

Rural Development Center Newsletter-February 1999

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USDA TRADE SITE:

The **U.S. Department of Agriculture** has launched a website on trade. The site, www.fas.usda.gov/exporter.html, is not much different from other introductory sites, but the USDA address may attract companies that would not otherwise consider exporting. It includes a simple export readiness screen and links to other sites with market information.

AMERICA'S NEW ECONOMY REPORT:

A new report by the **Progressive Policy Institute** explains how the economy of today differs from that of a generation ago and describes the driving forces behind the transformation. Global forces are a recurrent theme. While the report treats the subject of trade-related job loss with compassion, trade is cast as a positive and necessary force for improving the nation's standard of living. The *New Economy Index: Understanding America's Economic Transition* supports its message through 65 charts and an easy-to-read narrative that includes brief explanations of the trends.

The report's charts are grouped into three segments: data illustrating the economy's competitive position, data describing how American workers and families are affected, and data showing trends in high technology. Just a few of the report's highlights are as follow:

□ Between 1994 and 1995, the private sector added a total of 3.6 million new jobs to a civilian workforces of some 130 million. New establishments cut 4.5 million others. At the same time, existing establishments created 10.6 million new jobs and cut 8.2 million. Thus somewhere between a quarter and a third of all jobs in the U.S. economy are in flux every year.

□ Only about 20 percent of the workforce are

in jobs making things (manufacturing). The rest work in jobs requiring them to move things, process or generate information, or provide services to people.

□ High technology industries' share of **U.S. Gross Domestic Product** has increased from 5.5 percent in 1990 to 6.2 percent in 1996. The products and services of these companies are transforming the rest of the economy.

□ Since 1969, virtually all the jobs lost in goods production and distribution have been replaced by office jobs. (See Chart 1)

□ The U.S. is increasingly specializing in high-value added goods and services, reflected in the fact that the average weight of a dollar's worth of exports is less than half what it was in 1970.

□ High-wage, high-skills jobs have grown, but so have low-wage, low-skill jobs. The occupations with the largest predicted numerical increases are cashiers, janitors retail salesperson, and waiters/waitresses. Together they will account for about 13 percent of all new job growth between 1996 and 2006.

□ The growth in earnings inequality has slowed. The dominant factors behind income inequality in the 1990s appears to be increasing the share of one-parent families and increasing incomes for wives of men who are high earners.

□ The share of the world's economy that faces global competition will rise from about one-seventh of the world's output in 1995 to one-half in 2000.

The reports is a good source of speech material, but it also offers some provocative thoughts about comparative advantage. "In the old economy, fixed assets, financing, and labor were principal sources of competitive advantage for firms. But now, as markets

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fragment, technology accelerates, and competition comes from unexpected places, learning, creativity, and adaptation are becoming the principal sources of competitive advantage in many industries.”

The report also points to the explosive growth in the number of U.S. industry technology alliances. Noting that such alliances in Europe and Japan have actually declined, the report suggests partnerships are a key comparative advantage for the U.S. “Indeed, a proliferation of networks of organizations, in the form of partnerships and consortia, has contributed to the successful renewal of the U.S. economy by ratcheting up technological innovation.”

This suggests that achieving a sustainable level of exports will increasingly depend on a region’s firms’ capacity to innovate, in part by linking up with other firms. And these inter-firm partnerships will be increasingly global, introducing whole new demands on small firms to learn how to cultivate and manage international business relationships. For example, while English may suffice as the language of trade transactions, it is not going to be enough to support relationship-building.

VALENTINE’S DAY:

Romantic-Sounding Places Niagara Falls has long been considered one of our nation's more romantic places (i.e., incorporated cities, towns, villages or boroughs). But it doesn't have the most romantic-sounding name. Among the contenders for that distinction are Valentine, Neb., whose population was an estimated 2,884 in 1996, and Valentine, Texas, at 234.

And so is Loveland, Colo. With a population of 44,923, it is the most populous of the 10 places around the nation that have the word "love" as one of the syllables in their name. The other nine are Lovejoy, Ga.; Loves Park, Ill.; Lovelock, Nev.; Love Valley, N.C.;

Loveland, Ohio; Loveland, Okla.; Lovelady, Texas; Lovettsville, Va.; and Lovell, Wyo.

④<http://mapping.usgs.gov/www/gnis/gnisform.html>

Flowers--

If your valentine prefers flowers, we've got you covered! Some 26,728 florists nationwide plied their trade in 1996, employing 125,631 persons.

④<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-233.html>

It is possible the flowers you buy this year came from Colombia, our nation's leading supplier of cut flowers. U.S. imports of cut flowers from Colombia between January and October 1998 were valued at \$312.2 million. Or the flowers could have been grown right here in the U.S.A.: domestic production of cut flowers totaled \$505 million in 1996.

④<http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/www>

Chocolate and Candy--

The chocolate and candy you give or receive probably were made in one of our nation's manufacturing establishments. In 1996, 165 such establishments, employing 10,284 people, produced chocolate and cocoa products. These manufacturers shipped \$3.3 billion worth of goods that year. Meanwhile, 694 U.S. establishments, employing 52,599 people, manufactured candy and other confectionary products. They shipped \$12.8 billion worth of goods that year.

