

**USDA NEW HAMPSHIRE
JOB CREATION AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION**



**FEBRUARY 3, 2010
HOLIDAY INN – CONCORD, NH**

The USDA roundtable discussion on jobs creation and economic growth was hosted at the Holiday Inn, Webster Conference Room, in Concord, New Hampshire on Wednesday, February 3, 2010.

Hosted by USDA Rural Development and Farm Service Agency, over 50 participants attended the roundtable discussion, including New Hampshire State Officials, local agricultural and business leaders, representatives from the Offices of Senator Shaheen, Senator Gregg, Congressman Hodes, Congresswoman Carol Shea-Porter, and the Commissioners of Agriculture and Employment Security from the Office of NH Governor Lynch.

This conversation, in follow-up to the national conversation started by the President in December, provided New Hampshire leaders and citizens a venue to highlight the challenges and opportunities specific to job creation and economic growth in rural New Hampshire.

The participants were welcomed by hosts/moderators Molly Lambert, State Director for USDA Rural Development and Jay Phinizy, State Director for Farm Service Agency. A video presentation by USDA Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan opened the conversation and the following questions provided by the White House were then discussed. A summary of the comments by attendees follow:

1. What parts of your local economy *are* working or thriving? What business sectors *are* hiring?

- “Eat local” industry and local markets are thriving. NH now has 70 farmers markets and winter markets are increasing as well.
- Jobs tied to nutrition and health related products
- Milk processing equipment
- NH Winery Association noted that NH wineries have grown from zero in 1997 to 24 today. It is an industry that is becoming very attractive as a second career.
- Although dairy producers are struggling, there is growth in dairy processing businesses.
- Energy plants that use low grade wood for energy have been brought back on line due to the renewable energy credits.
- Littleton, NH has a new, very successful cooperative grocery.
- Technology incubator in partnership with Dartmouth College is thriving. Skilled workforce is crucial when partnering with a college.
- Innovation is a growing sector.
- There is a whole series of high tech and biotech industries that occupy the Pease International Trades Port (former military base).
- Many small business sectors are using venture capital and there is much partnering of investors. Individually many businesses are strong.
- The Institute of Agriculture and Forestry is a new farm incubator project which will include 20 new farmers and a staff of 5. They are looking to train the farmers then help them purchase their own farms.

- The maple industry is thriving. NH is exporting maple products to East Asia. The advent of new types of vacuum lines, high flow valves, etc. is a positive.

2. What parts of your local economy are *not* working or thriving? What businesses and sectors have been *hit the hardest*? What are people struggling with the most?

- Precision machine industry
- Nonprofit sector as they are not receiving the donations, etc. they saw in past years.
- Small to medium sized construction contractors.
- Manufacturing, especially commodity based manufacturing such as Ethan Allen furniture
- Housing construction
- Restaurants
- Apple industry
- Horticultural farms
- The policy for migrant workers
- Lack of access to broadband
- Food processing regulations for value added (too restrictive for small producers)
- Starting to see problems with available physicians/health care in rural areas.

3. What are the opportunities for growth in your community? What businesses and sectors seem poised to rebound? What do you see as jobs of the future?

- Broadband is critical to starting home and web based businesses. Tremendous desire every day for people to "move back" to where they came from if have broadband.
- Clean technology and clean energy. A supply opportunity for rural areas.
- Natural foods - much faster growing than traditional and organic.
- Health care is growing, particularly nursing and dental
- Hydroponic tomatoes
- The businesses poised for growth are those that have survived this economic crisis.
- A good quality east west road in NH would be helpful!! Look at what happened when the road was improved from Manchester to the seacoast.
- Biggest opportunity is in thermal energy- we have highest use of fossil fuels for heating. Product is in the forest but we are losing the infrastructure to get the product out of the forest - sawmills, loggers, truckers. Wont' build energy sector if we lose this infrastructure. Need strong housing and pulp markets as energy alone won't support the infrastructure.
- Community colleges are vital

4. What are the obstacles to job creation in your community? What could make local businesses more likely to start hiring?

