



Bette Brand is President and CEO of Strategic Consulting LLC. She works with lenders, rural businesses and communities to access much needed capital and other resources to improve the quality of life and prosperity in rural America.

She also serves as the Senior Advisor of Generation Food Rural Partners Fund, a recently launched \$125 million target fund through Big Idea Ventures that will drive economic development in rural communities through the commercialization of university-developed intellectual property.

In addition, Brand is a member of the Virginia Cannabis Control Authority Board and the Virginia Racing Commission; both appointed by the Governor of Virginia.

Brand served with USDA Rural Development for more than three years, eventually as the Deputy Under Secretary where she led a team of 4,500 in 477 field offices across the US committed to helping improve the economy and quality of life in rural America. Agencies under her oversight included Rural Housing Service, Rural Utilities Service and Rural Business-Cooperative Service. Before this appointment, Brand served as the Rural Business-Cooperative Service Administrator. As Deputy Under Secretary, Brand supported the Rural Development mission through strong leadership, program stewardship, and through partnerships within the federal family with sister agencies like SBA and DOE. During her tenure at USDA (January 2018- January 2021) Brand prioritized increasing rural America's access to capital, investing in innovative technology, and helping businesses create jobs.

Prior to USDA, Brand was with the Farm Credit System for 35 years where she served as chief advocate for the agriculture industry and rural businesses, supporting producers at the state and national level and educating policymakers and consumers on agriculture. Prior to this, she

served as Chief Sales Officer, overseeing the business development of a \$1.6 billion credit portfolio, managing a team of commercial agriculture and agribusiness lenders, and supervising Farm Credit of the Virginias' marketing and branding. She has wide-ranging experience promoting rural communities, having served on the Virginia Agribusiness Council, the Virginia Horse Council, the Virginia Cooperative Council, and the Virginia Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom.

Brand has a BS degree in Animal Science and an MBA from Virginia Tech. She and her husband David live in Roanoke, Virginia and have three grown sons.