



2024 ANNUAL REPORT



Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development

*Enhancing the capacity of Land Grant Universities
to foster regional prosperity and rural development*

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The Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development receives core funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (award #2022-51150-38139) as well as from Multistate/Regional Research and/or Extension Appropriations (project #NE2249), agInnovation Northeast, and the Pennsylvania State University, College of Agricultural Sciences. Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and should not be construed to represent any official USDA or U.S. Government determination or policy.

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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

I have been honored with the task of leading the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development for over a quarter century now. Above all, I am grateful to the many talented and devoted individuals who graciously worked with the Center over the years, ranging from educators to faculty and land-grant university leadership, colleagues in various federal agencies, as well as many community-based individuals. The Center's own staff, critical to making the work possible, of course warrants special mention. Our forthcoming 25-Year Retrospective, parts of which are summarized in this Annual Report, contains details about the Center's activities, outputs, and impacts.



Stephan J. Goetz

areas of opportunity have emerged, ranging from agritourism and recreation to innovation and national energy independence. One critical input into our work – the bread and butter, so to speak – has been the public datasets compiled by federal agencies, especially the Census Bureau. These

have allowed us to understand how economic, social, environmental and even natural processes play out over space and can, or cannot, be influenced by public policy. Increasingly, thanks to a federal research data center housed at Penn State, we have been able to work not just with publicly available, county-level data but also with restricted data from individual census records. This has opened up an entirely different set of opportunities for research, as well as for collaboration.

On behalf of the Center's staff and our many collaborators in the region and beyond, I am pleased to share this report of our activities in 2024.

Stephan J. Goetz, Ph.D.
Director and Professor
March 2025

Our key priorities have changed over the last quarter century, often following the ups and downs of the broader economy, with land-use issues generally being more pressing during bountiful economic times, and economic development featuring more prominently during downcycles or crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

As global conditions have changed, especially in recent years, new



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About the NERCRD

The Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development (NERCRD) is one of the nation's four Regional Rural Development Centers (RRDCs) established by the Rural Development Act of 1972. The RRDCs work in partnership with the land-grant university (LGU) system to address the critical needs of the nation's rural communities. The NERCRD is hosted at Penn State and serves the 12-state region from Maine to West Virginia and the District of Columbia.

NERCRD accomplishes its goals by:

Facilitating high-impact collaborations across the land-grant system

NERCRD serves as a regional hub for our LGU partners, linking research and Extension faculty across state lines. By facilitating collaborative networks and partnerships, NERCRD enhances the capacity of the LGU system, so that it can work more effectively to foster regional prosperity and rural development.

Leading impactful research

Through a robust research portfolio, NERCRD researchers contribute to the science base so that other researchers and practitioners can better understand and address rural America's economic development problems. Recent NERCRD research has been used at the highest levels of the federal government, has been cited in groundbreaking studies on the economic mobility of Americans, and has appeared in highly ranked general science, disciplinary, and interdisciplinary journals.

Leveraging strong connections to federal resources

The RRDCs have strong connections to federal resources, enabling us to network with other federal and private funding agencies and stakeholder organizations, and to connect them with the land-grant system. Over the last decade, the NERCRD leveraged \$2.40 in additional extramural funding for each dollar of core funds received from USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA).

How NERCRD is governed:

The NERCRD is administered by a joint agreement between USDA and Penn State (the host institution). Major core funding comes from the USDA NIFA via the U.S. Congress annual appropriations process, and from the region's land-grant universities. NERCRD's Board of Directors is composed of administrators from the regional land-grant institutions and representatives of USDA NIFA and USDA Economic Research Service. With input from NERCRD's Technical Advisory Committee, the Board establishes policies and programming emphases. NERCRD's current emphasis areas are:

- Economic Development, Innovation, and Resilience
- Food Systems, Nutrition Security, and Agriculture
- Tourism and Outdoor Recreation
- Capacity Building and Facilitation

Learn more at: <https://nercrd.psu.edu/about/>

CELEBRATING

25 YEARS

OF LEADERSHIP!

The Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development celebrated a remarkable milestone this year: 25 years of leadership with NERCRD Director Stephan Goetz!

Since joining the Penn State faculty in 1999 as NERCRD's Director, Goetz has shaped its development as a high-performing organization that has made numerous contributions to the understanding and practice of rural community and economic development.

Highlights from the last quarter-century include:

\$4.2M

**in funding
distributed
externally through
multi-state
collaborations**

198

**scientific
publications**

16

**postdocs &
grad students
mentored**

38

**workshops &
conferences
convened**



Raising Stakeholder Awareness

NERCRD staff dedicated significant time and effort in 2024 to elevating the visibility of the Regional Rural Development Centers' work, especially to the policymakers who appropriate the Centers' core funding.



NERCRD participates in Pennsylvania's largest outdoor agricultural exposition

Ag Progress Days, hosted by the Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences, draws 45,000+ visitors from around the state and beyond. To prepare for the Center's first presence at this annual event, the entire NERCRD team collaborated on developing materials, including an interactive quiz, poster displays, and a presentation. Staff enjoyed interacting with visitors and sharing how the Regional Rural Development Centers support strong rural economies and a vibrant agricultural sector.

NERCRD attends Pennsylvania Ag Summit hosted by U.S. House Committee on Agriculture Chair Glenn Thompson

On August 12, NERCRD's Director and Associate Director had the opportunity to attend the sixth annual Pennsylvania Ag Summit hosted by the Chair of the U.S. House Committee on Agriculture, U.S. Representative Glenn "GT" Thompson (PA-15). The event took place at the Central Pennsylvania Institute of Science and Technology in Pleasant Gap, PA, with the goal of showcasing Pennsylvania's agriculture industry.

"In his closing remarks, Representative Thompson called out and thanked rural development organizations for their role in integrating and facilitating connections across the food system and helping farmers develop new business opportunities," said NERCRD Director Stephan Goetz. "Since that is central to our mission at NERCRD, it was particularly gratifying to hear. He also pointed to the important role played by Penn State Extension in helping farmers adopt agritourism strategies, to which the Center also has contributed in important ways." Read more and see photos from the event at: <https://bit.ly/4jL8r64>.

NERCRD launches new publication series for communicating its impacts

In preparation for the meetings in Washington, D.C., (see opposite page) the NERCRD team developed a series of ten one-page documents that outline the key research findings and impacts in several topic areas. These "NERCRD Digests" are available online at: <https://bit.ly/NERCRD-digest>.



NERCRD Director invited to join USDA Rural Prosperity Event

NERCRD Director Stephan Goetz served on a roundtable discussion about rural prosperity with U.S. Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Xochitl Torres Small and other governmental and non-governmental partners in agriculture to discuss efforts by USDA to create additional income opportunities for producers and entrepreneurs and more. Goetz spoke about the role of the Regional Rural Development Centers in supporting rural prosperity. During the event, which was held on April 23 in Erie, PA, Torres Small announced USDA’s plans to invest in 700 clean energy projects.

