



Virginia Cooperative Extension

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Situation Analysis Report



Warren County 2018

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Introduction

The Virginia Cooperative Extension Warren County Situation Analysis was updated during 2018 with the assistance of the Warren County ELC and community stakeholders. Information was compiled from the 2018 ELC Community surveys from Winchester City, Shenandoah, Frederick, Warren, Page and Clarke Counties, as Extension Agents (except 4-H) in these counties serve all five counties. Input was obtained through key informant interviews and with input from local commodity, industry and community groups, and Extension volunteer associations.

The survey identified several areas of concern for community members. The top ten included: water/environment/pesticide use; drugs and alcohol abuse; health issues related to obesity, chronic disease, and lack of insurance; farms and farmland conservation; personal financial management and poverty; affordable housing; public school system relating to overcrowding and employee turnover; county government and county management concerns; transportation safety and crowded roadways; and the availability of a safe and affordable food supply. VCE's educational efforts in Planning District 7 currently work towards addressing all but three of these identified areas and all will be discussed in more detail as priority issues.

Unit Profile

Warren County is centrally located in the Northern Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is bordered by Frederick and Clarke Counties on the north, Fauquier and Rappahannock Counties on the east, Page County to the south, and Shenandoah County to the west. Warren County has a total land area of nearly 217.86 square miles. The rural part of the County contains 207.36 square miles and the Town of Front Royal covers 10.5 square miles. The County is bounded by the Blue Ridge Mountains, which encompasses part of the Shenandoah National Park and Skyline Drive, on the east and the Massanutten Mountains, which encompasses part of the George Washington National Forest, on the south and west. These two mountain ridges visually dominate the County's landscape, looming 1,000 to 2,900 feet over the central lowland. Topography in these mountainous areas includes steep-walled valleys with fast flowing streams, rivers and wooded slopes. These rivers and streams are within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Warren County is situated at the crossroads of U.S. Interstate I-81 (North/South) and I-66 (East/West) two major interstate highways in the Mid-Atlantic Region. Other primary highways through the county are routes 55, 340 and 522. These routes serve as a nexus for commercial and personal transport to all of the Shenandoah Valley and the Washington D.C. Metropolitan area. Nearby major cities include Washington, D.C., 70 miles; Baltimore, 110 miles; and to Richmond, 135 miles. Nearby major airports include Dulles International Airport, 50 miles; and Reagan National Airport, 70 miles. The County is in an ideal location to provide commercial access to roads to and from markets in Northern Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Washington, D.C., Pennsylvania, and eastern

Ohio; the Virginia Inland Port, opened in 1989, links to the Port of Virginia in Norfolk via rail, which opens the County to global markets.

The community's vision is to maintain and enhance the quality of life for the residents of Warren County. To do so, the quality and character of Warren County's natural resources should be preserved, conserved, and used effectively to ensure that future citizens will enjoy the benefits of;

- An adequate, sustainable, clean, and potable supply of both surface water and ground water
- Clean air
- Farming and open spaces
- The beauty of our rivers, mountains, and scenic views
- Protection of our rural character
- Quality educational facilities and system
- A balanced tax base
- Sound fiscal management

This mandates that the county plan for sustainable growth based on these limited resources. This can be translated to say the annual residential growth rate should be maintained at approximately 2% to no more than 3% annually and the industrial/commercial tax base should achieve a level of 30 to 35% of the total assessed value. By doing so, we can provide for quality schools, safety on our roads and in our communities, a balanced tax base, equitable paying jobs, reduced out-of-county commuting, quality recreational facilities, and other social amenities associated with our quality of life expectations.

The current county government consists of a five member Board of Supervisors, representing the Shenandoah, North River, South River, Fork, and Happy Creek districts, a county administrator, various other county offices, a Sheriff's Department and the Department of Fire and Rescue Services. The County of Warren has 212 full-time and 94 part-time County employees. Warren County offers employment in various industries including: agriculture, distribution, education, health care, manufacturing and transportation. The Front Royal - Warren County Economic Development Authority provides technical and financial assistance to existing, expanding, and emerging companies to encourage investment in Warren County. Since 1995, sixteen international and domestic companies, both large and small, selected Warren County and made investments exceeding \$220 million.

Demographics

Population as of July 1, 2018:	39,630
Median Age: (2017)	40.6
Total Households: (2017)	14,190
Total Housing Units: (2017)	16,358
Median Household Income: (2017)	\$65,353

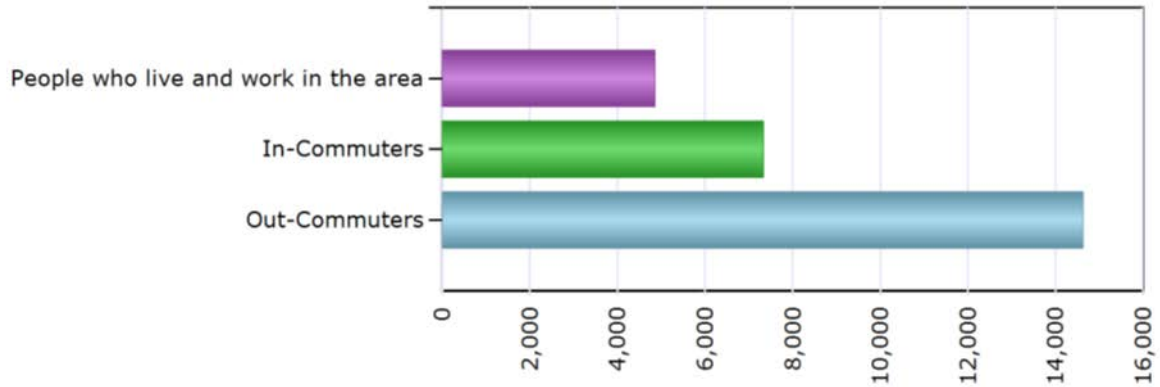
Population estimates from 2018 indicate a population of 39,630, an increase of 1.7% from 2012. This indicates lower growth than the state rate of 2.3%. Twenty-four point eight percent (-3 % over 2012) of the population in Warren County is under 19, with 14.80% being 65 and older (+2.06% over 2012). The community is aging. Warren County is predominately white (90.63%), with other major ethnic groups totaling 5.43% being Black or African American, American Indian, Asian, Pacific Islander, some other race, or two or more races. The Hispanic population is 4.2% (+1.28% since 2012) of the total population, public perception is that this audience is growing. While the number is still relatively small as a percent of the total population, this is a population with specific needs such as addressing language barriers that should be investigated.

