End Migration of Rural People To Cities

W. Ralph Sechler, Chairman of the Yancey County Technical Action Panel, said today the Department of Agriculture had instructed its rural development specialists to "end the migraticn of rural people to large cities by helping small communities revitalize themselves."

Mr. Sechler said instructions had been sent by Assistant Secretary John A. Baker to all the field staffs of USDA agencies urging them to expand efforts to:

Extend services and benefits to all Federal agencies into rural areas.

Help rural cimmunities make economic development plans and secure services needed to carry out the plans.

The Assistant Secretary's action emphasized the importance of the technical action panels that the Secreary of Agriculture

has ordered established in each state and the approximately 3,000 rural counties to work with local community development organizations.

"Basically, what the Department is doing," Baker explains, "is realigning and fortifying its field offices to insure that rural communities do not miss out on help available from any source in their development programs.

"We have established a "one-stop" service concept in every rural county to enable local leaders to (1) get help they need in finding out what is impeding the development of their local economy, (2) obtain assistance in preparing economic development plans, and (3) tap all government and private services that can be used to turn dreams into reality.55

Membership of the technical action panels at the state level

consists of the heads of all Department of Agriculture agencies that have State offices. The heads of all other government agencies that provide support in the development of rural areas are invited to become members. The panels are assisted by the directors of the Extension Service, who in some States also serves as a panel member.

The State Director of the Farmers Home Administration serves as chairman, the Soil Conservation state conservationist is co-chairman, and the state executive director of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service is alternate chairman.

o give staff support to the mels a Farmers Home Administration rural development specialist has been assigned as executive director in 40 states.

The composition of the panels in the counties follows the pattern established at the rural level.

Mr. Baker in his directive also gave details on multi-coun-

ty panels that are to be set up where needed to service areawide planning bodies. These panels will include development specialists from the same group of agencies represented on state and county panels, but will deal with projects that serve more than one county.

"Modern communications and transportation," Baker points out, "have made possible a new kind of functional rural community that has a population base adequate to support a large number of basic public services. Generally, this new type of community includes two or more rural counties and at least one small city which is the focil point of local economic, educational and social activity. Areas of this type can undertake development programs that no single county or community could afford."

In addition, Mr. Baker's instruction listed the contributions to be made in rural areas develcpment by USDA agencies that do not have nationwide, county-level field staffs.

For example the Consumer and Marketing Service will provide technical assistance in the area of marketing services and food assistance programs.

The Farmers Cooperative Service will help provide advisory and educational assistance to rural cooperatives.

The Forest Service, through its cooperative State and private program, will provide technical assistance in each area where forests are economically important.

The Rural Electrification Administration, working through its borrower organizations, will furnish credit-finding aid for commercial and industrial projects.

Support efforts of the Agricultural Research Service, the Cooperative State Research Service, the Economic Research Service, the Economic Research Service, the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation, and the Statistical Reporting Service were also listed.

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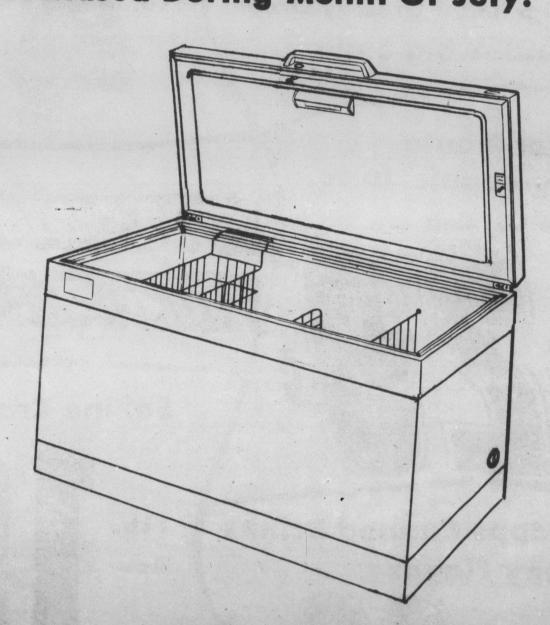
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