RRDCs convene in Washington for strategic planning and partnership development

Over three days in mid-September, the leadership teams of the nation’s four Regional Rural Development Centers (RRDCs) gathered in Washington, D.C., to engage in facilitated strategic planning discussions and to meet with federal and land-grant partners.

The meeting’s main goal was to identify best-practice strategies to activate and energize support and investments for the RRDCs, thereby enhancing their capacity to build and sustain research and Extension initiatives across the nation. The meeting also served to welcome the Western Rural Development Center’s new director, Dr. Paul Lewin (University of Idaho), and to strengthen relationships across the four Centers.

This was the first time such a meeting has taken place since 2008. It included participation from representatives from each of the Centers’ Board of Directors and Technical Advisory Committees and from the Regional Associations of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors and Extension Directors. Other participants included representatives from the Association of 1890s Extension Administrators, the Association of 1890s Research Directors, USDA NIFA, and the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU).



The strategic planning and partnership development meeting engaged 26 participants, including those pictured here. Front Row, L-R: Rich Bonanno, Bret Hess, Martha Ray Sartor, Maria Marshall, Michael Wilcox, Sarah Rocker, Heather Stephens, Michele Ely. Back row, L-R: Stephen Alessi, Mary Emery, Michael Gaffney, Jeanette Thurston, Paul Lewin, Gary Thompson, John Green, Richard Rhodes, Stephan Goetz, Wesley Whittaker, John Yang, Robin Shephard, Rosanne Scammahorn, Doreen Hauser-Lindstrom. Image credit: Kristina Parker, Purdue Extension, who facilitated the meetings.

Tourism, Agritourism, and Outdoor Recreation

NERCRD conducts research on the role of tourism, including agritourism, on economic resilience. NERCRD also provides critical support to several networks of Extension and research faculty working in these areas.

New Initiative

The Rural Tourism Institute: Leveraging Land-Grant Universities to Support Sustainable Rural Tourism Development in Appalachia

This project is funded by the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and is led by Doug Arbogast, Rural Tourism Development Extension Specialist at West Virginia University. The project team includes collaborators from North Carolina State Extension Tourism, the Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky, the Northeast and Southern Regional Rural Development Centers, prominent tourism industry consultants, and community partners across three Appalachian states. They will use the funds to plan the development of the Rural Tourism Institute, including three initiatives:



Source: Appalachian Regional Commission

- the Rural Tourism Academy, which will develop the industry's first Rural Tourism Executive Certification program;
- the Rural Tourism Lab, which will leverage academic faculty and students to fill critical data and intelligence gaps and provide planning and research support; and,
- the Rural Tourism Peer Network, which will provide facilitated networking and information sharing among practitioners.

Tourism, Resiliency, and Indicators for Post-Pandemic Planning (TRIP) project

The long-term goal of this USDA AFRI-funded project led by Doug Arbogast, West Virginia University Extension, is to enhance the sustainability and resiliency of rural destinations by providing research-based information and a destination management framework for rural gateway destinations. In 2024, the project team — which includes collaborators from the National Extension Tourism Design Team, Penn State, University of Vermont, University of New Hampshire, and the NERCRD — conducted visitor surveys in northwestern Pennsylvania, the Upper Valley region on the Vermont/New Hampshire border, and the Monongahela National Forest region of West Virginia. Visitor survey results are available in draft form on the project webpage: <https://nercrd.psu.edu/trip-homepage/>.

Creating an agritourism support system

This five-year USDA AFRI-funded project is led by NERCRD Faculty Affiliate Claudia Schmidt (Penn State). NERCRD supported the development of two research briefs aimed at distilling the 2022 Census of Agriculture data into accessible, digestible formats for use by agritourism operators and support organizations:

- Entsminger, Jason S., and Claudia Schmidt. 2024. "Agritourism and Recreational Services on US Farms: Data from the 2022 Census of Agriculture."
- Entsminger, Jason S., and Claudia Schmidt. 2024. "Direct-to-Consumer Sales of Agrifood Products by US Farms: Data from the 2022 Census of Agriculture."

Taken together they provide a snapshot of the national agritourism and direct-sales landscape and document recent changes across the industry. Stakeholders were made aware of these publications through a press release, social media, and inclusion in the NERCRD newsletter. Other project outputs include:

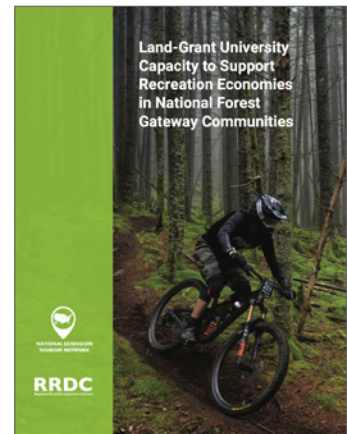
- Hollas, Chadley, Claudia Schmidt, Zheng Tian, Stephan Goetz, and Lisa Chase. 2024. "Insights and Oversights: Behind the Data on Agritourism and Direct Sales in the United States." *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*.
- Schmidt, Claudia, Luyi Han, Arian Moghadam, and Stephan J. Goetz. 2024. "Broadband Access and Agritourism Operations in the United States." *Journal of the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association*.
- Valdez, Rupa, and Claire Wellbeloved-Stone. 2024. "Accessibility in Rural Tourism and Agritourism." Presented at the National Extension Tourism (NET) Webinar, hosted by NET and NERCRD, organized and facilitated by Claudia Schmidt, March 28.



National Extension Outdoor Recreation Working Group (NEORWG)

NERCRD has been convening monthly meetings of the 18-member NEORWG Steering Committee since summer of 2023. Their goal is to establish a shared strategy and collaborative network for Extension programming related to the outdoor recreation economy. Recent accomplishments include:

- A project led by Doug Arbogast, West Virginia University, was selected to receive funding and assistance through the New Technologies for Ag Extension program operated by the Extension Foundation. This initiative documents the readiness of land-grant universities to support the development of recreation economies around U.S. national forests, and identifies the places best positioned to deploy resources for program implementation. The findings are published on the NERCRD website in a report titled, "Land-Grant University Capacity to Support Recreation Economies in National Forest Gateway Communities," along with two map resources. <https://bit.ly/3NrZ2e8>



- A new fact sheet developed by several steering committee members and NERCRD staff makes the case for Extension’s involvement in the outdoor recreation economy and provides examples of outdoor-recreation-focused Extension programming and sample job descriptions for Extension positions.
- A partnership that resulted from the working group between The Ohio State University (OSU) Extension and University of Minnesota Extension led to a \$40,000 grant from the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development small-grants program to customize an entrepreneurship curriculum for the outdoor recreation sector.



- The Appalachian Regional Commission project described on page 7 is a collaboration of several NEORWG members.
- A webinar hosted by NERCRD provided a platform for NEORWG members to hear from USDA RD staff about their data resources.
- These and more resources are available on the NEORWG website: <https://bit.ly/4b5easq>.

Food Systems, Nutrition Security, and Agriculture

From agricultural profitability and market opportunities to nutrition and environmental stewardship, NERCRD's work in this area helps communities make balanced and informed decisions about the many opportunities associated with local and regional food systems.

