

# RDI Past, Present, Future...

## Who We Are

**B**randon University's Rural Development Institute fosters community development and resiliency through research and information sharing on issues and opportunities unique to rural, remote and northern communities.

RDI's mandate is Applied Research, Knowledge Dissemination, and Learning. RDI establishes new

partnerships; conducts multi-disciplinary research; promotes the development of new community projects; shares findings through reports, workshops, presentations and online publications; and nurtures new generations of rural researchers among students, community members and rural stakeholders.

## Our Past: What Have We Done...

**S**ince 1989, RDI has conducted multi-disciplinary research and initiated the development of many community projects in the prairies and across rural areas in Canada. Academic and applied research projects address issues directly linked to rural development, such as community economic development, community leadership, environment and agro-economic issues, information management and

technology utilizations, policy and program research and development, rural adaptation and change, rural health, rural tourism, and others. For over 20 years, research conducted by RDI has helped define issues and opportunities in rural areas, and often informed new policies, and related policy implications, and public programs specific to these areas.

## Our Present: What We Do Now...

**O**ver the past two years, RDI has initiated a number of new projects through collaborative partnerships with government departments, funding agencies, and community organizations. RDI's Welcoming Communities initiative built upon a multi-sector collaborative approach to examine rural immigration. In response to community needs, RDI's research efforts gathered practical examples of strategies for rural communities to respond to housing challenges. RDI also responded with an information guide to aid smaller rural businesses to navigate through a maze of inter-jurisdictional steps, requirements, and submission for hiring temporary foreign workers. To quickly sort through the growing plethora of tools of community growth, RDI initiated a Pathfinder project that inventories tools, engages potential users to determine common ways to access the tools, and seeks online reviews on tools as well.

For more information on these and other new projects, see page two or go to [www2.brandonu.ca/organizations/rdi/](http://www2.brandonu.ca/organizations/rdi/).



## Our Future: Our Vision...

**W**ith partners in communities, agencies, and among academics and students, RDI continues to initiate new outreach activities, research, and learning options, and contributes to addressing rural development issues and responding to opportunities. The Institute builds on a strong history of collabora-

tive activities while enhancing resource capabilities and programming. As a leading source of information on rural areas, RDI continues to deliver new knowledge of rural issues and helps create opportunities for vibrant rural communities and regions.

- RDI Team**  
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## Recent RDI Research Projects and Activities

### Building Welcoming Communities: A Multi-Sector Regional Collaborative Approach to Rural Immigration (2009-2010)

Building Welcoming Communities project carried on previous research in rural immigration conducted by RDI over the past six years. The project focused on improving the ability of rural communities to invite, settle and retain immigrants. Through a collaborative engage-

ment of multiple stakeholders, the project established a strong foundation of knowledge for rural communities to attract, settle and retain immigrants, and directly impacted opportunities for community development amongst rural regions in the province.

### On the Bright Side: Rural Canada Works (October 2010)

A national rural policy conference, co-hosted by the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (CRRF), was held October 14-16, 2010 in Brandon, MB. *On the Bright Side: Rural Canada Works* focused on rural communities and their futures, and highlighted approaches, policies and projects that are making a difference in rural, northern and remote communities across Canada. The three-day conference attracted over 140 participants from across the country and featured over 30 paper and poster presentations, five panel discussions, three keynote presentations, meetings and networking events.



### Pathfinder for Communities: Selecting Tools for CED (2010 – 2012)

The objective of this project is to help rural communities with their Community Economic Development (CED) to make better decisions when choosing CED tools for effective development efforts. Recently completed phase 1 of the project involved a series of consultations with community leaders, CED practitioners, researchers, policy makers and industry representatives to determine CED history in participating communities, CED tool selection process, and other criteria. Phase 2 will focus on community capacity in their selection and

application of specific CED tools, and the development of a web-based, searchable database of CED tools for the benefit of communities in Canada and abroad.



### Demonstration & Investigation into Livestock Systems Adoption (2011 – 2014)

This project aims to demonstrate environmentally responsible practices for reducing greenhouse gas emissions while simultaneously reducing livestock production costs. This undertaking incorporates an integrated approach focusing on livestock systems and cropping systems and agroforestry. The main components of the project include field demonstration and examines the

attitudes of beef producers to the proposed livestock system through a social marketing framework. By using multiple tools, the project will determine opportunities and barriers to adoption of best management practices, and provide incentives and knowledge that will increase adoption of these practices among beef producers and other stakeholders

### Our Partners

Past and present RDI research and project partners include: Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives; Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation; Community Futures; Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives; Manitoba Labour and Immigration; Rural and Cooperative Secretariat; and other government, university, community and corporate partners who support applied rural research.

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