



Items of Interest



Letter from the Director:

[John J. Green](#)

As we have reported through several outlets, including *Around the South*, 2024 marked the fiftieth anniversary of operations for the Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC). Established under the Rural Development Act of 1972, the nation's four Regional Rural Development Centers have focused attention on building the capacity of the Land-Grant System to advance quality of life and wellbeing through research and Extension with support from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The SRDC's first plan of work was officially approved in 1974 and reflecting on this history as we approach celebration of Thanksgiving in 2024, there is so much to be grateful for in our work.

Of special mention are the many collaborations between individuals and organizations working together across social, institutional, and state boundaries for the benefit of rural communities. As demonstrated in this and previous issues of *Around the South*, such partnerships provide a strong basis for a brighter future in rural America.

To view previous issues of SRDC's newsletter, *Around the South*, please visit:
<https://srdc.msstate.edu/newsletters/ats>

Webinars:

BEAD (Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment) Broadband Navigator: Empowering Tomorrow's Digital Nation Through Local Projects Convening

In partnership with the Rockefeller Foundation, Penn State Extension and the Southern Rural Development Center are excited to co-host a convening designed to share new, publicly available, spatial analysis tools important for local community broadband development projects.

The online meeting will be held:
December 5th, 2024
10 AM – Noon CT
9 AM – 11 AM ET

Follow this link to register for this webinar: https://msudafvm.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1F8ieGwkND7GbAi

For more information or questions, contact Dana Ollendyke at dgm428@psu.edu.

SERA-47 Local and Regional Food Systems Virtual Annual Meeting

We are happy to announce the 2024 SERA-47 Virtual Annual Meeting. Attendees will participate in a half-day virtual meeting with engaging and informative discussions and presentations on best practices in local and regional food systems. The meeting date is Tuesday, December 10, 2024.



Tuesday, December 10: 10:00AM – 1:00PM CT/11:00AM – 2:00PM ET

- Welcome
- Lightning Talks
- Discussion Panel

A more detailed schedule will follow in the coming weeks.

Register here:

https://msstateextension.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJErDOypqTguGdC6GUh1_ltlpxanmYD8Q9x1

For disability accommodation, please contact Grace Langford at grace.langford@msstate.edu or 662-325-3207.

Webinar to be held Winter/Spring 2025:

Who Will Fill My Shoes: Succession Planning for Land Owners and Family Businesses

Dates of Webinar (5-Part Series):

- **Module 1: January 22**
- **Module 2: January 29**
- **Module 3: February 5**
- **Module 4: February 12**
- **Module 5: February 19**

Time of Webinars:

2:00PM ET/1:00 PM CT/12:00 PM MT/11:00 AM PT

To register for the webinars, please visit: https://msudafvm.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2aRrKSK3aF7ady6

Not knowing where to start in succession planning is often paralyzing. In *Who Will Fill My Shoes: Succession Planning for Land Owners, Farmers, Forest Owners, and Family Businesses*, participants will learn about the following components of succession planning:

- **M1: Communication and Conflict in Succession**
- **M2: Key Players in Succession: Who Should Be Involved?**
- **M3: Legal and Business Structures**
- **M4: Road mapping and Goals in Succession: Who, When and How to Transfer?**
- **M5: Meeting Planning and Coordination for Succession**

Succession planning encompasses many emotional and financial aspects of a family and a business, making decisions and moving forward more difficult. This research-based curriculum with integrated and comprehensive handouts will give participants the confidence they need to learn strategies for moving succession forward with their property or business. Both soft and hard skills are covered in the materials and will empower owners to develop and implement their succession plan.

For disability accommodation, please contact Roseanne Scammahorn at r.scammahorn@msstate.edu or 662-325-3207.

SRDC Repository Readership Snapshot Update: October 2024

The Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC) hosts new and archived publications on Mississippi State University's platform, Scholars Junction, which allows users to explore published content from the Center and its partners. Through this system, the Center also receives updates pertaining to readership of these published materials. Readership activity highlights from October 2024 are listed below:

