



NEWS RELEASE

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Rural Development's Homeownership Program Being Tapped at Record Levels

COLUMBUS, OHIO, Jan. 8, 2008 – While the sub-prime mortgage crisis has limited available credit to some low to moderate income families in Ohio, the USDA Rural Development Guaranteed Rural Housing (GRH) Loan Program has recently seen a dramatic increase in loan volume. At the close of the federal fiscal year on September 30, 2007, Ohio obligated 1,112 loans totaling more than \$99 million - a 24 percent increase over the 2006 loan volume. And, during the first three months of this fiscal year, Ohio has seen an 88 percent increase in the number of homeownership loans.

“We’ve always offered a reliable, fixed-rate product so homeowners can have total predictability about their mortgage payments,” said Rural Development State Director Randy Hunt. “With the current instability in mortgage financing products we think Rural Development’s guaranteed home ownership loan program offers homeowners the best option available.”

Along with a fixed rate of up to 30 years, the GRH homeownership program requires no down payment, no Mortgage Insurance (PMI), and is available in all rural areas of Ohio.

The Hunt family from Orville, Ohio used Rural Development’s GRH loan program to finance their home. “We wouldn’t have been able to purchase our home without the Rural Development loan program,” said Christopher Hunt. “This is the perfect home in our price range. We are so blessed with the whole process.”

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs in a way that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life of rural residents. Rural Development provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure.

Further information on Rural Development’s housing programs is available by calling 614-255-2400, visiting a local USDA Rural Development office or by viewing USDA Rural Development’s web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

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(Front row) Christopher Hunt holds Emilie while Tiera stands next to him. (Back row) Phoebe Horvath holds Jaakob with Jennifer Hunt at her side. The Hunt's were able to move into their new home courtesy of Rural Development's home ownership program.