

NE 162 Progress Report
Submitted by: Jill L. Findeis

Research continued on the impacts of economic change and policy on rural individuals, households and communities across America. Several issues important to rural areas are the focus of this research. First, work has concentrated on immigrant populations, and particularly on the Hispanic population living and working in the U.S. that has grown significantly in the past decade. Three subthemes have emerged: (1) changes in the labor status of Hispanic workers in the U.S., and particularly on changes in their labor status, (2) changes in the hired farm workforce, a workforce that is increasingly comprised of young solo males that work on U.S. farms only part of the year and then return to Mexico, and (3) the effects of out-migration on agricultural households in countries such as Mexico that lose part of their workforce to out-migration. Using survey data on agricultural households in selected villages in Mexico, households in Mexico that lose workers to the U.S. are shown to be negatively affected in terms of changes in agricultural production efficiency. Farms in the U.S., in turn, are shown to be highly dependent on an immigrant workforce from Mexico. Using data from the National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS), increases in dependence on farm workers from Mexico is documented both for those regions typically hiring Hispanic workers and those (such as the Northeast region) where employment of Hispanic workers was not as prevalent but is becoming rapidly more so. As Hispanic workers become a greater proportion of the total workforce in the U.S., many are found to be underemployed but less so than African Americans that continue to suffer high rates of underemployment.

Second, adjustments that agricultural households make to changes in economic conditions and changing policy are also the focus of research, both for the U.S. and worldwide. Studies completed during the last year examined factors influencing farmers' decisions to cease farming and farmer decisions in an urbanizing environment. Related work that is a continuation of work done in 2000 shows that farm households are adjusting to changing external labor markets and other factors by increasingly working off-farm.

Finally, research has been undertaken that explore the role that U.S. State governments can take to stimulate entrepreneurship.

Impacts:

The studies related to agriculture have direct bearings on the current farm bill discussion in Congress, as well as on Congressional discussions of guest worker programs. The study of reasons motivating farmers to leave agriculture suggests that the billions of taxpayer dollars spent on farm programs may have an effect opposite to that intended.

Publications:

Refereed journal articles:

Larson, Janelle, Jill L. Findeis, and Stephen M. Smith. 2001. "Agricultural Adaptation to Urbanization in Southeastern Pennsylvania." *Agricultural and Resources Economics Review* 30(1):32-43.

Goetz, Stephen J. and David Debertin. 2001. "Why Farmers Quit: A County-Level Analysis." *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* 83(4): 1010-1023.

Goetz, Stephen J. and David Freshwater. 2001. "State-Level Measures of Entrepreneurship and a Preliminary Measurement of Entrepreneurial Climate." *Economic Development Quarterly: The Journal of American Economic Revitalization* 15(1): 58-70.

Jensen, Leif, Jill L. Findeis and Qiuyan Wang. 2000. "Labor Supply and Underemployment in the Southern United States." *Southern Rural Sociology* 16:93-121.

Findeis, Jill L., Leif Jensen and Qiuyan Wang. 2000. "Underemployment Prevalence and Transitions in the U.S. South." *Southern Rural Sociology* 16:122-144.

Books, chapters in books, and monographs:

Findeis, J.L., J. Anton, C. Weiss, and K. Saito. 2001. *Agricultural Policy and Farm Employment*. Paris: OECD. 55pp.

Goetz, S., T. Jaksch, and R. Siebert (eds.). *Agricultural Transformation and Land Use in Central and Eastern Europe*. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing. 340pp.

Goetz, S.J. 2001. "Agricultural Transformation in Central and Eastern Europe in a Global Perspective." Chapter 1 in S.J.Goetz, et al.(eds.), *Agricultural Transformation and Land Use in Central and Eastern Europe*. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing. pp. 1-22.

Other publications:

Findeis, Jill, Mark Henry, Thomas Hirschl, Willis Lewis, Ismael Ortega-Sanchez, Emilie Peine and Julie Zimmerman. 2001. "Welfare Reform in Rural America: A Review of Current Research." RUPRI Policy Paper P2001-5. Rural Policy Research Institute, University of Missouri. 85 pp. (<http://www.rupri.org/pubs/index.html>).

Wang, Qiuyan and Jill Findeis. 2001. "Labor Force Transitions of Men and Women in the United States: 1980-2000." *Working Paper 01-10*, Population Research Institute, The

Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA
(http://www.pop.psu.edu/general/pubs/working_papers/psu-pri/wp0110/pdf).
Dissertations and theses:

Ritz, Rachel. 2001. Welfare, Work, and Underemployment: An Analysis of Low-Income Single Females, 1990-2000. M.S. thesis in Agricultural Economics and Demography, The Pennsylvania State University, Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology. 148 pp.

Ortega-Sanchez, Ismael. 2001. Labor Out-Migration Impacts on Agrarian Economies: The Case of Central and Southern Mexican Communities. Ph.D. Dissertation in Agricultural Economics and Demography, Penn State University, University Park, PA 306pp.