- Apple producers need to be GAP (Good Ag Practices) certified to sell to supermarkets. We need to help them with certification.
- Energy costs

- Lack of access to traditional capital. Banks are being heavily regulated, risk profiles are reduced.
- Lack of early stage risk capital
- Businesses often don't understand their own business cycle. Times were so good they didn't have to. Need to help them understand this.
- Cost to employ people is high
- Foreign competition in lumber industry (low cost coming in from Australia and New Zealand and former Soviet countries).
- Improved workforce via training
- Lack of broadband – internet access
- Induce more tax credits at the employer level
- Invigorate New Market Tax Credit program

5. What other issues and ideas should the President consider?

- Consider supporting/developing royalty investing vs. equity or capital.
- Look at what kind of Federal programs can be put in place for low/medium income families to send their kids to college. A post-secondary education is essential.
- Incentivize large animal veterinarians
- Make it a priority to have broadband to all regions 2012.
- Don't restrict active management of national forest by local forest product manufacturers.
- Fixed tax credit per employee, including seasonal employees
- ARRA \$ and federal initiatives have to reach local communities sooner through block grants with no strings attached.
- Improve ag workforce through improved support of H2A immigrant worker program
- Better programs for early stage, high-risk businesses that will spur innovation.
- Focus on quality jobs - long term jobs with living wages are what is needed.

6. Are there specific changes to USDA programs and regulations that could positively impact the development of businesses in Rural American or strengthen current businesses? What innovative ideas should USDA consider to increase economic opportunity in rural areas?

- NRCS Farm and Ranch and Protection program should include horticulture.
- Allow public facilities to access the USDA \$ for renewable energy.
- Allow to apply regionally vs. separate applications when a grant will benefit multiple states.
- Programs should be regionally competitive vs. nationally.
- Grafton County farm can't sell product to local farm or use their own milk to feed the county prison population. WIC coupons can't be accepted at county farm stand.
- Expand the Rural Business Enterprise Grant program for revolving loan fund.
- Reduce the amount of paperwork to get a federal grant
- USDA energy grants should only go to projects that would not be built if grant not made.

- Instead of just providing \$ to individuals - why not to the larger infrastructure - slaughterhouse, food processing facilities.
- USDA has some great housing programs - can finance a manufactured home, but not if in a manufacture housing park. Need to change this.
- Reduce reporting requirements
- Increase funding for USDA extension specialists. Those who retire are not being replaced.
- Fund teachers at land grant colleges
- Hoophouse grants are good - can triple farmer income – continue and expand.
- Encourage a program that combines both high risk capital with technical assistance (high touch investment).
- One size does not fit all - please recognize this in your regulations.
- Wetland regulations are too restrictive
- USDA staff go the extra effort to help applicants with the process so keep a strong, local presence of USDA staff
- Process to access USDA renewable energy funding is too complex
- Better sharing platform for replicable and successful projects.
- “Express” type grants for smaller projects, to include equipment.

Executive Summary

The New Hampshire roundtable had a diverse group of individuals representing lenders, regional developers, public officials, government agencies, businesses and very strong representation from the agricultural sector (approximately 2/3 of attendees).

Common themes that were expressed as barriers to economic growth were lack of broadband service, problems obtaining both traditional and high risk capital, a workforce that is not trained for the new economy, and federal programs with cumbersome application and regulatory requirements that have a “one size fits all” approach that does not work for the small businesses and farms in New Hampshire. Specific to the agricultural sector were concerns around complex food safety regulations.

There was much enthusiasm for the growing local and value added food sector as well as biomass energy. These were most often identified as sectors poised to grow in the future.

Suggestion and ideas for spurring economic growth included additional tax credits, improvements in migrant worker policies, support for critical business infrastructure such as slaughterhouses and food processing facilities and improved access to both traditional secondary education as well as more the more technical job training critical for the new economy.

The USDA staff in New Hampshire appreciated the leadership opportunity of hosting this job forum and presenting this feedback to both USDA nationally and the President.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Molly Lambert". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "M".

