
CaRDI 2007 Annual Report

April 2008



Research and Education Supporting Informed Decision Making for
New York State Communities

“CaRDI is an incredible resource for the state...the greatest strength that Cornell and CaRDI bring to the table is that they are **organizationally insulated,**

interjurisdictional in scope,

multi-functional in focus,

and intergovernmental in effect.”

Kris Hughes, Ontario County Planner

Table of Contents

A Letter from the Directors.....	2
CaRDI Staff and Advisory Committee.....	3
Applied Research.....	4
Empire State Poll	
Indicators of Local Agriculture and Food System Viability Indicators	
Survey of Planning and Zoning Boards	
FoodSystem Mapper™	
A Place at the Table	
Education, Training. Policy.....	7
Cornell Municipal Clerks Institute	
Dennis A. Pelletier County Government Institute	
Land Use Leadership Alliance	
Healthy Farm Neighbor Relations	
Sustainable Tioga	
Great Lakes Commission Roundtable	
Rural Learning Network of Central and Western New York	
Publications and Seminars.....	10
Rural New York Minute	
Research and Policy Brief	
CaRDI Reports	
Future of Rural New York Seminar Series	
Regional Initiatives.....	12
Pipeline 4 Progress Regional Action	
North Country Regional Food Initiative	
Cornell Small Farms Work Group on Local Markets	

A Letter from the Directors

We are pleased to share with you the 2007 CaRDI Annual Report. The report provides a representative sampling of our work from July 2006 through December 2007, as well as a look ahead to some of our activities planned for the future.

The Community and Rural Development Institute was founded in 1990 to address the dramatic social, environmental and economic changes taking place in rural and urban areas. People and communities across New York State and beyond are significantly affected by local, state, federal and global trends. While CaRDI has made programmatic changes over the past 18 years, a constant focus has been our partnerships with elected officials and other community leaders to help them respond to these larger challenges and opportunities. We continue to be a multidisciplinary social sciences institute that emphasizes research, outreach and training to support informed decision making for NYS communities.

CaRDI reorganized in 2006 in response to an internal program review. We have renewed our commitment to producing applied research, training, policy and outreach focused on three areas – 1) land use, 2) community food and agriculture and 3) socio-demographic trends and changes. Our goal is to be a trusted provider of research-based information and educational programs that support local, regional and state-level decisions affecting rural people and communities. We invite you to visit our new website (www.cardi.cornell.edu) for more information about our focal areas and related initiatives. On the website, and in this report, we also highlight some of the training programs we provide for town, village and county leaders. These trainings represent partnerships with key state organizations, such as the New York State Association of Counties, and provide a platform to help our communities and leaders think beyond their own municipalities.

In addition to sharpening our focus and becoming more product-oriented, we have enhanced our connections with Cornell faculty and broadened and



Max Pepper, Rod Howe and David Brown

strengthened our growing stakeholder base of local leaders. We are now producing regular, up-to-date publications and training opportunities for local leaders and others on important community and economic development issues, promoting and facilitating policy-relevant research and providing a space where faculty, state and local officials and community leaders can meet to enhance rural New York's quality of life.

CaRDI is uniquely positioned to be a facilitator and “connector,” even in issue areas that extend beyond our three foci. One example is the topic of rural health, which was highlighted during the 2006 Rural Vision Project we conducted in collaboration with the Legislative Commission on Rural Resources and Cornell Cooperative Extension. While CaRDI does not have a specified focus on health, we were instrumental in providing leadership to continue the critical dialogue. The result is an emerging state-wide rural health university consortium. Another example is rural schools, a topic that also received significant attention during the Rural Vision Project. As a result of the project and activities of program staff members, a number of emerging policy and research initiatives are now focusing on the connection between rural schools and communities.