Northeast agriculture is “small but mighty”

Work exploring the changing contribution of Northeast agriculture is ongoing, most recently using the 2022 Census of Agriculture data, which was released in February 2024. An initial presentation was made at a conference in Baltimore, MD, sponsored by the University of Maryland Eastern Shore.

- Stephan J. Goetz, Yuxuan Pan, Zheng Tian and Claudia Schmidt, “The 2022 Census of Agriculture: Updates and emerging trends for the Northeast U.S.,” Presented at the NAPA 4th Biennial International Scientific Conference, May 24-26, 2024, Baltimore, MD.

Farm loss, transition, and succession

The NERCRD worked with Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture and Penn State Extension on developing a farmer transition survey, and will also help with analyzing results. This can help the NERCRD gain a better understanding of the impact farmer transitions have on rural communities and the rural economy, and assess the future contribution of the Northeast to the nation's food supply. NERCRD staff are exploring a similar project with University of Maryland Eastern Shore.

Demand thresholds for alcoholic beverage manufacturing

Building on earlier research (e.g., Cleary et al., 2019) to understand population thresholds needed to support a given number of establishments and tourism-related trails, NERCRD researchers are expanding this analysis to include alcoholic beverage manufacturing enterprises (breweries, cideries, distilleries). Preliminary results were presented at the Food Distribution Research Society conference in Puerto Rico in October.

- Goetz, Stephan J., Zheng Tian, Claudia Schmidt, and Yuxuan Pan. 2024. “Alcoholic Beverage Manufacturing Resilience during The Great Recession and the Covid-19 Pandemic.” October 21.
- Goetz also shared this work as an invited panelist at a USDA-sponsored roundtable on rural investments held in Erie, PA earlier this year. (See page 6.)

Effects of food insecurity on population mental health

NERCRD Graduate Researcher Yuxuan Pan led this research, conducted as part of her dissertation studies, and addresses three specific questions:

- How did unemployment, income loss, and food insufficiency induced by COVID-19 affect mental health?
- Which predictor is the most important?
- In addition, which subgroups were hit hardest by the hardships induced by COVID-19 and experienced more mental health disorders (i.e., anxiety)?

Pan found that the pandemic significantly impacted both food sufficiency and mental health, with food insufficiency having a larger negative impact on mental health than income loss. Larger effects were found in mortgage-paying households, among males, and in non-metro areas.

Other Food Systems, Nutrition Security, and Agriculture work underway:

NERCRD researchers continue to study food supply chains, most recently with a special focus on resilience vs. efficiency in the case of the dairy supply chain. They also have conducted analyses of inflation, especially inflation of food prices. They presented their preliminary findings at the Food Distribution Research Society in October:

- Goetz, Stephan J., and Zheng Tian. 2024. "Decomposition of the U.S. Dairy Supply Chain: Implications for Sustainability and Resilience in the Post-COVID Era." Presented at the Food Distribution Research Society 2024 Conference, Fajardo, PR, October 21.
- Tian, Zheng, Stephan J. Goetz, Claudia Schmidt, and Yuxuan Pan. 2024. "Comparing Food Price Inflation Experiences across the States." Presented at the Food Distribution Research Society 2024 Conference, Fajardo, PR, October 21.

They are also in the early stages of several analyses using the recently released 2022 Census of Agriculture Data.



NERCRD agritourism researchers honored with multiple awards

In addition to the USDA NIFA award described below, NERCRD Faculty Affiliate Claudia Schmidt was recognized this year by the Extension Committee on Extension and Policy (ECOP) with the “Northeast Region Excellence in Extension Award for an Individual” for her research-based agritourism Extension programming in Pennsylvania. Schmidt and her collaborators, including NERCRD Director Stephan Goetz, and Penn State Senior Extension Program Specialist Sarah Cornelisse were also recognized with the Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences 2024 Dennis and Janet Scanlon Integrated Team Research Award for their agritourism-focused collaborations. Congratulations, all!

Agritourism Research and Extension Collaborative honored with USDA NIFA National Partnership Award

Members of the Agritourism Research and Extension Collaborative, including NERCRD Faculty Affiliate Claudia Schmidt (Penn State), were recognized with a 2023 USDA NIFA Partnership Award for their multi-state work advancing agritourism. The award honors the collective efforts of a network of individuals that spans more than a dozen states at 11 Land-Grant Universities, and two community partner organizations who collaborated on several projects to advance agritourism nationally.

Their collaboration resulted in the development and deployment of the first national survey of agritourism operators. Led by Lisa Chase at the University of Vermont, the online survey was disseminated in collaboration with colleagues from the National Extension Tourism Network between November 2019 and February 2020, and received responses from all 50 states and Washington, D.C. It provided detailed data on producer motivations and challenges, farm profitability, firmographics, and demographics, resulting in important implications for policy and outreach related to agritourism. Learn more at: <https://bit.ly/42rn6Gv>.

Economic Development, Innovation, and Resilience

NERCRD conducts research on the causes and consequences of economic resilience and innovation, and supports outreach that empowers communities to create vibrant local economies.

New Initiative

NERCRD awarded funding to analyze how U.S. businesses approach energy self-sufficiency

NERCRD researchers and their collaborators will receive \$650,000 (beginning July 2024) over three years to study why, how, and where U.S. businesses are developing and adopting renewable energy sources — a process known as decarbonization — and how these decisions could affect rural communities. The project, funded by USDA NIFA, will be the first to use newly available federal data to examine decarbonization decisions at the level of individual firms, or for-profit enterprises. Goetz is leading the project team, which includes researchers from Penn State, the USDA Economic Research Service and the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education. Read the news release at: <https://bit.ly/42tf1kR>.



New Initiative

New grant from U.S. National Science Foundation to measure local innovation activity

NERCRD's Zheng Tian and Stephan J. Goetz, and their collaborator Timothy Wojan — an Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE) fellow — were awarded a two-year, \$300,000 grant from the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF) to develop a new method for accurately measuring innovation activity in small geographic regions. Their project endeavors to shed light on the factors that promote or hinder innovation among firms in different U.S. locations, as well as facilitate more targeted and effective local interventions to foster economic growth and social well-being.

"Researchers have not been able to effectively measure innovation's local prevalence or its impacts, due to a lack of data at the substate level," said Tian. "We will address this gap by developing methods for estimating innovation rates among firms in more localized smaller areas, such as counties or commuting zones."

The researchers named the new measure the Small Area Innovation Rate Estimation, or SAIRE. Learn more about the SAIRE project at: <https://bit.ly/4a5XXFL>.

Factors affecting the success of rural entrepreneurs and rural economic vitality

NERCRD has partnered on two projects focusing on different aspects of this topic:

Small business growth and entrepreneurship development (WVU AFRI subcontract).

Prior research suggests that expanding entrepreneurship or self-employment is a key strategy for promoting economic growth in rural, distressed regions. This project, led by Heather M. Stephens (West Virginia University), seeks to understand the factors that support or deter entrepreneurship and to translate these findings to help key stakeholders develop policies and programs to support entrepreneurs. Project objectives include:

- identifying the factors associated with higher shares of self-employed in rural counties using unique proprietary data;
- examining the factors associated with the success or failure of entrepreneurs using confidential firm-level micro data; and
- translating the research findings into Extension programming to support rural entrepreneurship and to promote broad rural prosperity.