MOLLY LAMBERT
State Director
USDA Rural Development

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jay Phinzy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

JAY PHINIZY
State Executive Director
USDA Farm Service Agency

Attachments:

1. Invite List
2. Attendee List
3. Press Release

New Hampshire Jobs Creation and Economic Growth Roundtable Discussion

Attachment 1

Page 1

FirstName	LastName	Title	OrganizationName
Jennifer	Boulangier	Executive Director	Belknap County Economic Development Council
Jim	Roche	President	Business & Industry Association of NH
Bill	Andreas	Executive Director	Business Enterprise Development Corporation
Stephen	Heavener	Executive Director	Capital Regional Development Council
Thaddeus	Guldbrandsen	Director	Center for Rural Partnerships at PSU
Norman	Charest	Economic Development Director	City of Berlin
Dan	Gray	Executive Director	Coastal Economic Development Corp
Ralph	Littlefield	Executive Director	Community Action Belknap-Merrimack Counties Inc
Gary	Gray	President	Connecticut River Bank
Peter	Riviere	Executive Director	Coos Economic Development Corporation
Gregg	Fairbrothers	Executive Director	Dartmouth Entrepreneurial Network
Jill	Wurm	Media Contact	FairPoint Communications, Inc.
Loyd	Dollins	Executive Vice President	First Colebrook Bank
James	Tibbetts	President/CEO	First Colebrook Bank
David	Bishop	VP Branch Manager	First Pioneer Farm Credit
Mark	Scarano	Executive Director	Grafton County Economic Development Council
Mary Ann	Kristiansen	Executive Director	HGM Development, Inc.
Carol	Holden	Vice Chair	Hillsborough County Board of Commissioners
Steve	Griffin	Co-Owner	Isaacson Structural Steel
Arnie	Hanson	Co-Owner	Isaacson Structural Steel
Louis	Guevin	SVP Commercial Lending	Laconia Savings Bank
William R.	Hatch	Vice President and Commerical Loan Officer	Ledyard National Bank
Stephen	Christy	President and CEO	Mascoma Savings Bank
David	Hamel	Director	MicroCredit-NH
Laurence	Huot	President	Middleton Building Supply
Jack	Dugan	President	Monadnock Economic Development Corporation
Jac	Cuddy	Executive Director	Mt. Washington Valley Economic Council
Betsy	Miller	Executive Director	New Hampshire Association of Counties
Gerald	Little	President	New Hampshire Bankers Association
Katharine	Eneguess	President	New Hampshire Community Technical College
Steve	Ahnen	President	New Hampshire Hospital Association
Jasen	Stock	Executive Director	New Hampshire Timberland Owners Association
Jack	Ruderman	Director, Sustainable Energy Division	NH Public Utilities Commission
Jack	Donovan	Executive Director	NH Business Finance Authority
Katharine	Shields	Executive Director (Send Rep to Listen)	NH Community Development Finance Authority
Juliana	Eades	President, Board of Directors	NH Community Loan Fund
Lorraine	Merrill	Commissioner	NH Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food
Pam	Szacik		NH Department of Employment Security
George	Bald	DRED Commissioner	NH Dept of Resources and Economic Development
Van	McLeod	Commissioner	NH Dept. of Cultural Resources
Raymond S.	Burton		NH Executive Councilor-District 1
John	Shea		NH Executive Councilor-District 2
Beverly	Hollingworth		NH Executive Councilor-District 3
Raymond	Wieczorek		NH Executive Councilor-District 4
Debora	Pignatelli		NH Executive Councilor-District 5
Zenagui	Brahim	Director of Operations	NH Manufacturing Extension Partnership
Bud	Fitch	Administrator of Economic Stimulus Funds	NH Office of Economic Stimulus (Recovery)
Mary	Collins	State Director	NH Small Business Development Center
Michael	King	Executive Director	North Country Council, Inc.
Rick	DeMark	RC & D Coordinator	North Country Resource Conservation & Developme
Jon	Freeman	President	Northern Community Investment Corporation
Max	Makaitis	AVER Economic Development Director	Northern Community Investment Corporation