CaRDI moved to the Department of Development Sociology in 2006, and this has become an excellent,

mutually beneficial relationship. The partnership between CaRDI and the department in developing the Rural Learning Network of Central and Western New York is but one example of the strong and productive ties between CaRDI and the department's faculty. We receive our core funding from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, the College of Human Ecology and Cornell Cooperative Extension, and selectively seek grants that enable us to extend the reach of our program and further contribute to our mission and objectives. For example, our designation as an Economic Development Administration (EDA) University Center for the past three years has allowed us to support a wide range of initiatives in economically distressed communities, ranging from main street renewal to regional partnerships for producing local foods. We submitted an application to the U.S. Department of Commerce this spring in hopes of continuing our EDA University Center designation for the next three years.

We work in close partnership with Cornell Cooperative Extension and take seriously our responsibility to support their Associations in the community and economic vitality arena. Our connections on campus, across the state and nationally aid us in this important endeavor.

We are proud of CaRDI's accomplishments thus far and are pleased to have the opportunity to share them with you in this report. We look forward to the activities planned for this year, including: expanding our portfolio of training for local elected officials, exploring the formation of a leadership institute for community leaders, deepening our commitment to building the capacity of regions where community development has been elusive, expanding our land use training initiative and developing mechanisms to help communities develop their own indicators of well-being.

Sincerely,

Max J. Pfeffer, co-faculty Director
David Brown, co-faculty Director
Rod Howe, Executive Director

CaRDI Staff

Rod Howe Executive Director

David Brown Director

Max J. Pfeffer Director

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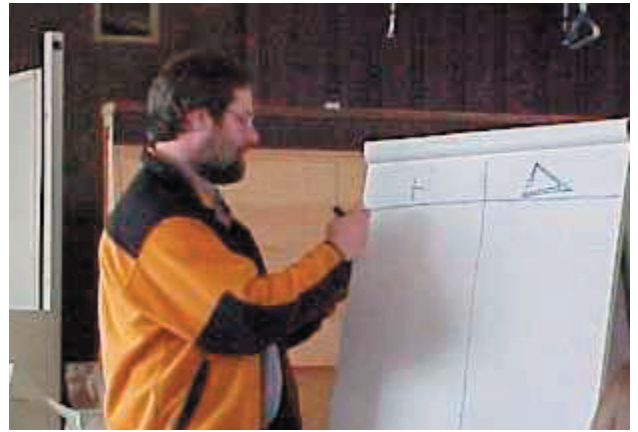
John Sipple Education

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Nancy Wells Design & Environmental Analysis

Steve Wolf Natural Resources

Applied Research



David Kay, Senior Extension Associate

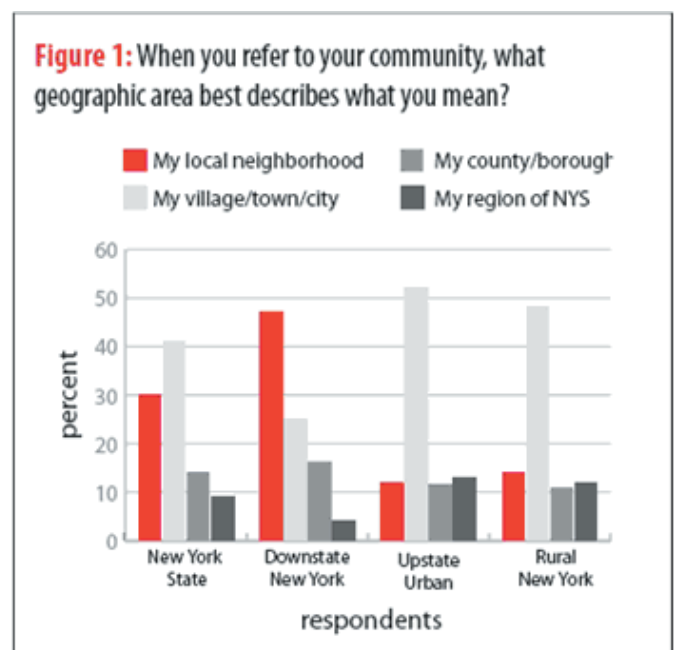
Empire State Poll (ESP)

