Center for Rural Affairs Encyclopedia Article

Center for Rural Affairs

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Center for Rural Affairs

The Center for Rural Affairs (CRA) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the social, economic and **environmental health** of rural communities. Founded in 1973, the Center for Rural Affairs includes among its participants farmers, ranchers, business people, and educators concerned with the decline of the family farm.

CRA works to provoke public thought on issues and government policies that affect rural Americans, especially in the Midwest and Plains regions of the country. It sponsors research, education, advocacy, organizing and service projects aimed to improve the life of rural dwellers. CRA's **sustainable agriculture** policy is designed to analyze, propose, and advocate public policies that reward environmental stewardship, promote family farming, and foster responsible technology. CRA assists beginning farmers with design and implement on-site research that helps to make these farms environmentally sound and economically viable. CRA's **conservation** and education programs address the environmental problems caused by agricultural practices in the North Central United States.

Through a rural enterprise assistance program, CRA teaches rural communities to support self-employment, and it provides business assistance and revolving loan funds for the self-employed. It also provides professional farm management and brokerage service to landowners who are willing to rent or sell land to beginning farmers. CRA promotes fair competition in the agriculture marketplace by working to prevent monopolies, encouraging enforcement of laws restricting corporate farming in the United States, and advocating for the role of United States farmers in international markets.

Publications offered by CRA include the *Center for Rural Affairs Newsletter*, a monthly report on policy issues and research findings; the *Rural Enterprise Reporter*, which provides information about developing small local enterprises; and a variety of special reports on topics such as small farm technology and business strategy.

Resources

Organizations

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