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E-Newsletter of the Montana Association of Community Development Extension Professionals

**August 2010**

### **President's Corner**

The [2010 Rural Community Conference](#) takes place Aug. 31 to Sept. 1, 2010. We have a great line-up of speakers and panelists. Registration is still open and the full agenda is available on-line. We look forward to seeing you in Bozeman for this exciting event!

-Paul Lachapelle  
MACDEP President

### **Upcoming Events**

#### [Montana Digital Government Summit 2010](#)

August 4, 8:00 AM, Best Western Great Northern Hotel, Helena. The Montana Digital Government Summit provides a unique opportunity for IT leaders and decision-makers from state and local agencies to share and develop professional knowledge in the field of government information technology. Collaboration is the key to enhancing IT services while discovering cost-effective solutions to the common challenges facing government's use of digital tools and systems.

[Managing your Economic Development \(or any other\) Organization and Strategic Planning](#)

### **New Reports/Resources**

#### [Pockets of Youth in Rural America](#)

The Daily Yonder reports that Rural America, like the rest of the country, is getting older. But it's not that simple. In some parts of the Great Plains, the percentage of young people is growing. As with other demographic changes in the nation's 2,038 rural counties between 2000 and 2009, place still matters. Some regions saw their share of the young increase while other parts of the country had the percentage of their populations under 25 go down. The map below shows whether a rural county gained or lost its share of those under 25 years of age. Red means the percentage of those under 25 decreased in that county between 2000 and 2009. Green means the percentage of the county's under 25 population increased. The chart shows changes compared to urban and exurban locales. The aging population still outranks youth growth in most areas, as also shown in this report, but the change in youth number is important.

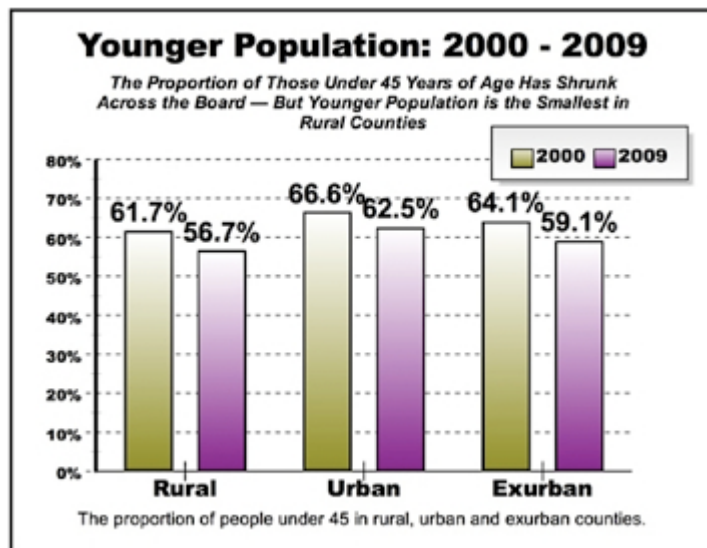
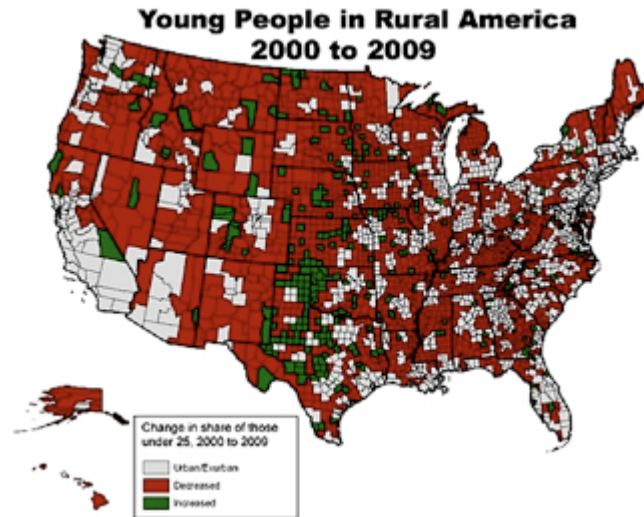
August 10 – 11, MSU-Billings Downtown Campus, Billings. Thanks to PPL Montana, the MEDA Professional Development Committee is bringing to Montana LaDene Bowen, Executive Director of the Institute for Decision Making, University of Northern Iowa, for this workshop on Economic Development. The workshop will be interactive with full participation utilizing case studies, exercises and practical examples on how to manage an effective economic development organization and strategic planning tools focused on results. Cost for MEDA Members to attend entire workshop is now \$45; Non-Members \$55. Fee includes lunch on Tuesday.

