



## ***Rural Connections* Call for Abstracts**

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Call Issued: January 30, 2012  
Abstracts Due: March 5, 2012

The Western Rural Development Center is soliciting articles for its May 2012 issue of *Rural Connections*. The topic for this issue will be “Local and Regional Food Hubs Boost Rural Economies.”

### **Overview**

The United States Department of Agriculture’s working definition of a food hub is “a business or organization that actively manages the aggregation, distribution, and marketing of source-identified local and regional food products primarily from small to mid-sized producers to wholesalers, retailers, and/or institutional buyers” Many farmers and ranchers—especially smaller operations—are challenged by the lack of distribution and processing infrastructure of appropriate scale that would give them wider access to retail, institutional, and commercial foodservice markets, where demand for local and regional foods continues to rise. Food hubs offer a combination of production, distribution, and marketing services that allows them to gain entry into new and additional markets that would be difficult or impossible to access on their own. Nationally, local and regional food hubs are gaining popularity in rural communities as a viable way to boost economic development, expand market opportunities for local agriculture producers, processors and distributors, and increase a community’s access to fresh healthy foods.

The Western Rural Development Center is soliciting abstracts focusing on the economic development benefits of local and regional food hubs in rural communities, and success stories, best practices, and lessons learned from operating food hubs.

### **Submission Guidelines**

Please submit the following information to the Western Rural Development Center by the deadline listed below. Submissions that exceed or do not follow these guidelines will not be considered for publication.

1. Abstracts should be written using MS Word and include the following information in the order listed here:
  - a. Title of Article
  - b. Author(s) Name, Job Title, University/Organization, Mailing Address, Email Address, Daytime Telephone Number
  - c. 400-600 word abstract of your article
  - d. Text should be double-spaced using a 12-point font size
  - e. Contributors should feel free to write in a manner that will be understandable to a diverse audience of researchers, practitioners, and non-scientists.
2. Submit the MS Word document as an email attachment to Betsy Newman at [betsy.newman@usu.edu](mailto:betsy.newman@usu.edu).

### **Deadline**

Abstracts must be submitted **by close of business Monday, March 5, 2012.**

#### **NOTE:**

- The Western Rural Development Center will contact you on or before Friday, March 9, 2012, to inform you whether or not your submission has been selected for publication.
- At that time we will provide you with details on article guidelines such as the submission deadline, word count, charts, graphs, etc.

- The Western Rural Development Center will provide you with eight weeks from the date of notification for you to write and submit your article.
- The Western Rural Development Center retains all final editorial rights including the selection of artwork, graphics and pictures to accompany each article.
- The author(s) retain copyright of their article and charts and graphs.

#### **Criteria for Judging All Abstract Submissions**

1. Relationship to publication theme: Does the abstract relate to the theme or any of the sub-topics?
2. Sound conceptual framework: If appropriate, does the abstract indicate the development and implementation of a theory-based intervention or research project?
3. Methodology: Are objectives clearly stated? Are findings included and do they correspond to the objectives?
4. Usefulness: Can the research, program or plan be applied elsewhere? Is it useful to practicing agriculture educators, researchers, and/or academicians, and communities?
5. \*Origination of Research/Application: Did a resident of the WESTERN U.S. submit the abstract and/or does the project focus on a western community?
6. Innovation: Does the abstract represent research, a program, a project, or professional preparation activity that is unique, new or creative?
7. Clarity of Content: Does the abstract clearly outline what the article is about, such as project type, target audience, setting?
8. Format: Does the abstract reference objectives, methods or interventions, results or major findings, implications? Does abstract meet typing and space criteria?
9. Overall reaction: Considering the above criteria, what is your overall reaction?

\*The Western Rural Development Center will give priority to abstracts highlighting the research and programs developed and implemented in the Western U.S. However, we welcome submissions from all sectors and regions of the country and typically publish at least one article from outside the western region in each issue.

#### **About Rural Connections**

*Rural Connections* is published two times each year and focuses each issue on a particular topic of interest to residents in the Western U.S. Contributors include researchers, faculty, practitioners, and professionals from throughout the nation. It is intended to appeal to a broad audience.

The magazine is electronically distributed to over 900 Western Rural Development Center stakeholders, made available on its website (<http://wrdc.usu.edu/htm/rural-connections>) and announced in Twitter (@westernrural).

The magazine is further distributed to over 4,000 individuals by the Western Rural Development Center's partners including the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development, the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, the Southern Rural Development Center, USDA-NIFA, and reaches an extensive national and international audience. The WRDC also makes printed copies available for the contributors, and as requested by its stakeholders.

#### **Questions**

Please direct your questions to:

Betsy H. Newman  
 Communications Specialist  
 435-797-0218  
[betsy.newman@usu.edu](mailto:betsy.newman@usu.edu)

Western Rural Development Center  
 Utah State University  
 8335 Old Main Hill  
 Logan UT 84322-8335

Tel: 435-797-9731  
 Fax: 435-797-9733  
 Web: [wrdc.usu.edu](http://wrdc.usu.edu)