Usborne, ON *Winterton, NF*

Seguin, ON

NRE

THE NEW RURAL ECONOMY

Néguac, NB

Pic Mobert *Tweed, ON*

Rhineland, MB *Indian Brook, NS*

Benito, MB *Springhill, NS*

Okanese 82, SK *Blissfield, NB*

Spalding, SK *Twillingate, NF*

Wood River, SK *Taschereau, QC*

Hussar, AB St-Roch-de-Mékinac, QC

Ferintosh, AB *Ste-Françoise, QC*

Girouxville, AB *Cap-à-l'aigle, QC*

Tumbler Ridge, BC *Armagh, QC*

Mackenzie, BC *St-Damase, QC*

Port Alice, BC *N. Plantagenet, ON*

Upper Liard

FCRR CRRF

Lot 16, PE

Arctic Bay, NV *Carden, ON*

The New Rural Economy Project: Summer 2001 Household Survey

This is booklet number 2 in the NRE "What Have We Learned" series

For information on other available booklets, please contact us at:

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Caution: These findings vary up to 8%!

When conducting a study that involves a sample, researchers are cautious about how they interpret the results. This is because they can never be certain that the findings will represent the whole population from which the sample was drawn. For this survey, the 'whole population' is represented by the total number of households found within each selected NRE site. When you are reading these results, please keep in mind that any of these findings could vary by 8%.

WHAT DID WE LEARN IN 2001?

Ray Bollman (StatCan), Tom Beckley (UNB) and Bill Reimer (NRE)

This is the fifth year of the New Rural Economy Project (NRE). It is an exciting time, since we are now reaping the fruits of our collaboration and hard work. This document is a small part of the harvest.

You will find two major sections in this booklet.

- The NRE Houshold Survey 2001. This first section presents a selection of results from our household survey conducted last summer. From May to July, we knocked on doors in 21 of our NRE sites and spoke to people in just under 2000 households. They gave generously of their time and expertise to inform us about their community activities, household organization, challenges, and options regarding a range of rural issues. We have selected a few of the results so you can compare your community to others in your region and across the nation.

- The NRE in the Global context. This section fills you in on NRE events across the nation and around the world. Through its parent organization, the *Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation* (CRRF), we enjoy the support of many other national and international groups. They help us understand how local events and challenges can be rooted in more global processes such as the changing demand for our resources, the introduction of new technologies, or the implementation of policies affecting economic and social programs.

Our collaboration is long-term. After four years of working together, we are enjoying a level of exchange that is exceptional for both our research and education objectives. I was particularly pleased to meet representatives from 15 of the NRE sites who joined us at the CRRF Annual Conference in Muenster, Saskatchewan last October. For three days we compared experiences, visited local projects, and enjoyed each others' company as we searched for new ways to improve the lives of rural Canadians. We invite you to join us this fall at our next meeting in Miramichi, New Brunswick (October 26th to 29th).

This booklet is prepared as part of our continuing discussion about the condition and future of rural Canada. We ask you to read it – not as a finished document – but as a basis for discussion. Let us know whether it makes sense from your point of view – whether it helps you understand what is happening in your community or whether we have overlooked something important. Write us a letter, give us a phone call at (514) 848-2139, e-mail us with your comments (nre@vax2.concordia.ca), or leave them on our web site (http://nre.concordia.ca). We will visit your community whenever we can – keep an eye out for us.

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IMPRESSIONS FROM THE NRE 2001 HOUSEHOLD SURVEY TEAM
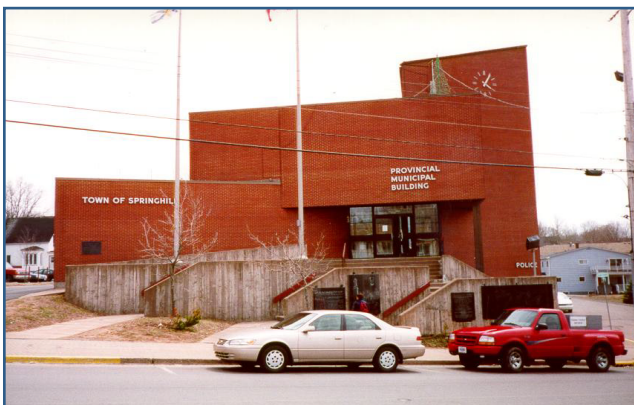
Springhill, NS

Household interviews were conducted in May and June, 2001. Many thanks to everyone who responded. Many others made the interview process a success, including Councillors Alan Dill and Cathy Fisher who were supportive of the work, Mary Willa Littler who contacted residents to invite their participation in the interview process, and Amanda Marlin and Susan Hill who conducted the interviews.

Springhillers were exceptionally welcoming to us and we are grateful for their willingness to share their insights into the issues and challenges that exist, and the opportunities and solutions that might be possible. The household surveys were of particular interest to the entire NRE research team, given that close to 30 members participated in a day-long trip to the community in late April, 2001. At that time, many had their first exposure to what Springhill is all about, and learned a great deal about the businesses and community organizations which make the community a vibrant place to live. Many thanks to the now-retired Economic Development Officer, Ron Jefferson, and NSCC Principal Myrna Breen for helping to organize the visit.

There is no doubt that Springhill has had a trying year, with many challenges related to the loss of the arena, and controversies associated with policing and with water issues. At the same, many positive steps have been made, including securing a long term role for the hospital, upgrading of municipal infrastructure, and holding the line on property taxes. We are hopeful that our research results stemming from the household survey will be useful to many in the community.

Mary Willa Wittler and Cathy Fisher participated in the annual CRRF "rural university" held in Muenster, SK in October.
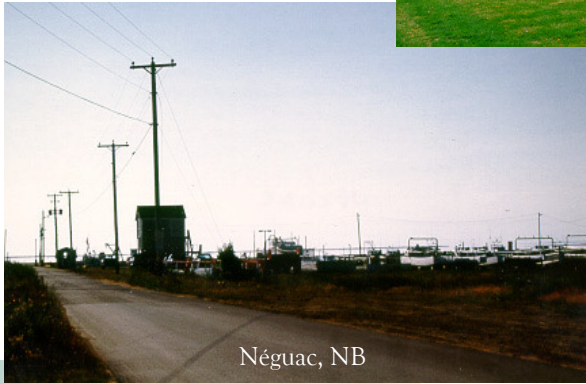
David Bruce
Site Coordinator

Cap-à-l'aigle, QC

Mackenzie, BC

Lot 16, PE

Néguac, NB

Springhill, NS

The NRE 2001 Household Survey

Festival du MAIS de Saint-Damase VOUS ACCUEILLE

St-Damase, QC

Hussar, AB

Spalding, SK

Ferintosh, AB

Usborne, ON

Twillingate, NF

Rhineland, MB

Carden, ON

Community Inclusion and Cooperation

One of the things that we tried to measure using the survey was 'Social Cohesion'. By social cohesion, we mean the extent to which people respond collectively to achieve the outcomes they desire, and to deal with the economic social political or environmental stresses that affect them. It is difficult to measure this, but one way is to find out how residents feel about the cohesion within their community. Another way is to measure how the community works together to provide basic needs and services. This is discussed in the section titled 'Doing Things for Ourselves and Others'.

Respondents were asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed with statements such as: "I feel like I belong in this community", "I believe my neighbours would help me in an emergency" and "I regularly stop and talk with people in my community". The answers we received helped us to understand how the community viewed itself, and if they felt the community was able to work together to achieve success.