In 2017 the median household income of \$65,353, which was significantly higher than 2012 (\$61,379). This figure is just below the statewide median of \$68,766 and above the national median of \$57,652. 75.1% of Warren's population owns their home while the remaining population finds the median gross rent to be \$1,106 per month. The Labor Market Information Community Profile on Warren County reports

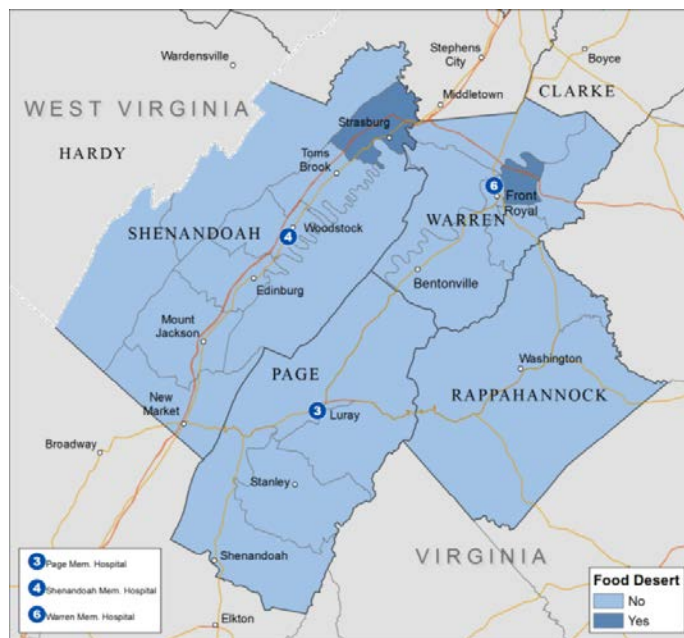
The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates unemployment in Warren County is at 2.7% in December 2018, down from 6.7% in 2012.

Top 10 Employers in Warren County

Employer	Range of Employment
Warren County School System	791 FT/145 PT Total: 936
Valley Health System (WMH)	Total 470
Family Dollar Services	338 FT/30 PT Total: 368
Warren County Government	239 FT/99 PT Total: 338
Axalta Coating Systems	Total: 318
Interbake Food, LLC	228 FT/75 PT Total: 303
Walmart	178 FT/92 PT Total: 270
Sysco Northeast Regional Dist. Center	259 FT/2 PT Total: 261
Ferguson Enterprises, Inc.	233 FT/19 PT Total: 252
Jackson Furniture Co. of VA.	Total: 190



Information Community Profile on Warren County reports .53% of the population speaks English less than well. Unemployment is low, Yet, there is still poverty and great need in the county. Per the U.S. Census estimates, 9.8% (+1.0% over 2012) of Warren County’s residents were determined to be below the poverty level, with 14% of youth under the age of 18. Opioid use is a locally identified issue in the county with 17 deaths in 2017 and 2.55% of persons over age 12 reported to have dependency issues in 2014. 11.3 % of the population does not have health insurance and 91.7% are not receiving addition treatment. The Community Health needs Assessment reports a list of Prioritized Health Needs: 1. Access to Primary and Specialty Health Care, 2. Mental and Behavioral Health, 3. Substance Abuse and Tobacco Smoking, 4. Physical Activity, Nutrition, and Obesity-related Chronic Diseases, 5. Financial Hardship and Basic Needs Insecurity, 6. Oral Health and Dental Care. Access to Healthy Fresh Food is limited as the following graph from the U.S. Department of Ag shows.



US Department of Ag 2015

Warren County holds a strong belief in the value of education and offers enrollment to children from kindergarten through 12th grade. All schools offer networked computer labs with internet access. Warren County schools provide basic education for those planning to attend college as well as an excellent vocational program. All schools are fully accredited by the Commonwealth of Virginia Board of Education. Sept. 30, 2018 Enrollment in Grades K - 12: 5,171 students.

