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Wallace Foundation for Rural Research and Development

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Wallace Foundation for Rural Research and Development

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Wallace Foundation for Rural Research and Development

Rod Backhaus, board president

Aspirations of the Wallace Foundation, established in 2001:

1. To develop an economy where 80% of the commodities produced in southwest Iowa leave as consumer-ready, value-added products, with producers owning equity in processing and merchandising businesses.
2. To work with agencies, organizations, businesses, and southwest Iowa citizens to insure that every home, business, and community has high-speed communications.
3. To assist and encourage new business development by:
 - working with organizations, including universities, venture capitalists, the Southwest Iowa Coalition, and communities and counties;
 - providing training opportunities for leadership and community involvement;
 - documenting measurable increases in career opportunities in southwest Iowa.
4. To assist in maintaining a wholesome environment in southwest Iowa, which includes economic and recreational opportunities, quality health care, safety, mobility, and a caring society.
5. To establish a direct relationship between the WFRRD and agricultural education programs in southwest Iowa, and to establish an agriculture education advisory board and a board of students.

There were 150 workshops/seminars/field days, attended by 4,700 people, at the Wallace Foundation Learning Center in 2001. We are very proud to see the Armstrong Research Farm and the Learning Center used to meet needs identified for research, education, and rural development.

The Wallace Foundation Innovation Center, staffed by Jill Euken and Mike Glenn, worked with several new and existing value-added

ventures in 2001. These businesses are seen as keys to creating a profitable and sustainable population base and infrastructure base in southwest Iowa. The Innovation Center provided assistance, but was not limited, to the following entities in 2001:

- **BioMass Agriproducts.** Biomass Agriproducts (B/MAP), incorporated in 1999, is a value-added business in the Harlan, Iowa, area with which the Wallace Foundation has been strategically involved since inception. B/MAP is becoming a reliable, consistent, cost-effective supplier of renewable raw materials to a broad range of companies making products that are partially or wholly derived from agricultural crops and residues.
- **Quality Iowa Maize.** Hamburg-based QIM continued to improve its cleaning/bagging operations and expand its high-quality white corn marketing activities. These efforts resulted in significant business volume increases for 2001.
- **Heartland Organic Cooperative.** The markets for organic crops are growing very rapidly as they continue to conduct feasibility studies for capitalizing and building producer-owned processing capacity for organically-produced Iowa crops and livestock.
- **Iowa Quality Producers Alliance.** During 2001, IQPA initiated a contract-growing program with two major cornstarch processors. IQPA also received a \$100,000 USDA grant to study the feasibility of producing a new nutritionally dense, low-phosphorus, corn-based hog and chicken feed. In cooperation with the ISU Iowa Grain Quality Initiative, a producer training

and certification pilot program was begun. IQPA is also exploring a proposal for a foundation seed plant for emerging new GMO corn varieties.

- **Tall Corn Ethanol.** The Wallace Foundation congratulates the board of directors of the Tall Corn Ethanol project. Rod Backhaus, president of the Wallace Foundation for Rural Research and Development, is on the Tall Corn board and reports that the plant will create 33 new jobs related to management, operation, and maintenance of the ethanol plant. This represents a payroll of 1.3 million dollars. Construction completion is scheduled for fall 2002. For more information go the Tall Corn Ethanol web site <http://www.tallcorncoop.com/>
- **Organic Dairy Alliance.** This new group is researching opportunities for differentiated production and marketing practices for dairy products. Jill Euken and Ron Orth (Institute for Cooperatives) are working with this group to conduct a complete market analysis, feasibility study, and business and capitalization plan. The group has received funding support from the USDA Rural Development and IDED.

The Wallace Foundation is grateful for the continued contributions of individuals and businesses in southwest Iowa as well as those of the ISU Agricultural Foundation and the Wallace Genetic Foundation.

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