### Perceived High Levels of Social Cohesion in the Community
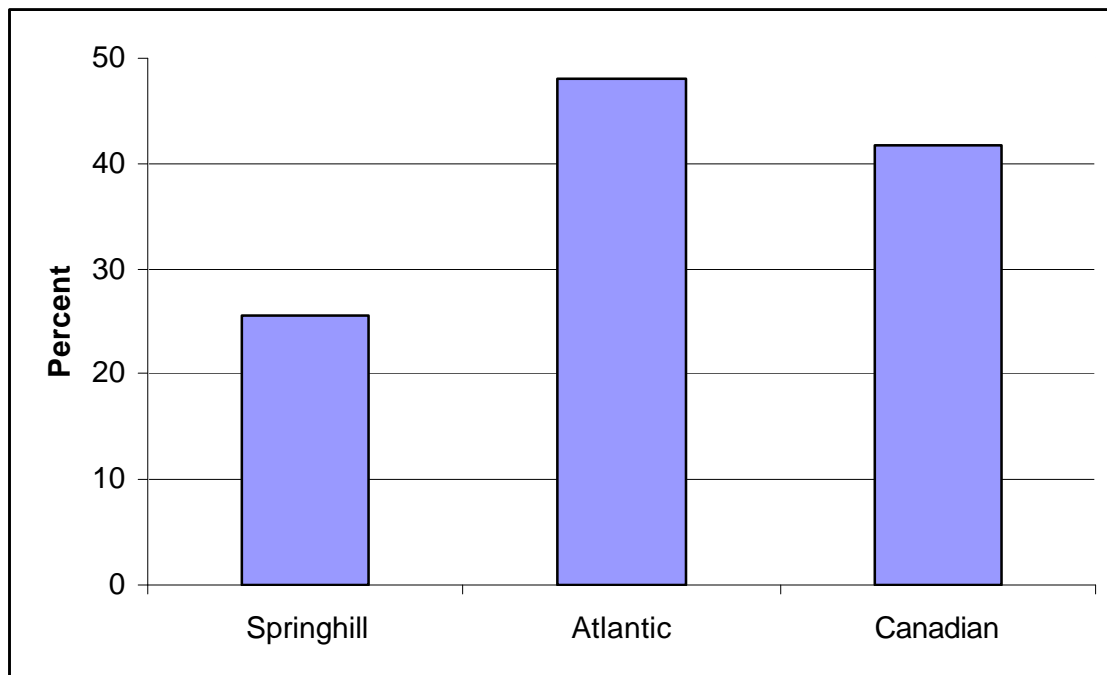
In looking at the above bar chart we find that 26% of the respondents in Springhill feel that their community has a high level of perceived social cohesion compared to 48% for other NRE sites in the Atlantic and 42% for the total Canadian sites.

Given that residents describe their level of community social cohesion as relatively low, it may be beneficial to organize more community-based events in order to increase the sense of fellowship. Neighbourhood activities that bring people together such as community festivals and celebrations can also potentially increase the community's social and economic well being.

Perception of Leadership Opportunities for Women and Young Adults
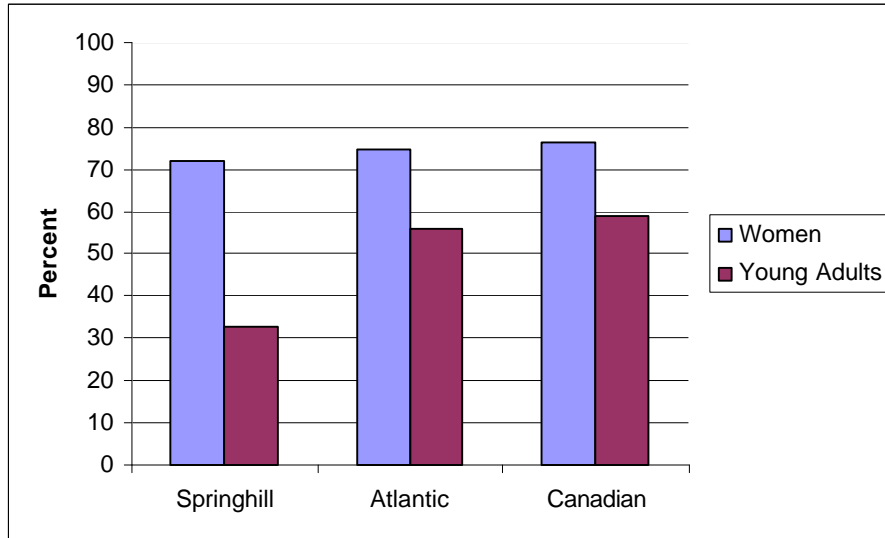
Residents of Springhill view their community as being open to leadership opportunities for women but fewer respondents feel that there are leadership opportunities for young adults. The views on the opportunities for women were similar to both regional and national averages, however the opinions on the opportunities for young adults were less favourable than the averages for Atlantic or Canadian sites.

## Perceived Ability of Community to Work Together
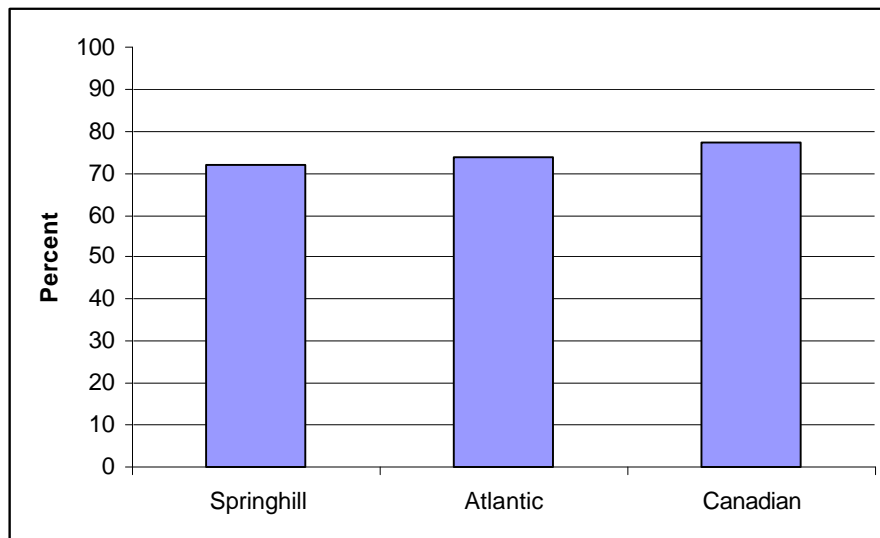
Residents of Springhill feel that community members are willing to work together towards a common goal. In the above graph 72% agreed that the community was able to work together, in comparison to 74% of respondents in the Atlantic sites and 77% of the respondents in all the Canadian sites. What this data suggests is that Springhill is a community that is able to work together and that the leadership opportunities for both women and young adults in the community can possibly contribute to the community's ongoing success.

Taking Action in the Community

As part of the summer survey, we were very interested in how people express their concerns about community issues. To measure this, we asked respondents if they had written a letter to their Mayor, Provincial or Federal government representative, or to a newspaper editor. We also asked if they had signed a petition, attended or spoken at a public meeting in the 12 months previous to the interview.

Action Taken in Springhill
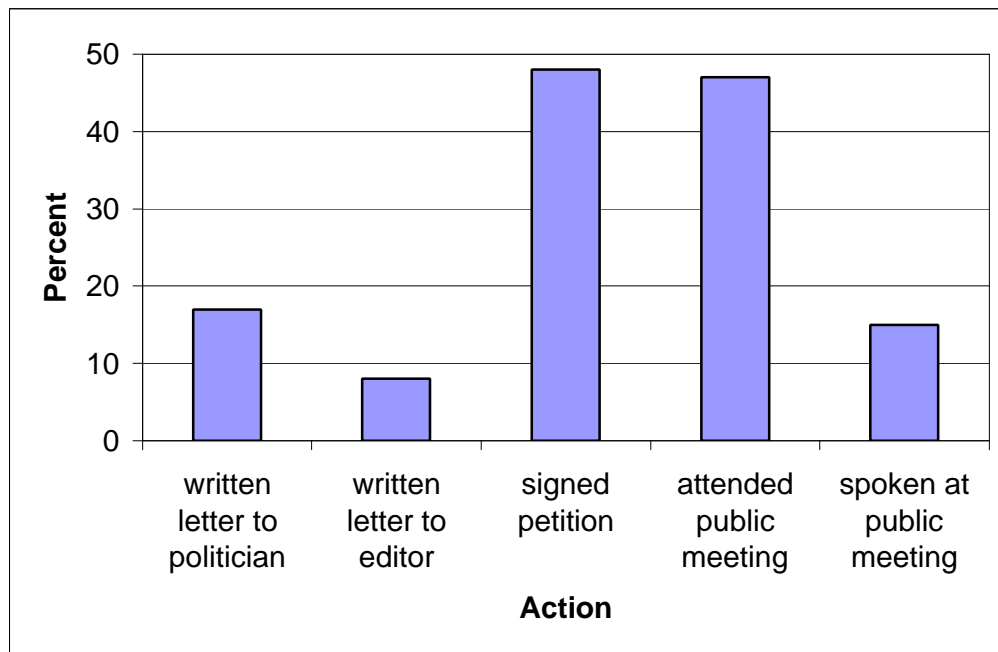
The graph above shows that in Springhill, 17% of people interviewed had written a letter to the Mayor, Provincial or Federal representative and 8% of respondents wrote letters to a newspaper editor. In addition, 48% had signed a petition, 47% had attended public meetings and 15% had spoken at public meetings.