Elementary Schools

- Five Elementary Schools: A.S. Rhodes, Hilda J. Barbour, E. Wilson Morrison, Leslie Fox Keyser, and Ressie Jeffries

Middle Schools

- Skyline and Warren County Middle Schools
- Grades 6 - 8

High Schools

- Skyline and Warren County High Schools
- Grades 9 - 12
- Mountain Vista Governor's School

Private Schools

The following private schools are located in Warren County or within a reasonable distance of County residents:

- Randolph-Macon Academy
- Chelsea Academy
- Divinum Auxilium Academy
- Guardian Angel Academy
- Royal Christian Academy
- Front Royal Christian School
- Wakefield Country Day School
- Mountain Laurel Montessori School
- Seton Home Study School

Colleges

Warren County is the home to Christendom College, which offers four year and two year degrees (www.christendom.edu) and Lord Fairfax Community College and LFCC Workforce Solutions is located 2.3 miles away in Middletown, VA (www.lfcc.edu)

Warren County Agriculture Profile:

Preservation of open space and agricultural land is important to the county. If the farmer can produce a product and make a reasonable profit, like any business, farming can be a successful enterprise. If not, the land will likely be sold for development. Many farms are family businesses and have been in operation for generations. The producers are in the business because they like what they do and enjoy being self-employed. Farmers love the land and often hope their children could join them in farming and follow in their footsteps. Many times this doesn't happen because the farm isn't profitable enough to support multiple families or younger generations are not interested and/or don't see farming as a viable career.

The latest agriculture statistics come from the 2012 Census of Agriculture. Unfortunately, 2017 Census of Agriculture statistics are not due out until Spring 2019. Since 2012, The county has actually increased the land in farms +359 acres and farm size has increased as now the average farm size is 139 acres which is up 13%. Small farms ranging from 1-49 acres increased by 17.6% since 2007, while the county retains five farms ranging from 1000+ acres. Approximately 47,994 acres of land is in farms which is an increase from 20087. Of this 47,635 acres - approximately 15,827 is devoted to crops (up 18% from 2007) with the remaining in pasture, woodland and other uses. Corn and forage hay for the horse and cattle markets are the primary commodities produced.

Average farm expenses per farm increased from \$20,579 in 2007 to \$24,194 in 2012 while net operating income per farm decreased from \$4,875 in 2007 to -\$5,083 in 2012. Landowners saw an increase in property values with the average farm value at \$781,852 in 2007 to \$990,097 in 2012; per acre values increased from \$6,352 in 2007 to \$7,138 in 2012. This holds well above the 2012 Virginia average price per acre of \$4,306 and far exceeds the nation value of \$2,148 per acre in 2012.

Most of the farm operators in Warren are male and the average age is now over 60 years old. Attracting young, new/beginning farmers will help retain or expand the agricultural operations in the county.

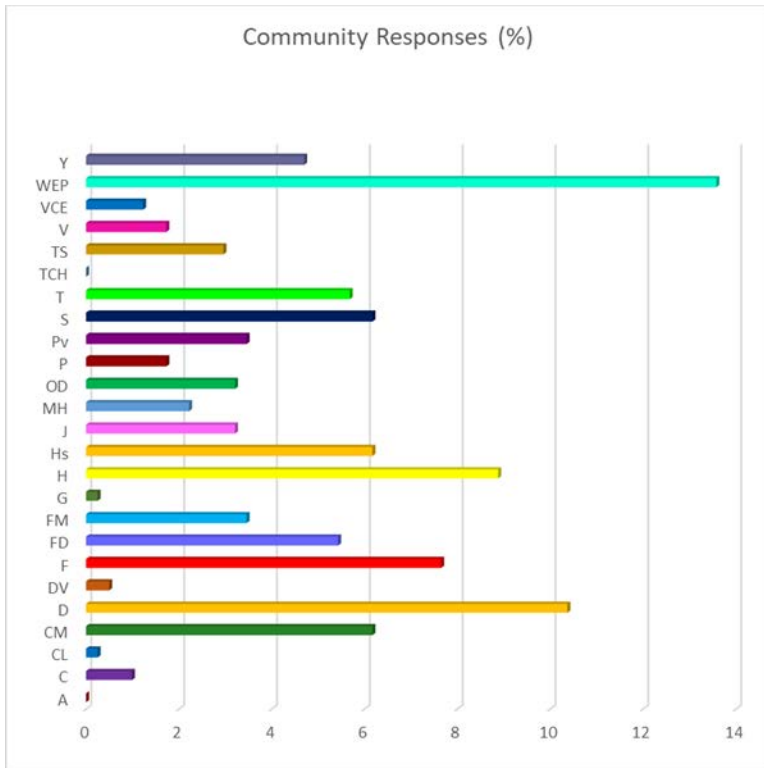
Community and Resident Perspectives

Agents and ELCs in Planning District 7 (Counties of Clarke, Frederick, Page, Shenandoah, Warren and the City of Winchester) conducted a 2018 ELC Community Survey in which 647 residents responded. These responses were combined with information listed in the U.S. Census, The Community Health needs Assessment, the Information Community Profile on Warren County, information from community groups and individual surveys were used to formulate the priority issues identified later in this report.

In our best attempt to reach a uniform representation of the entire community and all demographics, it should be noted that the majority of respondents were female, white, and familiar with Extension having participated in a program at some point in their life.