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Jane	Pauley	District Director	Office of Congressman Paul Hodes
Olga	Clough	District Director	Office of Congresswoman Carol Shea-Porter
Carol	Carpenter	State Director	Office of Senator Judd Gregg
James	Richardson	Executive Assistant for the Governor	Office of the Governor-State of New Hampshire
Henry	Huntington	President	Pleasant View Gardens
Patrick	McDermott	Economic & Community Development Manag	Public Service of New Hampshire
Debbie	Leuteritz	Owner	Quality Castings and Aluminum Products, LLC
Ralph	Johnson	Owner	R. N. Johnson, Inc.
Laurel	Bistany	Executive Director	Rockingham Economic Development Corporation
James	Rymes	President	Rymes Heating Oils, Inc.
Alice	Zachos	(Covering Table)	SBA
Witmer	Jones	District Director	SBA
Karen	Marzloff	Coordinator	Seacoast Local
Dennis	McCann	Executive Director	Southeast Economic Development Corporation
Larry	Troller		Southwestern Community Services, Inc.
William	Marcello	Executive Director	Southwestern Community Services, Inc.
Ronald H.	Covey, Jr.	President, CEO	St. Mary's Bank
Rob	Riley	President	The Northern Forest Center
Richard	Ellsmore	Acting State Conservationist	USDA Farm Service Agency State Office
James	Spielman	Acting Assistant State Conservationist	USDA Farm Service Agency State Office
James (Jay)	Phinizy	State Executive Director	USDA Farm Service Agency State Office
George	Cleek	State Conservationist	USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
Denise	Roy-Palmer	Executive Director	Wentworth Economic Development Corporation
Jim	Teetzel	President	Wilcox Industries Corp.
Christine	Davis	Executive Director	Womens Business Center
James	Graham	Executive Vice President	Woodsville Guaranty Savings Bank
Michael	Power	President	Workforce Opportunity Council
Marilynne	Cooper	Executive Director	WREN
Ellen	Vollinger		Food Research and Action Center
Names & Emails from FSA list for email and RSVP tracking			
John	Lynch	Governor-State of New Hampshire	Governor-State of New Hampshire
Richard	Sigel		Office of the Governor-State of New Hampshire
Kate	Peters		Office of the Governor-State of New Hampshire
	Sen. Deborah Reynolds, District 2		
	Sen. Martha Fuller-Clark		
	Hon. Tara Sad, Chair House Committee on Environment and Agriculture		
Unless out early	Hon. Robert Haefner, Ranking Member House Committee on Environment and Agriculture		
	Stephen Taylor	New England Correspondent	Lancaster Farming (PA)
	Commissioner Tara G. Reardon NH Department of Employment Security		
	Commissioner George Copadis New Hampshire Department of Labor		

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	Andrew Howe		<u>NH Agricultural Advisory Committee</u>
	Justin Hussey		<u>NH Agricultural Advisory Committee</u>
	Tracie Smith		<u>NH Agricultural Advisory Committee</u>
	Gordon Gray		<u>NH Agricultural Advisory Committee</u>
	Jesse LaFlamme		<u>NH Agricultural Advisory Committee</u>
	Matthew R. LeClair		<u>NH Agricultural Advisory Committee</u>
	John McPhail		<u>NH Agricultural Advisory Committee</u>
	Frank Reinhold, Jr.		<u>NH Agricultural Advisory Committee</u>
	Robert Beaudry		<u>NH Agricultural Advisory Committee</u>
	Mary Ann Kristiansen		<u>NH Agricultural Advisory Committee</u>
	David S. Floyd		<u>NH Agricultural Advisory Committee</u>
	Helen Brody		
	Dr. John Porter		
	Larry Major for	John E. Pike	
	Juli Brussell, Agricultural Resources		
	Darrel Covell Forestry & Wildlife/ Sea Grant Extension & Water Resources		
	Michael R. Sciabarrasi		
	Peter Erickson, DNRC UNH Fairchild Dairy Teaching & Research Center		
	Michal Lunak UNHCE-Grafton County		
	Karen Bennet Forest Resources		
	Sarah Smith Forest Industry		
	Brian Krug Greenhouse & Floriculture		
	Catherine Neal Ornamentals		
	Becky Grube Sustainable Horticulture Production		
	Matt Tarr Wildlife		
	Ken LaValley Sea Grant Extension & Water Resources Specialists		
	Thomas E. Brady College, NHAES & NHVDL Dean, COLSA Director, NHAES		
	Amy Ouellette		<u>County Extension:</u>
	Tina Savage		<u>County Extension:</u>
	Carl Majewski		<u>County Extension:</u>
	Steve Turaj		<u>County Extension:</u>
	Margaret Hagen		<u>County Extension:</u>
	George Hamilton		<u>County Extension:</u>
	Dorothy Perkins		<u>County Extension:</u>
	Nada Haddad		<u>County Extension:</u>
	Geoffrey Njue		<u>County Extension:</u>
	Seth Wilner		<u>County Extension:</u>
	Holli Umphrey	USDA/NRCS Coordinator	
	Sherrill Harris, Farm Loan Manager Farm Service Agency		
	Jeffrey A. Temple, Vice President Yankee Farm Credit, ACA		
	Mattie Huckins, President		Ag in the Classroom
	Lisa Nevins, Education Director		Ag in the Classroom
	Kate Kerwin Small & Beginner Farmers of NH		