[Governor’s Forum on Adult Credentialing](#)

August 12, Glacier High School, Kalispell. Join Governor Schweitzer, educational innovators and representatives of various Montana business and industry sectors to explore how to attract and retain adults with the credentials to propel Montana’s economy in the 21st century. Please [register](#) before August 6th. There is no cost for the forum but registration is required.

[Rural Community Conference](#)

August 31 – September 1, MSU-Bozeman Campus. Neighborhoods, schools, cities and towns are bringing all kinds of people into creative community problem solving and building a future for the rural West. This is your chance to share, learn, connect and mobilize with others dedicated to creating thriving rural communities. Find solutions, share success stories, adopt new tools, and leave ready to move from waiting to leading, from talk to action. [Register](#) today.



[Mobile Phone and Internet Use Grows Robustly](#)

The use of mobile telephones and the Internet continues to grow worldwide, and the two technologies are increasingly becoming integrated through advances like Internet-ready “smart” phones. In 2009, mobile phone subscriptions hit the 4.6 billion mark, doubling in less than four years. Their use has increased worldwide at over 21 percent annually over the past five years, and subscriptions are projected to reach 5 billion in 2010. Internet use also grew to new levels—averaging 15 percent growth a year over the past five years—to reach almost 1.7 billion total users worldwide in 2009, about twice the usage rate in 2003. The graph below illustrates the increase in mobile phone use over the last three decades.

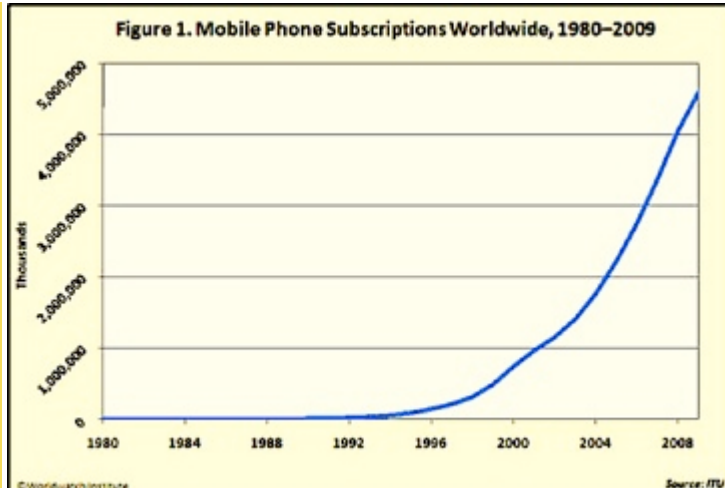
[2010 Montana Economic Development Summit](#) September 13 – 14, Downtown, Butte. The hosts of this year's event are Senator Max Baucus, the Montana Economic Developers Association, and Montana Tech of the University of Montana. Montana Economic Development Summits have been held every three years as a forum to spark innovation and promote economic growth within the state. Please join us to welcome top entrepreneurs, academics, policy makers, corporate representatives, investors and Montana business owners to discuss the mechanics of a healthy recovery and how to get workers back into good-paying jobs.

[Montana Downtown Forum](#) September 16, 11:00 AM, Holiday Inn Downtown at the Park, Missoula. The Montana Department of Commerce's Main Street program and the Missoula Downtown Association are co-hosting the most comprehensive downtown development and historic preservation conference in the state from Sept. 15-17. For more information, please call Department of Commerce's Main Street program at 841-2756 or [email](#).