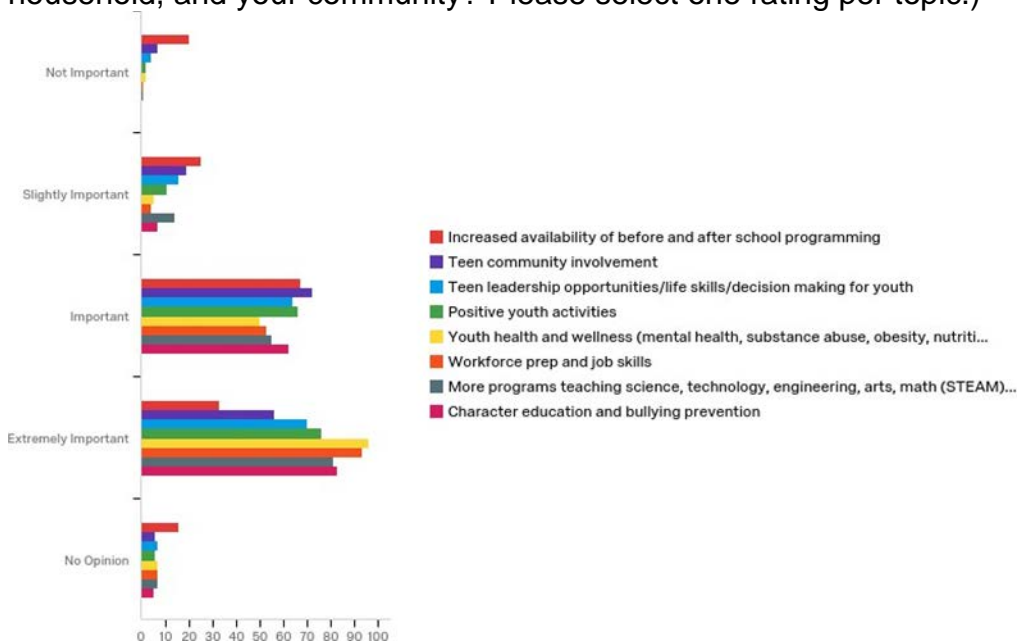
Residents responding to the 2018 ELC Community Survey were asked to list the top three issues facing Warren County. Top community issues to the open ended question are depicted below.

<u>Issues in Alphabetical Order</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Community Responses (%)</u>
Aging Population	A	0	0
Child Care (also Senior Care)	C	4	0.99
Climate Change/Energy (renewable energy)	CL	1	0.25
County Management (taxes, budget decisions on resource use, teacher salaries, school maintenance, emergency & fire services)	CM	25	6.17
Drugs (alcohol, human trafficking, related crime)	D	42	10.37
Domestic Violence	DV	2	0.5
Farms (and forests, preservation/conservation, production issues, maintaining rural lifestyle)	F	31	7.65
Food (availability, quality, cost)	FD	22	5.43
Financial Management	FM	14	3.46
Guns (firearms training)	G	1	0.25
Health (insurance, exercise, recreation, obesity, chronic pain, elderly, isolation)	H	36	8.88
Housing (affordability, availability, rental rights & responsibilities)	Hs	25	6.17
Jobs (employment, growth, economic development, encouraging small businesses, tourism)	J	13	3.21
Mental Health	MH	9	2.22
Overdevelopment/Overpopulation	OD	13	3.21
Parenting (skills, child abuse)	P	7	1.73
Poverty	Pv	14	3.46
Schools (curriculum, structure, student behavior, overcrowding, bullying, teacher turnover: but not funding which is uner CM)	S	25	6.17
Transportation (I-81, lack of public transit, farm traffic on back roads)	T	23	5.68
Technology (affordable computer training for all ages, phone scams, need for choice in internet/cable providers)	TCH	0	0
Trade Schools (need for more vocational training)	TS	12	2.96
Values (community spirit, toxic political climate)	V	7	1.73
Comments directed to Virginia Cooperative Extension Services	VCE	5	1.23
Water/Environment/ Pesticides (including air quality)	WEP	55	13.58
Youth (healthy after school activities, work habits, life skills, job skills, programs for teens, sodal skills, responsibility)	Y	19	4.7