Action in Springhill Compared to Atlantic and Canadian Sites
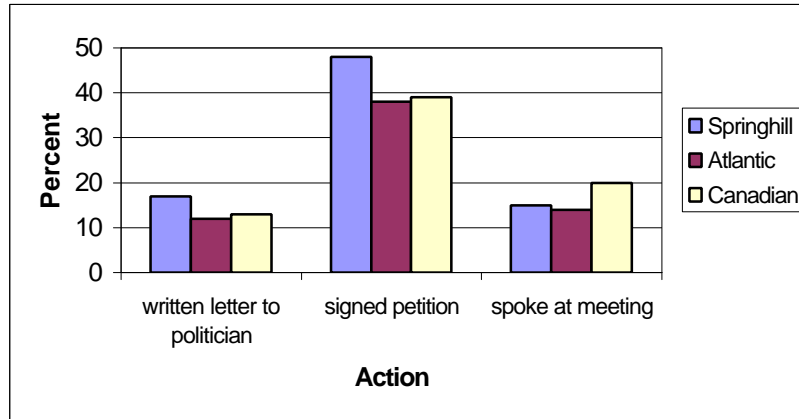
As can be seen in the graph above, the actions taken in Springhill are similar to those taken in Communities in both the Region and the rest of Canada. In most cases, respondents were much more likely to attend and speak at meetings, or sign petitions than they were to write letters stating their opinion. Public meetings and petitions are excellent ways of sharing information, gathering public opinion, and reaching a consensus within a community. It is also important that other avenues are used to express opinion, especially those that inform external decision makers.

Average Number of Organizations per Person
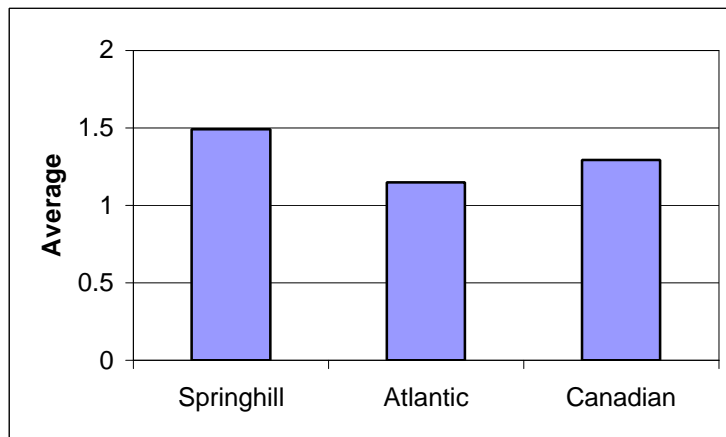
In order to understand how a community works together, we measured how many voluntary organisations people within the community belonged to. These might be social clubs, religious groups, or any other type of organized meeting. We took an average per person of the number of groups attended, in order to make the comparison between communities shown in the graph above.

Small groups and communal activities, whether formal or informal, offer a value to the community. While the measure can never be perfect, the number of voluntary organisations that people belong to is a way of understanding the level of social cohesion in a community.

Services In The Community

The basic services that a community receives are key to the quality of life enjoyed by the members of that community. In order to understand them, we looked at the availability and use of basic services such as health care, education, safety and recreation. We asked people to rate if they considered the services to be good, and if they had improved or worsened in the last five years.

The residents of Springhill described some deterioration in the access to health services in the past five years. As is seen in the graph below, in the case of doctors, 48% reported access being more difficult than five years ago. In the case of the dentist, residents described very little change. Although fewer respondents had experience with emergency services, 26% reported finding it harder to access an emergency room than five years ago. This suggests that the quality of health care in Springhill has declined somewhat in recent years.

## Opinions About Health Service Access Compared to Five Years Ago
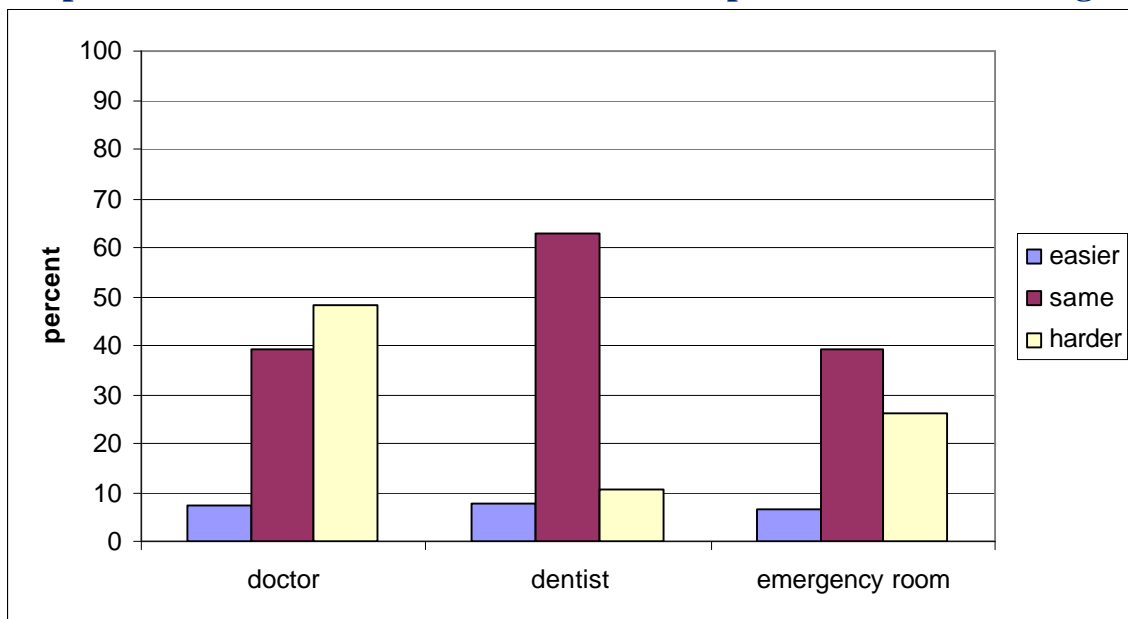
People in Springhill also expressed some reservation about the quality of other local services. As can be seen in the graph on the next page, in most cases, people in Springhill rated their services lower than respondents in Atlantic and Canadian sites overall. The services that rated highest were fire, elementary schools, and sewage. For example in the case of fire protection, 92% rated the service as either "good" or "very good". The services that fared worse were water, recreation programs and secondary schools. Water got a particularly low rating with only 5% of respondents describing it as "good" or "very good". Springhill is not alone in having concerns about their water; the graph indicates that other Atlantic communities also gave water quality a low score.