④<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-233.html>

④<http://www.census.gov/econ/www/manumenu.html>

In at least one respect, Pennsylvania and New York could be called the nation's sweetest states. Pennsylvania has more establishments making candy and other confectionary products (76) than any other state while New York leads the nation in the number of

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establishments making chocolate and cocoa products (22). The Keystone State, however, leads the way in the number of persons employed in establishments manufacturing chocolate and cocoa products --4,684-- nearly four times more than the next leading state, California, which employs 1,344 in this trade. Illinois, meanwhile, leads the country in employees who make candy and other confectionary products, with 11,514.

☺<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-233.html>

Then again, these sugary delights could have been made somewhere outside the United States. Between January and October, 1998, the United States imported \$278.8 million worth of chocolate from Canada, more than from any other country. Canada also was the leading supplier of nonchocolate candy to the United States during the same period, with shipments totaling \$129.6 million.

☺<http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/www/>

Though people can buy candy in many places, perhaps the best single retail source is one of the 4,742 candy, nut and confectionary stores located in the United States in 1996.

☺<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-233.html>

Americans consumed 27 pounds of candy per person in 1997 no doubt a good bit of it on Valentine's Day.

☺<http://www.census.gov/industry/ma20d97.txt>

Marriage and Divorce--

During 1996, 2.3 million marriages and 1.2 million divorces took place in the United States. That translates into 6,400 marriages and 3,200 divorces on a typical day.

☺<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-226.html>

Between 1990 and 1996, the annual number of

marriages dropped by 99,000, while the annual number of divorces fell 32,000.

☺<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-226.html>

Nevada was the nation's marriage and divorce capital, racking up the highest marriage rate (88.1 marriages per 1,000 population), as well as the highest divorce rate (8.1 divorces per 1,000 population) of any state in 1995. Hawaii was a distant runner-up in the marriage rate (15.8) while Oklahoma, Wyoming and New Mexico (each at 6.7) tied for second place in the divorce rate.

☺<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-226.html>

Among 18- to 24-year-olds, 21 percent of women and 11 percent of men were married as of 1998. The figures rose to 62 percent and 54 percent for 25- to 34-year-olds and 71 percent and 74 percent for 35- to 64-year-olds. For persons 65 and over, the percentage falls to 43 percent for women, but remains statistically unchanged for men.

☺<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/1999/cb99-03.html>

The estimated median age at first marriage in 1998 was 25.0 years for women and 26.7 years for men. The age for women equaled the 20th century high reached in 1997 while the age for men has dipped 0.4 years since it reached a 20th century high in 1996.

☺<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/1999/cb99-03.html>

Singleness--

There were 114 unmarried men (i.e., never married, widowed or divorced), ages 18 to 44, for every 100 unmarried women of those ages in 1998. At older ages, however, the ratio reverses, to 146 unmarried women for every 100 unmarried men among 45- to 64-year-olds and 315 unmarried women for every 100 unmarried men among persons 65 and over.

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☎<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/1999/cb99-03.html>

In 1998, 13.7 million persons 25 to 34 had never been married, representing 35 percent of all persons in this age group. The respective totals for those 35 to 44 dropped to 6.8 million and 15 percent.

☎<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/1999/cb99-03.html>

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH FACTS:

Education--

Eighty-eight percent of African Americans, ages 25 to 29, were high-school graduates in 1998, continuing an upward trend in the educational attainment of African Americans that began in 1940. As a result of this trend, the gap in high-school completion between African Americans and Whites narrowed in the 25- to 29-year-old age group over the past decade to the point where there was no statistical difference between the two racial groups in 1998.

☎<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-221.html>

Nearly 3 million or 15 percent of African Americans, ages 25 and over, held a bachelor's degree or higher in 1998; of these degree-holders, more than 800,000 had an advanced degree (e.g., master's, Ph.D., M.D. or J.D.).

☎<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-221.html>

The number of African Americans under 35 who were enrolled in college in 1996 (1.5 million) was nearly 40 percent higher than the number enrolled a decade earlier. Similarly, African American nursery-school enrollment doubled over the same period, to 702,000.

☎<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-139.html>

Income and Poverty--

African American households experienced an increase of 4.3 percent in real median income between 1996 and 1997, from \$24,021 to \$25,050. In the past three years (1995-1997), median-income levels of African American households achieved or surpassed their 1989 pre-recessionary peak levels.

☎<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-176.html>

The number of poor African Americans dropped from 9.7 million in 1996 to 9.1 million in 1997, while their poverty rate decreased from 28.4 percent to 26.5 percent.

☎<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-176.html>

For African American families, the number and percent in poverty fell from 2.2 million to 2.0 million and from 26.1 percent to 23.6 percent, respectively, from 1996 to 1997.

☎<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-176.html>

African Americans accounted for 60 percent of the decline in the number of poor persons in the United States between 1996 and 1997. Similarly, about 400,000 fewer families were poor in 1997 than in 1996 and more than half of them were African American families.