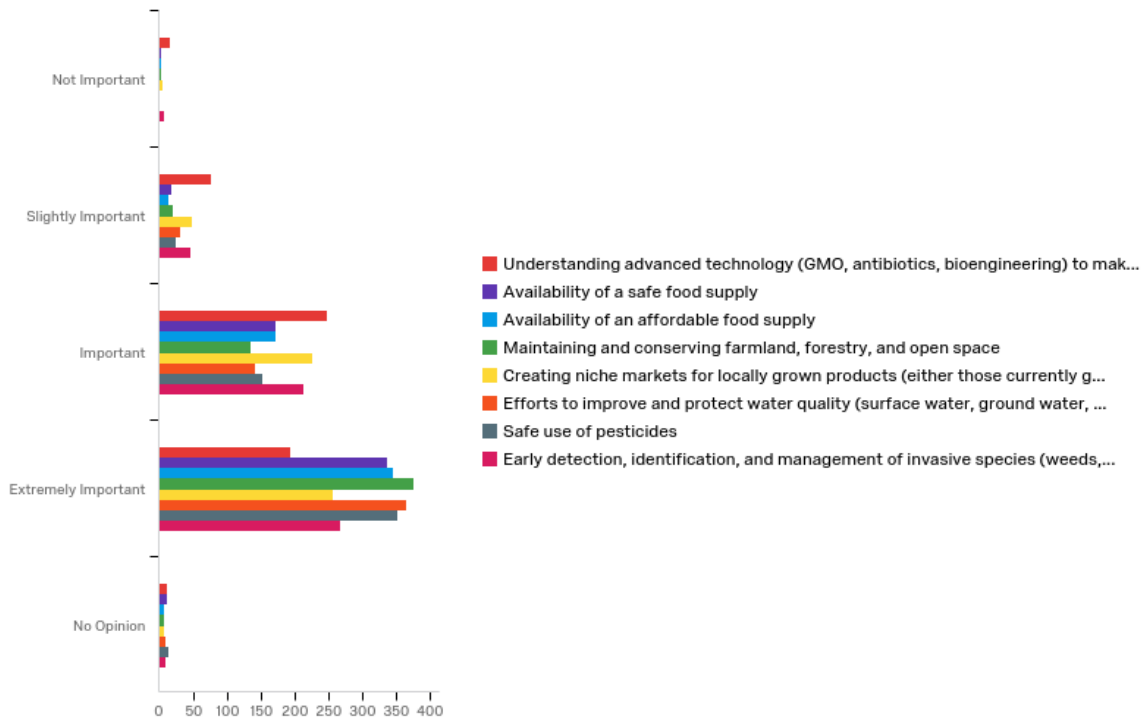


Survey participants were also asked to prioritize programming topics by program area currently offered in the Northern Shenandoah Valley.

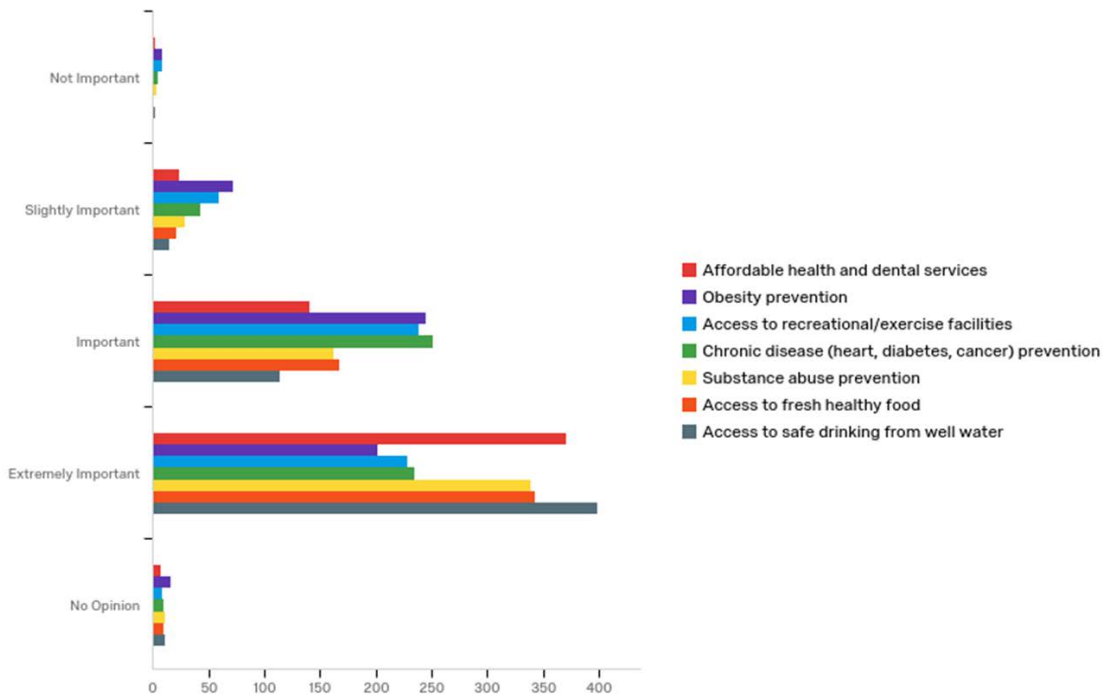
Positive Youth Development: (For the topics below, how important is each topic to you, your household, and your community? Please select one rating per topic.)



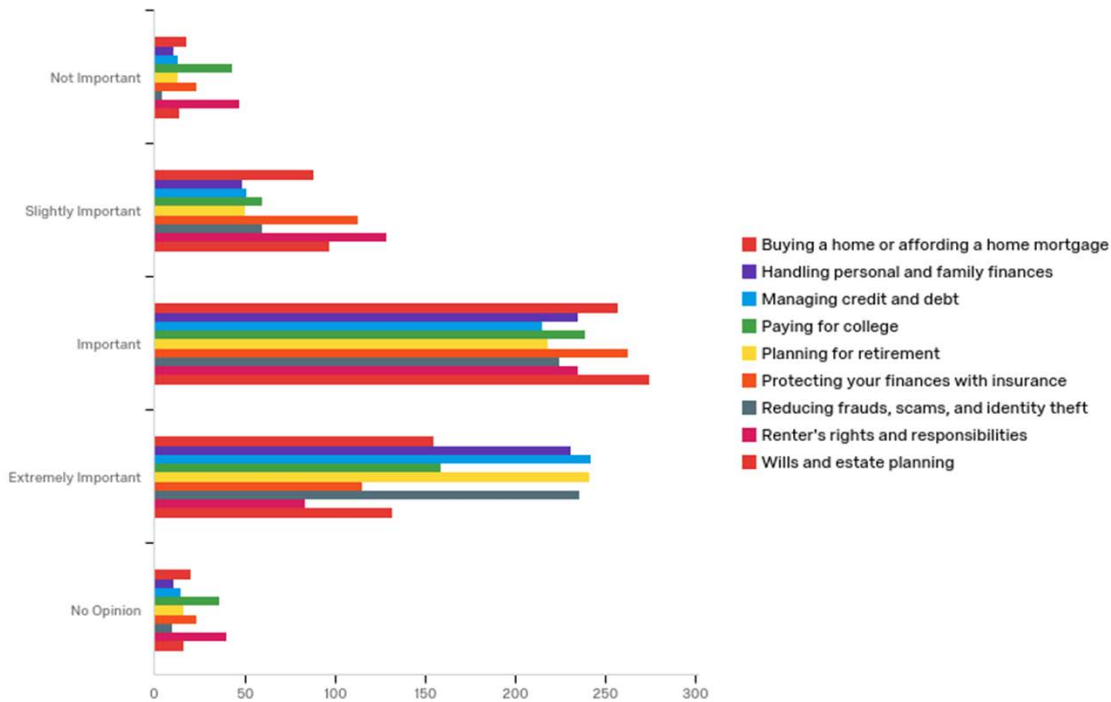
Agriculture and Natural Resources:



Nutrition, Health and Wellness:



Family and Community Economics:



The following question brought many individual responses. Many of these were outside of the scope of the Extension mission. These responses were summarized in the overall priorities.