- *Breaking Barriers: Examining Heirs' Property Legislation and Access to USDA Programs*, in partnership with the Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Policy Research Center at Alcorn State University **had 72 full-text downloads**. The post popular paper was *Examining the Efficacy of the Uniform Partition of Heirs' Property Act in Georgia and Alabama and Its Relevance to Kentucky* with **41 downloads**. To view the articles from this series, visit <https://scholarsjunction.msstate.edu/srdctopics-breakingbarriers/>
- *SRDC Annual Reports* from 2015, 2017, and 2009 were also a highly accessed topic area with **48 full-text downloads**. View the above-mentioned annual reports and others at <https://scholarsjunction.msstate.edu/srdc-annual-reports/>
- *CREATE BRIDGES* had **24 downloads**. *Extended Publication: Measuring the Impact Economic Pull Factors Have on the Tier Status of the CREATE BRIDGES Counties in Western North Carolina* was the most downloaded publication at **6 downloads**. To view the CREATE BRIDGES briefs and extended publications, please visit <https://scholarsjunction.msstate.edu/srdctopics-createbridges/>
- *Heirs' Property* had **22 downloads**. The article *Black Land: Research Note on The Heirs' Property to Poverty Pipeline in Louisiana* was **downloaded 11 times**. View this article and others from the *Heirs' Property* series at <https://scholarsjunction.msstate.edu/srdctopics-heirsproperty/>

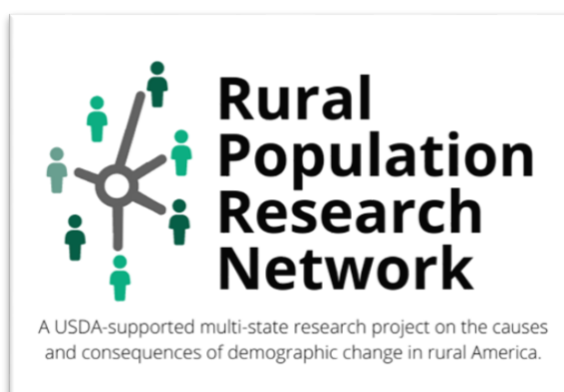
To access these topic areas and others, visit the SRDC archival system at <https://scholarsjunction.msstate.edu/srdc/>.

Future Directions for Rural Population Research: Findings from the Rural Population Research Network's Listening Sessions

In 2023 and 2024, the [Rural Population Research Network \(RPRN\)](#) led an effort to identify the issues diverse rural stakeholders see as top priorities for understanding rural population change. More than 80 Extension colleagues working with rural people and places from across the country participated in listening sessions on challenges and opportunities related to population change.

RPRN is now excited to share the findings from those listening sessions. The report can be found at [this link](#). Please share these findings with your networks, as they can be used for identifying topics of interest and priorities for future applied research and interventions.

The Rural Population Research Network is a USDA supported multi-state research project on the causes and consequences of demographic change in rural America.



Job Opportunities

Current Job Opportunities at the Community and Economic Development Unit of Prairie View A&M University Extension

The Community and Economic Development Department (CED) at Prairie View A&M University in Texas is dedicated to supporting limited resource families and individuals in achieving a higher standard of living through various means, such as small business development, youth entrepreneurship, community program involvement, home ownership, government assistance programs, non-profit assistance, and workforce development. Our team of professionals is ready to offer consultation and technical assistance to entrepreneurs and community organizations who wish to start or expand their operations. To learn more about the CED at PVAMU please visit <https://www.pvamu.edu/cafnr/extension/community-and-economic-development/>.

CED Extension Agent positions are available in the following counties: Fayette County, Washington, Kleberg, Lee, and others. To learn more about these and other positions visit the Prairie View A&M University job postings web page: https://tamus.wd1.myworkdayjobs.com/en-US/PVAMU_External?q=CED

Conferences, Workshops, Trainings

2025 Southern Rural Sociological Association (SRSA) Conference

In-Person: February 2-3, 2025, The Westin Irving Convention Center at Las Colinas, Irving, Texas

[LEARN MORE AND REGISTER](#)

2025 Extension Leadership Conference (ELC)

In-Person: February 19-20, 2025, Savannah, Georgia

[LEARN MORE AND REGISTER](#)

2025 Public Issues Leadership Development Conference (PILD)

In-Person: April 7-8, 2025, Arlington, Virginia

Save the date and the location of the 2025 PILD Conference. **Request for proposals open: Due December 9, 2024.**

[LEARN MORE AND SUBMIT PROPOSAL](#)

2025 National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals (NACDEP) Conference

In-Person: June 9-12, 2025, Charleston, West Virginia

Join the West Virginia State University Extension Service and West Virginia Extension Service in Charleston for the 2025 NACDEP Conference: Country Roads, Connecting the Farm to the Country. More details to come.

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