Respondents who Describe Services as "Good" or "Very Good"
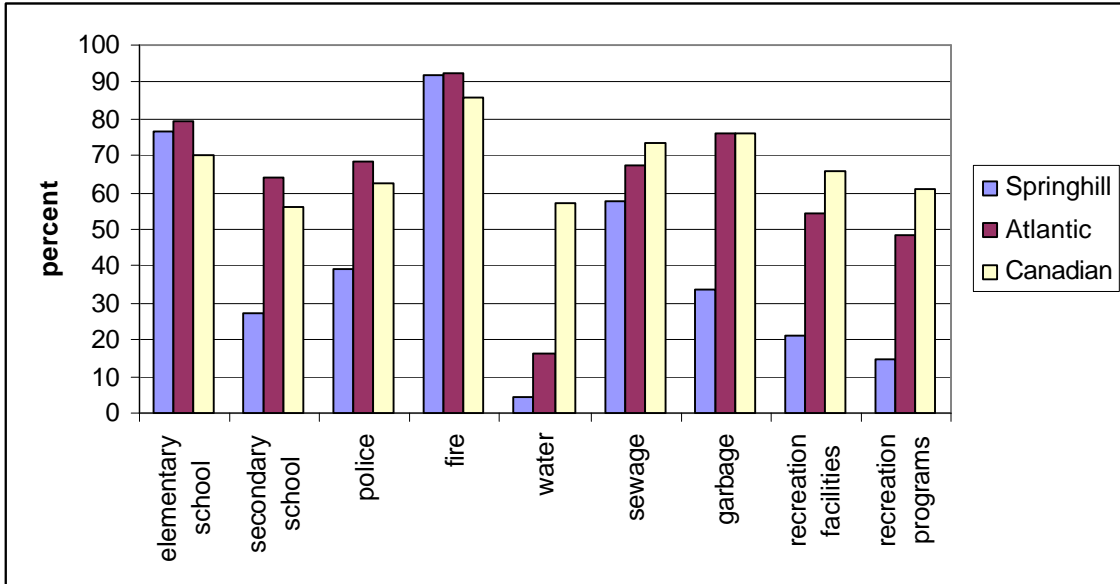
Respondents were also asked if these same services have changed over the past 5 years. As is seen in the graph below, this question gave mixed results. The services that respondents described as having improved the most were the elementary schools, fire protection and sewage. While fire was almost unanimously described as the same or better than five years ago, there was a difference of opinion over the elementary schools. The areas of greatest decline identified by respondents were garbage collection, water and recreation programs and facilities. For example, over 70% of respondents reported that garbage and recreation facilities are worse than five years ago. Our results indicate that residents of Springhill are, on the whole, dissatisfied with the quality of their services.
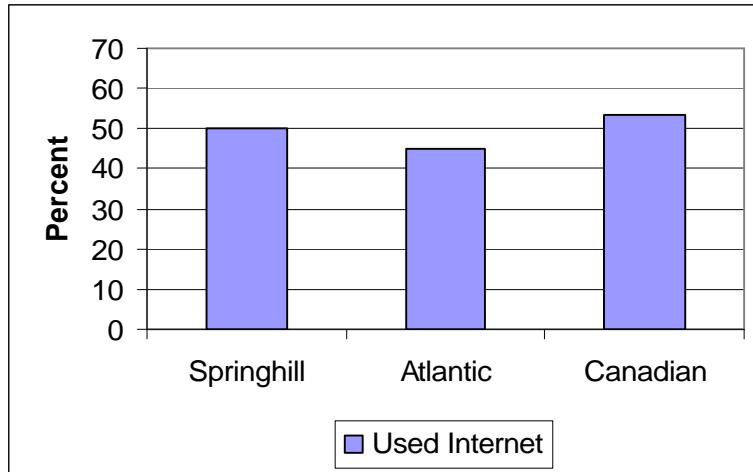
Perceptions of Local Service Quality as Compared to Five Years Ago
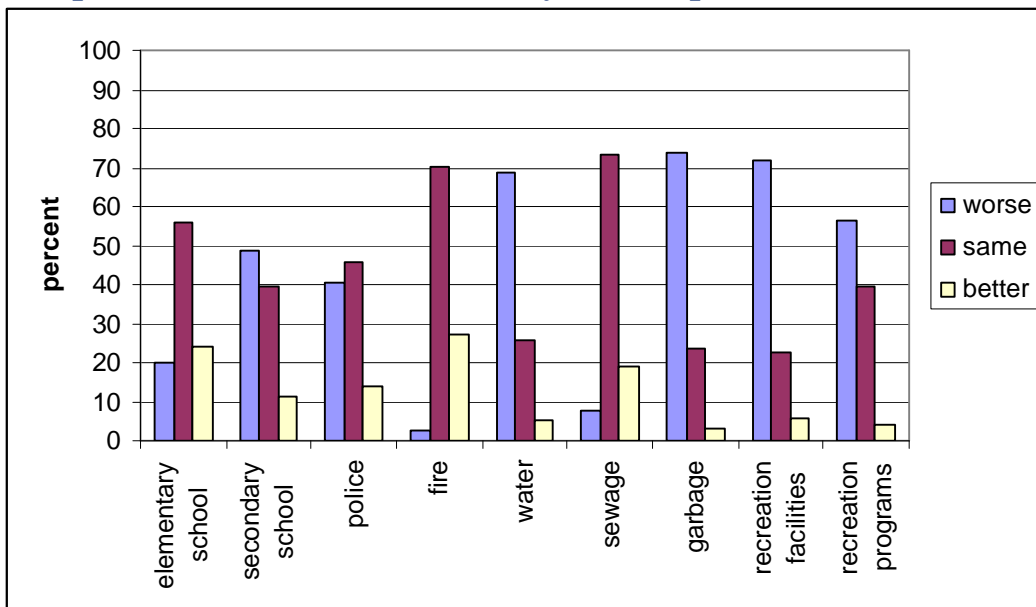
Internet in the Community

Part of this summer's survey looked at the community's use of the Internet. Questions we asked have helped us to better understand how many people in Springhill use the Internet, where it is used, what for, and opinions about it.

Internet Use in Springhill

The above graph shows the percentage of people sites who use the Internet in Springhill, the Atlantic sites, and in all 20 Canadian sites. Here we can see that approximately 50% of the people surveyed in Springhill use the Internet. This is similar to both the regional and national averages. By adding computers and Internet access to other locations in Springhill and promoting existing public access locations, people who may not have access within the home may be encouraged to get online. Also, by holding "How To" sessions on Internet and computer use for various groups such as the seniors club or youth groups, more people may feel at ease using these technologies and build upon their existing knowledge.

Locations of Internet Use
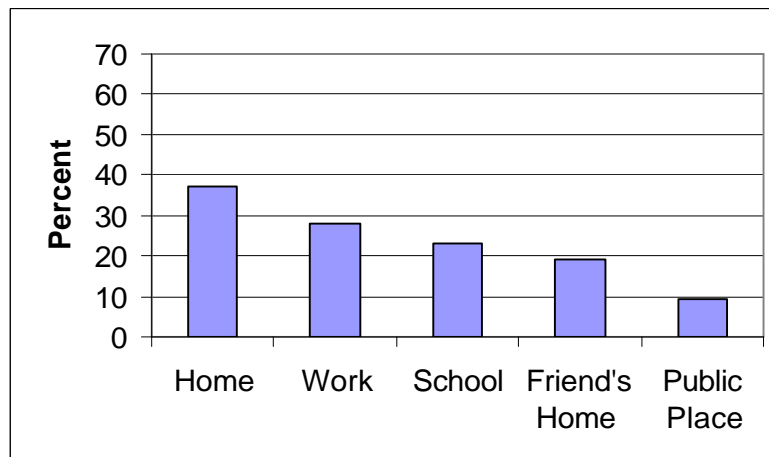
The previous graph shows where people in Springhill tend to use the Internet. The most common place is at home and the least common place is in a public place such as the library or community centre. The top three locations being home, work and school suggest that people of different ages and occupations can get online and access the information they need.

Opinions About the Internet
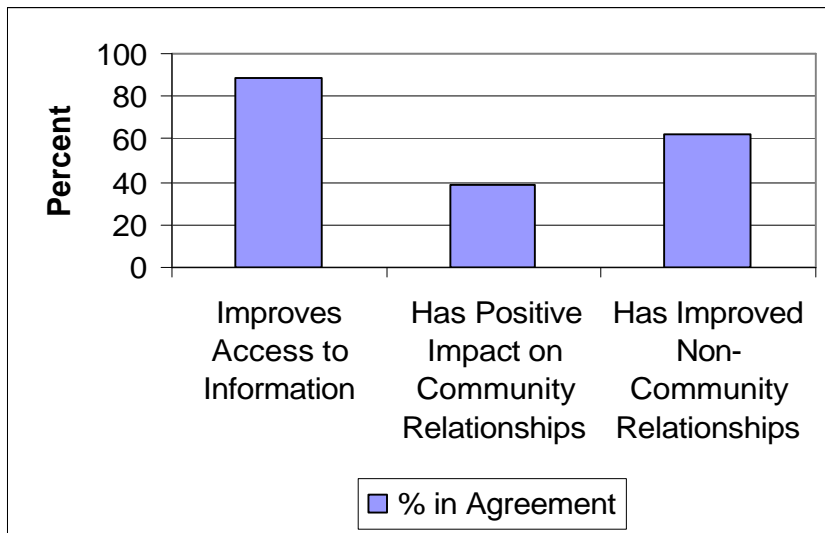
This last graph depicts how people in Springhill feel about the Internet and its impact on their lives. 38% of those people interviewed think that the Internet has a positive impact on their relationships with people inside the community. 62% of the people interviewed in Springhill felt that the Internet has improved their relationships with people outside of the community. 89% of people felt that the Internet has improved their access to information. The fact that so many respondents feel that the Internet has improved access to information may reflect people's growing knowledge about navigating through the World Wide Web and an increased comfort level with this technology. Again, "How To" sessions held within the community may help even more people to learn about searching for the information they need and want, and becoming familiar with various advanced search engines, municipal, and national web sites can often help people to find what they are looking for. The existence of your community web site may also be contributing to people's positive feelings about online access as it provides a valuable source of local information. Promoting this web site and expanding it to include more details about local events, news, current issues, meetings, and fundraisers can allow people to find out even more about what is important to them locally. This type of access not only informs people, but can also bring people together from various parts of the community who may not normally have a chance to interact – certainly a benefit to social cohesion and community spirit.

