tools of the trade

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Taking Computers to the Community

Taking Computers to the Community: Prospects and Perspectives. Carol A. Chapman and others, eds. Louisville: University of Kentucky, Department of Agricultural Economics, Development Information System for Kentucky (DISK), January, 1978. 220 pp. $5.

This is a collection of papers presented at a two-day conference designed as a forum for discussion about rural development information retrieval and delivery systems.

Fifty-one participants from 20 states, representing a number of disciplines (agricultural economics, farm management, community development, rural sociology, nutrition, food science, entomology, and state government) interacted concerning community information systems.

Sessions and papers focused on:

1. Information Systems: What Information and for Whom?
2. Information Systems: Approaches to Information Delivery.
3. Information Systems: Educational Efforts and Implementation Problems.
4. Information Systems: Experiences from the States.

The document's introduction provides an excellent review of the development and use of computerized information systems in the United States. Agricultural, environmental, and socioeconomic systems are covered.

Papers address such basic questions as: What information should be included? Who might potential users be? What is

the relevance of an information system to local decision-making? How can local needs and interests be determined? What client training is needed? How can client training be evaluated? What are the accomplishments of existing projects (eight are reported)?

The editors have done a good job of organizing and presenting the papers. The format aids the reader, and charts and other tabular material are presented for easy comprehensi A number of references are presented for readers who wish to delve further into these and related topics.