CaRDI commissions a survey of 300 rural New York State residents to complement the Cornell Survey Research Institute's (SRI) annual telephone survey of 800 state residents. This rural survey allows CaRDI to compare the answers of rural and more urban residents on a broad range of policy-relevant issues, and also to focus on particular rural subgroups. The ESP strengthens CaRDI's relationships with stakeholders and policymakers around the state by allowing CaRDI to obtain and disseminate data on items of particular interest, many of which are reported in CaRDI's three publication series.

In addition to providing policy-relevant information on state residents to CaRDI's stakeholders, the rural ESP survey facilitates and encourages Cornell faculty to conduct research on rural issues. Through the survey, CaRDI provides Cornell researchers with a cost-effective means to conduct important analyses into issues that affect rural people and communities. Researchers have examined such topics as local foods, attitudes towards wildlife, perceptions of undocumented immigrants, the definition of "community" and support for school-based health clinics, to name just a few.

One question focused on the way people define their community. The answer shows not only the way people view where they live and their place in society, but also affects the actions they take personally, politically, and otherwise to shape the forces that affect their every day lives. In 2007, the ESP and rural survey asked 1,100 people across the state "When you refer to your community, what geographic area best describes what you mean?"

As can be seen in chart, responses varied dramatically according to where people lived in the state. These findings are important because the place where local community action occurs may differ between upstate and downstate New York, suggesting different targets for community-based public policy.

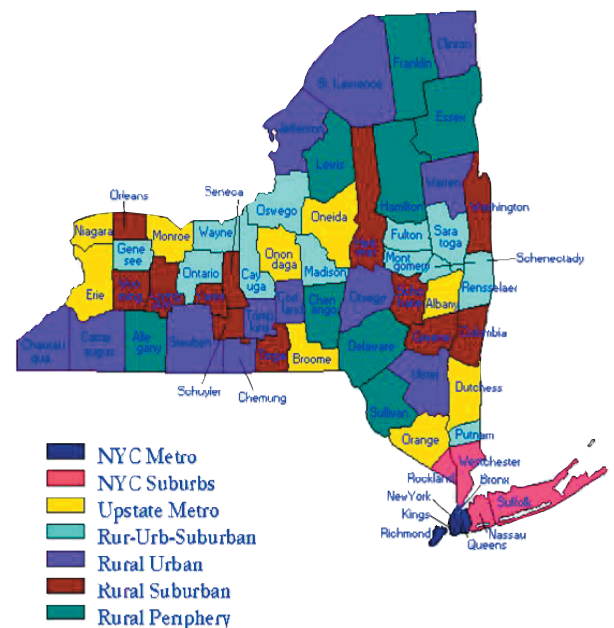


Developing Indicators of Local Agriculture and Food System Viability

This research project is focused on creating a set of simple but reliable social, economic and environmental indicators of the viability of agriculture in a county or region. Funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the project is being conducted in cooperation with leadership teams from Lewis, Ontario and Tioga counties. During 2007, these pilot counties identified what they value in their local agricultural community and developed a set of goals to maintain or enhance those values. Each county is now identifying indicators to measure their progress toward the goals. The project's final output (expected in late 2008) will be a set of "local agriculture viability indicators" (LAVIs) that can be used throughout the state and the Northeast. It is expected these LAVIs will contribute to better informed agricultural communities, better evaluation of programs/impact analysis and improved targeting of public and private resources to support local agriculture and agriculture-economic development.

"From the point of view of a county Extension educator, CaRDI really is playing a valuable role in fostering connections in agriculture, food and community by backing up assertions with available and applied research."