Personal Stress and Household Changes

Changes in personal circumstances, and the stresses that these cause, have a great effect on the residents of any community. In order to understand the changes in a community, and how it was dealt with by the residents, we asked a series of questions about the types of change seen in the last year, how they coped with the change, and whether life in the community was stressful or not. Examples of changes discussed included health, financial, legal, family relationship and child care.

Our survey found that 16% of residents in the community of Springhill described their lives as being very stressful. Across the six rural Atlantic Canadian communities surveyed this summer, high levels of stress ranged from a low of 3% to this high in Springhill. The national average indicated that 13% of Canadians described their lives as being very stressful in the 20 rural communities surveyed. Furthermore, 13% of respondents in Springhill indicated that they had no stress in their lives at all. This proportion is similar to the Atlantic average and the national average who reported no stress in their lives.

Examining the Levels of Personal Stress
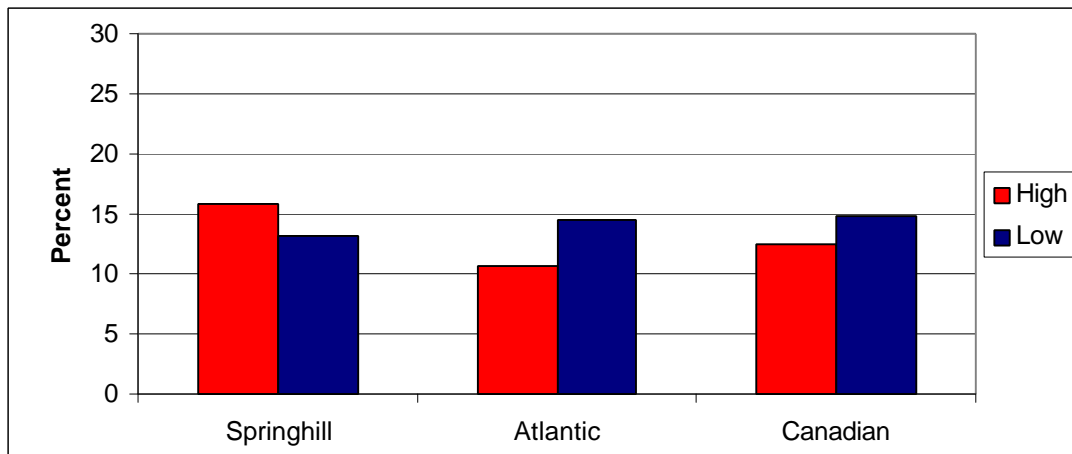
The age of an individual also plays an important role in their level of personal stress. In general, our research across Canada indicated that stress levels tended to peak by middle age (35 to 49 years old) and then began to decline in later stages of adulthood.

In the community of Springhill, stress levels were also at their highest among middle-aged adults with 1 in 5 middle-aged adults indicating that they were very stressed (as indicated on the following graph). Remaining consistent with national and regional trends, seniors (65 years old and up) in Springhill represent the smallest proportion of stressed individuals (9%) across the age groups surveyed.

Examining High Levels of Stress Across Various Age Groups
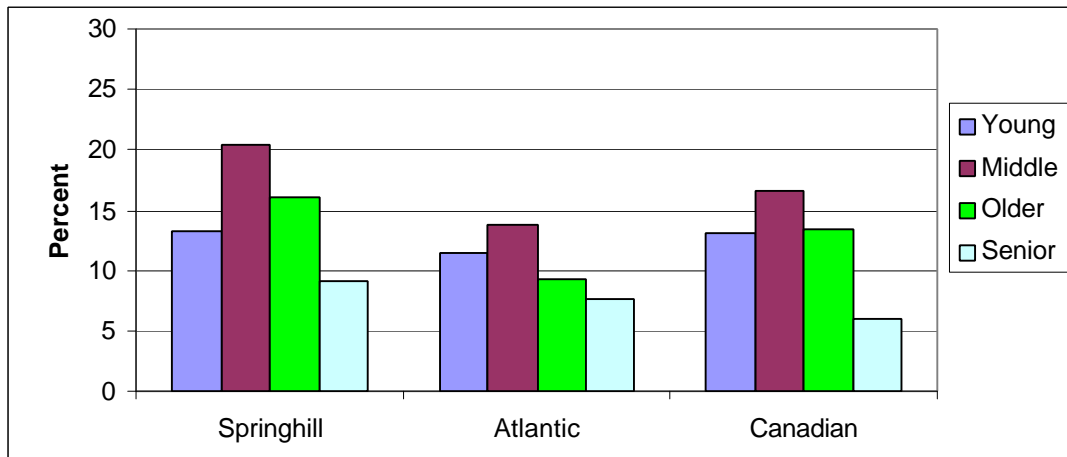
Household Changes

Households experience many different types of changes throughout the course of a year and the impact of each of these changes varies from household to household and from one community to another. In the community of Springhill, 73% of households experienced at least one change over the past 12 months. Of these households, 40% reported that a health change had the greatest impact on their household. Furthermore, 16% of households indicated that a financial change had the greatest impact on their household over the past year.

Changes That Had the Greatest Impact on Households in Springhill
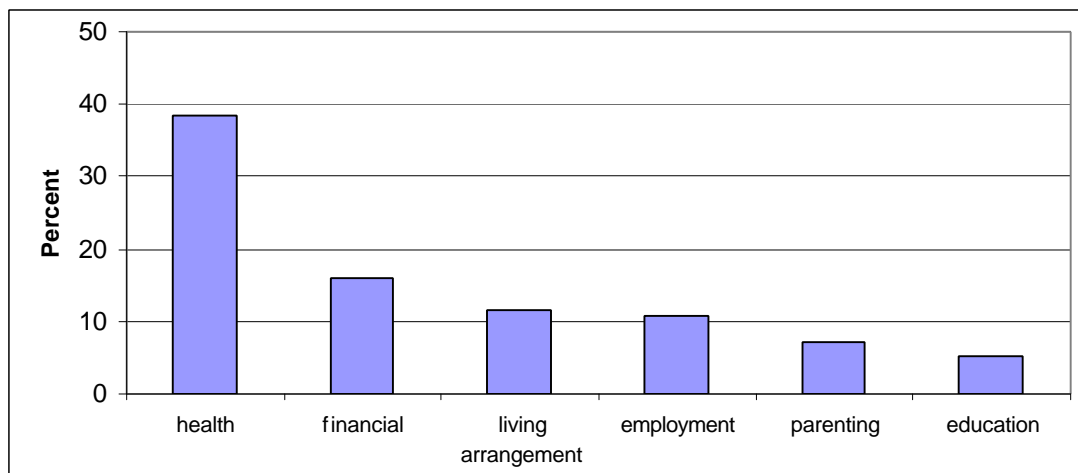
Across the six rural Atlantic communities surveyed this summer, Springhill had the highest proportion of respondents (38%) citing a health change as having had the greatest impact on their household. Similarly, Springhill also had the greatest proportion of respondents (16%) who indicated that they were under a high degree of stress across the six rural Atlantic communities. It is possible that these health changes may have contributed to the high level of stress residents feel in the community.

Doing Things For Ourselves And Others

In the section titled 'Community Inclusion and Co-operation' we measured social cohesion using resident's views of the community they live in, and how that community works together. In this section we look at how residents in the community help one another with basic needs and services. This allows us to measure cohesion within the community on a practical level. Doing things for others contributes to a community not just by providing basic needs and services, but by possibly increasing communication and understanding between residents, which may lead to greater unity.

We looked at some basic household needs, such as wood, vegetables, fruit and game. We asked if residents grew or collected these themselves, and if they gave or received them from others. We also asked about basic skills and services that people within the communities shared. The reports on each community only include those basic needs that are relevant to that community.