From your perspective, what are the top three issues in the Northern Shenandoah Valley (Clarke, Frederick, Page, Shenandoah, and Warren Counties)? Please identify each issue and why you feel it is important. Please rank them 1, 2, 3.

Q15 - How familiar are you with Virginia Cooperative Extension?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Not familiar at all	10.35%	53
2	Somewhat familiar	32.03%	164
3	Familiar	28.71%	147
4	Very familiar	28.91%	148
	Total	100%	512

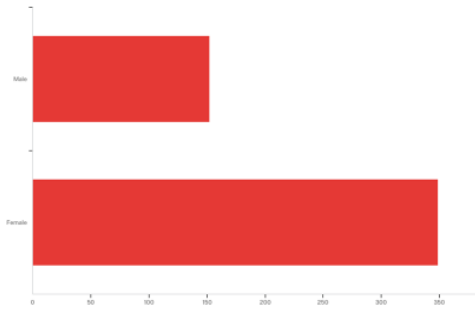
Q16 - Have you ever participated in educational programs offered by Virginia Cooperative Extension?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	No	43.22%	220
2	Yes	56.78%	289
	Total	100%	509

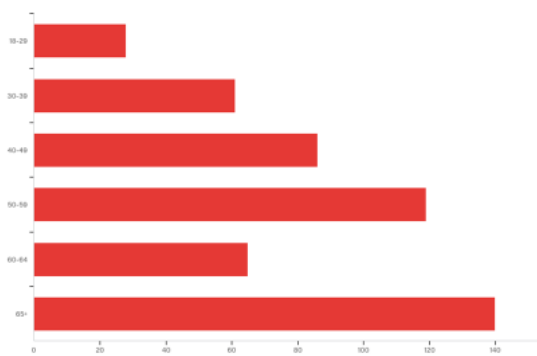
The following question brought many individual responses. Many of these helped confirm existing VCE programs that could be used to provide effective targeted responses to community needs. These responses were summarized in the overall priorities.

Q17 - If you answered "Yes" to the previous question, which VCE educational program(s) did you participate in, and what was the value to you?

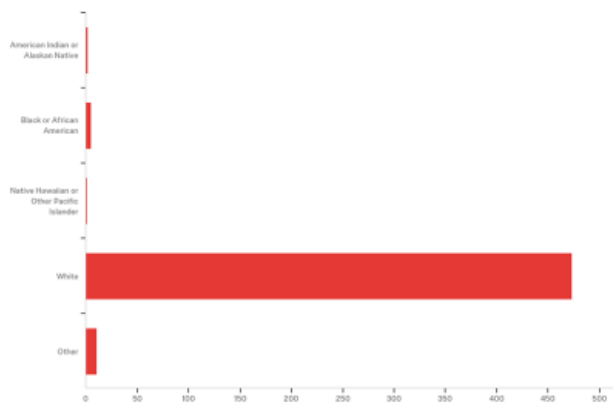
Q19 - What is your sex?



Q20 - In which category is your current age?



Q22 - Which category best describes your race?



Q23 - Which of the following categories best represents your gross total family income during the last year?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Less than \$30,000	5.05%	25
2	\$30,000 to \$49,999	14.55%	72
3	\$50,000 to \$69,999	15.96%	79
4	\$70,000 to \$89,999	17.37%	86
5	\$90,000 or more	27.68%	137
6	I prefer not to answer	19.39%	96
	Total	100%	495

Priority Issues

1. Water/Environment/Pesticide Safety

Warren county is home to the confluence of the Shenandoah river and is the Canoe capital of Virginia. Ensuring that the quality of Warren County's natural resources (land, air, water, and wildlife) is protected is very important to county citizens. Specific aspects of this issue include:

- Finding solutions to animal waste problems
- Ensuring there are adequate public utilities for waste treatment
- Ensuring there is an adequate water supply (public and private) and utilities for population growth
- Ensuring protection and/or improvement of surface and ground water quality
- Educating and helping commercial landscape maintenance companies deal with new regulations concerning urban nutrient management

Partnering with government agencies and non-profit organizations helps Virginia Cooperative Extension offer programming to address these aspects. These organizations include: Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, Lord Fairfax Soil and Water Conservation District, and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services. In 2018, 34 private well water samples were provided by Warren County residents for testing during the VA Household Water Quality Program. The following are the percentage of samples showing levels exceeding the EPA recommendation for various quality parameters:

- Iron – 8.8%
- Manganese – 23.5%

- Hardness – 5.9%
- Sulfate – 5.9%
- Total Dissolved Solids – 14.7%
- Copper – 2.9%
- Sodium – 26.5%
- Lead (first draw) – 2.6%
- Total Coliforms – 52.9%
- E. coli – 8.8%

While citizens want to ensure adequate protection of county resources, there is an overall expressed concern that environmental regulations should not significantly impede livelihoods and operations. VCE-Warren County and Planning District 7 play a major role in education, dissemination of information, and hands-on help related to this issue, but the high priority of this issue is evidence that a review of available programming options addressing these concerns is warranted. This issue is being addressed to some extent by VCE resources (for example: VA Household Water Quality Programs). Additional efforts need to be explored to better address this issue.