Role of access to credit (Community Reinvestment Act; ERS cooperative agreement)

In collaboration with James Davis and Anil Rupasingha of USDA ERS, NERCRD researchers examined the impact of loans to business owners from the Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBCS) program of the USDA. The RBCS program aims to support rural entrepreneurs with funding, training, and expertise to launch and expand ventures, as well as access employment opportunities in agriculture. The initial work includes (1) starting a new research project within the Penn State Research Data Center (RDC), (2) importing the transaction-level RBCS data from ERS to Penn State RDC, and (3) matching the businesses in the RBCS data set with those in Census Bureau's establishment-level data sets, such as the County Business Patterns Business Register and the Longitudinal Business Database.

The researchers investigated whether the effects varied between metro and nonmetro areas. According to the statistically significant findings, the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) designation increased residence-based employment in CRA-designated tracts. They also observed that these effects were higher in tracts located in non-metropolitan areas compared to metro areas.

Exploring the caregiving experiences of households in the Northeast U.S.

In 2023, NERCRD partnered with the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development (NCRCRD) and the Penn State Department of Agricultural Engineering to deploy a survey in the Northeast region focused on the caregiving experiences of households in the Northeast U.S. The survey received 4,480 responses from all 13 states in the region, and sheds light on how caregiving intersects with community and economic development. The research team prepared three “research snapshots” to share their findings:

- The economic and social well-being of caregivers in the Northeast Region
- What supports do caregivers in the Northeast use and what support do they still need?
- The complex picture of caregivers’ health and well-being in the Northeast region



The research snapshots were developed by Florence Becot, Elena Pojman, and Emily Southard (all from Penn State) and Shoshanah Inwood (The Ohio State University). The team also prepared similar research snapshots using data from the North Central region.

The survey development was led by Inwood in collaboration with the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development (NCRCRD), and is part of a larger effort by NCRCRD to build regional open-access datasets to facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration across states. Access the snapshots and datasets here: <https://bit.ly/40NXTVP>.

Demonstrating broadband’s role in agritourism and exports

- NERCRD-led research published in *Telecommunications Policy* in August shows that U.S. firms that use cloud computing services are more likely to export their products and services. The findings were stronger for firms located outside of large cities, demonstrating the need for expanded availability of the high-speed internet required for cloud computing to support economic development. Read the news release at <https://bit.ly/3DMZWjW>.
- NERCRD researchers also found that the availability and adoption of high-speed broadband appears to boost the number of farms offering agritourism activities. Their findings, which were published in the *Journal of the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association*, bolster the argument for expanding broadband availability in support of farm operators who want to benefit from the growing consumer interest in on-farm experiences. Read the news release at <https://bit.ly/4715r56>.

Study shows innovation is linked to international exports for both rural and urban firms

U.S. firms actively engaged in creating innovative products or processes are more likely to expand into international markets, according to a study published in *Economics Letters*. The findings, which apply to both rural and urban companies, could inform efforts aimed at boosting U.S. exports.

The team — led by NERCRD Postdoctoral Scholar Luyi Han — examined the effect of several factors on a firm’s decision to engage in international trade, including innovation activities, owner characteristics and firm characteristics. They found that firms, or for-profit commercial enterprises, that are more innovative are more likely to engage in exports, as are older and larger firms or those with multiple owners.

Read the news release at: <https://bit.ly/42jiouJ>.

Other Economic Development, Resilience and Innovation activities underway:

- A new Multi-State Hatch Project launched this year to support regional research collaborations in the areas of:
 - building regional capacity and facilitating the integration of research and outreach
 - supporting rural economic development, entrepreneurship, and innovation
 - facilitating tourism development, including agritourism
 - measuring and promoting food and nutrition security
- NERCRD researchers are planning additional research projects focused on:
 - population change in rural areas
 - workforce development (e.g., construction, logging, other)
 - loss of rural services, such as health care, pharmacies, etc.
 - housing and rental property affordability at the county-level nationwide, to identify areas with a prime need for housing development (inc. prevalence of zoning and other regulations; how housing and rental affordability vary across the country for different age cohorts)
- Data from a baseline rural development survey (conducted jointly with the North Central and Southern Rural Development Centers) will be available in Spring 2025.

Capacity Building and Facilitation

NERCRD serves as a regional hub for our Land-Grant University (LGU) partners, linking research and Extension faculty across state lines. By facilitating collaborative networks and partnerships, we enhance the capacity of the LGU system, so that its people can work more effectively to foster regional prosperity and rural development.

New Initiative

Addressing widespread housing challenges through capacity building

NERCRD Associate Director Stephen Alessi has partnered with University of New Hampshire (UNH) Extension's Scott Slattery to co-lead a regional working group aimed at expanding UNH's award-winning "Housing Academy" in the region. At UNH, Housing Academy participants learn about the various aspects of their community's housing problems, how these issues affect residents and communities, how land-use zoning impacts housing, and how they can engage community members in identifying local solutions. The goal of this working group will be to help other Extension programs in the region adopt and adapt the Housing Academy curriculum for delivery in their communities.

Alessi has also partnered with Penn State Extension on developing its 2025 Land Use Webinar Series, which will include a session on housing and will feature UNH Extension (see page 18).

To get involved with the regional housing working group, contact Alessi at spa15@psu.edu.

Expanding capacity to promote digital opportunities

The Northeast Digital Equity Summit, which took place September 19, 2023, provided an opportunity for Land-Grant University educators and researchers across the Northeast region to learn from one another and expand capacity for digital equity programming in the Northeast. In 2024, NERCRD staff continued work in this area by:

- Publishing "Insights from the 2023 Northeast Digital Equity Summit: A Report on the Role of Extension Programs." This report was written by University of Maryland Extension staff member Julie Slivka, with editorial and publishing support by NERCRD.
- Convening a national webinar on "The BEAD (Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment) Broadband Navigator."
- Participating as a panelist on a Maryland Digital Equity Summit taking place in October 2024 (S. Alessi).

Access these resources and recordings from the Summit at: <https://bit.ly/499aB2U>.

New Initiative

NERCRD webinar series engages new audiences, expands regional capacity for community development

NERCRD Associate Director Stephen Alessi wasted no time after his June 2024 arrival in launching several new outreach initiatives. Among these is a NERCRD webinar series aimed at facilitating collaboration in the region and expanding the Land Grant system's capacity to address important community development issues. Two webinars were held in 2024, and recordings and resources are available online:



- Ladlee, Jim, Harry Crissy, Tom Beresnyak, and Dana Ollendyke. 2024. **The BEAD (Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment) Broadband Navigator**. September 24. <https://bit.ly/3AUGjoC>.
- Turack, John and Neal Fogle. (2024). **Local Community Implementation of Active Transportation Plans**. December 10. <https://bit.ly/4aNOLnw>.

