



# REDDI MATTERS

Regional Economic  
Development District  
Initiatives of South-  
central PA

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Reporting on  
Economic  
Development  
Initiatives in:

Adams, Berks,  
Cumberland,  
Dauphin,  
Franklin,  
Lancaster,  
Lebanon & York  
Counties

Upcoming  
Events:

Biofuels...  
A PA  
Reality  
Renewable  
Energy  
Conference  
October 23



**Our New Home...** REDDI's new office is now situated at 1604 N. Second Street in Midtown Harrisburg within walking distance of the Governors Mansion. REDDI relocated to their new office space on March 17. The office is housed in an early 20<sup>th</sup> century two and one-half story masonry structure, which previously housed the offices of the Pennsylvania Grange. The space consists of 1800 square feet and provides ample office space for REDDI's fulltime staff of four. The space required many renovations but yet maintains its Old World charm, with a beautifully wood crafted executive office, built-in cabinetry, full width porch, bay windows and two fireplaces. Stop by and take a tour of our new home when visiting in the area.

## NADO Award Recipient

The National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) has recognized two of REDDI's projects for their 2006 Innovation Awards Program. Each year NADO recognizes organizations that have demonstrated innovative approaches to



regional economic and community development. REDDI's President, Russ Montgomery was an invited speaker at NADO's Annual Training Conference held August 26-29, in Reno, NV. The regional awarded projects include:

- *Biodiesel Soybean Crush Facility* – a feasibility study found the regional assets to be capable of supporting the development of a biodiesel crush facility that can produce 3 million gallons of soybean oil for conversion into biodiesel.
- *Manure Gasification/Conversion for Renewable Energy* – creating new sources of environmentally safe energy from the region's agricultural solid waste materials for use by commercial facilities and other businesses entities.

In the past two years, REDDI has been on the cutting edge of economic development and continues to support and work to fund innovative economic development projects such as, development of industrial parks, Manufacturing Incentive Program and Broadband. REDDI is also involved in alternative energy sources such as biodiesel production. Additionally, REDDI has recognized that agriculture is a significant part of our economy in Central Pennsylvania and is working on agriculturally oriented economic development. REDDI has accomplished these new initiatives with the support of our partners and members. We will continue to look to the future and meet the needs of our partners and the citizens who benefit from REDDI's programs.

**Congratulations**...REDDI's Board of Directors has named Robert Anspach, Mayor of Lebanon City, as its new **Chairman**. Other new assignments include; **Treasurer**, Lou Colon, Project Manager, Harrisburg City's Mayor's Office of Special Projects and **Secretary**, Ralph Rhode, FirstEnergy, Senior Economic Development Executive. ■ **Welcome, new members**, Tom McKeon, President, Berks County Industrial Development Authority and Randy Patterson, Director, Economic Development & Neighborhood Revitalization, City of Lancaster. ■ **Best Wishes**...REDDI's former Chairman, Charles (Chuck) Maneval, has accepted a new position with the Spanish American Civic Association Development Corporation in Lancaster as the Chief Operating Officer. We are certain that Chuck will be as dynamic in his new role as he was serving on REDDI's Board of Directors.

#### **Partner Projects:**

**Adams County**: Borough of Gettysburg - restoring the blighted downtown area to reflect the renewal of the surrounding area will be accomplished upon receipt of funding to bring in Phase III development of this five-acre site. **Berks County**: Riverfront Commerce Center – Berkshire Bottling Works has acquired the space and has begun to implement plans to construct one of the most modern, high speed water bottling facilities in the world. **Cumberland County**: Stella Street Underpass – plans to construct an underpass and walkway at this busy at-grade site located in Wormleysburg Borough are moving forward. The project will eliminate rail, vehicle and pedestrian traffic problems that can delay traffic by as much as 45 minutes per train crossing. **Dauphin County**: a study to evaluate the development of a trades incubator in Midtown Harrisburg which will utilize resources of the nearby HACC Community Center for Technology & Art (CCTA) providing business and job opportunities for skilled tradesman.

