

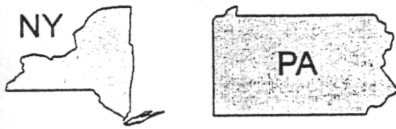
# The Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development

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1998  
Annual Report

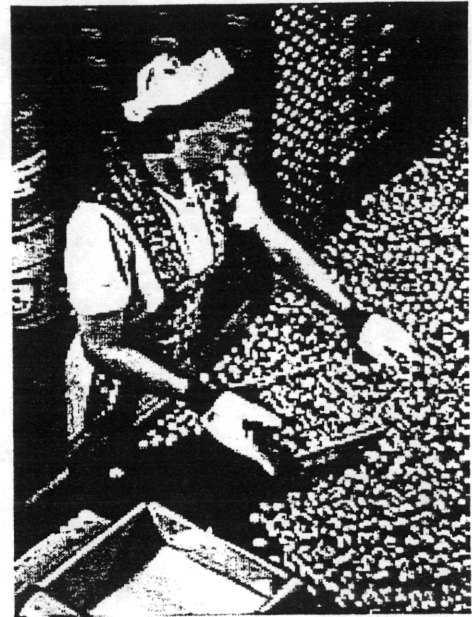
## Community-Based Food Processing Strategies in the Northeast (Research)



### Highlights:

- Case studies of community-based food processing incubators were completed because of the limited knowledge about their effectiveness as an economic development strategy.
- The book *Adding Value for Sustainability: A Guidebook for Cooperative Extension Agents and Other Agricultural Professionals*, is now available in soft-cover for \$8.50 plus shipping by calling (814) 349-9856 or (607) 255-9832.

Interest in value-added food processing enterprises is growing in the Northeast, and in some areas, communities are responding to this interest by developing food processing incubators. Incubators provide facilities, equipment and technical services. They help enterprises in their start-up phase. Food processing incubators serve a variety of clientele such as farmers wishing to add value to raw agricultural products, and home-based businesses and cottage industries which can't afford to build their own commercial certified inspected kitchens. But information about the effectiveness of community-based food processing incubators as an economic development strategy is extremely limited.



Duncan Hilchey received a Northeast Center grant to conduct four in-depth case studies of community-based food processing incubators, and a basic financial analysis. An outcome of the project is an extension bulletin focusing on the plausibility of this development strategy for rural communities in the Northeast. A guidebook also was developed for cooperative extension agents and other agricultural development professionals. The guidebook provides background on small-scale processing enterprise development and can be used to educate interested producers, processors and communities.

To order the guidebook, *Adding Value for Sustainability: A Guidebook for Cooperative Extension Agents and other Agricultural Professionals*, by Kristen Markley and Duncan Hilchey, contact either PASA or the Farming Alternatives Program. Cost is \$8.50 plus postage and handling.

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**Collaborating organizations:** Farming Alternatives Program, Cornell University; Northeast Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program; and Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture.

**Keywords:** community development, economic development, hazard analysis of critical points (HACCP), incubators, local food processors