The webinars enabled the NERCRD to reach new stakeholder groups, resulting in an 19% increase in NERCRD's newsletter audience.

Webinar topics under consideration for 2025 include:

- Addressing food waste and food insecurity at the community level, featuring the University of Rhode Island
- Rural health and wellbeing
- Rural population trends
- Land-grant capacity for supporting recreation economies
- An update from the Tourism, Resiliency, and Indicators for Post-Pandemic Planning (TRIP) project
- Insights on farm transition planning with the PA Department of Agriculture
- Caregiving in the Northeast

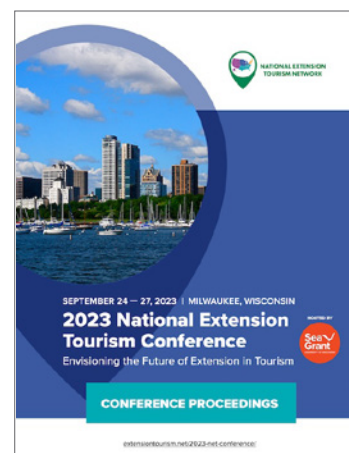
Alessi has also partnered with Penn State Extension and the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association on organizing a separate webinar series focused on land use. The Land Use Webinar Series will provide monthly in-depth presentations on land-use topics for landowners/managers, farmers, elected and appointed officials, developers, and community members who are involved in decision-making processes regarding using or preserving natural resources and the Commonwealth's land base. While the topics will focus on issues pertinent to Pennsylvania, many of these issues are relevant to communities throughout the Northeast, and the webinar series is open to all. More information is available at: <https://bit.ly/3XvttW5>.

Supporting and facilitating several knowledge-sharing networks

NERCRD's role as a networking hub helps foster new connections and collaborations across the Land Grant system. Here are some recent examples.

National Extension Tourism Network (NET)

To increase access to the impactful work presented at the 2023 National Extension Tourism Conference, NET has published its 2023 conference proceedings. Project management support was provided by Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development employees Kim Boonie and Kristen Devlin. Publication design was provided by Wisconsin Sea Grant. The volume contains nine submissions from the 2023 NET Conference, which are divided into three sections/themes: Agritourism, Rural Tourism, and Engaging with Specific Audiences. It is available at: <https://extensiontourism.net/category/publications/>



NERCRD's Kristen Devlin also continued to provide communications support to the network, serving as the co-chair of the NET Communications Committee (with April Turner, South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium) and maintaining the network's listerv and website. Learn more about NERCRD's longstanding partnership with NET at: <https://nercrd.psu.edu/projects/national-extension-tourism-network/>

Community and Economic Development Extension Program Leaders

NERCRD Director Stephan Goetz and Associate Director Stephen Alessi participate in monthly meetings of the Community and Economic Development Extension Program Leaders from the Northeast. These meetings are hosted by the Northeast Extension Directors and provide an opportunity for Northeast Extension Community and Economic Development educators to collaborate and build capacity and program knowledge.

National Extension Climate Initiative (NECI)

In a relatively new partnership, NERCRD and NECI are collaborating on short-term strategic planning aimed at identifying long-term solutions to the organization's recurring communications needs. NECI's current chair, David Kay (Cornell University) is a longtime member of NERCRD's Technical Advisory Committee.

NACDEP award recognizes RRDCs Listening Session team

A national team that included University of Maine’s Jason Entsminger and NERCRD’s Stephan Goetz and Kristen Devlin was recognized as the Regional Runner Up for the Excellence in Teamwork award for their National Listening Session initiative. The award was given by the National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals (NACDEP). Other members of this team include RRDC colleagues John Green, Grace Langford, and Rachel Welborn of the Southern Rural Development Center; Maria Marshall, Michael Wilcox, Renee Wiatt, and Zuzana Bednarik of the North Central Rural Development Center; and Betsy Newman and Don Albrecht, formerly of the Western Rural Development Center. Learn more about the Listening Sessions Initiative at: <https://bit.ly/3SkD8wE>.



Stephan Goetz (left) and Jason Entsminger received the award at the NACDEP conference on behalf of the team.

Coming to the Northeast in 2025!



National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals Conference
 June 9-12 | Charleston, WV
<https://www.nacdep.net/2025-nacdep-conference>



Community Development Society Conference
 July 6-9 | Geneva, NY
<https://cdsociety.org/2025cdsconference/>



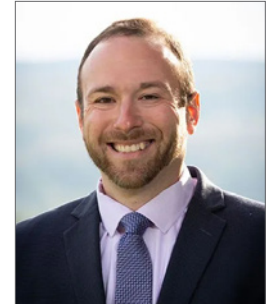
2025 NETtra Tourism Conference
 A joint conference of the National Extension Tourism Network and Northeast Chapter of the Travel and Tourism Research Association
 October 7-10 | Meredith, NH
<https://www.nettra.org/2025-annual-conference.html>



Administrative Updates

Stephen Alessi joins NERCRD as Associate Director

NERCRD is very pleased to welcome Stephen Alessi, who joined as Associate Director in June. In this role, Alessi is leading the NERCRD's outreach and Extension-oriented activities by fostering and strengthening the Center's relationships with Northeast Land-Grant universities and rural development partners, and by identifying and responding to opportunities for cross-state collaborations and sharing of programs.



Alessi brings a wealth of experience within the Cooperative Extension System. Before joining the NERCRD, he served for seven years as a Client Relationship Manager for Penn State Extension, overseeing six counties in northeastern PA. In this role, he worked with Extension stakeholders to raise awareness of the breadth of Extension products and services available, to identify local issues and needs, and to assist program teams in bringing the full resources of Extension to address these issues. Learn more about Stephen at <https://bit.ly/2024nercrdAD>.

Dr. Minsu Kim joins NERCRD as newest postdoctoral scholar



The NERCRD team is also very pleased to welcome the newest postdoctoral scholar, Dr. Minsu Kim, who joined the Center in October. Kim is an energy, environmental, and urban/regional economist who focuses on topics in energy transition and urban/regional sustainability, with an emphasis on optimal policy, technology adoption, consumer behavior, and local policy implementation. While at the NERCRD, he will support its overall research mission and also engage in two specific research projects: analyzing how U.S. businesses approach energy independence and measuring local innovation activity (see p. 13).

Kim holds a dual doctoral degree in economics and agricultural, food, and resource economics from Michigan State University; a master of city planning in environmental studies from Seoul National University in Seoul, South Korea; and a bachelor of science in chemistry from Pohang University of Science and Technology in Pohang, South Korea. Learn more about Minsu at: nercrd.psu.edu/welcoming-minsu-kim/.

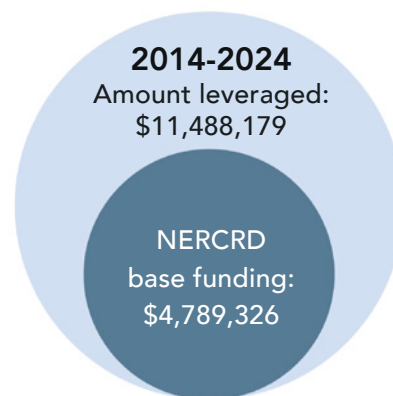
Congratulations and farewell to Dr. Yuxuan Pan!