**Franklin County**: PennMar Ethanol is now determining their next plan of action after failed efforts to obtain an extension from Letterkenny Industrial Development Authority for the purchase of a construction site. **Lancaster County**: City of Lancaster Industrial Park – The 22 acre former brownfield site is fully renovated offering office space for 13 businesses. **Lebanon County**: Aspen's Business Park – LVEDC has been working with a local developer to rehabilitate a former brownfield site. Infrastructure for this new 60-acre park has been completed. Future plans are to construct an Incubator Technology facility in hopes to attract biotechnology firms into the region. **York County**: Greenway Tech Centre – this project is complete and has been certified a "Green" (environmentally friendly) building by the US Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. It can support technology-based companies requiring wireless broadband, supported by fiber-optic cable backup systems. Lifetime Brands of Westbury, NY will occupy the space to serve as headquarters for their Internet consumer sales division.

## Ag Economic Development Initiatives:

*Agriculture in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century demands thinking outside the box, and that is precisely what REDDI is doing when it comes to new ventures such as aquaculture, renewable energy, manure management and identifying emerging marketing trends for Pennsylvania products.*

■ *At Cheyney University's Aquaculture Research and Education Center, Dr. Steve Hughes plans research work in developing plant-based feed sources for Atlantic salmon and other high-value fish species. This is one step closer to establishing organic status for farm-raised fish in Pennsylvania. Extensive scientific research*

*shows that farm raised fish are a high quality, nutritious food that is rich in Omega 3 fatty acids. For this project, REDDI will provide market and consumer research to eventually launch aqua farming into mainstream Pennsylvania agriculture.*

■ *Taking nitrogen and phosphorus out of the nutrient paths that reach the Chesapeake Bay will be essential for our environment.*

*REDDI has received a First Industries Grant to explore the feasibility of a manure gasification system that would provide heat, electricity and fuel from livestock manure sources. REDDI is partnering with Adams County Solid*

*Waste Department and is currently reviewing proposals to determine a final candidate to conduct the study.*

■ *Small-scale farm entrepreneurs throughout the state often seek better and more diversified markets for their products. Many specialty food shops throughout the region seek new products such as value-added dairy items. REDDI works with farmer alliances to seek new and emerging markets for specialty products. In working with dairy goat producers, REDDI has linked these producers with buyers and wholesalers looking for cheese, ice creams, yogurts and other products.*

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## Other Development Activities:

*REDDI is committed to fostering economic development wherever possible within it's region. By acting as a facilitator for several regional projects REDDI continues to promote strong business development initiatives throughout South-central Pennsylvania. Other activities that have benefited from REDDI's strategic planning include: ■ **Broadband**, REDDI is nearing completion of a regional assessment study (e-Commonwealth Assessment Study) which surveyed both business and the general population to measure broadband's true meaning to the region as defined by their way of life today, tomorrow and well into the future.*

■ ***Manufacturing Incentive Program (MIP)**, through funding received from PA Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration, REDDI in partnership with local workforce investment boards, CareerLinks and Harrisburg Area Community College will create an urban MIP that will provide key skills gap training to attract, sustain and grow new and existing manufacturers located in the cities of Lancaster, Lebanon and the Borough of Chambersburg. ■ **Franklin County/Chambersburg-Urban Mixed Use Redevelopment Study**, REDDI is seeking \$30,000 in EDA funding for the preparation of an urban redevelopment feasibility study focused on certain strategic properties in downtown Chambersburg. Appropriate development in this area is important as many southeastern counties in the state are experiencing rapid growth and significant tendencies toward suburban sprawl.*



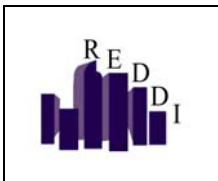
**Location:**

York Holiday Inn-  
Holidome  
2000 Loucks Road  
York, PA 17408

**Time:**

\*Registration  
begins: 7:30am  
\*Conference:  
8:30am – 5:00pm  
\*Evening  
Reception

