

Why we do rural economic development differently

Dramatic Population Loss + Few Livable Wage Jobs + Few Competitive Business Opportunities
= NEED FOR NEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (FRAMEWORK)

How we do rural economic development differently (Delta Bioenergy)

Building deep collaborations based on self-interest and shared interests	Arkansas Green Energy Network grew to over 50 support partners, 20 transactional partners
Wealth that is rooted locally, stays and grows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become a fuel hub for nation by connecting farmers and rural communities to regional transportation hubs and fleets • Replicable community-based processing of biodiesel
Investment in multiple forms of capital and asset based development that is mutually beneficial and inclusive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revitalization of vacant facilities • Introduction of new crops and technologies • Community application of university research and pilot concepts • Utilizing community college as innovation hub • New cooperative business model • Leveraging public/private partnerships • Turning potential liabilities into economic opportunity for farmers and community
Demand Driven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City vehicles utilize 10,000 gallons per year • One of longest school bus routes in the state; utilizes 30,000 gallons per year • Farmers in Arkansas County utilize upwards of 6 million gallons per year

Impact/Results of doing rural economic differently

- **46 jobs and 3 business** have been created through facility renovation and strategy
- **Since 2014 approximately 10,000 gallons of Waste Vegetable Oil (WVO) have been recycled, 5,000 gallons biodiesel produced, 5,000 lbs. Camelina harvested.**
- Managing risk for farmers to introduce new cropping systems and access new markets for oilseed crops
- Inclusion of small farmers
- GIS mapping has identified **25** suitable fields for growing Camelina in DeWitt area
- Recycling of waste cooking oil saves the city of DeWitt thousands of dollars in water infrastructure upkeep and repair
- Approximately **150-200** gallons of WVO is being recycled per week and room for growth
- City of DeWitt recycling program expansion, reimbursed for hauling of recycled material delivering 140 tons per month
- Biofuel processing capacity in DeWitt is **200,000** gallons annually and scalable
- Feasible, community-scaled biofuel processing system designed by Arkansas State University
- Partnership with municipality to leverage funding for equipment purchase to implement biofuel strategy
- Managing costs of fuel testing (\$800/batch) for small-scale production through cooperative ownership structure
- Outdoor Learning Center and Online Entrepreneur Training accessible through local community college
- Creation of local community sustainability leadership team
- Partnership with regional economic development district for replicating wealth building biofuel strategy
- New multi stakeholder, mutual benefit cooperative

Contact Information

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