Congratulations to Yuxuan Pan, a NERCRD research assistant, who successfully defended her doctoral dissertation in Agricultural Economics on October 7! Pan's dissertation explores the impacts of COVID-19 on mental health, disparities in nutritional quality, and the effects of soda taxes on household purchases. Pan joined the University of Kentucky as a postdoctoral researcher in December.



NERCRD Funding Snapshot

Over the last decade, the NERCRD generated \$2.40 in external grants each year for every \$1.00 in base funding.



Through its core federal investment, the NERCRD is able to build strong collaborative networks in the Northeast and across regions and work across federal, state, and private agencies to secure funding with partners to address the nation’s pressing rural development issues. NERCRD’s 2023 grant portfolio included:

Title	Sponsor	Start Date	End Date	Amount
Core Funding:				
The Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development - FY2021	USDA NIFA	9/1/21	8/31/24	\$494,027
The Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development - FY2022	USDA NIFA	9/1/22	8/31/25	\$599,100
The Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development - FY2023	USDA NIFA	9/1/23	8/31/25	\$704,232
The Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development - FY2024	USDA NIFA	9/1/24	8/31/25	\$617,167
Leveraged Funding:				
Creating an Effective Support System for Small and Medium-Sized Farm Operators to Succeed in Agritourism (C. Schmidt PD)	USDA NIFA	7/1/20	6/30/25	\$498,051**
Minority- and Women-Owned Businesses, Food Security, Innovation, and Access to Credit in Rural America (A. Rupasingha PD)	USDA Economic Research Service	9/1/22	8/31/25	\$349,986* \$459,983**
Rural Community Well-Being: Using Tourism Indicators to Identify, Understand and Address COVID-19 Pandemic Impacts and Strategies for Resiliency (D. Arbogast PD)	USDA NIFA via West Virginia University	9/1/22	12/31/25	\$200,301* \$522,995**
Factors Affecting the Success of Female and Minority Rural Entrepreneurs and Rural Economic Vitality (H. Stephens PD)	USDA NIFA via West Virginia University	5/15/23	5/14/26	\$143,905* \$649,915**
Climate Change and Decarbonization: Firm-level Insights from the 2023 Annual Business Survey and Implications for Rural Communities	USDA NIFA	7/1/24	6/30/27	\$650,000
EAGER: PBI: Assessing Societal and Economic Impacts of Place-Based Innovation with Small Area Innovation Rate Estimation	National Science Foundation	9/1/24	8/31/26	\$299,998

* NERCRD portion

** Total amount granted, including NERCRD portion

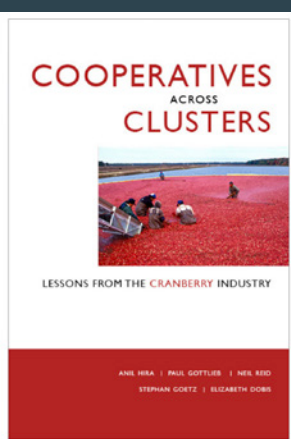
Publications and Presentations

Selected peer-reviewed publications

- Ge, Houtian, Jing Yi, Stephan J. Goetz, Rebecca Cleary, and Miguel I. Gómez. 2024. "Determining the Optimal Food Hub Location in the Fresh Produce Supply Chain." *Journal of Modelling in Management*, August. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JM2-02-2024-0042>.
- Han, Luyi, and John V. Winters. "Did the U.S. Fracking Boom Shale Shock Regional Patenting?" *Growth and Change*, 55, no. 4 (December 2024): e12740. <https://doi.org/10.1111/grow.12740>.
- Han, Luyi, Zheng Tian, Timothy R. Wojan, and Stephan J. Goetz. 2024. "Testing Biasedness of Self-Reported Microbusiness Innovation in the Annual Business Survey." *Plos ONE*, January. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0296667>.
- Han, Luyi, Timothy R. Wojan, and Stephan J. Goetz. 2024. "Cloud Computing and Rural Globalization: Evidence for the U.S. Nonfarm Economy." *Telecommunications Policy* 48 (8): 102814. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.telpol.2024.102814>.
- Han, Luyi, Timothy R. Wojan, Zheng Tian, and Stephan J. Goetz. 2024. "How Export Performance Is Mediated by Innovation, Owner Characteristics, and Location." *Economics Letters* 237 (April):111657. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econlet.2024.111657>.
- Hollas, Chadley, Claudia Schmidt, Zheng Tian, Stephan Goetz, and Lisa Chase. 2024. "Insights and Oversights: Behind the Data on Agritourism and Direct Sales in the United States." *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, August 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2024.134.005>.
- Schmidt, Claudia, Luyi Han, Arian Moghadam, and Stephan J. Goetz. 2024. "Broadband Access and Agritourism Operations in the United States." *Journal of the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association*, June, jaa2.128. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jaa2.128>.

Books

- Hira, Anil, Paul D. Gottlieb, Neil Reid, Stephan J. Goetz, and Elizabeth Dobis. 2024. *Cooperatives Across Clusters Lessons from the Cranberry Industry*. Oregon State University Press.