☎<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-176.html>

African American families with a female householder, no husband present, experienced a significant drop in both the number and percentage of families who were poor: 1.6 million and 39.8 percent in 1997, down from 1.7 million and 43.7 percent in 1996.

☎<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-176.html>

In 1997, the poverty rate of African American married-couple families, female-householder families with no husband present and

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individuals was lower than their 1989 pre-recessionary rate.

④<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-176.html>

Families--

In 1998, there were 8.4 million African American families, nearly half of whom were married-couple families. Nearly 6 in 10 African American families included their own children under 18.

④<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-228.html>

In 1998, 1.4 million African American children (12 percent) lived in a grandparent's home (with or without their parents present). More than 4 million (36 percent) resided with both their parents.

④<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/1999/cb99-03.html>

In 1998, the typical African American family consisted of 3.42 members, larger than the average of 3.02 members for non-Hispanic White families but smaller than the average of 3.92 members for Hispanic families.

④<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-228.html>

Among African American men ages 18 and over in 1998, 41 percent had never been married, 45 percent were currently married, 4 percent were widowed and 10 percent were divorced. Among women, the corresponding percentages were 37 percent, 39 percent, 11 percent and 13 percent.

④<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/1999/cb99-03.html>

Population Distribution—

The nation's African American population totaled an estimated 34.5 million as of Nov. 1, 1998. It comprised 13 percent of the total population. Since July 1, 1990, the African

American population has increased 13 percent while the total U.S. population grew 9 percent.

④<http://www.census.gov/population/estimates/nation/intfile3-1.txt>

The nation's African American population is young, with an estimated median age of 30.0 years as of Nov. 1, 1998 five years younger than the median for the U.S. population as a whole.

④<http://www.census.gov/population/estimates/nation/intfile3-1.txt>

According to middle-series population projections, the African American population is expected to grow more than twice as fast as the White population between 1995 and 2020, reaching 45.1 million. After 2016, more African Americans than non-Hispanic Whites would be added to the U.S. population each year.

④<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb96-36.html>

In 1998, 55 percent of African Americans lived in the South, comprising one-fifth of that region's population. Nationwide, 54 percent resided in the central cities of metro areas.

④<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-127.html>

As of July 1, 1997, according to population estimates:

The 10 states with the largest African American populations were New York (3.2 million), California (2.4 million), Texas (2.4 million), Florida (2.3 million), Georgia (2.1 million), Illinois (1.8 million), North Carolina (1.6 million) and Maryland, Louisiana and Michigan (1.4 million

each). The only changes in rankings from 1990 were that Louisiana and Michigan each fell one place, from 8th and 9th place to 9th and 10th place, respectively, while Maryland moved up two slots, from 10th to 8th place.

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Ⓜ<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-159.html>

The District of Columbia (Washington, D.C.) led all states or state equivalents with the largest percentage (63 percent) of African Americans in its total population. Four Southern states rounded out the top five in this category: Mississippi (36 percent), Louisiana (32 percent), South Carolina (30 percent) and Georgia (28 percent).

Ⓜ<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-159.html>

Cook County (Chicago), Ill., maintained its position as the county in the United States with the largest number of African Americans (1.4 million). Los Angeles County, Calif., was second (1.0 million), followed by Kings County (Brooklyn), N.Y. (924,862), Wayne County (Detroit), Mich. (894,079), and Philadelphia County, Pa. (625,040).

Ⓜ<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-159.html>

With respect to African Americans as a percentage of a county's total population, Jefferson County, Miss., ranked No. 1, with 87 percent of its population made up of African Americans. Macon County, Ala., was a close second in this category (86 percent). Others in the top five were:

Claiborne County, Miss. (82 percent), Hancock County, Ga. (82 percent), and Greene County, Ala. (81 percent).

Ⓜ<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-159.html>

Between April 1, 1990, and July 1, 1997, according to population estimates:

Florida registered the biggest increase (480,255) in African American population among states. Just behind were Georgia (374,946), Texas (326,065), Maryland (200,609) and North Carolina (181,417).

Ⓜ<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-159.html>

Harris County (Houston), Texas, was the top gainer (73,293) in African Americans among counties. Prince George's County, Md., was No. 2, with 68,325 new African American residents, followed by Broward County (Fort Lauderdale), Fla. (67,920), Fulton County (Atlanta), Ga. (66,017), and Dallas County, Texas (45,348).

Ⓜ<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-159.html>

Jobs--

In 1998, nearly one-quarter (23 percent) of employed African American women, ages 16 and over, and 17 percent of men worked in managerial and professional specialty occupations (e.g., engineers, dentists, teachers, lawyers and reporters).

Ⓜ<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb98-127.html>

Businesses--

The number of African American-owned businesses in the United States increased 46 percent, from 424,165 to 620,912, between 1987 and 1992. Receipts for these firms rose 63 percent during this span, from \$19.8 billion to \$32.2 billion. The total number of firms in the United States increased 26 percent over the period, to 17.3 million; their receipts grew 67 percent, to \$3 trillion.

Ⓜ<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/cb95-219.html>

The preceding facts come from the Current Population Survey, population estimates and projections and the Survey of Minority-Owned Business Enterprises.

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