Households that Grow or are Given Vegetables
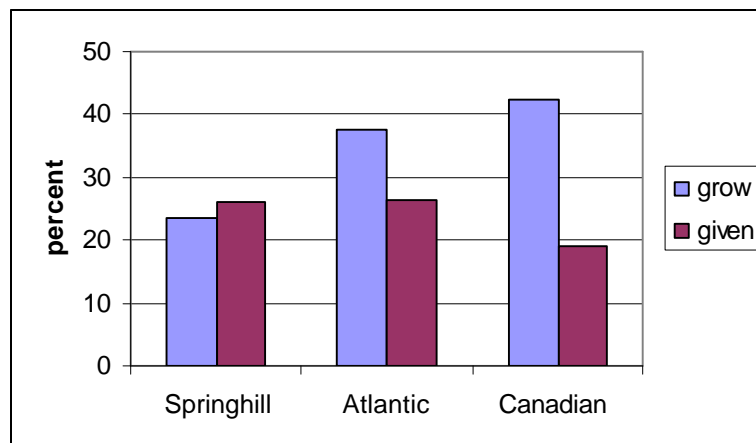
Land-based activities are not uncommon in Springhill. However the graph above indicates that fewer people in Springhill grow their own vegetables than the averages of other Atlantic and Canadian sites. Sharing networks in Springhill for are similar to the average of Atlantic sites, and above the national average. The growing and sharing of foods can be an important addition to more conventional economic activities especially during times of economic difficulty.

In Springhill, 18% of respondents use some wood to heat their homes. This figure is lower than the average for the Atlantic sites, and the national average. As is seen in the graph below, most people purchase their firewood. Harvesting is rare in Springhill; only 1% of respondents reported doing so. As a result, sharing networks for firewood are virtually non-existent in Springhill.

Households that Harvest, are Given, or Buy Firewood
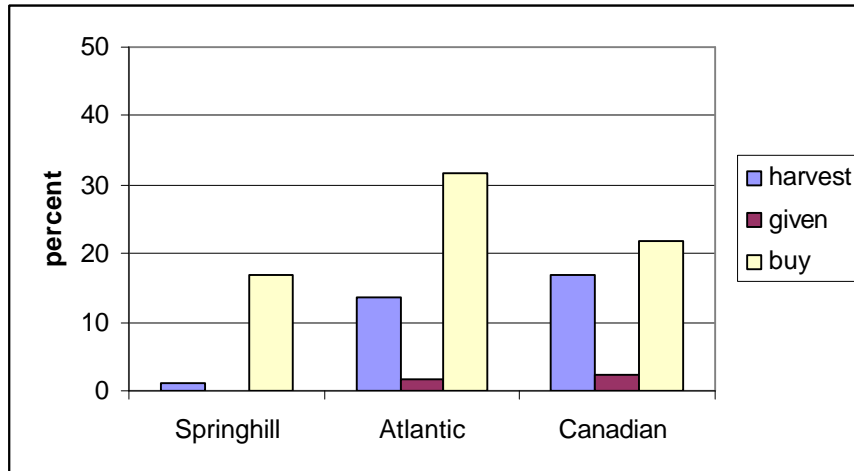
Households that Provide and Receive Skills and Services Free-of-Charge
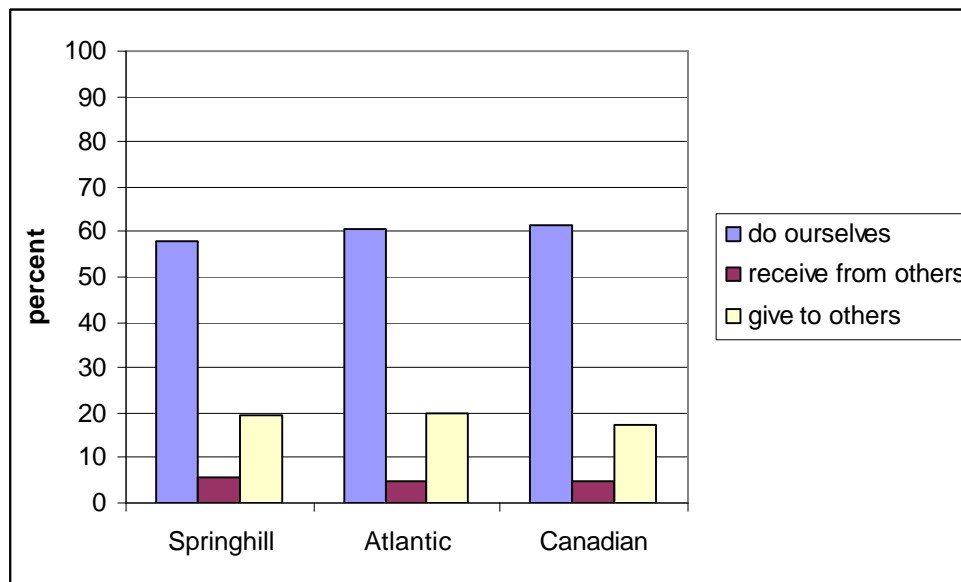
As a means to measure self-reliance our survey also looked at a number of other activities such as carpentry, painting and mechanical work. In the graph above you will see an index which combines several of these variables (specifically painting, sewing, housework, babysitting, repairs, technical help, snow removal and lawn care). The graph reports on the percentage of respondents who do these things themselves, receive them free-of-charge from others or provide them to others free-of-charge.

The graph above shows that people in Springhill carry out a similar level of activities for themselves as respondents in other sites both regionally and nationally. The activities that respondents are most likely to do themselves are housework, transportation and lawn care. The services respondents are most likely to pay cash for are technical services, automobile/boat repair and snow removal. The graph also shows that people in Springhill do a similar amount of work free-of-charge for each other as the Atlantic sites and Canadian sites.

The NRE in the
global context
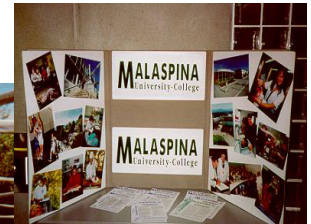
THE NRE RESEARCH SITES IN BRIEF

One of the older coastal communities in Newfoundland, the traditional fishing town of **WINTERTON** is nestled along Trinity Bay on the Northwestern side of the Avalon Peninsula. Winterton is home to approximately 600 people, many of whom are employed by the local fish plant and various service industries in the area. To celebrate its heritage and beauty, the town has established a boat-building museum, and most recently a spectacular board walk.

TWILLINGATE, an island community along the central North Coast of Newfoundland, is said to be the iceberg capital of the world. Home to about 3,000 people, Twillingate has traditionally been one of the most prominent fishing ports in Newfoundland. Although it has felt the effects of the cod moratorium, Twillingate continues to support a growing tourism industry and hosts the internationally acclaimed Fish, Fun and Folk festival every year in July.

Encompassing the communities of Belmont, Central Lot 16 and Southwest Lot 16, **LOT 16** is an unincorporated area located about 15 minutes northwest of Summerside, PEI. With a population of approximately 650 people, Lot 16 is known for its involvement in the agricultural sector as it is home to both dairy and potato farming. Residents of Lot 16 place high value on family and togetherness, with community groups such as the 4H Club, the Women's Institute and the Senior Citizen's Club gathering on a regular basis at local churches and the community hall.

SPRINGHILL, with an approximate population of 4,200 people, is located in the Northwestern part of Nova Scotia. Since the end of its traditional mining backbone, Springhill has been working hard to diversify itself in the areas of tourism, geothermal development and manufacturing. It is home to the Anne Murray Centre, the Miners' Museum and celebrates an annual Irish Festival filled with traditional dancing, music and other cultural events.

BLISSFIELD, an unincorporated parish of about 700 people, is located along the Miramichi River, next to Doaktown. Because it is surrounded by natural resources and spectacular scenery, Blissfield has relied on forestry, fishing and tourism to support the local economy. For six days in July 2000, Blissfield organized the Doaktown Fair and Reunion, a celebration which revived community spirit and encouraged community action.

NEGUAC, a highly bilingual community along the Southern end of New Brunswick's Acadian Peninsula, is home to about 1,700 people. Traditionally, residents of Néguac have relied mainly on the forest and fishing industries for their livelihood, but as these resources become more unstable, the community has been seeking economic support in other areas such as manufacturing and tourism. Through the local Historical Society and events such as Rendez-Vous Néguac, the community is able to promote its heritage.

The town of **ST. DAMASE** is located in the St.Lawrence valley, only 45 minutes east of Montréal. The population, currently at about 1,500, has been gradually increasing as St. Damase promotes a solid economic base in agriculture and food processing industries. With numerous social clubs and organizations, along with annual events such the Festival du Maïs, the people of St. Damase encourage togetherness and community spirit.

CAP-A-L'AIGLE is a picturesque little town located on the edge of the St. Lawrence river in Québec, with a population of about 710 people. The community's picturesque nature, tourism and recreation are the main drivers of the economy. However many members of the community work in neighbouring areas. One important event for Cap-à-L'aigle is the Fête des Lilas which includes 3 days of activities to bring the town together.