Jim Ochterski,
CCE Senior Extension Educator, Ontario County



Survey of Planning and Zoning Boards

CaRDI is updating a scientifically randomized survey of planning and zoning boards that was first fielded in 2002. This five year follow-up focuses on training and technical assistance needs of zoning boards, and the actual (as opposed to legal or theoretical) role comprehensive planning plays in land use decisions for the state's municipalities. This research is intended to inform ongoing legislative and technical assistance efforts to improve the quality of municipal planning and land use decision making in the state. The survey has been endorsed by, and incorporated suggestions from the New York Planning Federation, the Association of Towns of the State of New York, the New York Conference of Mayors and the Legislative Commission on Rural Resources. These groups expect the survey to inform their future activities. The final statewide analysis will be completed this spring, but preliminary results indicate that although nearly all responding planning board chairpersons were aware of the 2007 legislation requiring annual training for planning/zoning officials, only about 66 percent were confident that their municipalities had specified annual training requirements. Nearly all respondents wanted more information on the training topics and courses available to them.

FoodSystem Mapper™

FoodSystem Mapper™ (formerly called “MarketScape”) is a Geographic Information System-based tool that can map the demographic characteristics of neighborhoods and communities, as well as explore the spatial relationships between concentrations of certain populations (e.g., food insecure households, immigrant households) and the location of food system infrastructure (e.g. supermarkets, soup kitchens and other emergency food assistance providers). In 2007, new databases were added, including more than 2,000 emergency food assistance programs and more than 400 local agriculture and food system organizations and projects in New York. In 2008, FoodSystem Mapper™ will be made available on the Internet for use by Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) and other community-based organizations interested in learning more about the regional food system. CaRDI will collaborate with CCE of New York City and the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development to provide training on e-commerce and food system mapping techniques. The project is funded by a Hatch Grant from the Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station.

A Place at the Table: Exploring the Geography of America’s Disappearing Agricultural Heritage

Building on previous work in the Concord grape belt, CaRDI is exploring the potential of new agriculture-themed heritage areas in the U.S. This project, funded by the National Geographic Society, includes a series of detailed geographical transects, which identify promising place-based agricultural regions. Project leaders will characterize each region’s historical, environmental and cultural significance; inventory specific cultural and historic assets and the unique strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of each; and prepare a comprehensive report on each region’s potential for heritage area development.

In 2007, transects were completed for six specialized agricultural regions: Maine’s wild blueberry barrens, Florida’s Indian River citrus district, northern Minnesota’s wild rice region, Fresno California’s Raisin District, the cranberry bogs of southeast Massachusetts and Cape Cod, and Louisiana’s Atchafalaya Basin wild crawfish region. Additional transects will be completed by May 2008.

This information is useful to New York because the state has a number of specialty agricultural regions with similar potential for heritage area development: Orange County’s black dirt region, the Lake Ontario apple belt, and the historic hop production region in Madison and Otsego counties.

In addition to the National Geographic Society, technical support for this project comes from the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the United States Department of Interior Heritage Areas Program.



Cornell Municipal Clerks Institute

The Cornell Municipal Clerks Institute is an educational opportunity provided through a partnership between CaRDI and the Association of City and Village Clerks, the Town Clerks Association of the State of New York and the New York State Association of Clerks of County Legislative Boards. Participants gain new knowledge and skills to enhance the administration of their offices and the professionalism of their municipal governments. Under the umbrella of the International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC), this multi-year certification program addresses a wide range of professional skills. In 2007, 65 municipal officials participated in the Clerks Institute.

“It is three and a half days packed full of information about local government in New York, the use of technology and other tools for effective management of information and people. And, while every minute of every presentation may not be directly related to our day to day activities, it helped us to understand local government better and perhaps to understand the job that the person down the hall does, too.”