[Communication Across Barriers Workshops: Poverty 101](#) September 27. Poverty 101 Online Course. These courses are highly interactive intensive opportunities for gaining skills and knowledge for breaking barriers to moving out of poverty. Go to the CAB [website](#) for more information or to register.

## Grants, Awards & Opportunities

[Grants Available for Rural](#)



### [High-speed Railroading Threatens Freight Lines](#)

A new article in the Economist states that America's system of rail freight is the world's best. High-speed passenger trains could ruin it. The stimulus package last year of a lump sum of \$8 billion, plus \$1 billion a year, will help construct fast rail corridors around America (see map below). In the past, giving the railroads the freedom to run their business as they saw fit led to dramatic improvements. The first result was a sharp rise in traffic and productivity and fall in freight costs. Since 1981 productivity has risen by 172%, after years of stagnation. Adjusted for inflation, rates are down by 55% since 1981 (see graph 1 below). Rail's share of the freight market, measured in ton-miles, has risen steadily to 43%—about the highest in any rich country. American rail freight is among the cheapest in the world, costing less than half as much as in Japan or Europe. After adjusting for differences in purchasing power it is cheaper even than in China (see graph 3 below).



### Community Conference

Triangle Communications announces the availability of its Business Education Grants to cover early registration costs up to \$95 to participate in the Rural Community Conference to be held on the MSU Bozeman campus on August 31 and September 1, 2010. This grant is available to residents located within the Triangle service area. Forms can be found under the Economic Development/ Operation Business Boost tab at the [website](#) or contact [Anne Boothe](#) at (406) 394-2888 for more information.

### Grants Available for Montana Companies Impacted by Imports and Forced to Lay Off Workers

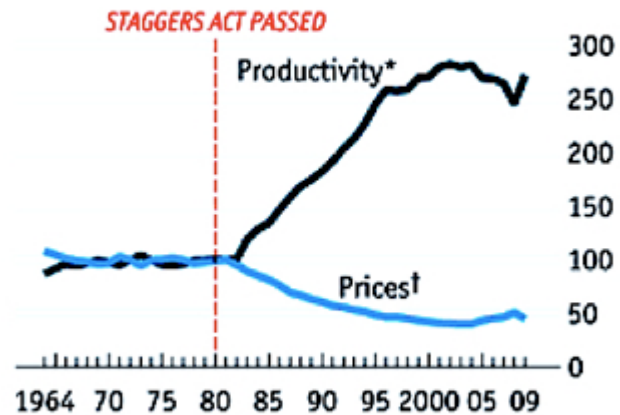
NWTAAC (Northwest Trade Adjustment Assistance Center) is a US Department of Commerce program designed to assist American companies that are impacted by imports and been forced to lay off workers. We offer up to \$75,000 in matching federal grants for Montana companies that qualify for our program. In order to qualify, a company must demonstrate that their business has been negatively impacted by foreign competition. Eligible companies can use the funding on technical assistance projects aimed at improving their competitiveness including marketing, employee training, website redesign, lean manufacturing, quality control certification and product or facility design, among many others. However, our funding cannot be used by an eligible company to purchase assets, such as equipment or software.

### Arts-Oriented Development Encouraged through New Sustainable Communities Grant Programs

Last week, HUD and the U.S.

## Deregulation junction

Largest seven US freight-railway companies  
1981=100



\*Revenue ton-miles divided by operating cost at 2009 prices; 1 RTM=1 paid-for ton carried 1 mile  
†Revenue per ton-mile, cents, 2009 prices

Source: Association of American Railroads

## Low-cost America

Rail-freight rates, 2006-08 average, US=100



Source: Association of American Railroads

\*Purchasing-power parity

### Paying the Costs of Wind Power

The Daily Yonder reports that governors from eleven eastern states have written a letter protesting plans



Department of Transportation (DOT) released two Notices of Funding Availability (NOFAs): \$100 million in grants available through HUD's Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program, and up to \$75 million in grants available through a joint HUD and DOT Sustainable Communities Challenge Grant Program. Under both programs, arts organizations are eligible to partner with state and local governments, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), transit agencies, philanthropic and non-profit organizations and other eligible applicants to develop consortia grant proposals.