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	Debbie Gile NH Aquaculture Assn. Hillsboro Aqua Farm	
	Gary Keough, Director USDA/NASS	
	Jeffrey A. Holmes, President	<u>NH Farm Bureau Federation</u>
	Robert Johnson, Executive Director	<u>NH Farm Bureau Federation</u>
	Melanie Phelps, Executive Asst.	<u>NH Farm Bureau Federation</u>
	Charlie Burke, President NH Farm to Restaurant Connection	
	Don Lassonde, Secretary New Hampshire Maple Producers	
	Laurie Ferguson	<u>NH Made</u>
	Jim Horst NH/VT Christmas Tree Association	
	Elizabeth Obelenus, Membership & Program Coordinator Northeast Organic Farming Association	
	Peter Oldak New Hampshire Winery Association	
	Jane Difley, President/Forester Society for the Protection of NH Forests	
	Robert Clarke, Chair Granite State Landscape Architects	
	Donald Ross, President NH Arborists Association	
	Steve Surowiec, President NH Fruit Growers Assn.	
	NH Plant Growers Assn.	
	NH Vegetable & Berry Grower's Association c/o Chip Hardy, Secretary/Treasurer	
	Amy Hall, Director Granite State Dairy Promotion	
	Evelyn Hart, RD LD NE Dairy & Food Council	
	Keira Farmer NH Game Farmers Assn.	
	Tom Danko, Secretary/Treasurer NH Poultry Growers Assn.	
	Carol Howe NH Sheep & Wool Growers Association	
	Nicole Veloza, Treasurer NH Horse Council	
	Ms. Meg Malette, Exec. Director Mortgage Bankers Association of NH	
	Mark MacKenzie, President New Hampshire AFL-CIO	
	Mike Somers, President New Hampshire Lodging and Restaurant Assn.	
	Paul Griffin, COO NH Association of Realtors	
	Nancy Kyle, President Retail Merchants Association of NH	
	NH Veterinary Medical Association c/o Richard Bouley	
	Associated General Contractors of NH c/o Gary Abbott	
	Hon. Timothy D. O'Connell, Exec. Director S.P.A.C.E.	
	David Laughton, Principal Office	Teamsters Local #633
	Hon. Robt. Clegg, Chair Small Business and Small Industry Assn.	
	Sarah Holmes	Senator Jeanne Shaheen
	Chris Neary,	Senator Jeanne Shaheen
	Matt Leahy	Senator Judd Gregg
	Alexis Miller	Congressman Paul Hodes
	Adam Robbins	Congresswoman Carol Shea-Porter
	Mike Satzow, President North Country Smokehouse	
	Henry Ahern Bonnie Brae Farms	
	Bruce Bascom Bascom Maple Farms	
	Liz and Bill Taylor Garfield's Smokehouse, Inc.	
	Ann Mirages Blake's Creamery	
	Peter Eggleston Smuttynose Brewery	
	Mary McNamara McNamara's Dairy	
	Doug Cole D.S. Cole Growers, Inc.	
	Denis Ward for Howard Hatch Hatchland Dairies	
	Springhill Farm Doug and Deb Erb	
	Pooh Sprague Edgewater Farm	