Eric S. Denk
Certified Municipal Clerk

Dennis A. Pelletier County Government Institute

The Dennis A. Pelletier County Government Institute is a comprehensive educational program jointly sponsored by the New York State Association of Counties and Cornell University. The institute, a voluntary certification program, provides county officials with structured training to help them more effectively serve the public, by enhancing their knowledge, leadership and decision making skills. Core courses focus on building consensus in a political environment, ethics, foundations of county government, principles of county budget and finance and public sector labor/management relationships. Electives cover a wide range of topics such as economic development and health and human services issues. In 2007, more than 250 individuals participated in the institute.

Education Training & Policy

Land Use Leadership Alliance

CaRDI is partnering with the Pace University Land Use Law Center to make the center’s Land Use Leadership Alliance (LULA) training more widely available outside the center’s Hudson River Valley region. This sophisticated, interactive program offers four full days of training to a carefully selected and balanced group of local and regional “land use leaders.” Participants gain an understanding of the legal foundations and structure of New York’s land use system. Collaborative community decision making and conflict management skills are taught to integrate new legal knowledge with new leadership and process skills. Participants are encouraged to become part of intermunicipal, regional and statewide networks of similarly-trained land use leaders. During 2007, CaRDI, Yates County Cooperative Extension, the Genesee Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council and Pace won a New York Department of State Quality Communities grant to fund two rounds of training in the Keuka Lake watershed. The first round took place in February 2008. Aside from being the pilot combined Cornell/Pace training, this effort included an innovative agenda integrating training with the generation and dissemination of an intermunicipal watershed plan.

Healthy Farm Neighbor Relations

In January 2007, CaRDI organized a day-long course on Healthy Farm Neighbor Relations at the NYS Farmers' Direct Marketing Conference. The session grew out of prior SARE-funded research and extension efforts that focused on this issue. Presenters were from Cornell, other academic institutions outside New York State, regional farm businesses and several agencies that address agricultural conflicts. Participants received information about trends in development and agriculture, the relevant legal and planning environment, conflict resolution tools and a dramatization of what to do when healthy farm neighbor relations break down.



Pelletier Institute Graduate Recognition

“In our country and in our state, we are facing harsh partisan divisions – divisions that all too often result in a bitter political impasse that severely impacts our ability to address the problems we as New Yorkers face in an ever more complicated and dangerous world. To combat this troubling trend, NYSAC and Cornell University have designed a comprehensive program for county elected and appointed officials which will make us all more knowledgeable of the issues and more prepared to engage in civil and constructive dialogue on the challenges we face.”

Virginia O. Amico, Past NYSAC President

Sustainable Tioga

Sustainable Tioga’s goal was to teach a cadre of private and public sector leaders the essentials of a well planned, well integrated and well coordinated approach to community and economic development. Participants implemented an innovative economic development strategy to increase job opportunities, the supply of well paying jobs and private investment in Tioga County, as well as improve the county’s quality of life. Participants gained skills to help them assess the intrinsic value of local assets , explore opportunities to connect local assets to the regional and global market through cluster development, develop a solid implementation plan, encourage powerful collaborations and secure project financing. The curriculum loosely followed CaRDI’s “Community Visioning Workbook.”

Great Lakes Commission Policy Roundtable

“The Rural Learning Network has had a visible impact by opening the lines of communication among government entities for sharing, learning and implementing best practices to ease taxpayer burden.”

**Beverly Mancuso,
CCE Executive Director, Genesee County**

Between 2002 and 2007, the Great Lakes Commission conducted a series of state land use policy roundtables. Working with key stakeholders in the respective states, roundtables built on each state’s progress as well as on past work by the Great Lakes Commission that identified strategies to address urban revitalization and open space protection. CaRDI played a central role, advising the commission about various aspects of the New York Roundtable’s content, participants and organization. The roundtable met several key objectives including: a) briefing state and regional policymakers and agency staff on programs and strategies related to smart growth; b) providing a networking forum for participants and c) identifying opportunities to enhance the benefits of regional and statewide programs, resources and strategies for better land use.