THE NRE RESEARCH SITES IN BRIEF

STE. FRANÇOISE is a charming community located south of Trois-Pistoles about fifty kilometers east of Rivière-du-Loup, in the region of the Lower Saint-Lawrence. The economic engine of this community of 467 people is its agro-forestry industry. There are also about ten commercial dairy farms in the area and many small farms that operate on a part-time basis. Each year, the Fête de Noël festival is celebrated by the residents of Ste. Françoise.

TASCHEREAU is a small town in Québec located in Central Abitibi between the communities of La Sarre and Amos. With a population of approximately 640, Tashereau has no shortage of water with 12 lakes and 7 rivers in the immediate area. With an entrance to the beautiful Aiguebelle Park, this town benefits from tourism. Forestry is also an extremely important industry as it employs almost 50% of the community.

Previously a township, **CARDEN**, Ontario has now amalgamated to be part of the City of Kawartha Lakes and is home to approximately 880 people year round. This number swells to over 1,300 in the summer as cottage season takes hold. While many people work outside of Carden, there's a growing aggregate industry here. The Carden Fair and the Alvar Plains are just some of the great reasons to visit.
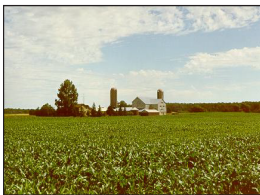

USBORNE, previously its own township, is now part of the Municipality of South Huron, Huron County. It is located just north of London, Ontario and to the east of Lake Huron. With a population of about 1,500, Usborne's economy is rooted in the cash-crop and livestock industries; in fact, approximately 40% of the workforce is involved with farming. One of the major events which this town enjoys is the Kirkton Fair.

TWEED is a scenic Ontario town located just north of Belleville, between Toronto and Ottawa. It is home to approximately 1,600 people and acts as a service centre to the surrounding rural area. It has a mixed economic base of tourism, retirement functions, retail, and agricultural services. The Heritage Centre and renowned Flowerama Festival are two of Tweed's major attractions.

Located in Northeastern Ontario at the Southern tip of the Parry Sound District, **SEGUIN TOWNSHIP** is a recent amalgamation of several smaller communities. Its permanent population is about 3,400, but this number nearly quadruples as cottagers arrive each Summer. Tourism is one of Seguin's main industries and this beautiful area is not to be missed. Events like the Foley Fall Fair and the Winter Frolic bring the community together.
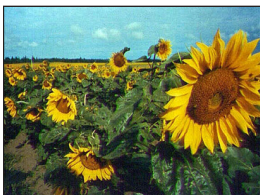
The Rural Municipality (RM) of **RHINELAND** is a cluster of communities, villages and farms in Southern Manitoba located along the border with North Dakota. The main communities of Altona, Plum Coulee and Gretna are small service centres and home to most of the 4,200 people living in the RM. The vibrant blue, yellow and gold fields in midsummer show Rhineland's strength in agriculture and annual festivals throughout the Summer draw tourists from around the province and the world.

The Municipality of **WOOD RIVER**, located in Southern Saskatchewan southeast of Moose Jaw, is home to about 980 people. Ranching and mixed farming are the main livelihoods in the municipality, and the town of Lafleche acts as the main service centre for the area. From their Crazy Canuk Days in the summer to the Curling Bonspiel in the winter, this community demonstrates a lively spirit year-round.

THE NRE RESEARCH SITES IN BRIEF

Home to approximately 280 people, **SPALDING** is located in Central Saskatchewan, northeast of Saskatoon. This small community acts as the service centre for the larger area of Spalding Rural Municipality. Historically rooted in agriculture, Spalding also has an innovative Geographical Information Systems business which connects truckers to farmers for grain transportation. The Fall Supper and Winterfest are just some of the events which bring community members together.

Home to 150 residents, **FERINTOSH** is located 125km southeast of Edmonton, Alberta. Ferintosh has proved to be a resilient community in the wake of many changes that occurred in the mid 1970's. It was able to adapt by bringing in outside industry (fibre optics terminals and public utility cooperatives) and by maintaining a strong volunteer base. The Church Suppers and the Snowmobile Rally help bring people together to express Ferintosh's community spirit.

HUSSAR, with a population of approximately 160, is located in Southern Alberta about 100km east of Calgary. Its economy is based in agriculture, oil and gas, and Hussar's adjacency to Calgary has also been an influence. The town recently raised money and built a new arena and sports complex. Hussar also celebrates community pride and spirit through such events as the Curling Bonspiel and the Summerdaze Rodeo.

TUMBLER RIDGE, incorporated in 1981, is located in the Eastern foothills of the Rocky Mountains in Northern BC. With an approximate population of 3,000, the town has relied mostly on coal mining but is working hard to diversify to include forestry, oil and gas, and tourism through newly established provincial parks and protected areas. Every August, the annual Grizzly Valley Days is held to promote community togetherness through family activities, sports, and games.

With a population of about 6,000, **MACKENZIE** is located in North Central British Columbia. Its economic base is grounded in forestry and it started out as an "instant town", planned and developed by a forestry company to be a regional processing centre. The annual Alexander Mackenzie Days is just one event which helps to bring Mackenzie's families closer, with entertainment, crafts, and games.

THE NEW RURAL ECONOMY

NRE
THE NEW RURAL ECONOMY

NRE Sites Across Canada

★ Twillingate
★ Winterton
★ Springhill
★ Indian Brook
★ Lot 16
★ Néguac
★ Blissfield
★ Armagh
★ St. Damase
★ Ste. Françoise
★ Cap-à-l'aigle
★ N. Plantagenet
★ Taschereau
★ St-R. de Mékinac
★ Tweed
★ Seguin
★ Carden
★ Usborne
★ Pic Mobert S.
★ Arctic bay
★ Rhineland
★ Benito
★ Spalding
★ Okanese 82
★ Wood River
★ Ferintosh
★ Hussar
★ Girouxville
★ Upper Liard
★ Mackenzie
★ Tumbler Ridge
★ Port Alice
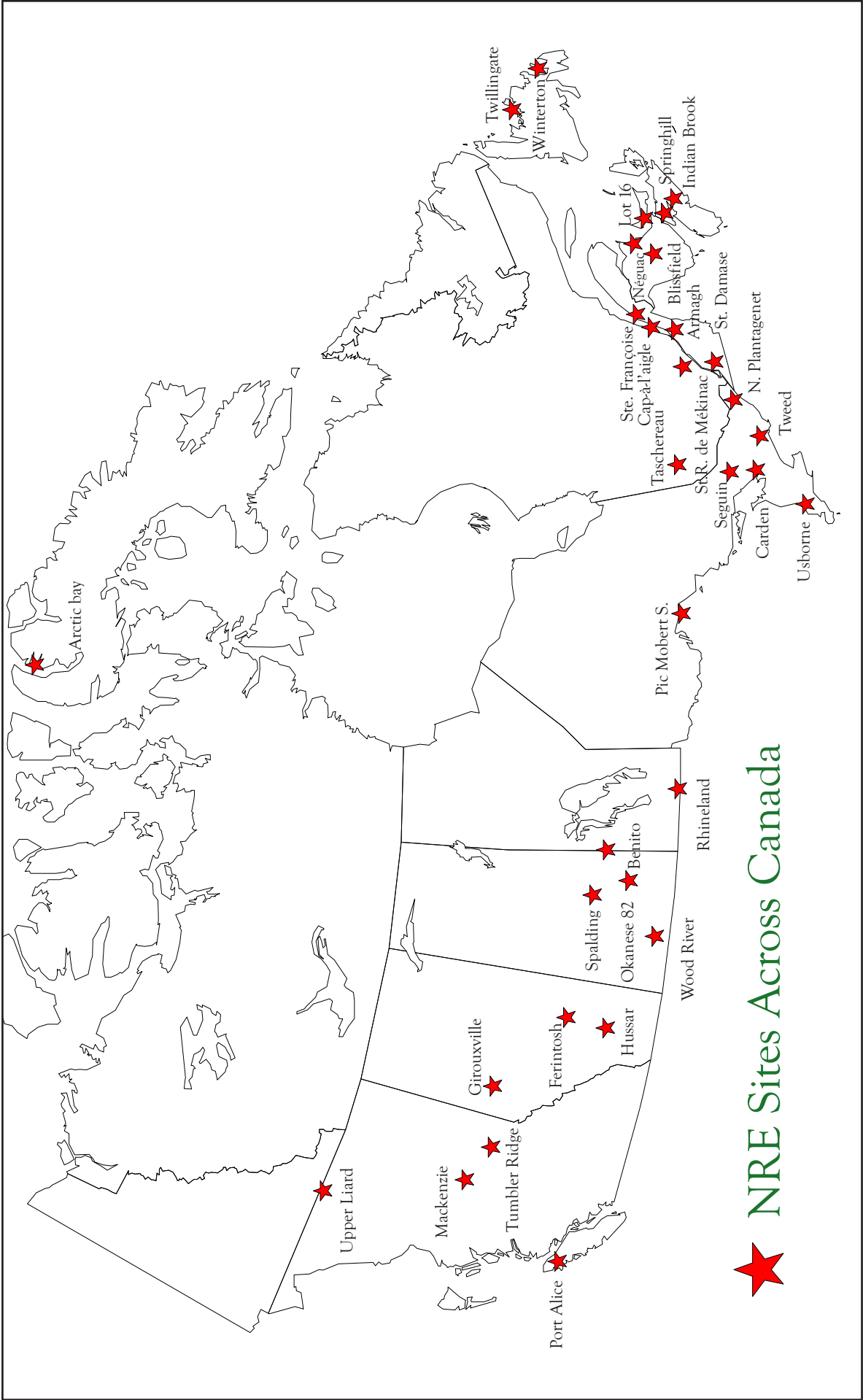
Understanding the New Rural Economy: Options and Choices
a project of
The Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation
May, 2002