#### [MSU's College of Business Seeking Business Mentors](#)

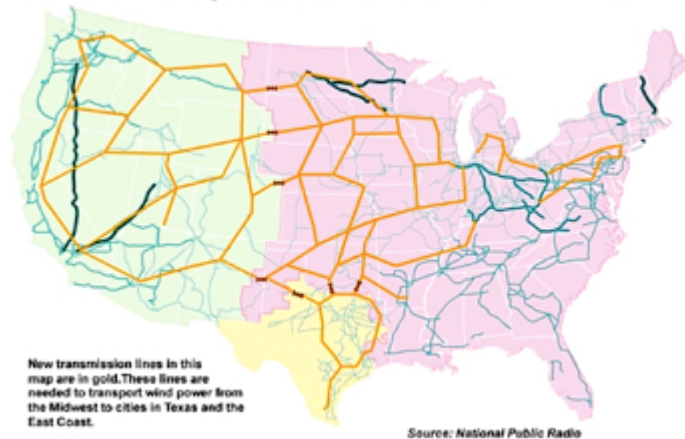
Montana State University's College of Business is seeking local and regional businesses and non-profit organizations that would be willing to offer management students practical business experience during the upcoming fall and spring semesters in return for research, issue analysis or operational advice. The MSU College of Business is taking applications from companies that may want to participate during the fall 2010 and spring 2011 semesters, which run from Aug. 30-Dec. 17 and Jan. 12-May 7. All types of businesses and organizations are encouraged to apply. For more information, email [Gary Bishop](mailto:Gary_Bishop) or call (406)994-7017.

#### [NCAT Program Helps Community](#)

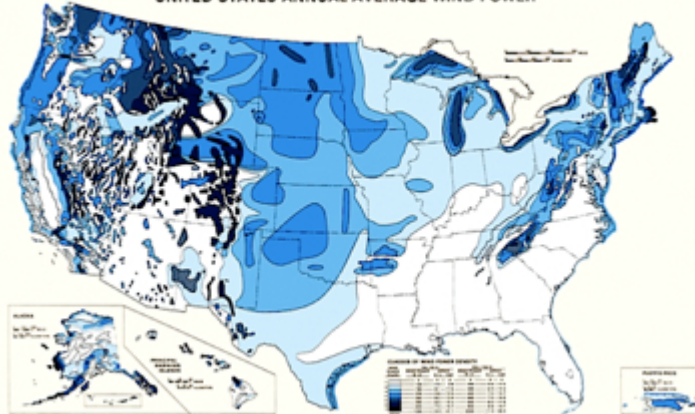
The National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) is currently seeking non-profit organizations, schools and public agencies throughout Montana to host Energy Corps AmeriCorps members. The Energy Corps has been addressing unmet community energy needs by

to charge their customers the cost of transmitting wind power from the Great Plains and Midwest to the East Coast. Who will pay for moving wind power is a hundred billion dollar question. The first map below shows power plants, transmission lines and future transmission line needs. On the second map, the darker the blue, the greater capacity the area has for producing wind-generated power.

#### **Who Will Pay For New Transmission Lines?**



#### **UNITED STATES ANNUAL AVERAGE WIND POWER**



#### [Soul of the Community Poll Released](#)

What makes a community a desirable place to live? What draws people to stake their future in it? Are communities with more attached residents better off? Gallup and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation launched the Soul of the Community Study in 2008 with these questions in mind. After interviewing close to 28,000 people in 26 communities over two years, the study has found that three main qualities bind people to place: social offerings such as entertainment venues and places to meet – the top factor in 21 of 26 communities,

promoting sustainable energy consumption and education, fostering community sustainability and helping to mitigate the effects of global climate change. The program provides organizations and agencies involved in sustainable energy projects with trained individuals for a one-year term of volunteer service. Serving as an Energy Corps host site provides a unique opportunity to improve organizational and community capacity to address our nation's energy needs. The Energy Corps also provides members with hands-on training and skills development to pursue a career in a green-collar workforce capable of meeting the needs of the future in an emerging green economy. If your organization is interested in hosting Energy Corps members, please review and complete the attached application by August 11, 2010. For more information about the Energy Corps program visit our [website](#) and/or contact [Todd Hunkler](#) at 406-497-4572.