For the New York Report, see
<http://www.glc.org/landuse/nyroundtable/>

Rural Learning Network of Central and Western New York

CaRDI joined with the Department of Development Sociology, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Genesee County and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chautauqua County to develop the Rural Learning Network (RLN) of Central and Western New York. In 2007, 224 community leaders from the public, private and nonprofit sectors within a 15-county region of central and western New York became members of the RLN, with the number of members expected to increase over the pilot project’s three year time frame. The RLN will hold semi-annual conferences on community and economic development issues vital to rural communities of central and western New York. After seeking input from local leaders, the project leadership team (Nina Glasgow, Rod Howe, Bev Mancuso, and Joseph Pillittere) organized a May 31 conference on shared municipal services and a November 1 conference on the role of local/regional foods in community and economic development. The conferences are designed to enhance local decision-making by using evidence-based knowledge and to propose innovative solutions to community and economic development challenges in the region. The RLN also enhances campus-county collaborations and the co-production of knowledge among academics, practitioners and policy makers. RLN members are part of a listserv, where they receive announcements of events focused on community and economic development and information about materials posted on the web. The RLN’s next workshop, scheduled for May, will focus on research, educational programs, and government/private sector initiatives designed to address problems and take advantage of opportunities to produce a net brain gain in rural central and western New York.

Publications & Seminars

CaRDI Publications

In January of 2007 CaRDI, launched three new publications: the Rural New York Minute (a one-page monthly broadsheet focusing on community development issue in NYS); the Research & Policy Brief Series (a two-page monthly feature discussing important research findings and their policy implications); and CaRDI Reports (full-length research monographs released occasionally on special topics). All of CaRDI's publications are available on the CaRDI website at www.cardi.cornell.edu.

CaRDI publications are an important vehicle for connecting the community and economic development work of Cornell University researchers with stakeholders across New York State and beyond. Publications are reprinted in community newspapers, published in organizations' newsletters, forwarded via listservs and used as teaching tools. It is CaRDI's hope that these publications provide evidence-based research to inform decision-making at the local, regional and state levels. CaRDI strives to foster a productive dialogue around the issues contained in these regular publications and to strengthen its relationships with stakeholders across the state.

Rural New York Minutes

- *What is Rural? And Why Does it Matter?*
- *What Issues Are Important to Upstate New Yorkers?*
- *What are the Plans of Owners of Idle Agricultural Land in NYS?*
- *New York State Consumers Express Strong Interest in Local Food*
- *Health Care Access in Rural NY: It's Not Just About Having Health Insurance*
- *What does "Community" Mean to New Yorkers?*
- *Community Issues in New York State: What's Important?*
- *New Yorkers More Optimistic About Their Personal Finances than the State's Economic Future*
- *Home Grown Power: Community Energy Initiatives in Upstate NY*
- *Driver's Licenses for Immigrant Farm workers: Policy Considerations for NYS*
- *Do Residential Preferences Foster Sprawl in Upstate New York?*
- *Are Towns Outside of NYC Feeling the Effects of Rural Gentrification?*

Research & Policy Brief Series
ISSUE NUMBER 13 (MARCH 2008)

The Capacity of Early Childhood Care & Education in Rural NYS
by John W. Sipple, Lisa A. McAfee, and Judith Rose Benschultz, Cornell University

What is the Issue?
Comprehensive early education programs can have a positive impact on children's future success in school and employment. Yet, despite the importance of such experiences to later outcomes, early education is delivered through a complex network of programs with different settings, regulations, goals, and findings; the availability of which may differ in urban, suburban, and rural counties. In fact, little is known about the capacity of early care and education in rural areas of the United States, and New York State in particular.

