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(Continued from page 46)

narrowed at nominal (virtually zero) cost, simply if small changes are made in data collection and reporting methods. Some of the most troubling gaps for data users appear to stem from reporting agency bias. Agricultural agencies, focusing on farm data, fail to collect and report related rural nonfarm information. Other agencies are urban oriented; application of agency rules and habits as to disclosure, volume, and reliability result in

a relative abundance of urban detail. But the rural-oriented detail collected is never made readily accessible to rural-oriented users.

The rural point of view is often not presented in meetings in which changes in census, sample, and administrative data are discussed. Sometimes a data gap can be closed by slight changes in the way a question is worded on a questionnaire, a sample is stratified, or sorting and

merging is done that underlies the publication of a table. Relatively large gains can be had at nominal cost if the rural point of view is expressed at the appropriate moment in the planning process. Rural employment data users should become more involved with the development of rural-based data series. To achieve this end, nonfarm rural interests should have greater representation on Federal data committees.

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