

Wynne has made great strides to become competitive with other locations in our region of the country that have aggressive economic development programs. As much as its residents may love Wynne, to an outsider Wynne is just a town surrounded by bean and rice fields. What has already begun to set Wynne apart is its professionally-run economic development program, which has been responsible for keeping and expanding existing industry and helping to attract new industries and jobs. Many of these efforts are not evident to those who are not directly involved, but they consist of acquiring matching grant funds, making presentations to industrial prospects, and developing an industrial park. Prospects want to know things such as what land is available, will the soil support what they want to build, what is the capacity and quality of the water, what is the voltage, capacity and cost of electricity, what is the cost and availability of natural gas and railroad access, what economic incentives are available and are there environmental or archeological roadblocks, among others. A prospective industry will not consider locations that have not already done their homework and are not ready for them – they will mark them off their list and move on.

So far, Wynne has managed to hold its own against the deteriorating economic environment that has brought down so many communities in our region of eastern Arkansas. In those communities, the decline did not happen overnight, but happened bit by bit over a number of years.

There is no way to guarantee that the population and economy of Wynne will not decline like so many in our region, but the best hope is to have an aggressive economic development program, and the people of Wynne should be commended for this effort.

Michael Swan
President/CEO
Woodruff Electric Cooperative Corporation