Currenty, New York is one of 28 states that lack pre-kindergarten programs. With regard to childcare, rural children are only two-thirds as likely as their rural children to be in center-based care (other than head starts). Instead, most children are either cared for by relatives, typically in homes that are not part of any regulated system (in what is termed "informal" child care in New York State; Geiss, et al., 2005). Limited research also suggests some challenges with child care in rural communities. One of the biggest challenges is that a smaller, dispersed population tends to limit the child care options available. Not only are there fewer providers and programs (especially centers) to choose from, but there are also problems with transportation due to the longer distances between homes, child care settings, and workplaces (Calkins & Bowen, 2002).

With findings from the state legislature obtained by the Legislative Commission on Rural Resources in 2006-2007, the NYS Rural Education Advisory Committee commissioned a study assessing these research questions:

- What is the incidence of early childhood learning, State-wide and in rural areas?
- How does the incidence of early learning programs relate to the population of children in rural and non-rural settings?

Findings:

- Rural and non-rural types.
- Family child

Data and Methods:
The data for this analysis were derived from the 2007 State Education Children and Family Survey. By using state data files to provide information on the education, employment, health, child care, and income, and the providers of the care, the study provides the missing

Early care and education:
• Care based on type of month in year; and
• Programs in which no work was done.
• All children aged 3-5
• New York State
• Income
• Family child care
• Family child care

What factors (e.g., space, wealth, education level) may be related to patterns of early learning program in rural versus non-rural areas of New York State?

rural new york minute
ISSUE NUMBER 13 (MARCH 2008)

Local land uses and downstream benefits: How farmer attitudes influence watershed conservation practices
by Robert C. Christian, Cornell University; David L. Lamm, Virginia Tech; and Peter J. Aronson, USDA Agricultural Research Service*

Information from analysis across including spatially explicit information on watershed characteristics (land cover, stream network, and watershed hydrology) and farmer characteristics (education, income, and farm type) to test the hypothesis that farmer attitudes influence watershed conservation practices. The analysis found that farmer attitudes were a significant predictor of watershed conservation practices, and that farmer attitudes were a significant predictor of watershed conservation practices. The analysis found that farmer attitudes were a significant predictor of watershed conservation practices.

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• New York State
• Income
• Family child care
• Family child care

What factors (e.g., space, wealth, education level) may be related to patterns of early learning program in rural versus non-rural areas of New York State?

Research & Policy Briefs

- *Terrorism & Residential Location Preferences in New York State*
- *New Yorkers' Perceptions of Immigrants and Immigration*
- *Childhood Obesity: Do New Yorkers Support Policies to Reduce it?*
- *Converging Worlds: The State of Farm-Neighbor Relations in NYS*
- *Farm-to-School Initiatives Gaining Ground in New York State*
- *Losing and Gaining Metropolitan Status: So What?*
- *School-Based Health Centers in New York State*
- *Heats & Animositities: What Rural New Yorkers Think about Local Taxes and Services*
- *The Creative Economy Practitioner's Toolkit: Taking Advantage of Campus and Community Resources*
- *Racial Segregation in Rural & Small Town America: Does NYS fit the national pattern?*
- *Attracting & Retaining a Young, Skilled Workforce in Upstate New York*
- *Poverty in NYS: Patterns and Prospects*

CaRDI Reports

- *Owners of Idle Agricultural and Forest Land in New York State: Results from a Mail Survey*
- *Losing and Gaining Metropolitan Status: Implications for Program Eligibility, Community Image, and Local Development*
- *Municipal Approaches to Energy Conservation & Renewable Energy Production: A Resource for Community Energy Initiatives*

“CaRDI faculty have been instrumental in helping us analyze and report the results of our economic impact survey of non-profit organizations in our county. This has been EXTREMELY helpful to us!”

