Beautification Project

There are many empty planters along Main Street this summer due to drought or neglect and they need replanting and a lot of TLC to boost the curb appeal in Downtown Plainview along Broadway. Master Gardeners are going to "Adopt a Pot". The City of Plainview has potting soil and mulch in reserve for our use and Robert's Tree House will be the source for new plants. The following pictures represent "Before Renewal".



Financial Empowerment Center Of the Plains

What is the Financial Empowerment Center? The Financial Empowerment Center:

- ◆ Helps educate the community on banking and financial matters
- ◆ Supports individuals wanting to go back to school
- ◆ Assists individuals with starting a business
- ◆ Helps individuals with the purchase of a home

"You must gain control over your money or the lack of it will forever control you."

~Dave Ramsey

What is an IDA? An IDA is an Individual Development Account. It is designed to assist adults with financial literacy. Part of that literacy consists of a matched savings component. This is a matched savings account designed to help people to learn to save and become an asset owner.

IDA's through the Financial Empowerment Center of the Plains are matched at 2:1 rate. Which means every \$1 saved by a participant will be matched with \$2. The participant can put up to \$1,000 in savings. Each participant then has a total of \$3,000 to purchase an asset after completing the program.

If you would like information on how you can participate in this program, please contact the Financial Empowerment Center of the Plains at 806.293.9772 or 115 E 7th Street, Plainview, TX. 79072

Our focus with this newsletter is to provide an inter-communication platform in Hale County to offer educational training opportunities and education information on rural development issues and projects affecting our community.

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The Texas A&M University System, U. S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.