



Email: phipple@csrees.usda.gov

Fax: (202) 690-3162

Phone: (202) 401-2185

1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Stop 2215, Washington, DC 20250-2215

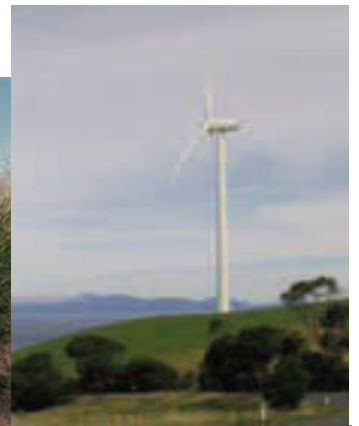
Economic and Community Systems Unit, CSREES, USDA
National Program Leader for Sustainable Biobased Economies

Patricia (Pat) C. Hipple, Ph.D.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF THE BIOECONOMY

*Exploring Implications
for Rural People
and Places*



HUMAN AND SOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF THE BIOECONOMY

How will we ensure a secure energy future that rewards agricultural producers and rural communities for the value they create forging a new bioeconomy?

Agricultural production for bioenergy, biofuel, and bioindustrial products has the potential to dramatically alter the economy, social structure, and ecology of U.S. farms, rural communities, and landscapes. So does rural land use and infrastructure development for other renewable energy sources. What will be the role of and impact on agricultural producers and rural communities? How do we direct our efforts to promote a bioeconomy that is sustainable and accrues real benefits for rural people and places?

Social scientists at CSREES are working to promote and support science-based research, education, and extension activities to answer these questions and examine the broad social, cultural, economic, and environmental implications of the technology, management practices, policies, and behaviors shaping a new bioeconomy. Among the many questions that propel these efforts are:

- To what extent does an acceleration of agricultural production for bioenergy, biofuels, and bioindustrial products compete with food, feed, and fiber? For example, how are grain and livestock markets affected? And what are the implications for U.S. energy security and food security worldwide?
- What effect does an expanding bioeconomy have on land use, cropping and rotation patterns, production on marginal lands, and conservation efforts?
- What decisions will be required of farms, firms, institutions, and communities to shape or respond to an expanding bioeconomy? What factors will most influence their decisions?
- What are the best strategies and mechanisms for creating, retaining, and increasing value from the bioeconomy for agricultural producers and rural communities? How do we do it sustainably?

Next Steps:

To engage in a multidisciplinary discussion with social scientists, agricultural producers, community planners, industry experts, state and federal governments, and others to identify the scientific opportunities and gaps in our knowledge, and to set priorities for future research, education, and extension activities to promote sustainable biobased economies. To join in the discussion contact Patricia (Pat) C. Hipple at (202) 401-2185 or phipple@csrees.usda.gov.