Paul Trader

CCE Executive Director, Rockland County

Future of Rural New York Seminar Series

The Future of Rural New York Seminar Series is designed to provide a forum where Cornell faculty, state policy makers and local and regional development practitioners can come together to discuss issues important to rural New York State and beyond. The format includes a panel of presenters representing varying perspectives and approaches, with an emphasis on research, outreach, extension, practice and policy. Audience participation in the discussion section of the program is highly encouraged. Seminars in the spring of 2007 were videotaped and posted to the CaRDI website, along with supporting presentation materials. Seminars in 2008 will be available as webinars via Adobe Connect. Seminars in 2007 & 2008 included:

- The 2007 Farm Bill: Implications for State & Local Food & Agricultural Policy in New York
- Rural Sprawl in Upstate NY: Observations on Residential Development & Housing Prices
- What is Cornell University's Role in Local & Regional Economic Development?
- Viewing Health as a Centerpiece of Community Development
- Poverty in the 21st Century: Research & Action in NYS
- The Brain Drain/Brain Gain Issue in Upstate New York: Research, Education & Outreach Response

Pipeline 4 Progress Regional Action

CaRDI is providing leadership at Cornell to develop a regional alliance of committed organizations and individuals to promote region-wide economic development. This alliance is called Pipeline 4 Progress.

The alliance, a collaboration of the Committee for the Future, Three Rivers Development Corporation and Cornell University, is developing a regional development plan for 13 counties in the southern portion of Upstate New York. Through a partnership formalized this fall, teams have begun to identify and act on key opportunities for the region. In the long term, the partnership will continue to work with key stakeholders to identify strategies for collaborative action, disseminate research and analysis in order to guide action items, and develop a strategic action plan. The plan will drive the collaboration forward, create educational opportunities, and foster connections with New York State's economic development representatives.

"In the Adirondack-North Country region, we recognize the value of collaboration on a regional basis. Those of us working on the North Country Regional Food Initiative have been pleased to work with CaRDI to strengthen our relationships internally, among CCE Associations, and cultivate new relationships with community-based organizations, local officials, and community and economic development agencies. It is exciting to see the shared enthusiasm and successes that come from working together."

Clive Chambers
CCE Executive Director, St. Laurence County



North Country Regional Food Initiative



North Country Regional Food Initiative

CaRDI has been partnering with Cornell Cooperative Extension associations of Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence counties in northern New York on the North Country Regional Food Initiative. Supported by funds from the Economic Development Administration University Center, this project is designed to enhance economic and community development through regional agriculture and food initiatives.

The project's objectives include: (1) assessing economic and community impacts of regional food markets; (2) understanding challenges and opportunities related to these markets; (3) identifying and responding to related training needs; (4) strengthening relationships between farmers, agencies, NGOs, Cooperative Extension and others working to build and support local markets; and (5) sharing impacts, challenges, and opportunities with local government officials, economic developers and community leaders to support regional approaches to community and economic development. Secondary data sources and qualitative interviews with business owners and organizations have been used to document and understand the social and economic impacts of North Country regional food activities and potential markets for these products. This research and examples of local food initiatives will be shared at a conference on the "Role of Adirondack North Country Regional Foods on Community and Economic Development" in April 2008.

The Cornell Small Farms Work Group on Local Markets

CaRDI is providing leadership for the Cornell Small Farms Work Group on Local Markets. The team will identify challenges and opportunities related to connecting the state's food producers and processors with consumers. During the 2006 Small Farms Summit, direct market opportunities were recognized as critical to small farm vitality. The Cornell Small Farms Program subsequently formed work teams to identify strategies for strengthening direct retail and wholesale market opportunities. During 2008, CaRDI and other project leaders will engage farmers, consumers, and representatives of agencies and nongovernmental organizations to facilitate shared learning among participants; identify opportunities and challenges to direct markets and develop strategies to address challenges and capitalize on opportunities. Information generated during this outreach process will be summarized in a report and shared with participants, other stakeholders and policymakers.

"Global warming, agriculture and development are central issues for our time and place. With education, people will make responsible decisions. We need to help people think about the long term, and CaRDI is in a good position to do this because of its ability to help break down political barriers."

Don Barber
Town of Caroline Supervisor

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