[Request for Proposal for Consultant Services](#)

Montana Business Assistance Connection (MBAC) is a non-profit, member supported economic development organization in Helena Montana. They are seeking a feasibility study for a private business specializing in controlled environment hydroculture growhouses. Interested parties may submit a detailed request for proposal [online](#) or it is also available via [email](#) or by calling Carolyn at 406-442-4986 or at 225 Cruse Avenue, Helena, MT 59601.

[New Grant Opportunities](#) have been added to the MSU Extension Website.

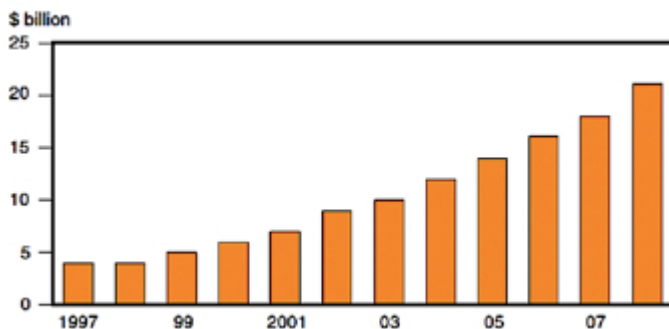
openness (how welcoming a place is) and the area's aesthetics (its physical beauty and green spaces). The image below defines the criteria used for the poll.



[Organics and Local Markets](#)

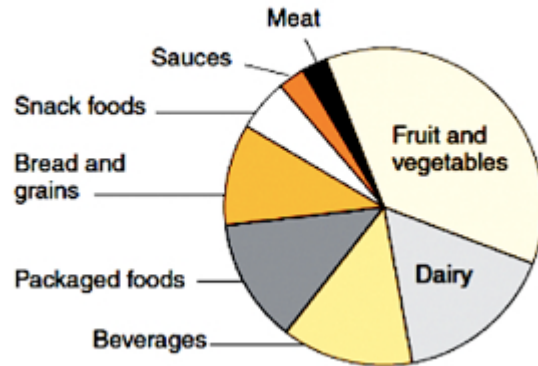
Sales of organic foods have increased from \$3.6 billion in 1997 to \$21.1 billion in 2008, as seen in the graph below. The number of acres devoted to organic production doubled from 2000 to 2008, to 4.6 million acres. Organic food, however, accounted for only 3.5% of the food sold for consumption in the home in 2009. The pie chart below shows the market percentages of organic goods being produced. Per the Daily Yonder, this and other trends are affecting local food economies.

U.S. organic food sales topped \$21 billion in 2008



Source: Nutrition Business Journal.

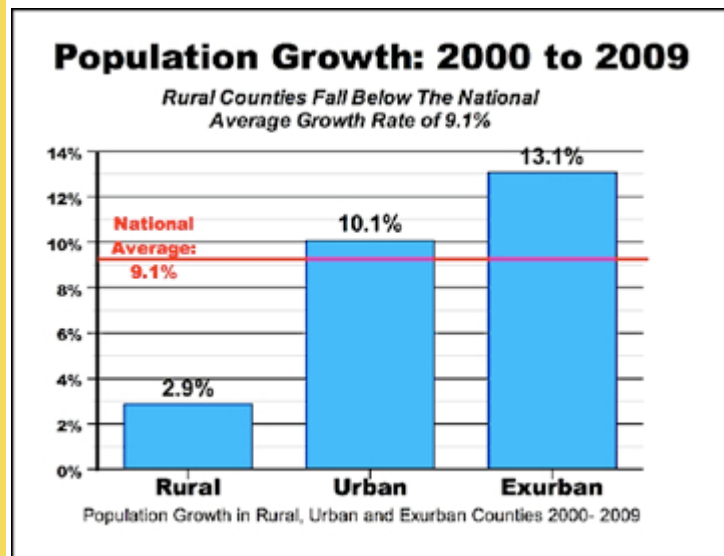
**Fruits, vegetables, and dairy accounted for over half of the \$19 billion organic food market in 2007**



Source: *Nutrition Business Journal*.