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	Gary or Nancy Hirschberg	c/o Chandra Carson
	Nancy Hirschberg Stonyfield Farm	
	Mike Cross Mack's Apples	
	Laura Spencer & Steve Wood Farnum Hill Ciders Poverty Lane Orchards	
	Beth Hodge Echo Farms Puddings Echo Farms, Incorporated	
	Moulton Farms John Moulton	
	Apple Hill Farm Diane & Chuck Souther	
	Charles A. Levesque, President - Innovative Natural Resource Solutions LLC	
	Pete & Gerry's Organics, LLC. c/o Peter Stanton and Gerry LaFlamme	
	David Howard, Architect Firstday Cottage, Inc.	
	HHP, Inc c/o Ross D'Elia (owner)	
	Lakes Region Pellets c/o Gregory True	
	Durgin & Crowell c/o Ben Crowell	
	Garland Lumber Co., Inc	Karla Allen (forester)
	White Mountain Lumber, Inc. c/o Barry and Mark Kelley	
	David Westover	
	James L. Taylor	<u>State Committee:</u>
	Bruce A. Clement	<u>State Committee:</u>
	Joshua E. Jennings	<u>State Committee:</u>
	Suzanne Brown, Executive Director	
	Richard Lowrance	Matt Leahy forwarded email-member of Senator Gregg's staff
	Martha Richards	Grafton County Commissioner
	Joe Casey	NH Building Trades (Recommended by Mark MacKenzie at NH AFL-CIO)
	Jennifer Risley	Hannah Grimes Marketplace
	Lisa Levine	Office of Paul Hodes
	John Hamilton	Vested for Growth
	David Sorenson	Chairman Carroll County Commissioner
	Pete Lambert	Pleasant View Gardens
	Estelle Votour	Teamsters 633
	John Funk	
Jason	Stock	NH Timberland Owners Association
Terri	Beyer	Office of Congresswoman Carol Shea-Porter
Brian	Pilcher	NHCDFR
Michael	Gurau	President CEI Community Ventures, Inc.

New Hampshire Jobs Creation and Economic Growth Roundtable Discussion
Attachment 2

RSVP	Attended	FirstName	LastName	Title	OrganizationName
YES		Jennifer	Bouanger	Executive Director	Belknap County Economic Development Council
YES		Stephen	Heavener	Executive Director	Capital Regional Development Council
YES		Lloyd	Dollins	Executive Vice President	First Colbrook Bank
YES		Stephen	Christy	President and CEO	Mascota Savings Bank
YES		Jack	Dugan	President	Monadnock Economic Development Corporation
YLS		Gerald	LHe	President	New Hampshire Bankers Association
YES		Lorraine	Merrill	Commissioner	NH Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food
YES		Van	McLeod	Commissioner	NH Dept. of Cultural Resources
YLS		Beverly	Hillingworth		NH Executive Council-District 3
YCS		Mary	Collins	State Director	NH Small Business Development Center
YLS		Jan	Fraeman	President	Northern Community Investment Corporation
YES		Jane	Pauley	District Director	Office of Congressman Paul Hodes
YES		Alice	Zachos	(Covering Table)	SSA
YES		Dennis	McCann	Executive Director	Southeast Economic Development Corporation
YES		Larry	Trotter		Southwestern Community Services, Inc.
YES		Rob	Riley	President	The Northern Forest Center
YES		Richard	Ellsmore	Acting State Conservationist	USDA Farm Service Agency State Office
YLS		James	Spelman	Acting Assistant State Conservationist	USDA Farm Service Agency State Office
YES		Kela	Felere		Office of the Governor-State of New Hampshire
YES		Stephen	Taylor	New England Correspondent	Lancaster Farming (PA)
YES		Commissioner Tara	Keardon		NH Dept of Employment Security
YES		Dr John	Porjar		
YES		Larry	Mejor		Pike Industries
YES		Sarah	Smith		Forest Industries
YES		Thomas E.	Brady		College, NHAES & NHVDL Dean, COLSA Director, NHAES
YES		Cefi	Majewski		County Extension
YES		George	Hamilton		County Extension
YES		Seth	Wilner		County Extension
YES		Sherrill	Harris	Farm Loan Manager	Farm Service Agency
Yes		Gary	Keough		Director USFANASS
YCS		Johnny	Holmes, President		NH Farm Bureau Federation
YES		Ruebit	Johnson, Executive Director		NH Farm Bureau Federation
YES		Patric	Oldak		New Hampshire Winery Association
YES		Mark	MacKenzie		President New Hampshire AFL-CIO
YES		Hon Timothy	D. O'Connell		Exec. Director S.P.A.C.E
YES		Sarah	Holmes		Senator Joanne Shannon
YES		Matt	Leahy		Senator Judd Gregg
YES		Dania	Ward		Howard Hetch Hatchland Dairies
Yes		Charles	A. Levesque		President - Innovative Natural Resource Solutions LLC
YES		Joshua	E. Jennings		State Committee
YES		Suzanne	Brown, Executive Director		
YES		Richard	Lawrance		Senator Judd Gregg
YES		Martha	Richards		Grafton County Commissioner
YES		Lisa	Levine		Office of Paul Hodes
YES		John	Hamilton		Vested for Growth
YLS		Jason	Black		NH Timberland Owners Association
YES		Tom	Boyer		Office of Congresswoman Carol Shea Porter
YES		Brian	Pilcher		NHCDFA
YCS		Michael	Guru	President	CEI Community Ventures, Inc.
			Robert Fry, Robert McCarthy, Steve Epstein, Brian Ritchie, Gregg MacPherson		