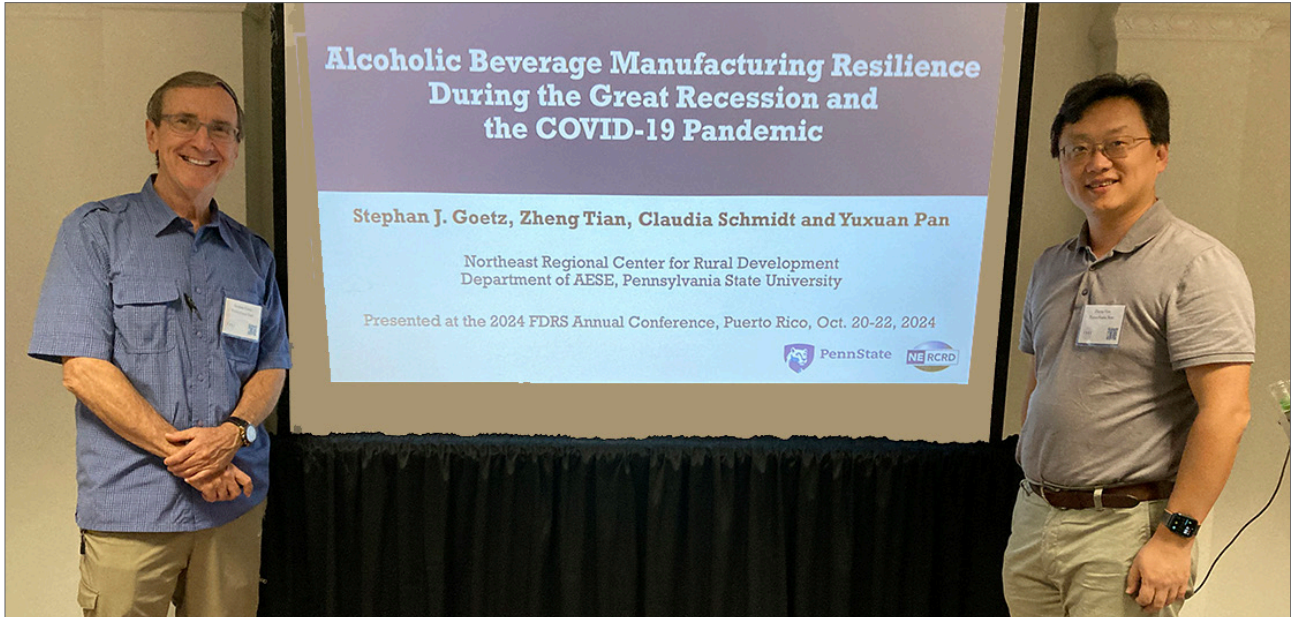


From the publisher: "Most agricultural production is of commodity or undifferentiated products. Producers suffer from a roller-coaster ride of price swings, over- or under-production, weather and pest threats, and the inability of family farmers to capture anything beyond a small percentage of the final price. *Cooperatives Across Clusters* provides lessons from the cranberry industry, a commodity product organized mostly into family farms in seven different clusters around North America. The industry is remarkable in that it's nearly organized around one large cooperative, Ocean Spray. The authors examine how the cooperative came to be, the challenges of coordination and industry leadership across the diverging clusters, and the lessons for cooperation for other agricultural industries." Learn more at: <https://bit.ly/4hDApbp>.

Selected presentations

- Devlin, Kristen, Zheng Tian, Claudia Schmidt, and Stephan J. Goetz. 2024. "From Academic Circles to Public Squares: Transforming Research into National News." Presented at the Food Distribution Research Society 2024 Conference, Fajardo, PR, October 23.
- Eades, Daniel, Doug Arbogast, and Stephan J. Goetz. 2024. "Integrated Partnerships to Enhance Rural Tourism Economies." Presented at the Southern Regional Science Association Meeting, Washington, D.C., April 5.
- Eades, Daniel, Doug Arbogast, Luyi Han, and Stephan J. Goetz. 2024a. "Developing and Deploying Rural Sustainable Tourism Indicators for Improved Destination Management." Presented at the Travel and Tourism Research Association 54th Annual International Conference, Burlington, VT, June 12.
- Eades, Daniel, Doug Arbogast, Luyi Han, and Stephan J. Goetz. 2024b. "Identification and Perceptions of Sustainable Tourism Indicators in Rural America: Identifying Secondary Indicators with Academics and Destination Stakeholders." Presented at the Travel and Tourism Research Association, Burlington, VT, June 12.
- Goetz, Stephan J. 2024b. "The Regional Rural Development Centers and Rural Prosperity." Panel Discussion presented at the USDA Investing in Rural America Roundtable, Erie, PA, April 23.
- Goetz, Stephan J., Yuxuan Pan, Zheng Tian, and Claudia Schmidt. 2024. "The 2022 Census of Agriculture: Updates and Emerging Trends for the Northeast U.S." Presented at the Association of Nepalese Agricultural Professionals of Americas 4th Scientific Conference, Baltimore, MD, May 24.
- Goetz, Stephan J. and Zheng Tian. 2024. "Decomposition of the U.S. Dairy Supply Chain: Implications for Sustainability and Resilience in the Post-COVID Era." Presented at the Food Distribution Research Society 2024 Conference, Fajardo, PR, October.
- Goetz, Stephan J., Zheng Tian, Claudia Schmidt, and Yuxuan Pan. 2024. "Alcoholic Beverage Manufacturing Resilience during The Great Recession and the Covid-19 Pandemic." Presented at the Food Distribution Research Society 2024 Conference, Fajardo, PR, October.
- Han, Luyi, Stephan J. Goetz, Anil Rupasingha, and Timothy R. Wojan. 2024. "Rural Innovative Firms and Credit: Findings from the Annual Business Survey." Presented at the 2024 Meeting of the Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology, Hyattsville, MD, October 22-24.
- Han, Luyi, Anil Rupasingha, and Stephan J. Goetz. 2024. "Impact of Community Reinvestment Act on Farm Loans." Presented at the Southern Regional Science Association Meeting, Washington, D.C., April 6.
- Han, Luyi, Zheng Tian, Timothy R. Wojan, and Stephan J. Goetz. 2024a. "How Export Performance Is Mediated by Varieties of Innovation, Owner Characteristics, and Location." Poster presented at the American Economic Association Annual Meeting, San Antonio, TX, January 5.
- Pan, Yuxuan, Linlin Fan, and Stephan J. Goetz. 2024. "The Effect of Soda Taxes on Beverage and Candy Purchases." Presented at the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association annual meeting, New Orleans, LA, July 29.
- Tian, Zheng, and Stephan J. Goetz. 2024. "Generational Population Shifts and Housing Affordability: A County-Level Analysis in the United States." Presented at the North American Regional Science Council Meeting, New Orleans, LA, November 14.

(Continued on next page.)



Stephan Goetz (left) and Zheng Tian presented three papers at the Food Distribution Research Society conference, which took place in Fajardo, PR, in October.

Selected presentations (continued)

- Tian, Zheng, Stephan J. Goetz, Claudia Schmidt, and Yuxuan Pan. 2024. "Comparing Food Price Inflation Experiences across the States." Presented at the Food Distribution Research Society 2024 Conference, Fajardo, PR, October 21.
- Tian, Zheng, Luyi Han, Timothy R. Wojan, Stephan J. Goetz, and Anil Rupasingha. 2024. "User Entrepreneurship and Firm Employment Growth." Poster presented at the American Economic Association Annual Meeting, San Antonio, TX, January 5.
- Tian, Zheng, Jiakai Zhang, and Yong Chen. 2024. "Navigating the Storm: Assessing Government Transfers and Employment Outcomes in Hurricane-Affected U.S. Counties." Presented at the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association annual meeting, New Orleans, LA, July 30.
- Tian, Zheng, Minsu Kim, David Kay, and Stephan J. Goetz. 2024. "Changes in Renewable Energy Production on U.S. Farms, 2012-2022: A State-Level Analysis." Presented at the North American Regional Science Council Meeting, New Orleans, LA, November 14.
- Wojan, Timothy R., Zheng Tian, Luyi Han, and Stephan J. Goetz. 2024. "Can the Annual Business Survey Borrow Strength from the Economic Census? The Feasibility of Small Area Innovation Rate Estimation." Presented at the Southern Regional Science Association Meeting, Washington, D.C., April 5.
- Wojan, Timothy R., Zheng Tian, Luyi Han, Stephan J. Goetz, and Justin Winikoff. 2024. "The Why, How, and Where of Industrial Decarbonization: Questions to Investigate Using the 2023 Annual Business Survey." Presented at the North American Regional Science Council Meeting, New Orleans, LA, November 15.