*In keeping with REDDI's mission to support agriculture and help grow a renewable energy industry in the region REDDI is partnering with the Governor's Agriculture Renewable Energy Council to provide a one-day conference promoting biofuels. The conference will include information on biodiesel and ethanol, along with research related to the health benefits of replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy sources. Information relating to developing trends for biodiesel use in school and public transportation will be shared. There will be opportunity to network with buyers and sellers throughout the region. Promotion of the State's PennSecurity Fuels Initiative will be highlighted through this venue. **Register online at: [www.reddionline.com](http://www.reddionline.com)***



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Visit us on the web at:  
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Mailing Label

## *Adams County Ag Innovations*

REDDI is partnering with Penn State Extension in Adams County on their Ag Innovations Program, which is currently involved in research that will identify innovative approaches for improving orchard pruning, thinning, and harvesting. The program has received funding through a First Industries grant along with a seed grant from Penn State University to begin investigation of intensive fruit production systems and orchard automation.



***The mission of the Adams County AG Innovations is to inspire a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation within rural Adams County, and encourage novel approaches to agriculture's challenges and opportunities, thus securing a strong future for farming as an integral part of our economy and community.***

A research team of horticulturists, economists and engineers conducted trials in growers' orchards with a moveable platform that workers can ride on at different elevations and eliminate the need for ladders. The primary objective was to develop a systems approach for increasing



management efficiency in orchards. Time trials were conducted to compare the efficiency of the innovative platform and conventional ladders; cost-benefit analyses will also be performed. The research team is optimistic that there will be significant differences between the platform and ladders, especially in narrow-canopy plantings.

Research team horticulturists developed a blueprint for an orchard system of high density, narrow-canopy trees that can be adapted to automation. Penn state engineers modified a prototype orchard platform by adding a self-propelled undercarriage and adaptations for harvesting. Additional refinements will focus on improving stability on sloped acreage. With high density, platform-compatible orchard systems, Pennsylvania growers can more easily adopt new precision agriculture technologies.

If you are interested in participating in the Penn State Ag Innovations Research as a cooperating grower, please contact Katy Lesser, Ag Innovations Coordinator, ([KML19@psu.edu](mailto:KML19@psu.edu) or 717-334-6271, ext 331).



### **"Perfecting the Platform"**

(adapted from a report written by Sarah Waybright)

At a recent presentation in Bendersville, PA, the Penn State Ag Production Innovations research team unveiled the platform they have been experimenting with for the past three months to a group of 50 local growers and interested individuals. The team performed time trials with both the platform and ladders in a number of local orchards, mainly focusing on peach and apple thinning. They compared the time it took to complete a given task in a randomized block design with both the platform and ladders.

The team made modifications to improve performance and worker comfort. Through experimentation, hard work and planning they found that removing the railings and harnessing themselves to a bar, centrally located, they could increase mobility, reach, and reduce back pain caused by leaning. They also discovered that having fewer people on the platform was more effective than loading to maximum capacity. Engineering a self-propelled undercarriage that could be steered by a first level worker with minimal effort or attention eliminated the need for a driver. Matt Harsh, Team Economist reported that, "there were cost differences in favor of the platform at most of the orchards visited. Situations that didn't produce a cost benefit were due to tree architecture or block design that was not conducive to mechanization." The inexperienced crew recognized increases in productivity as high as sixty percent. Platform use expands the worker pool because there isn't as much physical demand, which allows those who wouldn't previously consider orchard work to find a job. A presentation by summer intern, Jackie Van Pelt, demonstrated her unique bin-filler design, which automates the harvesting process allowing it to keep up with market demand and competition. Her prototype model allows apples to be laid gently in the bin one layer at a time to prevent bruising, and eliminates the extra step of moving them from a picking bag. This illustrates the potential for an innovative bin-filling concept to be coupled with a platform for harvest at some point in the future. It is clear that this is only the beginning of a very long path to mechanization of orchard tasks, but it is definitely a step in the right direction. The project was a successful introduction to what could potentially be the future of fruit growing in Adams County, and the greater east coast. For a complete review of the study contact Katy Lesser, Ag Innovations Coordinator, Penn State Cooperative Extension of Adams County at [KML19@psu.edu](mailto:KML19@psu.edu) or 334-6271 ext. 331.