*Reba Osmond - Knowledge Institute
Vice President
GAP Certified
S-Low Income*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Anita Rios Moore(802) 828-6006

ROUNDTABLE ON JOBS, ECONOMIC GROWTH HOSTED BY USDA

Business Owners, Residents, Community Leaders Shared Ideas on Creating Jobs

Concord, NH, February 9, 2010 – USDA Rural Development State Director, Molly Lambert, and Farm Service Agency State Executive Director, James Phinizy, hosted a roundtable discussion on job creation and economic growth this past Wednesday, February 3, 2010. The roundtable followed the Forum on Jobs and Economic Growth that President Obama hosted at the White House on December 3.

“This forum provided an opportunity for residents, business owners and community leaders across the state to share ideas on creating jobs and economic opportunities,” Molly Lambert said. “Government can help lay the groundwork for economic growth, but the best ideas for continued growth and job creation often come from local and community leaders. I look forward to sharing these ideas with the Administration.”

"New Hampshire's 3400 farmers and farm operations, large and small, will guarantee continued job growth not only within its own sector but, tangentially, important job sectors, such as trade and tourism. The input from the New Hampshire agricultural, business and government leaders, at this roundtable, will help to identify and grow jobs in the state's rural and agricultural communities," added James Phinizy.

The roundtable included business owners, residents, state and local officials, non-profit organizations, community leaders, economists and other interested parties. Participants discussed steps that can be taken to grow the economy and put New Hampshire residents back to work.

The primary focus was on ideas to accelerate job growth in rural America. Some of the topics discussed were:

- Exploring ways to rejuvenate and promote local businesses;
- Creating jobs by rebuilding America's infrastructure;
- Creating new opportunities from existing ones, such as with value-added agricultural products;
- Supporting job growth among small businesses; and
- Preparing workers for 21st century jobs.

USDA Rural Development administers and manages more than 40 housing, business, and community infrastructure and facility programs as laid out by Congress through a network of 6,100 employees located in 500 national, state and local offices. These programs are designed to improve the economic stability of rural communities, businesses, residents, farmers and ranchers and improve the quality of life in rural America. Rural Development has an existing portfolio of more than \$125 billion in loans and loan guarantees.

USDA's Farm Services Agency works to increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for rural Americans. Some of the agency's efforts include facilitating income support, disaster assistance and conservation programs, providing operating loans for the procurement of farm equipment, seed and fertilizer, as well as offering ownership loans to help new and veteran producers purchase a farm. FSA also works to procure various commodities to benefit low-income families through domestic food assistance programs.

#

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