Non-technical publications

- Arbogast, Doug, Stephan J. Goetz, and Kristen Devlin. 2024. "Land-Grant University Capacity to Support Recreation Economies Across U.S. Regions." National Extension Tourism and NERCRD.
- Becot, Florence, Shoshanah Inwood, and Emily Southard. "The Economic and Social Well-Being of Caregivers in the Northeast Region." Research Brief. Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development, July 10, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.22004/ag.econ.344226>.
- Deng, Jinyang, Doug Arbogast, and Stephan J. Goetz. 2024. "Visitors' Travel Behavior and Perceptions of the Monongahela National Forest Region." NERCRD.
- Deng, Jinyang, Doug Arbogast, Yuan Zhuang, and Stephan J. Goetz. 2024. "Visitors' Travel Behavior and Perceptions of the Allegheny National Forest Region." NERCRD.
- Deng, Jinyang, Doug Arbogast, and Stephan J. Goetz. 2024. "Visitors' Travel Behavior and Perceptions of the Upper Valley Region." NERCRD. Forthcoming.
- Entsminger, Jason S., and Claudia Schmidt. 2024a. "Agritourism and Recreational Services on US Farms: Data from the 2022 Census of Agriculture." 2024–1. NERCRD Data Brief. <https://bit.ly/4c66LJe>.
- Entsminger, Jason S., and Claudia Schmidt. 2024b. "Direct-to-Consumer Sales of Agrifood Products by US Farms: Data from the 2022 Census of Agriculture." 2024–2. NERCRD Data Brief. <https://bit.ly/4c66LJe>.
- Pojman, E., Becot, F., Inwood, S. (2024, October 18). "The Complex Picture of Caregivers' Health and Well-Being in the Northeast Region." NERCRD Research Brief. doi: 10.22004/ag.econ.347372.
- Southard, E., Becot, F., and Inwood, S. (2024, October 9). "What supports do caregivers in the Northeast use and what support do they still need?" NERCRD Research Brief. doi: 10.22004/ag.econ.347197.
- Slivka, Julie. 2024. "Insights from the 2023 Northeast Digital Equity Summit: A Report on the Role of Extension Programs." NERCRD. <https://bit.ly/499aB2U>.
- NERCRD 25-Year Retrospective, forthcoming.
- NERCRD. 2024. "Advancing Agritourism." NERCRD Digest. August 2024. <https://nercrd.psu.edu/pubs/advancing-agritourism/>.
- NERCRD. 2024. "Detecting Food Shortages Using X." NERCRD Digest. September 2024. <https://nercrd.psu.edu/pubs/meeting-emergency-food-needs/>.
- NERCRD. 2024. "Food Insufficiency and Anxiety." NERCRD Digest. September 2024. <https://nercrd.psu.edu/pubs/food-insufficiency-and-anxiety/>.
- NERCRD. 2024. "Innovation in Rural Firms." NERCRD Digest. August 2024. <https://nercrd.psu.edu/pubs/innovation-in-rural-firms/>.
- NERCRD. 2024. "Meeting Emergency Food Needs." NERCRD Digest. August 2024. <https://nercrd.psu.edu/pubs/meeting-emergency-food-needs/>.
- NERCRD. 2024. "Natural Resources and Innovation." NERCRD Digest. September 2024. <https://nercrd.psu.edu/pubs/natural-resources-and-innovation/>.
- NERCRD. 2024. "Rural Tourism During COVID-19." NERCRD Digest. August 2024. <https://nercrd.psu.edu/pubs/rural-tourism-during-covid-19/>.
- NERCRD. 2024. "Tourism and Outdoor Recreation." NERCRD Digest. August 2024. <https://nercrd.psu.edu/pubs/tourism-and-outdoor-recreation/>.

(Continued on next page.)

News releases and newsletters

- Devlin, Kristen. 2024. "High-Speed Internet Linked to More Farms Offering Agritourism," June 25, 2024. <https://bit.ly/4715r56>.
- Devlin, Kristen. 2024. "Innovation Linked to International Exports for Both Rural and Urban Firms." Penn State News, March 28, 2024. <https://bit.ly/42jiouJ>.
- Devlin, Kristen. 2024. "Researchers Earn NSF Grant to Measure Local Innovation Activity." Penn State News, August 13, 2024. <https://www.psu.edu/news/research/story/researchers-earn-nsf-grant-measure-local-innovation-activity/>.
- Devlin, Kristen. 2024. "US Companies' Global Market Reach Linked to Cloud Computing Use." Penn State News, August 12, 2024. <https://bit.ly/3DMZWjW>.
- NERC RD. 2024. "2023 NERC RD Annual Report." <https://bit.ly/3uz2ZYr>
- NERC RD. 2024. "Events, Opportunities, and Resources, March 2024 Edition," March 5, 2024. <https://mailchi.mp/021e2bcf59c0/nercrd-news-march-2024-6718502>.
- NERC RD. 2024. "NERCRD Newsletter, April 2024 Edition," April 29, 2024. <https://mailchi.mp/7cb4ec5e2820/nercrd-news-april-2024-6725737>.
- NERC RD. 2024. "NERCRD Newsletter, August 2024 Edition," August 22, 2024. <https://mailchi.mp/bc77633df402/nercrd-news-august-2024-6742961>.
- NERC RD. 2024. "NERCRD Newsletter, February 2024 Edition," February 7, 2024. <https://mailchi.mp/fd6de8deffee/nercrd-news-feb-2024-6687942>.
- NERC RD. 2024. "NERCRD Newsletter, June 2024 Edition," June 6, 2024. <https://mailchi.mp/76c122ff6db1/nercrd-news-june-2024-6741926>.
- NERC RD. 2024. "NERCRD Newsletter, November 2024 Edition," November 5, 2024. <https://mailchi.mp/241f43706b3f/nercrd-news-november-2024-6744034>
- NERC RD. 2024. "NERCRD Newsletter, December 2024 Edition," December 9, 2024. <https://mailchi.mp/7927d2b5243a/nercrd-news-november-2024-6744639>

Selected webinars organized and/or facilitated by NERC RD

- Ladlee, Jim, Harry Crissy, Tom Beresnyak, and Dana Ollendyke. 2024. "The BEAD (Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment) Broadband Navigator." Presented at the NERC RD webinar series, September 24.
- Turack, John and Neal Fogle. (2024). Local Community Implementation of Active Transportation Plans. NERC RD Webinar. December 10.
- Valdez, Rupa, and Claire Wellbeloved-Stone. 2024. "Accessibility in Rural Tourism and Agritourism." Presented at the National Extension Tourism (NET) Webinar, Hosted by NET and NERC RD, organized and facilitated by Claudia Schmidt, March 28.

About the Regional Rural Development Centers

The Regional Rural Development Centers (RRDCs) are regionally focused centers funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) to link research with Extension/outreach in the areas of rural economic development, forming a one-stop-shop connection to the nationwide network of Land-Grant college and university researchers, educators, and practitioners.

Established by the Rural Development Act of 1972, the RRDCs are a trusted source of economic and community development data, decision tools, education, and guidance for the nation's rural communities, and build capacity in the Land-Grant University System to address crucial needs in our nation's rural communities development issues. Learn more at rrdc.info.

50 YEARS RRDC
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