The New Rural Economy Project (NRE) is a five-year research and education program underway in rural Canada. It is a collaborative undertaking bringing together rural people, policy-analysts, researchers, the business community, and government agencies at all levels to identify and address vital rural issues. It is conducted at the national level with historical and statistical data analysis, and at the local level with case studies involving community and household surveys.

The project will produce:
- *learning forums* to discuss and debate opportunities, options, and choices that include the interests of all rural Canadians and stakeholders;
- documented *recommendations* for long run rural business performance, inclusive development, and public policy; and
- *informed questions* on new issues, unimaginable in the present, but requiring timely answers for the future.

The project is conducted within the framework of 5 social cohesion themes:
- *economy*
- *service*
- *capacity*
- *communication*
- *governance*

Since its inauguration in May, 1997 the project has held 10 national workshops and conferences, prepared a number of major reports, established a Centre for Rural Data, profiled 32 carefully selected rural sites for research and education activities, and organized a network of 33 partners, 22 researchers, 19 universities, and 18 government departments across Canada. Through its connection with the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (CRRF), the NRE project has involved over 100 partners and created a research and education network of international stature. Representation from Canada is complemented by colleagues from Europe, Mexico, and Japan.

For further information see the CRRF Web site: **www.crrf.ca**, the NRE Web page: **nre.concordia.ca** or contact:

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Understanding the New Rural Economy: Options and Choices
SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS
May, 2002

Research Products

1. **Sampling Frame** designed and **32 Sites Identified** on 5 critical dimensions
2. Data Centre expanded with site profiles, reports, photo gallery and other research tools
3. *Site Profiles* prepared for 25 field sites
4. Household Survey database, summer 2001
5. *Rural Canada Database* developed (1986, 1991, 1996)
6. Report: **A Preliminary History of Rural Development Policy and Programmes in Canada, 1945-1995**
7. Report: **Analysis of Leading and Lagging Census Sub-Divisions in Rural Canada**
8. Report: **Economic Integration and Isolation of First Nations Communities: An Exploratory Review**
9. Report: **Access to Federal Government Services in Rural Canada: Field Site Findings**
10. Report: **Predictability and Trapping: Under Conditions of Globalization of Agricultural Trade**
11. Report: **Review of the Literature Relating to the Role and Impact of Government Involvement in Rural Canada**
12. Report: **Dynamics of the New Rural Economy: An Exploration of Community-Sponsored Research from Huron County** (edited by Tony Fuller and Paul Nichol, 1999) Guelph: University of Guelph
13. Report: **Voluntary Organizations in Rural Canada: Survey Results**
14. Report: **An Education Strategy for Voluntary Organizations in Rural Canada**
15. Report: **Leading and Lagging Sites in Rural Canada: a Literature Review**
16. Report: **Leading and Lagging Census Sub-Divisions: Statistical Summary**
17. Report: An Analysis of the NRE Sample Sites Using Taxfiler Data
18. Report: **Self-Employment in Rural Canada: Statistical Summary**
19. Report: **Rural Small and Medium Enterprises: A Review of the Literature**
20. Report: **Cooperatives in Rural Development – Literature Review**
21. Report: **A Sample frame for Rural Canada: Design and Evaluation**
22. Report: **The Role of Small Businesses in Community Economic Development**
23. Report: **The Long Run Role of Institutions in Fostering Community Economic Development: A Comparison of Leading and Lagging in Rural Communities**
24. Book: Gouvernance et territoires ruraux. Eléments d`un débat sur la responsabilité du développement (Sous la direction de Mario Carrier et Serge Côté, 2000) Ste Foy: Presses de l'Université du Québec
25. Report: **How Researchers Approached Communities and Implemented the Protocols in 26 Sites Across Canada**
26. Report: **Factors of Growth in Rural Regions: Identifying Policy Priorities – Canadian Case Studies**
27. Network/Learning Forums: **CRRF National Workshops** (North Bay ON, 1997; St.Donat QC, 1998; Newtown NF, 1999; Nanaimo BC, 2000; Sackville NB, 2001) **CRRF National Conferences** (Charlottetown PE, 1997; Nelson BC, 1998; Trois-Pistoles QC, 1999; Alfred ON, 2000; Meunster SK, 2001)
28. **Powerpoint presentations available online**

Current and Planned Projects

1. Conceptualizing and Measuring Community Capacity
2. Complex and Dynamic Systems in Rural Canada
3. Social Cohesion and Social Capital in Rural Canada
4. Four systems (Bureaucratic Relations; Associative Relations, Market Relations and Communal Relations)
5. Governance and Local Participation
6. Communication Tools, Internet and Identity
7. Mobilization of Youth
8. Services in Rural Areas
9. Building Capacity in Agricultural Communities
10. Home Care and Health in Rural Canada
11. NRE Spring Workshop 2002, May 8 - 12, Altona, MB; CRRF Rural University (Miramichi, NB October, 2002)

NOTE: items in **bold** can be found via the CRRF web page: **www.crrf.ca** or the NRE web page: **nre.concordia.ca** ;
items in *italics* are available to NRE researchers and partners via the NRE web page

Upcoming Attractions

Network/Learning Forums:

~   NRE Spring Workshop (Altona, MB) May 8 - 12, 2002
~   CARCI Agricultural Capacity Building Workshop (Altona, MB) May, 2002
~   CRRF Annual Rural University Conference, Miramichi, NB; October 27-29, 2002
~   3rd Annual Community Partners' Round-Table, Miramichi, NB; October 26, 2002
~   CARCI Agricultural Capacity Building Round-Table, October, 2002

Books: 2002/2003

~   Social Cohesion in Rural and Small Town Canada
~   Challenges and Opportunities: A Portrait of Rural and Small Town Canada
     2003/2004
~   Rethinking Rural, Remote, and Small Town Canada
~   Conducting Collaborative, Comparative Research in Rural Canada

Reports:

~   Literature Review of Services in rural Canada
~   Social Capacity in rural Canada - Theoretical Discussion
~   Social Capacity - Policy Implications
~   Subsistence in rural Canada
~   Four Systems of Support
~   Social Economy (CURA/ARUC)
~   Literature Reviews and Indicators for Social Capital and Social Cohesion
~   High/Low capability and the presence of communications tools in rural communities.
~   Communications and youth migration
~   Communications on social cohesion
~   Health and Internet use in rural areas
~   Methodological Implications and Design of a national research project
~   Building Capacity in Agricultural Communities (CARCI)
~   Home Care and Health in rural Canada

Presentations:

~   Popular Culture Association Meetings, March 13-16, 2002
~   Canadian Sociology and Anthropology Association Meetings, Social Sciences and
     Humanities Congress, Toronto, May 29 - June 30, 2002
~   Session Organizers:
~   Ivan Emke - Rurality
~   D. Wilkinson - Social Cohesion
~   A. Woodrow - Boundaries in Field Research

~   International Sociological Association Meetings, Brisbane Australia, July 7 - 13, 2002