



4. In addition to building the capacity of rural residents to create viable business ventures, programs need to be designed to build the capacity of rural business consultants. Qualified consultants play a major role in building successful businesses.

5. Provide seed capital funding for new business ventures. The value-added producer grant program provided by USDA Rural Development has been very effective in providing seed capital funds for start-up business ventures. These programs need to be maintained.

6. Programs need to be developed to assist in the creation of various types of private sector rural business funds that can be used to provide capital to rural business ventures. These can range from high-risk, high-return venture capital funds for start-ups to moderate-risk, moderate-return funds for the expansion of existing businesses. Rural funds would be designed specifically for participation by rural residents.

7. Create and/or expand federal and state tax credit programs focused specifically on business creation and development in low income, economically distressed rural areas. These credits can provide an incentive to locate business ventures in low income areas while providing the credit to local residents for investment.

8. Design programs that encourage the private and public sectors to work together. Many university research programs need to be closely linked to private sector business development organizations for potential commercialization.

The responsibility for revitalizing rural America lies in the hands of the residents that live in these areas. However, the federal government can play an important role in assisting these efforts. The points discussed above provide an outline for designing this assistance.

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**... and justice for all**

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