



Office of the
Vice Provost
for Research
and Advanced
Studies

Office of
Biotechnology

February 2001

Iowa Industries and the New Economy

All over Iowa there is a buzzword spreading around—'New Economy'. This reflects a shift over the past decade from an economy based on manufacturing to one based on knowledge and ideas. As part of positioning Iowa for success in the new economy, Governor Vilsack formed advisory committees in Iowa's three target industry clusters. The needs of companies, present and future, within these clusters represent the future of industry-university collaborations at Iowa State University.

Life Sciences

Defined as the commercial application of a range of technological disciplines within agriculture and industry to develop food, pharmaceutical and chemical products and processes, bio-based products, and bio-energy which improve animal, plant, and human health and nutrition, while protecting the environment and quality of life. This includes an inter-related environment of industries, including production agriculture, value-added processing, pharmaceuticals, animal health products, and the application of biological and biochemical sciences to plants, animals, processed foods, and humans. This cluster will focus on projects that offer promise for creating new strategic business alliances for value-added food, nutraceutical, and pharmaceutical production in Iowa. For example, the a-project is underway to bring a shared protein processing facility to Iowa for extracting value-added proteins from plants and animals.

Information Solutions

Defined as creating the potential to continually respond to emerging technology developments and requirements including business based on information technology or telecommunications, and businesses that are information intensive, including insurance and financial services. Currently this group is working on strategies to expand access to advanced telecommunications services in Iowa and is evaluating the feasibility of creating regional technology innovations networks in areas of the state with a high concentration of information-technology-intensive businesses.

Advanced Manufacturing

Defined as a collaboration of Iowa businesses involved in the rapid introduction of new processes, materials, and technologies to manufacturing applications. This cluster gains competitive advantage through continuous innovations. Initial proposed projects include: working to expand the current initiatives for providing access to rapid prototyping technology and training and development in lean manufacturing.

Summary

The goal of this initiative is to increase the competitiveness of Iowa industries. For success, collaborations between private industry, public institutions, and government will be a key factor. Projects within the clusters must be market-driven with strong, sustained industry leadership. The clusters must work together where the needs of one cluster intersect with another.

For questions about this tip sheet or assistance in working with industry, please contact:

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Acknowledgement: Much of the content for this tip sheet was derived from a report submitted to Governor Vilsack, in December 2000, from the three industry-cluster advisory groups.