The federal and state pesticide laws require applicators to be certified to use restricted use pesticides. In addition, VA law requires all commercial applicators to be certified to use any pesticide and to renew their pesticide licenses through continuing education every two years. Without pesticide safety and IPM education to enable these individuals to do so, many would suffer economic hardships and violate the law. A lack of knowledge threatens human health and the environment. There are over 550 certified commercial applicators, registered technicians, and private applicators in Planning District 7.

In January 2018, PD7 ANR Agents conducted the 25th annual commercial pesticide recertification workshop at the NOVA 4-H Center in Front Royal for 260 area residents. Due to the proximity of PD7 to other states, this offering is certified by VA, MD, WV, DC, and PA for recertification. In March of 2018 the same agents offered a Core Manual and Right-of-Way Certification Prep class for potential private, commercial applicators and registered technicians. In fall 2018, VDACS approved private pesticide applicator re-certification programs teaching pesticide safety and IPM were offered to 100 residents in Berryville, Stanley, Woodstock, and Winchester. Similar programming will continue to be offered to help ensure safe and appropriate use of pesticides.

2. Drugs and Alcohol Abuse

This issue is a high priority as Warren county houses the intersection of interstates 81 and 66. This route has been viewed as a potential high traffic area for many types of narcotics.

VCE collaborates with several community groups and Substance Abuse Coalition partners that provide programs to address this issue. A 2009 Tufts University study found 4-H youth significantly less likely to use drugs, alcohol or cigarettes and to engage in delinquent behaviors.

- Developmental Assets: In general, 4-H youth appear to have higher levels of the developmental assets that the 4-H Study has found most important in promoting

positive youth development (PYD): relationship with others, and in particular, caring, competent, and committed adults, such as parents, teachers, and mentors. In Grade 11, 4-H youth reported that they had more mentors than did comparison youth.

- **Contribution and Active/Engaged Citizenship:** In the point-in-time sample, 4-H youth are 3 times as likely as youth in other OST programs to have higher scores for Contribution, and 1.6 times as likely to have higher scores for PYD. Consistent with the results from Grades 5 to 10, we find that, through Grade 11, 4-H youth in the longitudinal sample are 2.1 times more likely than other youth to make contributions to their communities. These same youth are also 1.8 times more likely to have higher scores on measures of active and engaged citizenship.
- **Education:** For educational measures assessed in the point-in-time sample, 4-H participants are 1.5 times as likely as youth in other OST programs to report high academic competence and 1.7 times as likely as youth in other OST programs to report high engagement in school. Visit 4-h.org/about/youth-development-research to learn more.
- **Healthy Living:** On health measures in the longitudinal analyses, 4-H participants are 1.6 times as likely as other youth to report healthy habits and 2.4 times as likely to delay sexual intercourse. They are less likely than youth in other OST programs to engage in delinquent behaviors by Grade 11.
- **Science:** In the longitudinal sample, 4-H participants are 1.6 times as likely as youth in other OST programs to participate in science, engineering, or computer technology programs in Grade 11. In the point-in-time sample, 4-H participants are 1.4 times as likely as youth in other OST programs to plan to pursue a career in science. Similarly, 4-H girls are 1.4 times as likely as girls in other OST programs to plan to pursue a career in science.

3. Health Issues Related to Obesity, Chronic Disease, and Lack of Insurance

A lack of physical activity and poor nutrition are contributing factors to overweight and obesity and to a wide range of health problems and chronic diseases among all age groups, including high cholesterol, hypertension, diabetes, heart disease stroke, some cancers, and more. Nationally, the increase in both the prevalence of overweight and obesity and associated chronic diseases is well documented and has negative consequences for individuals and society. Frederick County overweight and obesity statistics mirror and in some cases are above national averages. Low income and poverty often contribute to poor nutrition and to hunger.

FCS agents offer evidence-based programs to help encourage youth and adults to adopt healthy eating and physical activity practices that follow recommendations from the 2015 U.S. Dietary Guidelines and the 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans. This is accomplished by direct teaching, partnering with agencies to reach diverse audiences, training teachers and day-care providers, in-school nutrition education, and parent education. This includes a partnership between

the Lord Fairfax Health District and the FC FCS program to offer the CDC National Diabetes Prevention Program to those individuals identified as having prediabetes. This is an evidence-based lifestyle change program which offers structured behavioral counseling intervention to help people lose 5-7% body weight through healthier eating and 150 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity a week. Achieving this is expected to reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes by 58% in people at high risk for diabetes.

Backfilling the vacant FCS position and further partnership with Valley Health should be investigated.

4. Farms and Farmland Conservation

Concerns tie to preserving the local agriculture economy and preserving green space. Related to these were concerns to continue supporting and protecting agriculture and farming as an occupation, farm profitability, land conservation, government assistance programs, and the adequate supply of farm labor.