[Rural Population Changes](#)

The nation's total population increased 9.1% between 2000 and 2009, a total of 25.5 million people, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, as reported in the Daily Yonder. Population increases in rural counties lagged, however. The population of the nation's 2,038 rural counties increased by just 2.9% in the decade. Population in exurban counties had the highest percentage increase in the 2000s, up 13.1%. Urban counties increased 10.1%, just above the national average, as seen on the chart below. Also on the map below, population change in rural America during this decade has varied by region.







## **Community Development "In the News"**

### **National News**

#### [Idaho Ranks Among the Worst States for Job Markets in Gallup Index](#)

Idaho was No. 6 among the worst markets in the Gallup Job Creation Index from January to June of this year. More than half of the 10 best job markets in 2010 are energy- and commodity-producing states, Gallup reported. Idaho Statesman; July 21

#### [Sharing Renewable Energy Across Border Faces Big Hurdles](#)

Five years into promoting the first non-utility power line to cross the Alberta border into the United States, the 345-kilometre, 230-kilovolt Montana Alberta Tie Line is fully permitted, funded and contracted on both ends of the line. Calgary Herald; July 20

#### [Depaving Rural American Roads-Literally](#)

Rather than being part of a car liberation or permeable pavement movement, poorly maintained county roads are having their asphalt ground into gravel as a cost-cutting measure to avoid costly road reconstruction. Lack of funding is the cause. Wall Street Journal; July 19

#### [Techies Reject Coasts for 'Silicon Prairie'](#)

A generation of young workers flocked to the coasts at the turn of the millennium, drawn by job opportunities and the fast-paced lifestyle that the big cities provide. But the priorities of a 30-year-old can be dramatically different from those of a 20-something. CNN; July 18

#### [Wind Power's Big Blades Can Mask Radar](#)

Wind turbines blossom across the country, holding the promise of reduced reliance on fossil fuels while having a benign environmental impact. But turbines also can "erase" aircraft on civilian and military radar. Denver Post; July 17

#### [Solar Wells Displacing Windmills on Western Range](#)

An increasing number of Western ranchers are pulling down their old windmills and converting to solar-powered systems. US News; July 14

#### [Bamboo Houses to the Rescue](#)

Like poverty, bamboo is especially prolific in the tropics; perhaps what makes the concept of bamboo as a material for low-income housing most appealing is this symmetry. See video at article site. Miller-McCune; July 6

### **Montana News**

#### [Wind Power for Montana consumers? In Last Five Years, Not Much New](#)

Is Montana lagging behind neighboring states in development? The state's electric co-ops, which serve half the state's consumers, haven't financed a single project in Montana. Montana Standard; July 25

#### [NorthWestern Proposes 'Decoupling' Electric Rates](#)

The rate structure paves the way for NorthWestern to pursue aggressive energy-conservation programs, without worrying how that might affect the company's bottom line, supporters of the proposal say. Helena Independent Record; July 24

[Montana Farmers Face Regulatory Obstacles on Path from Farm to Table](#)

Trying to satisfy consumers' appetite for locally produced foods in Montana is becoming increasingly regulated for small producers in the state, and will become more so if the federal Food Safety Modernization Act passes. Bozeman Daily Chronicle; July 12

[War on Front's Noxious Weeds Needs Funds](#)

The Coalition to Protect the Rocky Mountain Front and the Wilderness Society on Wednesday released a study showing more needs to be done to control noxious weeds on the Rocky Mountain Front and across Montana. Great Falls Tribune; July 8

[Federal Open Fields Funding Released](#)

Congress included \$50 million in the 2008 Farm Bill for Open Fields, a new, innovative program to help fund dwindling public access to private land. New West; July 6

[Montana City's Program Lets Power Users Go 'Green'](#)

The Green Power Missoula program sells renewable energy credits to homeowners and businesses in the Montana city to reduce their carbon footprints and sends 20 percent of the proceeds back to Missoula for renewable energy projects. Missoulian; July 6



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