VCE-Warren County and Planning District 7 have many programs related to this area including: Small ruminant production and marketing opportunities, Equine and Poultry production classes, fruit production schools, commercial greenhouse production meetings, beef production meetings, food safety trainings, marketing educational efforts for many agriculture products, crop production schools, education on agribusiness management, and many related areas. Extension has been active in partnering with MidAtlantic Farm Credit to provide transition planning workshops for area farmers. Additionally, Extension supports the Blue Ridge Cattleman's Association, Old Dominion Livestock Producers Association, and the newly established Young Growers Alliance of Virginia that originated in Frederick County and is working to provide a network for new and next generation farmers. Throughout the year, efforts are made to conduct assessment of programs versus needs and adjustments are implemented to programming as needed is warranted.

5. County Government and County Management Concerns

This priority issue falls outside the mission of extension and would be most appropriately addressed by the Warren County Board of Supervisors and the Warren County administrators.

6. Affordable Housing

For the majority of families, housing represents the single largest household expense. Unfortunately, commuting patterns and Warren County's proximity to Northern Virginia negatively influence housing affordability. Employees in the urban localities earn higher salaries, allowing them to purchase or rent more expensive homes in our rural area, which drive local housing costs higher.

VCE Warren County and Planning District 7 provide some programs to address this issue. Homebuyer education programs, conducted in partnership with other agencies, enable residents to become knowledgeable about the home-buying process in order to maximize their resources and potentially save on their housing costs. Renter education classes, also conducted in cooperation with other agencies, prepare residents to assert their rights and

effectively fulfill their responsibilities as renters. VCE also participates in an area Housing Coalition which is working to increase the availability of affordable housing in the region. This priority issue would be most appropriately addressed by the Warren County Planning Commission and the Warren County Board of Supervisors.

7. Transportation Safety and Crowded Roadways

This priority issue falls outside the mission of extension and would be most appropriately addressed by Virginia Department of Transportation, the Warren County Board of Supervisors, and the Warren County administrators.

8. Public School System Relating to Employee Turnover

This priority issue would be most appropriately addressed by the Warren County School Board and the Warren County Public Schools administration team.

9. Personal Financial Management and Poverty

Low- and Moderate-income residents in the area experience financial distress because of inadequate savings, too much debt, and poor planning for major life events, as well as hardships such as illness, layoffs, or divorce. Many of area residents are struggling daily to make ends meet. In addition, many individuals and families, whether low- or middle-income rely on expensive and sometimes even predatory financial services, such as check-cashing services, payday loans, rent-to-own agreements or pawn shops. These households are considered “unbanked” or “underbanked.” According to data compiled by the Bank On initiative, 7% of the households in the area are unbanked, while an additional 16% are underbanked. Without a bank account, these households cannot effectively save for their future needs and goals. Even families with incomes above the poverty threshold struggle financially due to poor financial management practices. Although some statistics are not available by locality, data describing the financial practices of Virginians points to a need for financial education. For example, 13.8% of Virginians have severely delinquent student loan debt, 24% have debts that are in collections, and 25% have credit card balances that exceed 75% of their credit card limits. As housing, food, and health expenses soar, and debts accumulate, families need to know how to manage money and make wise choices. They need to be proficient at budgeting and encouraged to save. They need ideas as to how to cut motor fuel and heating costs and how to live more efficiently.

VCE Warren County and Planning District 7 provide a variety of programs to address this issue. The Managing Your Money series, as well as individual workshops on topics such as money management, financial security, and retirement, provide residents with the opportunity to strengthen their finances through education. In addition, financial simulations for youth in elementary, middle, and high schools provide the opportunity for students to learn about money management ‘in the real world’ through experiential learning.

10. Availability of a Safe and Affordable Food Supply

A key aspect of Extension's work in the Northern Shenandoah Valley is fostering a safe, high-quality, and affordable food supply for local residents. This issue has been listed as a planning district wide plan of work for all staff. Extending research-based education to both producers and consumers across the region is a collaborative effort among agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences, and 4-H youth development faculty, as well as program assistants, technicians, and support staff in the counties of Clarke, Frederick, Page, Shenandoah, and Warren.

The target audience consists of residents of the Northern Shenandoah Valley including, but not limited to producers, consumers, youth, underserved and diverse populations, agency partners, and businesses involved in food distribution.

Numerous interdisciplinary factors are involved in the effort to ensure a safe, high-quality, and affordable food supply. Programs for agricultural producers and youth focus on good agricultural practices that minimize health risks to those consuming agricultural products. Programs for food handlers emphasize HACCP processes that reduce the risk of foodborne illness within the restaurant industry. Programs for consumers and youth include safe food handling and preservation, as well as incorporating healthy food choices within a realistic spending plan. Programming efforts will include educational activities related to adult and youth meat quality assurance, good agricultural practices, safe food handling, adult and youth food preservation, emergency preparedness, adult and youth horticulture, pesticide application, youth financial simulations, nutrition and financial management, and stretching food dollars. In addition, efforts will focus on improving access to affordable local foods through increasing the use of EBT machines at Farmer's Markets and On-Farm Markets, as well as encouraging opportunities for vouchers, discounts, and other incentives for purchasing local foods.

Stakeholders will see our work as an integrated effort to foster a safe and affordable food supply in the Northern Shenandoah Valley. Residents will have increased access to a safe, high-quality, and affordable food supply in the Northern Shenandoah Valley.

We plan to identify the common threads of our programming and tie them together into an integrated impact report that can be used to educate stakeholders about our work. In 2018 and subsequent years, we hope to develop more focused evaluations that collect similar information from diverse audiences to more specifically delineate program results.